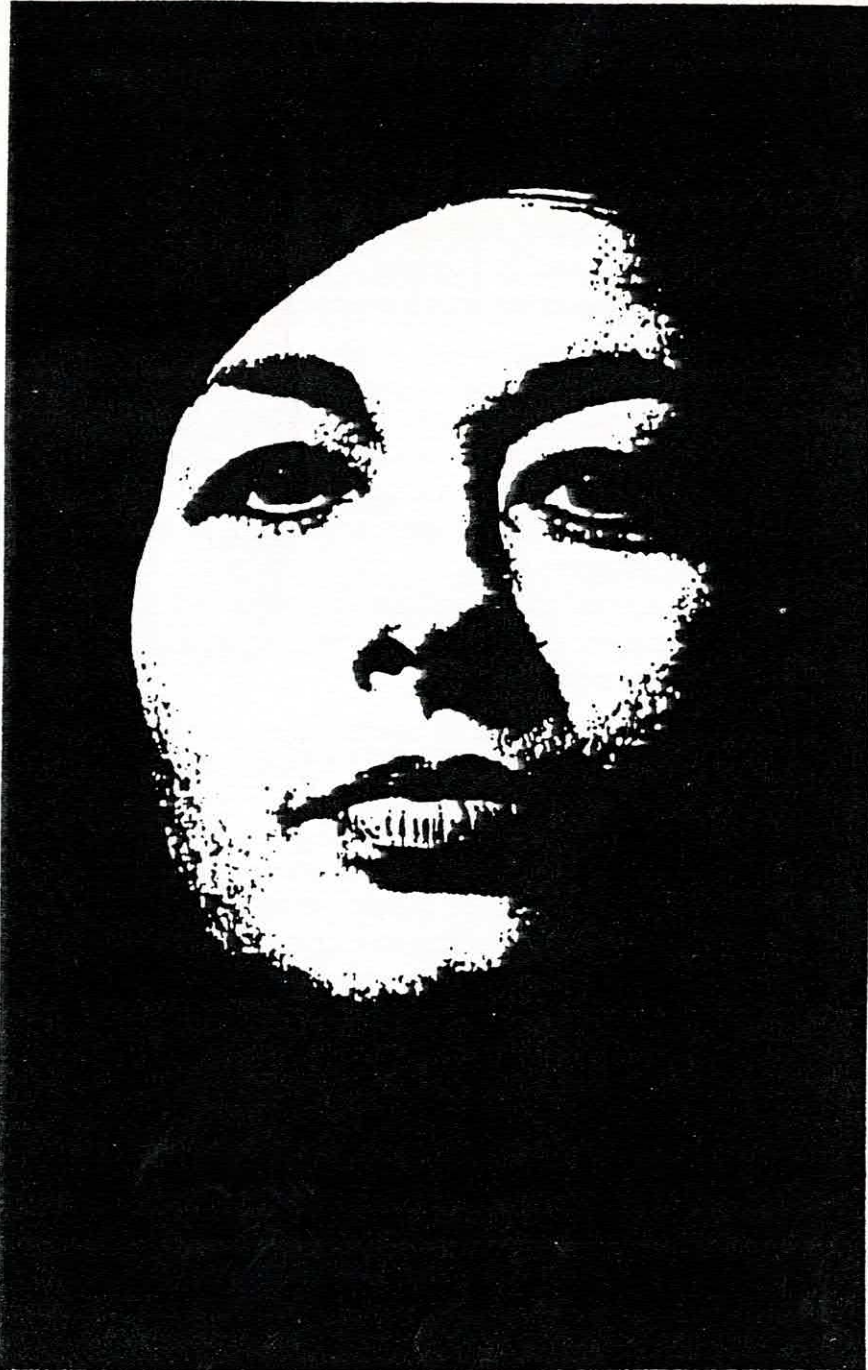


Norma Beecroft

a portrait



past present and future
with the music of John Weinzweig and Hope Lee

NEW MUSIC CONCERTS PRESENTS

Norma Beecroft

A "Portrait" of Norma Beecroft is the second offering of New Music Concerts in its current season. "Portrait Concerts", a concept introduced by NMC last season, celebrates the lives and works of senior Canadian composers by performing their music. In addition they are asked to name an earlier composer that influenced them and to suggest a younger colleague they may have taught or that they feel deserves more exposure.

Norma Beecroft, born April 11, 1934 in Oshawa, Ontario, has graced the creative community as both composer, producer, broadcaster and administrator. Her interest in music stemmed from her parents. Her mother Eleanor is an actress, while her father Julian's ambitions to become a composer and concert pianist were abruptly curtailed by an unfortunate injury to his hands. His interest in inventions however led to some early experiments in the development of magnetic tape that would presage Norma's own interest in electronic music.

In her late teens it seemed that Norma was destined for a modelling career, but the pull of music proved inexorable. In 1952 Beecroft joined John Weinzweig's first composition class at the Faculty of Music of the University of Toronto. Four years later she continued her studies abroad, participating in the summer course at the 1958 Berkshire Music Festival with Aaron Copland and Lukas Foss and subsequently travelling to Europe to study with Goffredo Petrassi in Rome and Bruno Maderna at Darmstadt.

The timing of her sojourn was a fortunate one, placing her at the apex of the renaissance of the European *avant-garde*. A performance of Stockhausen's *Kontakte* confirmed her growing fascination with the new horizons of electronic music. Upon her return to Canada in 1962 she began working in the leading electronic studios of the day, in particular the collection of instruments designed by Hugh LeCaine at the University of Toronto, the RCA installation at the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Centre, and the Institute for Sonology at Utrecht, Holland.

Three highly personal works by Beecroft will receive their world premières. **Images** (1986) for woodwind quintet (commissioned by the Ontario Arts Council for the late-lamented York Winds) is reflective of a period in her life when the composer was having "frightening problems" with her vision.

Her **Quartet** (1990-91) for amplified string quartet and tape was intended for a series of concerts at the Music Gallery that failed to materialize; it incorporates a digital tape part produced in the composer's studio using a Macintosh system and a Roland D70 synthesizer. **Face-à-Face**, a new work for two flutes and percussion, was written for New Music Concerts artistic director Robert Aitken and his daughter Dianne and was commissioned through the Ontario Arts Council and the Laidlaw Foundation by Toronto radio station CJRT as part of a retrospective week of broadcasts of the music of Norma Beecroft scheduled for broadcast in February of 1995.

Founder of the Canadian League of Composers and tireless advocate of the creative community, **John Weinzweig** has recently been described by Ottawa musicologist Elaine Keillor as the driving force who "established the profession of composer in Canada". New Music Concerts with present the première of his work-in-progress, **Journey Out of Night**, is described by its composer as "*A monodrama for mezzo-soprano and piano in 14 episodes, each with a single mood of random thoughts, fantasies and fears, that build up to a prophecy of a world doomed to vanish into darkness and stillness.*" Set to the composer's own texts, it is the fourth installment in Weinzweig's "words and music" project initiated by NMC's première performance of *Hockey Night in Canada* in 1987. The work will be presented in a performance by mezzo-soprano Marianne Bindig with pianist John Hess.

The experience of **Hope Lee** is similar in many ways to that of Ms. Beecroft. Both composers are fascinated by electronic music and both have benefited from their American and European experiences. Lee has observed how her two years of post-graduate study with Klaus Huber in Freiberg, Germany "*reinforced my development to express myself using a very logical, scientific approach, in which each note, each rhythmic value, each dynamic level is tied strictly to the structural frame.*" Born in Taiwan in 1953, Ms. Lee holds Bachelor degrees in both Science and Music and a Master's degree in composition from McGill University. Her commissioned work, **Voices in Time** for chamber orchestra and tape, is one of an ambitious cycle of eleven projected works based on Lee's research into ancient Chinese philosophy, poetry and music.

The concert will be held at **Premiere Dance Theatre** on **November 27** at 8:00 and will be preceded at 7:15 by a conversation with the composers, moderated by Artistic Director Robert Aitken. Tickets may be obtained by calling (416) 973-4000.

New Music Concerts

1 Sunday, October 23, 1994
duMaurier Theatre Centre
Harbourfront Centre
Galina Ustvolskaya

2 Sunday, November 27, 1994
Premiere Dance Theatre
Harbourfront Centre
Norma Beecroft

3 Sunday, February 5, 1995
Art Gallery of Ontario
Walker Court
Erwin Schulhoff

4 Sunday, March 19, 1995
Premiere Dance Theatre
Harbourfront Centre
Tan Dun/Melissa Hui



Premieres
Personalities
Portraits



9/4
5 season

Sunday, April 9, 1995
Premiere Dance Theatre
Harbourfront Centre
Udo Kasemets **5**

Sunday, April 30, 1995
The Great Hall at Hart House
University of Toronto
Olivier Messiaen **6**

Sunday, April 30, 1995
Premiere Dance Theatre
Harbourfront Centre
Olivier Messiaen **7**

Sunday, May 28, 1995
duMaurier Theatre Centre
Harbourfront Centre
Estrada/Scodanibbio **8**

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