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NEW MUSIC CONCERTS

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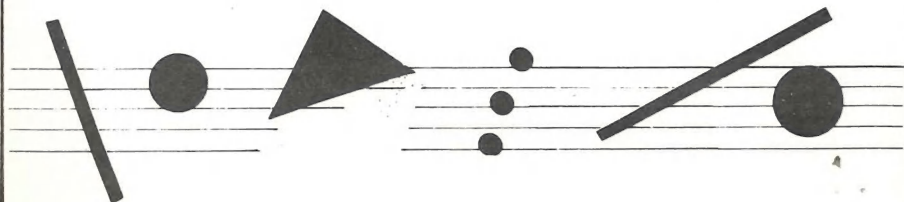
presents

COMPOSERS
EDGARD VARÈSE
TORU TAKEMITSU
JO KONDO

GUEST SOLOISTS
DON WILSON
PETER MCALLISTER
NEXUS

April 16, 1983
8:30 P.M.

MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Bldg., University of Toronto



P R O G R A M

IONISATION (1930-33)

EDGARD VARESE

ALLEN BEARD
ROBERT BECKER
JOHN BROWNELL
DAVID CAMPION
MARK DUGGAN
ROBIN ENGELMAN
KEN ERSKINE
RUSSELL HARTENBERGER
BEVERLEY JOHNSTON
HENRY KUCHARZYK
ROBERT PEARCE
MIKE PERRY
JOHN WYRE
ROBERT AITKEN, conductor

CHANSON DE BILITIS (1901)

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

PATRICIA DUMAS, narrator
ROBERT AITKEN, flute
DOUGLAS STEWART, flute
ERICA GOODMAN, harp
CHARLOTTE MOON, harp
MARC WIDNER, celeste

RAIN TREE (1981)

TORU TAKEMITSU

ROBERT BECKER, vibraphone
ROBIN ENGELMAN, marimba
RUSSELL HARTENBERGER, marimba
JOHN WYRE, lighting

I N T E R M I S S I O N

KNOTS (1977)

JO KONDO

PETER McALLISTER, guitar
DON WILSON, guitar
MARC WIDNER, electric piano
RUSSELL HARTENBERGER, percussion
JAMES MONTGOMERY, technician

WATERWAYS (1982)

TORU TAKEMITSU

JAMES CAMPBELL, clarinet
FUJIKO IMAJISHI, violin
PETER SCHENKMAN, cello
MARC WIDNER, piano
ERICA GOODMAN, harp
CHARLOTTE MOON, harp
ROBIN ENGELMAN, vibraphone
RUSSELL HARTENBERGER, vibraphone

RAIN COMING (1982)

TORU TAKEMITSU

DOUGLAS STEWART, flute
JAMES CAMPBELL, clarinet
CYNTHIA STELJIS, oboe
DAVID CARROLL, bassoon
JAMES SPRAGG, trumpet
HARCUS HENNIGAR, horn
JOHN DOWDEN, trombone
MARC WIDNER, piano (celeste)
ROBIN ENGELMAN, percussion
FUJIKO IMAJISHI, violin
NANCY MATHIS, violin
RIVKA GOLANI ERDESZ, viola
PETER SCHENKMAN, cello
JOEL QUARRINGTON, double bass
ROBERT AITKEN, conductor

STEVEN R. SMITH, STAGE MANAGER

Calling upon thirteen musicians to play more than 40 instruments, Varese is precise down to the last detail of the score; under "sirens" in the preface, he indicates: "Sterling Type H, operated by hand, with a button for instantaneous stopping (thumb brake).. mouth sirens not to be used." The structural principles of Ionisation evolve from the instruments chosen; this instrumentation scandalized many audiences during its early performances. The instruments can be classified into seven categories according to timbre:

- 1 METAL
Triangle, cowbells, gong, rim shot, etc.
- 2 MEMBRANE
Bongos, snare drum, etc.
- 3 SNARE
Tarole, snare drum and parade drum
- 4 WOOD
Claves, wood blocks and slap stick.
- 5 RATTLE-FRICTION
Sleigh bells, castanets, tambourine, maracas and guiros.
- 6 AIR-FRICTION
Sirens and string drum.
- 7 KEYBOARD-MALLET
Glockenspiel, chimes and piano.

Each instrument is assigned one or more functions which range from generating germinal ideas to providing special acoustic characteristics. This assignment of special functions serves as a means of control for the clarification of structure or

to achieve modulation in register and timbre.

According to Louise Varèse, Ionisation is the work that Varèse was most satisfied with, and proud of. In his letter to Carlos Salzedo dated December 17, 1931, he writes:

"Ionisation has turned out well--
cryptic, synthesized, powerful
and terse. And, as for the
structure: stunning mechanics.
What I like most about myself
is my modesty."

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CHANSONS DE BILITIS (1901)
Twelve Poems by Pierre Louys

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

The only music to emerge from a decade of friendship between Debussy and the poet Louys is Chanson de Bilitis, a celebrated hoax of the 19th century. Les Chansons purports to be the translation of the work of a Greek poetess named Bilitis. To give the supposedly translated works of the non-existent Bilitis authenticity, Louys wrote her biography and included a list of yet unpublished poems.

"The volume of bucolics, elegies and epigrams was prefaced by a somewhat fanciful story of the poetess' life, including her early defloration at Pamphylia, her sojourn on the island of Lesbos, her later career as a courtesan in Kypros and the discovery of her tomb whose walls were covered with the poems included in the collection."

Despite the classical origins of the "Bilitis" work, Debussy and his contemporaries were attracted to the translation. The music was written in great haste and abandoned before the project was completed. The original manuscript remained with Debussy's biographer, Leon Vallas, until Boulez in the 1950's, undertook to complete the work as Debussy had originally conceived it. A celeste part had to be written since Debussy, himself, had performed at the celeste and had apparently improvised this part.

This work is scored for two amplified guitars in quarter-tone tuning, an electric piano and seven cow bells of different, graduated pitches, to be played by one percussionist. The choice of pitches and the total range of the seven cow bells is left to the performer, although a conventional scale resulting from these pitches should be avoided.

The piece is divided into two parts. The first part is long, and, consists of single melodic-lines that are treated heterophonically. The second part, which is very short, quotes an ancient Greek tune called "Seikilos Song", accompanied by quarter-tone scales. This Greek song, although it has no direct connection to the melodic-lines in the first part other than the use of similar scales, is employed because of its likeness to the melodic materials in the first part. As a whole, the music is very static and is not goal-oriented, although a progression of musical ideas can be clearly perceived.

WATERWAYS (1977)

TORU TAKEMITSU

This composition, as the title suggests, shows the way various streams follow different waterways and finally all of them get together to become one high stream and all those streams go toward the sea of tonality. Waterways is dedicated to Peter Serkin and first performed by him and Tashi in Tokyo in 1978.

RAIN COMING (1982)

TORU TAKEMITSU

RAIN COMING is part of TAKEMITSU'S 'Rain Series' and was commissioned by the London Sinfonietta and performed by them in October, 1982.

NOTES BY THE COMPOSER

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

Claude Debussy was born in St.- Germain-en-Laye, on August 22, 1862; and died in Paris, March 25, 1918. He had little formal education as a child but in 1872 he entered the Paris Conservatory, where he studied with Albert Lavignac, Antoine Marmontel and Ernest Guiraud. After failing to win the Prix de Rome in 1882, he subsequently succeeded in 1884 and spent the next two years at the Villa Medici in Rome where he met and was influenced by Franz Liszt. During these years Art Nouveau was visually evident everywhere, in buildings, clothing, art, sculpture, decoration and graphics; so it should be of no surprise that Debussy associated with painters and poets. These artists proved to be a greater influence on his thinking than his fellow musicians.

Debussy was the founder of what has been called the Impressionist School whose followers largely avoided the narrative, the formal and the conventional. This School also followed the procedures of the writers Verlaine, Baudelaire, Mallarmé and others who reacted against the strong French Romantic poets such as Victor Hugo. This attitude was described by Mallarmé as "To name an object is to sacrifice three-quarters of that enjoyment of the poem which comes from the guessing bit by bit - that is our dream."

At first glance, it would appear that Debussy rebelled against both Classicism and Romanticism. Nevertheless his music does possess the classic qualities of devotion to form and the careful treatment of melodic themes as well as exhibiting a refinement of Romanticism.

JO KONDO

JO KONDO was born in Tokyo, Japan, on October 28, 1947. He graduated in 1972 from the Department of Composition at Tokyo University of Arts, and in 1978 was the recipient of the JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER AWARD. This award enable JO KONDO to reside in New York City and be the visiting lecturer at the University of Victoria during the years 1978-79.

JO KONDO'S music has been performed extensively in Japan, as well as at various concerts and festivals, both in the United States and Europe. Already he has written more than forty works, ranging from solo to orchestra, as well as electronic pieces. He wrote a book about his own compositional ideas which was published in 1979.

Twenty of his works have been issued on records in Japan and the United States and his compositions are published by Zen-On in Japan and C.F. Peters in the United States.

MUSICA PRACTICA, TOKYO, a chamber orchestra devoted to new music is directed by JO KONDO.

TORU TAKEMITSU

SOUND, AS STRONG AS SILENCE

The 1979 Catalogue Salabert listing the works of Toru Takemitsu contains the following autobiographical essay and reads in part:

"Everything that attracts me to music is basically of an inner, personal nature. Outside influences are totally unimportant, though not entirely non-existent. The only time they can affect me is if I am able to develop and transform those parts which can nourish my music.

"I often talk of 'nature', a word which I use simultaneously as an adjective, adverb and noun. It is really an imaginary 'nature' in which I experience reality intensely, particularly in eastern and western music, both of which are absolutely 'natural' because of being imaginary.

"It seems to me that most contemporary music carefully avoids the past. I am not afraid of it. On the contrary, I need at the same time whatever is newest just as I need whatever is oldest. However, the unknown is found neither in the past nor in the future, but in reality, simply in the immediate present.

"My musical form is the direct and natural result which sounds themselves impose and nothing can decide beforehand the point of departure. I do not try in any way to express myself through these sounds but, by reacting with them, the work springs forth itself.

"For several years I have composed a number of works for traditional Japanese instruments, in particular the shakuhachi and biwa, mainly because I have rediscovered through them the genius of two particular interpreters (Katsuya and Tsuruta). But there is no profound reason which could logically explain my attraction to the music of my country, except perhaps a slight curiosity and musical interest.

"To make the void of silence live is to make the infinity of sounds. Sound and silence are equal. But this conception cannot work without extracting to the full expressive potential of a musical sound or phrase which will then become an abstract, anonymous entity freely offered to the executant. The virtuoso of the shakuhachi dreams of a perfect, sublime sound, like that of the wind in the bamboos, and in that is the full expression of belief in Japanese music. The inner complexities of a natural sound are akin to nothingness.

"I would like to develop in two directions at once, as a Japanese in tradition and as a Westerner in innovation. Deep within myself I would like to keep two musical genres, both of which have their own rightful form. Making use of these basically incompatible elements at the heart of many processes in composition is, in my view, only the first stage. I don't want to resolve this fruitful contradiction' on the contrary I want to make the two blocks fight each other. In this way I avoid isolating myself from tradition whilst advancing into the future with each new work.

I would like to achieve a sound as
intense as silence..."

Toru Takemitsu was born in Tokyo in 1930 and in 1948 he became a private pupil of Yasuji Kiyose with whom he studied for a few years; otherwise he is self-taught, which may partly explain the originality of his approach and style. From the first, Takemitsu experimented with unusual combinations, unconventional performing techniques, graphic notation, aleatory music and the incorporation of visual elements. Between 1948 and 1965 he shared interest and concerts with fellow Japanese musicians through the development of groups to foster the traditional music of Japan. In 1964 Takemitsu was invited by The East-West Centre in Hawaii to give a series of lectures with John Cage with whom he later collaborated on performances. In 1967 he was commissioned to write a piece for the 125th Anniversary of the New York Philharmonic which was performed at the Lincoln Centre.

Since that time he has been involved in a myriad of musical and artistic activities some of which have been devoted entirely to his music. He is also the recipient of many international awards.

EDGARD VARESE

Born in Paris in 1885, Varèse studied at the Schola Cantorum with D'Indy and Roussel and then later worked as a choirmaster in Paris and Berlin. At the age of thirty he emigrated to the United States and settled in New York, but he was at home in both France and the United States. He was amazingly varied in his interests. Varèse was active in the American Dada group and, during World War I, founded the New Symphony Orchestra for the performance of contemporary music. He also founded the Composer's Guild (1921) and the Pan American Society (1926) and worked with both electrophonic and electronic instruments.

Varèse not only envisaged the development of the tape and electronic medium but composed some of the first masterpieces in the new idiom. Varèse was the first to exploit percussion systematically and extensively. His forms, blocked out and spatial in effect, turn away from what then was the traditional notion of developmental processes and approached the contemporary ideal of sound experiences for themselves and not for their part in a larger process. Nevertheless, Varèse never actually gave up the concepts of relatedness and "meaning," and his later works, including the tape compositions are highly dramatic in their juxtaposition of vocal, instrumental, and electronic elements. Finally, his use of tape and of a great variety of means suggest the enormous widening of perspective in which the range of material itself becomes a valid subject matter.

RAIN TREE (1981)

TORU TAKEMITSU

RAIN TREE belongs to the 'Rain Series' which includes: Rain Coming for chamber ensemble (1982); Rain Tree Sketch for piano, Garden Rain for brass ensemble (1974); Rain Spell for 2 violins (in progress).

When TAKEMITSU was planning the piece he was greatly influenced by a novel of Kenzaburo Oe. The opening page of the score has a paragraph quoted from this novel.

"It has been named the 'rain tree'; for its abundant foliage continues to let fall rain drops collected from last night's shower until well after the following midday. Its hundred of thousands of tiny leaves - finger-like - store up moisture while other trees dry up at once. What an ingenious tree. Isn't it?"

quoted from Atama no ij Ame no Ki, a novel by Kenzaburo Oe

DON WILSON & PETER McALLISTER

Duo-guitarists Don Wilson and Peter McAllister have been praised for their flawless ensemble playing, extensive repertoire, virtuosic technique and acclaimed as one of the world's fine chamber ensembles. Both hold the degree of Bachelor of Music from the University of Toronto where they studied guitar with Eli Kassner. Subsequently, they received a Canada Council grant to study as a duo with Alexandre Lagoya in France.

Mr. Wilson and Mr. McAllister have recorded with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra for radio and television, and have been guest soloists on seventeen occasions. They have performed throughout Europe and North America both as recitalists and soloists; most recently they completed their second tour of West Germany and Switzerland and toured Canada under the auspices of Jeunesses Musicales du Canada.

NEXUS

Over the past decade Nexus has become recognized as one of the most remarkable ensembles in the world, quietly establishing its own identity through its unique repertoire and instrumentation, and at the same time, building a reputation for unforgettably powerful performances.

The members of Nexus share an amazing variety of musics and moods, blending them skillfully into a delightful, memorable experience. Bob Becker, Bill Cahn, Robin Engelman, Russell Hartenberger and John Wyre are highly talented percussionists whose individual paths crossed and recrossed while they were beginning their careers as professional musicians. Realizing that a special rapport existed among them, they formed Nexus, which means a connection, a link. These five have now been together for 11 years and their rare sense of ensemble has become formidable.

Their repertoire is prodigious. Much of the music they play has been created from within the group - the result of a love of improvisation on the part of five musicians who are all skilled in the musical art. However, other composers' works are not excluded. In fact, Nexus performs a substantial amount of contemporary material for percussion, and does so masterfully.

Nexus has made a wide variety of records which they distribute themselves. "Music of Nexus", is an assortment of the group's own powerful music. "Changes", a Nexus/CBC co-production is a digital recording of four contemporary percussion classics.-- Third Construction by John Cage, Music for Pieces of Wood by Steve Reich, Clos de Vougeot by Bruce Mather and

Changes by William Cahn. "Nexus & Earle Birney" is a three-album set of poetry and music, the first recorded anthology of works by Canadian poet Birney. And "Nexus Ragtime Concert" is still a favorite.

In June Nexus will appear with the Toronto Symphony for four performances of John Wyre's Connexus, and on June 9 the Royal Conservatory of Music will sponsor a Nexus concert at Walter Hall.

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Its major task is to collect licence fees from the organizations which use music, and distribute the money to the composers whose music is being performed. CAPAC is by far the largest organization of its type in Canada in terms of income collected and royalties distributed — and last year passed on more than \$9 million to Canadian publishers and composers.

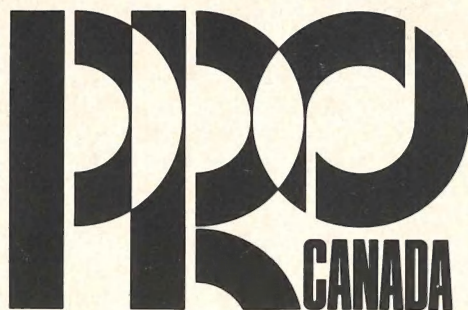
CAPAC supports a variety of efforts to spread the work of Canadian composers, and offers assistance and guidance to composers involved in the practical day-to-day business of music. It publishes a magazine, *The Canadian Composer*, 10 times each year, and is deeply involved in efforts to have Canada's outdated copyright laws brought into line with today's changing conditions.

If you need to know more about CAPAC, and how it helps keep score for Canadian composers and Canadian music, please call. CAPAC has a warm welcome for everyone involved in Canadian music.

The Composers, Authors and Publishers Association of Canada



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