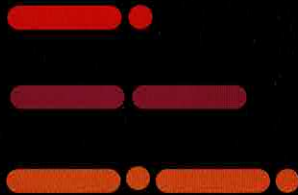




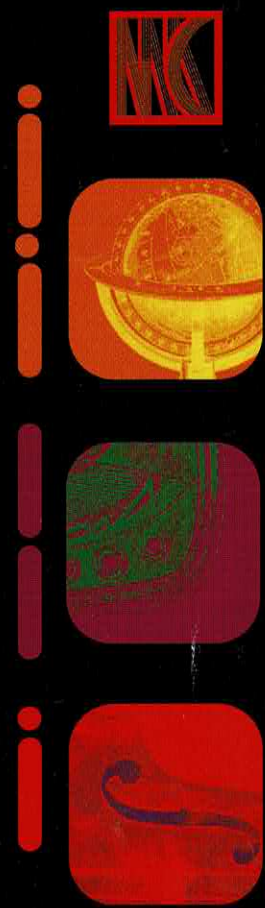
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Robert Aitken
artistic director

1999

2000



new music concerts



New Music Concerts presents

ROBERT AITKEN @ 60

Friday, November 19, 1999
Massey Hall New Music Festival

**A portrait to celebrate his 30 years as
artistic director of New Music Concerts**

Etching: The Vollard Suite (1964) dur. 3' Harry Somers (1925-99)
for solo flute (From the Picasso Suite) **CAN**

Lalita: Shadows II (1973) dur. 11' Robert Aitken (b. 1939)
solo flute, 3 violoncelli, 2 harps, 2 percussion **CAN**

Interplay (1998) ● dur. 20' John Weinzweig (b. 1913)
piccolo, tuba, piano **CAN**
1. Reflections 2. Clang Clang Clang 3. Reverie 4. Flippant 5. Soliloquy (piccolo solo) 6. Repartee 7. Serenade in Blue (tuba solo) 8. Waltz 9. Pas-de-deux 10. They're Off! 11. Intrusions 12. Forward March

Unfolding (Epigenesis) (1994) ● dur. 10' Juhan Puhm (b. 1964)
2 clarinets, 2 bass clarinets, 2 violas, 2 violoncelli, 2 marimbas, harpsichord, piano **CAN**

—INTERMISSION—

Nira: Shadows III (1973-88) dur. 12' Robert Aitken
solo violin, flute, oboe, viola, contrabass, piano, harpsichord **CAN**

Folia (1981) dur. 9' Robert Aitken
flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon **CAN**

Featured soloists: **Robert Aitken**, flute; **Fujiko Imajishi**, violin
(For Ensemble Musicians see list p. 8)

Tonight's concert will be broadcast on CBC Radio Two, 94.1 FM,
Sunday, December 12 at 10:05 p.m. on CBC's Two New Hours.



The Greta Kraus Wittmayer harpsichord used this evening
was graciously provided by Eric Robertson.

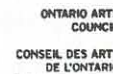
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Robert Aitken @ Sixty

programme notes by Daniel Foley

Harry Somers (1925-1999)

Etching: The Vollard Suite (1964)

for solo flute

In 1971 Robert Aitken's friend and colleague Harry Somers journeyed to the East. An outstanding result of his experiences in India, Nepal, Thailand and Bali was the large choral work, *Chura-churum*, which was premiered by *New Music Concerts* in 1985 and performed again on the occasion of NMC's Harry Somers portrait concert in 1994. The flute solo that Mr. Aitken will perform in Somers' memory this evening was originally the sixth movement of his *Picasso Suite*, a work which had its origins in the music Somers composed for a television series about the celebrated Spanish artist. A depiction of Pan playing an end-blown flute is the subject of one of the etchings Picasso drew for his friend and patron, the French art dealer and collector Ambroise Vollard (1867-1939). Aitken regards this composition as "the most important solo piece in the Canadian flute repertoire. It is to Canadian flutists what Debussy's *Syrinx* has become to the world."

Robert Aitken (b. 1939)

Robert Aitken's first formal composition studies took place at the University of British Columbia in 1958 with Barbara Pentland, while performing as the youngest principal flute in the Vancouver Symphony's history. After a year with the VSO he decided to continue his composition studies with John Weinzweig at the University of Toronto, where he would receive both his Bachelor (1959-61) and Master's degrees (1961-64) while also performing in Toronto's CBC Symphony Orchestra. From 1965 to 1970 he was the co-principal flutist of the Toronto Symphony. In 1971 he and Norma Beecroft established *New Music Concerts*, opening their first season with a concert of the music of Luciano Berio under the composer's supervision. He has also served as artistic director of the Advanced Studies in Music Program at the Banff Centre for the Arts and founded both the Music at Shawnigan festival in British Columbia and Music Today at Niagara-on-the-Lake. In April 1988

Aitken accepted the position of Professor of Flute at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany. He is in demand internationally as a conductor, teacher, clinician, and judge at music schools and festivals.

Aitken's exacting artistic standards and intimate knowledge of the music of our time is reflected in his mastery of extended instrumental techniques, exquisitely timed elements of controlled improvisation and concern for the movement of sound through space. He has been commissioned by such prominent organizations as the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the CBC, the National Youth Orchestra, the York Winds, IRCAM, the Elmer Iseler Singers and the Esprit Orchestra. His music has been published by Salabert, Universal Edition, Ricordi, Edition Transatlantique and Peer Music Classical.

Lalita: Shadows II (1973)

for solo flute, 3 cellos, 2 harps and 2 percussionists

The series of works that share the sub-title 'Shadows' arose out of Aitken's extended journey to the Far East in 1970. The first-hand exposure to the ancient musical arts of Asia made a profound impression on him: "When I returned, there were so many musical ideas running through my mind that I decided to write them down. This writing of 'ethnic'-inspired music went very much against my artistic principles at the time. I felt that a Canadian should write 'Canadian' music, whatever that means, and not something imitative of another culture. However, I set out to rid my mind of these shadows and planned to compose four works inspired by different places I had visited." We shall hear the central chapters from this series this evening. The companion works in this series include *Nekuia: Shadows I* (1971) for large orchestra, *My Song: Shadows IV* (1994) for two flutes and a quartet of optional instruments, and his most recent composition, the *Concerto for Flute and String Orchestra: Shadows V* (1999).

Both *Shadows II* and *Shadows III* are informed by the highly sophisticated rhythmic and melodic traditions of the music of the Indian sub-continent. The rhythmic patterns of Indian music are known as *talas*, while the melodic patterns are referred to as *ragas*. Both ragas and

talas have quite specific identifying characteristics, and are often associated with certain deities, locations, seasons, times of day, and emotions. The melodic patterns and intonations of the early morning raga *Lalitá* are associated with the hymn that is sung in honour of the deity of that name:

*Lalitá, charming in her innocence, is bright like gold.
While she holds a lute, a cuckoo perches on her lotus hand.
She is seated beneath the Wishing-tree, her breasts all unadorned, a thousand times desirable.
Lalitá, young and fair, and garlanded with seven-fold flowers.
Her long eyes like the petals of the lotus.
Sighing, overwhelmed by fate, still, at dawn, dressed for a lover's meeting.*
— Chatuarimshach' hata-Raga-Nirupanam

The composer's intention in this work was to create "a very intense work with a maximum of tension throughout. The flute spends much of its time dealing with turbulent effects, as do the other instruments. Occasional pauses for relaxation provide glimpses of the Indian scale upon which the work is built. The raga *Lalitá* only appears in its more obvious form to bring the movement to a peaceful close."

John Weinzweig (b. 1913)

***Interplay* (1998)**

for piccolo, tuba and piano

1. Reflections 2. Clang Clang Clang 3. Reverie 4. Flippant 5. Soliloquy (piccolo solo) 6. Repartee 7. Serenade in Blue (tuba solo) 8. Waltz 9. Pas-de-deux 10. They're Off! 11. Intrusions 12. Forward March

Over the course of four decades of teaching at the University of Toronto Dr. John Weinzweig, o.c., introduced advanced compositional techniques to a legion of Canadian composers. His roster of pupils include such stylistically diverse names as Somers, Freedman, Beckwith, Adaskin, Mather, Schafer, Beecroft, and Jaeger. Robert Aitken considers John Weinzweig to have been one of his greatest compositional influences. As founder and first president (1951) of the Canadian League of Composers Weinzweig fought to solidify the professional status of the creative musician and encouraged the establishment of the Canadian Music Centre in 1959.

Weinzweig's music has long been celebrated for its natural affinity for the colours of wind instruments, which have often been featured as soloists in the series of twelve *Divertimenti* that have marked the stages of a creative career that spans over half a century. The first of these was composed in 1946 for flute and strings, while the most recent is scored for woodwind quintet and string orchestra. It is with these works in mind that he introduces us to his latest composition:

In retrospect, those intimate voices, the woodwinds, dominated my solo repertoire. I had served them well. Then I heard a high-pitched voice at my door. It was a Piccolo begging to join my woodwind family. I pondered its sonic personality; so unvocal, ranging from piercing to shrill, it seemed at odds with the intimate voices. Perhaps, by removing it from the orchestral environment I might discover a more serene temperament. Finally, during the summer of '98, I sensed a solution: three disparate voices, combining the agility of the Piccolo, the articulate power of the Tuba and the Piano's orchestral spectrum set in a series of dialogues.

— John Weinzweig

Juhan Puhm (b. 1964)

***Unfolding (Epigenesis), Op. 2* (1994)**

for 2 clarinets, 2 bass clarinets, 2 violas, 2 cellos,
2 marimbas, harpsichord and piano

The music of Juhan Puhm first came to national attention with the performance of his *Mosaic* for orchestra at the Scotia Festival of Music in 1991. Though Puhm, who is largely self-taught as a musician, had already completed over 80 compositions, he subsequently designated this piece as his first mature opus. Recently he has been concentrating on a series of vocal compositions to his own texts. A new work is scheduled for performance next year by the Queen of Puddings music theatre.

Unfolding (Epigenesis) Op. 2, was completed in May of 1994 following a three year hiatus after the premiere of Mosaic conducted by Pierre Boulez in 1991. The main concern to the composer since this time has been the generation of dynamic structures from initial information. This information then informs and unifies the various levels of the composition from the large scale structure to the sub-sections to the individual notes. In this work the initial material undergoes a four-fold "unfolding," each stage successively differentiating upon the origi-

nal undifferentiated material, hence the subtitle, "Epigenesis." The process here leads to a work of a complex nature which the composer considers to be his most abstract expression to date.

— Juhan Puhm

Robert Aitken

***Nira: Shadows III* (1973-88)**

for solo violin, flute, oboe, viola, contrabass, piano and harpsichord

Nira is the Tamil word for 'shadows'. *Shadows III* was originally a Canada Council commission for l'Ensemble Instrumentale du Quebec; unfortunately work on the score was abandoned in 1973 when the ensemble disbanded. Aitken returned to complete this work in 1988, observing that "Rolling back the years and reworking a piece is an interesting experience as it shows how quickly music and our own concepts of art and creative musical principles change. I enjoyed the challenge and was curious to see how it weathered the passing of time."

While *Lalita* is redolent of the sensuous melodic world of the classical music of northern India, *Nira* is derived from a South Indian after-midnight raga known as *Paraj*. Aitken's description of this work acknowledges the influence of the vibrant rhythms of the Kathakali dance dramas: "The Kathakali music is to Western ears a very noisy metallic music which in fact bears a close relationship to the music of Bali. Sometimes it seems closer to the sound of the banging of pots and pans than anything we consider music."

***Folia* (1981)** for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon

Aitken's 'Scherzo for Woodwind Quintet', *Folia*, was commissioned by the York Winds with the assistance of the Canada Council in 1981 and was composed in the fall of that year at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire. Both the time and place of the work's creation are commemorated in the title of this work, which reveals the composer's intention to "reflect the random order and rich colours of nature as exhibited by trees and 'foliage' while maintaining a high level of intensity throughout. Even the few sustained passages offer the musicians extra technical challenges such as trills of variable speed, flutter tonguing and simultaneous singing and playing."

The dense forest of notes that evolve from the wooden instruments that send forth the first roots of the work may indeed strike certain listeners as 'random', yet they are in fact derived from the subtle ringing of changes on a carefully chosen series of notes and durations: "The music follows an idea of all things relating and flowing into each other and, while there are certain random aspects, it is not at all a 'free piece'." Towards the conclusion of the composition a measured degree of rhythmic freedom is introduced, before giving way to a single, sustained harmony that sounds the intervallic 'seed' of the work: "The melodic and harmonic material is entirely based on a major/minor ninth chord in all its inversions which, coloured with unusual overtones, slips in and out of focus, much like the variety of autumn foliage. Hints of relaxation and timbral changes are achieved by varying the density of the texture, suggestive of the wildness of nature."

MUSICIANS

Robert Aitken flute and piccolo

Keith Atkinson oboe

Joaquin Valdepeñas, Michelle Verheul, Shalom Bard clarinets

David Bourque, Lori Freedman bass clarinets

Kathleen McLean bassoon

Fred Rizner horn

Scott Irvine tuba

Erica Goodman, Janice Lindskoog harps

John Hess piano

David Swan harpsichord

Rick Sacks, John Rudolph percussion

Fujiko Imajishi violin

Max Mandel, Christopher Redfield violas

David Hetherington, Simon Fryer, Paul Widner cellos

Roberto Occhipinti contrabass



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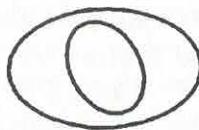
André Leduc, photographer

New Music Concerts gratefully acknowledges the financial support of:

The Canada Council; Toronto Arts Council; The Province of Ontario through the Ontario Arts Council; Factor; Goethe Institut (Toronto); The Julie-Jiggs Foundation; The Koerner Foundation; The SOCAN Foundation; The Tannenbaum Foundation; The Toronto Star; Mrs. H.S. Aitken; John Beckwith; Austin Clarkson; Elizabeth Frecaut and Paul Walty; Linda and Gordon Johnston; Michael Koerner; Mary Morrison; The Estate of Mary Ellen Perkins; Jeffrey Smyth

Correction: The Goethe Institut (Toronto) was co-presenter with New Music Concerts of the program of Degenerate Music on October 31, 1999 at the Premiere Dance Theatre. The program and the season's brochure incorrectly indicate that the Goethe Institut was co-sponsor. New Music Concerts regrets this error; and thanks the Goethe Institut for its creative partnership.

WholeNote Magazine
salutes Robert Aitken
and New Music Concerts



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The SOCAN Foundation salutes young composers

In its 1999 competition, The SOCAN Foundation has awarded cash prizes totalling \$18,000 to composers under 30. Congratulations to the winners.

SIR ERNEST MacMILLAN AWARDS

(works for 13 performers or more)

- First Prize (\$2,000): Andriy Talpash, 24, Montreal—*Queezinart-hocket in a blender*, for chamber ensemble
- Second Prize (\$1,000): Rose Bolton, 28, Toronto—*Incidental Music of My Mind*, for large chamber ensemble
- Third Prize (\$500): Justin Mariner, 28, Montreal—*Landmarks*, for orchestra

SERGE GARANT AWARDS

(works for three to 12 performers)

- First Prize (\$2,000): Eric Morin, 29, Laval, Que.—*Clone 2*, for wind quintet and piano
- Second Prize (\$1,000): Vincent Ho, 24, Calgary—*String Quartet No. 1*
- Third Prize (\$500): Alain Beauchesne, 24, Ste-Marthe du Cap., Que.—*Souper de famille*, for chamber ensemble

PIERRE MERCURE AWARDS

(works for solo or duet)

- First Prize (\$2,000): Paul Frehner, 28, St. Laurent, Que.—*anno . . . 00 . . .*, for solo guitar
- Second Prize (\$1,000): Michael Lacroix, 26, Harrow, Ont.—*Potens Nuntilus*, for solo piano
- Third Prize (\$500): Scott Edward Godin, 29, Montreal—*Sweat*, for violin and cello

HUGH Le CAINE AWARDS

(electroacoustic works)

- First Prize (\$2,000): Hugo Arsenaault, 26, Blainville, Que.—*Eschazoopsie*
- Second Prize (\$1,000): Mathieu Marcoux, 24, Montreal—*Corporation*

- Third Prize (\$500): Cheryl Hutchinson, 29, Vancouver—*Calling from Beyond*

GODFREY RIDOUT AWARDS

(choral/vocal works)

- First Prize (\$2,000): Scott Wilson, 29, Richmond, B.C.—*Come to me from Krete . . .*, for soprano and ensemble
- Second Prize (\$1,000): Alexis LeMay, 24, Ste-Croix, Que.—*Honey*, for soprano and ensemble
- Third Prize (tie, \$500 each): Karim Al-Zand, 29, Ottawa—*Winter Scenes*, for mezzo-soprano, harp, flute and viola; Rose Bolton, 28, Toronto—*Jade Flower Palace*, for soprano and ensemble



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