

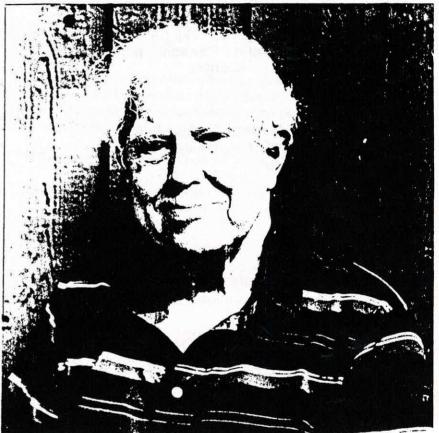






New Music Concerts presents

# An Elliott Carter Jubilee



Sunday April 5, 1998 / 8:00 pm Glenn Gould Studio / Canadian Broadcasting Centre Photo Credit: Kathy Chapman





## Sunday April 5, 1998 / 8:00 pm Glenn Gould Studio / Canadian Broadcasting Centre

Elliott Carter (b. 1908)

Con Leggerezza Pensosa (1990, dur. 5')

Joaquin Valdepeñas, clarinet, Fujiko Imajishi, violin, David Hetherington, cello

Elliott Carter

Bariolage (1992, dur. 5')

Erica Goodman, harp

Elliott Carter

Esprit Rude/Esprit Doux II (1994, dur. 4')

Robert Aitken, flute, Joaquin Valdepeñas, clarinet, Trevor Tureski, marimba

Elliott Carter

Of Challenge and Love (1994, dur. 23')●

- 1. High on Our Tower
- 2. Under the Dome
- 3. Am Klavier
- 4. Quatrains from Harp Lake
- 5 End of a Chapter

Valdine Anderson, soprano, John Hess, piano

- Intermission -

Robert Aitken (b. 1939)

My Song (1994, dur. 10')

Robert Aitken and Dianne Aitken, flutes

Elliott Carter **Figment** (1994, dur. 5')
David Hetherington, cello

Elliott Carter **Luimen** (1997, dur. 12')▼

William Kuinka, mandolin, William Beauvais, guitar, Erica Goodman, harp, Trevor Tureski, vibraphone, James Spragg, trumpet, Gordon Sweeney, trombone, Robert Aitken, conductor

Canadian Premiére
 ▼ North American première

Tonight's concert is being recorded for future broadcast by **Two New Hours on CBC Radio Two**.











#### Elliott Carter

(b. New York City, December 11, 1908)

Twice winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Music, first composer to receive the United States Medal of the Arts, one of the few composers ever awarded Germany's Ernst von Siemens Music prize, and in 1988 made Commandeur dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the Government of France, Elliott Carter is internationally recognized as one of the leading American voices of the classical music tradition. Enriched through wide acquaintance with European artists, including many, such as Bartók and Stravinsky, who came to America during World War II, Carter has seen his work as widely appreciated and as actively encouraged overseas as in his own country. In 1987 the Paul Sacher Foundation of Basel acquired all of Carter's musical manuscripts, to be permanently maintained in a public archive along with the manuscripts of Stravinsky, Boulez, Bartók, Hindemith, Lutoslawski and other universally acknowledged 20th-century masters.

A native of New York City, Carter has been compared as an artist to another New Yorker, Henry James, with whom he is seen to share a multifaceted richness of vision and fastidiousness of craft based on intimate familiarity with Western (and in Carter's case, non-Western) artistic traditions. Like Henry James, Carter and his work reflect the impress of a lasting and deeply felt relationship with Europe, a relationship dating from adolescent travels with his father, nourished by study of the fruits of European artistic and intellectual culture, and cemented by a 3-year course of musical training in Paris with Nadia Boulanger during the period 1932–1935. The comparison with James makes an equally apt reference to Carter's extensive accomplishments as an author of hundreds of articles, reviews and philosophical essays about music over the course of the past 60 years, recently anthologized in Jonathan W. Bernard's Elliott Carter: Collected Essays and Letters, 1937–1995.

First encouraged towards a musical career by his friend and mentor Charles Ives, Carter studied music with Walter Piston and Gustav Holst at Harvard University before his studies in Paris. Carter's early music reflected the aesthetic of his fellow American Francophiles of the 1930s and 40s, and includes a number of large-scale stage works and choral pieces. His first String Quartet, completed in 1951, marks the onset of his compositional maturity and his life-long predilection for abstract instrumental music. Carter was recognized by the Pulitzer Prize

Committee for the first time in 1960 for his ground breaking compositions for the string quartet medium.

Carter's string quartets advanced a new dimension to the perception of musical time that he termed "metric modulation" — an elegant, clock-work mechanism controlling the concurrent tempos of autonomous musical events. The kaleidoscopic superimpositions of Carter's multi-faceted "Time Screens" attain their greatest density in the 'sinfonia concertante' works of the 1960s and 70s: the Double Concerto (1961), Piano Concerto (1967), Concerto for Orchestra (1970) and Symphony of Three Orchestras (1977).

Many passages in Carter's music are based on the technical idiosyncrasies of the instruments for which they were conceived. In this evening's premiere of Luimen, for example, the mandolin, guitar and harp in this ensemble fall under the broad category of 'plucked chordophones', yet they also have a self-defining, 'native' manner of performance that the composer is free to exploit, contradict, or transform. Carter's instrumentations emphasize the "individuality" of the performers by assigning each player in an ensemble a characteristic repertoire of unique intervals ('invariant sets') and rhythmic gestures, "as if they were a large crowd of different people." He then conceives an acoustic scenario involving the dynamic opposition and merging of these instrumental identities over the course of time and space. Though the stimulus for Carter's works often springs from an allusion to a literary subtext, his dramatic intent has always been "to make moments of music as rich in reference as I could and to do something that can be done only in music and yet that has rarely been achieved except in opera."

Since the early 1980s Carter has composed a series of supremely challenging solo and chamber works commissioned by the world's leading instrumentalists, ranging from five-minute pieces like *Con Leggerezza Pensosa* (1990), works for solo instruments (including *Scrivo in Vento*, composed in 1994 and dedicated to Robert Aitken), and extended compositions such as the *Triple Duo* (1983), the *Quintet for piano and winds* (1991), and a fifth *String Quartet* (1995). His latest symphonic works include an *Oboe Concerto* (1988), a *Violin Concerto* (1990, a *Clarinet Concerto* (1996) and a *Symphonia* (1998) for orchestra. Mr. Carter is presently fulfilling a commission from the Paris Opera.

#### **PROGRAMME NOTES**

Elliott Carter

CON LEGGEREZZA PENSOSA (1990)

for clarinet, violin and cello

Con Leggerezza Pensosa was commissioned by Dr. Raffaele Pozzi, the director of the Istituto di Studi Musicali in Latina, Italy, as an homage to the Italian author, Italo Calvino, to be performed in connection with the institute's first annual awards for the best musicological papers of the year. Italo Calvino, who died after writing but before giving his Norton Lectures at Harvard University, Six Memos for the Next Millennium (Lezioni americane), was singled out for this homage because he presents in these lectures a new view of humanism which has become an inspiration for the Istituto di Studi Musicali.

The title was suggested by the remark Calvino makes in his lecture on Lightness:

spero innanzitutto d'aver dimostrato che esiste una leggerezza della pensosità, così come tutti sappiamo che esiste una leggerezza della frivolezza; anzi, la leggerezza pensosa può far apparire la frivolezza come pesante e opeca

Italo Calvino, Lezioni americane, 1988

(Above all I hope to have shown that there is such a thing as lightness of thoughtfulness, just as we all know that there is a lightness of frivolity. In fact, thoughtful lightness can make frivolity seem dull and heavy)

My short piece for clarinet, violin and cello was written in June 1990.

-Elliott Carter

Elliott Carter BARIOLAGE (1992) for solo harp

My **Trilogy** for oboe and harp, composed for those great performers and dear friends, Ursula and Heinz Holliger, has as its motto the last two stanzas of Rainer Maria Rilke's *Sonette an Orpheus*, *II*, 10. (Printed here in boldface type are the three phrases used as mottos for the three parts of the Trilogy.)

Aber noch ist uns das Dasein verzaubert; an hundert Stellen ist es noch Ursprung. **Ein Spielen von reinen Kräften**, die keiner berührt, der nicht kniet und bewundert.

Worte gehen noch zart am Unsäglichen aus... Und die Musik, immer neu, aus den bebendsten Steinen, baut im unbrauchbaren Raum ihr vergöttliches Haus.

But existence is still enchanting for us, in hundreds of places it is still pristine, **A play of pure forces**, which no one can touch without kneeling and adoring.

Words still peter out into what cannot be expressed... And music, ever new, builds out of the most tremendous stones her divinely consecrated house in unexploitable space.

Each of the three sections of *Trilogy* was written for a special occasion... *Bariolage* (which has the motto: Ein Spielen von reinen Kräften) is a harp solo written for a festival of my music given in Geneva in March, 1992, for Ursula Holliger, to whom it is dedicated, to play. I was interested in writing for the harp as I had been a friend and admirer of Carlos Salzedo who wrote for the harp in such an inventive way.

-Elliott Carter

Robert Aitken

MY SONG: SHADOWS IV (1997)

for two solo flutes

To celebrate their 15th anniversary, the Winnipeg ensemble "Aurora Musicale" commissioned five Canadian composers to compose works based on Indian rain dances. I, personally, did not want to risk such a challenge, but had always been interested in Western Indian culture. By chance, a short time before this invitation, I read a notebook by Jamie de los Angeles, a self-made ethnomusicologist who around the turn of the century had spent time with the Indians of northeastern California. As the land which these tribes occupied was of little interest to the ever-pervasive pioneers, and gold or other valuable minerals had not been discovered in their barren area, they lived in a comparatively natural state until well into the 20th century.

De los Angeles attempted, with very limited success, to record the music of these people on wax cylinders and 78 rpm records, but most of this transcribing was done graphically in notebooks. In addition to this, he described in great detail the purpose and use of music in the community. When children in these particular villages reached the age of pubescence, they were expected to go out into the wilderness to find themselves. And after a few days they returned, with not a dead mountain lion or bear but rather, a song. Hand-made flutes from willow bark were often an aid in finding this song, each one having an entirely different, distinctive scale. If the village liked the song, it became part of the repertoire of the village and known as that person's song — 'Jamie's Song', or 'Marie's Song'.

This story fascinated me and provided the inspiration for a piece, involving, of course, flutes, as the instrumentation of "Aurora Musicale" consisted of two flutes, oboe, bassoon, violin, cello and keyboard. In "My Song" the two flutists move about the stage exploring the performance space with sound, as if looking for a song. They begin first, with only the foot joint, then the centre piece, both together and so on, as if constructing a flute before the public's eyes. Each section produces its own scale, not related to the normal chromatic scale a flute produces when it is played as a complete instrument. The sound itself is quite magical and seems to be coming from a different, perhaps mystical world. The only difficulty is that the flutist must learn with a relative degree of certainty to perform on the different sections of the flute without the head joint, in what could be considered 'shakuhachi' style.

The first performance of "My Song" took place in the Winnipeg Art Gallery on March 14, 1994, with flutists Patricia Spencer and Laurel Ridd.

---Robert Aitken

Elliott Carter FIGMENT (1994) for solo cello

The idea of composing a solo cello piece had been in the back of my mind for many years, especially since so many cellists had been urging me to do so. When Thomas Demenga asked me for such a work, at my 1994 85th birthday concert in Basel, to be premiered at a concert he was giving in New York City sponsored by the Naumberg Foundation, I promptly set to work. Demenga had already impressed me greatly when he played some of my chamber works at my 80th birthday concert in Badenweiler, Germany, and especially by his wonderful recording of these works issued under the ECM RECORDS New Series.

**Figment** for solo cello presents a variety of contrasting, dramatic moments using material derived from a single musical idea.

-Flliott Carter

Elliott Carter **LUIMEN** (1997) (North American premiere)
for mandolin. guitar, harp, vibraphone, trumpet and trombone

For a number of years I had been thinking of writing a piece based on the sound of plucked instruments like the mandolin, guitar and harp, so when the Nieuw Ensemble [of Amsterdam] asked me for a piece I realized that this group had excellent players of these three instruments to which I added a trumpet, trombone and vibraphone and composed a one movement fantasy whose title was chosen by the ensemble (meaning 'mood' or 'whim').

The score opens with a fast movement that presents each instrument in brief solos between moments for the entire group. This is followed by a slow movement during which the mandolin picks out a line of short notes. A guitar solo accompanied by the group follows and the work concludes with a coda for the sextet. The music was composed during the early summer of 1997 in Southbury, Connecticut.

Elliott Carter
ESPRIT RUDE/ESPRIT DOUX II (1994)

for flute, clarinet and marimba

**Esprit rude/Esprit doux II** for flute, clarinet and marimba, was composed for the celebration of Pierre Boulez's 70th birthday on March 30, 1995 in Chicago. The title, translated a 'rough breathing/smooth breathing,' refers to the pronunciation of classical Greek words beginning with a vowel or  $\rho$ . With esprit rude (rough breathing) the initial vowel (or  $\rho$ ) is to be preceded by a sounded H, and is indicated by a reversed comma above the letter. With esprit doux (smooth breathing) the initial vowel is not to be preceded by H and is indicated by a comma above the vowel. In the Greek for "seventieth year"— $\xi \beta \delta \rho \mu \eta \kappa \sigma \tau \delta v \xi \tau o \zeta$ —(transliterated as hebdomekoston etos) the initial epsilon of the first word has a rough breathing sign while the epsilon of the second has a smooth one.

The score ends with the motto:

B-flat C A E B(O) U L E (Z)

Using both the French and German names of the notes.

---Elliott Carter

Elliott Carter

**OF CHALLENGE AND LOVE** (1994, First Canadian performance) for voice and piano

John Hollander's poetry has fascinated me for many years because of its poetic skills, its awareness of our cultural past and its wide-ranging modern expressivity. So when Lucy Shelton (whose performances of my work are superb) and the Aldeburgh Festival proposed that I write a cycle of songs for her, I accepted with great pleasure. The choice of the texts from many of Hollander's books and a type-written script of Quatrains from Harp Lake (which John tells me is the Sea of Galilee) are basically focused around the character of that poem, with its brief, vividly contrasting quatrains that have an under-current of irony and deep anxiety, that is also found in the other four poems in different ways. The score was composed in the last months of 1994 in New York City.

-Elliott Carter

# **Of Challenge and Love**Five Poems of John Hollander

## I. High on Our Tower

High on our tower
Where the winds were
Did my head turning
Turn yours,
Or were we burning
In the one wind?

Our wide stares pinned To a spinning world, We burned; my head, Turning to yours On that white tower, Whirled high in fire.

All heights are our Towers of desire;
All shaded spaces
Our valleys, enclosing
Now darkening places
Of unequal repose.
How tower-high were
Our whitest places
Where my head widely
Turned into yours
In the spaces of spinning,
In burning wind!

How dark and far Apart valleys are...

## 2. Under the Dome

That great, domed chamber, celebrated for its full choir Of echoes: high among its shadowed vaults they cower Until called out. What do echoes do when they reply? Lie, lie, lie about what we cried out, about their own

Helplessness in the face of silence. What do they do
To the clear call that they make reverberate?
Berate, berate it for all its faults, its frangible syllables.
But in this dear cave we have discovered on our walks
Even a broken call resounds in all, and wild tales
We tell into the darkness return trimmed into truth
Our talk goes untaunted: these are the haunts of our hearts,
Where I cry out my name. Hearing and overhearing
My own voice, startled, appalled, instructed, I rejoice.

## 3.Am Klavier (At the Piano)

The evening light dies down; all the old songs begin
To crowd the soft air, choiring confusedly,
Then above that sea of immense complexities
The clear tenor of memory I did not know
I had enters; like a rod of text held out by
A god of meaning, it governs the high, wayward
Waves of what is always going on in the world.
All that becomes accompaniment. And it is
What we start out with now: this is no time
To pluck or harp on antiquities of feeling.
These soft hammers give gentle blows to all their strings
Blows that strike with a touch of challenge and of love.
Thus what we are, being sung against what we come
To be a part of, rises like a kind of light.

## 4. Quatrains from Harp Lake

The thrumming waves of the lost lake had gone Into some kind of hiding place since the spring. His long yawn ceased to deafen, the switched on The sixty-cycle hum of everything.

Once we plucked ripened fruit and blossoms all Together from one branch, humming one note, Spring from the water, shining fish, then fall In one unbroken motion into my boat!

The river whistled and the forest sang,
Surprised, then pleased, that something had gone wrong.
The touches of your hand, your silence, rang
Changes on the dull, joyous bells of song.

They stood tall, loving in the shade; the sunny Air withdrew from them in a sudden hush The strong-arm tactics of the oak? The honey-dipped diplomacies of the lilac bush?

In from the cold, her reddened ears were burning With what the firelight had been saying of her.

This final urn is wordless now, concerning Her ashes and the ashes of her lover.

Under their phrases meaninglessness churn'd; Imprisoned in their whispers lay a yell. Down here we contemplate the deftly-turned Newel-posts of the stairway up to hell.

High on the rocks some Ponderosa pine Must overlook the jagged valley's floor. What then must one have witnessed to divine. That death was just a side-effect of war?

He'd long since put his feet into that part
Of life from which they could not be withdrawn
Late blossoms danced, then shook and took to heart
Summer's long shadows falling on the lawn.

Words of pure winter, yet not pinched nor mean:
Blue truth can handle a good deal of gray.
Dulled, but incontrovertibly still green,
The noble laurel holds the cold at bay.

## 5. End of a Chapter

But when true beauty does finally come crashing at us through the stretched paper of the picturesque, we can wonder how we had for so long been able to remain distracted from its absence.

### **BIOGRAPHIES**

#### **DIANNE AITKEN**

Since the early 1980s, flutist Dianne Aitken has performed at major music festivals in Canada, Germany, France and the United States. Her performances as a chamber musician and soloist have been broadcast on CBC Stereo, CIRT and CKLN, with the Aitken/Tureski Duo, New Music Concerts ensemble, Arraymusic ensemble and Windcest. her passion for contemporary music has led her to attend and participate in many contemporary music festivals, including the 1994 Académie d'Été at IRCAM (Paris), where she performed excerpts from Kaija Saariaho's work, Noa Noa for midi-flute and ISPW. Among many others, this experience has intensified Ms. Aitken's interest to continue to work with composers in the development and creation of new works for the flute. Her discography includes O Bali (CBC SM 5000) with the New Music Concerts ensemble, à la Plage (RANT) with the group Lonely Universe, a CD of Michael Hynes' chamber works, and a CD on the I Virtuosi/Ingleside Music label. In addition to performing, Ms. Aitken is a faculty member of the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Algonquin International Music Institute as well as an active member of the Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects.

### **VALDINE ANDERSON**

Already acclaimed in her native Canada, Valdine Anderson is also winning the respect of critics and audiences around the world. At home, she is often heard on CBC Radio, and has sung with the Edmonton, Manitoba and Vancouver operas. She appears regularly with Canada's leading symphony orchestras and, in Europe, she has performed with the London Sinfonietta, the BBC Symphony Orchestras of London, Scotland and Wales, the Robert Schumann Philharmonie, Halle Orchestra and Ensemble Modern. Ms. Anderson is acknowledged as a fine interpreter of Baroque music, and is especially noted for her brilliant interpretations of contemporary music, including Arcuri's La Nymphe du Ladon, Harry Freedman's Spirit Song, and the role of the Maid in the world premiere of Thomas Adès' Powder Her Face with Almeida Opera. Her recent engagements include a tour with Sinfonia 21; the world premiere performance of Peter Maxwell Davies's Job with Vancouver New Music, George Benjamin's A Mind of Winter with l'Orchestre national de France; a program of music by Webern with Amsterdam's Nieuw Ensemble; and her debut with English National Opera in the Gavin Bryars work Dr. Ox's Experiment.

#### **ERICA GOODMAN**

A native of Toronto, Erica Goodman received her training at the Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto), the National Music Camp (Interlochen, Michigan) and the Curtis Institute (Philadelphia). Already a concert performer in her teens, Ms. Goodman played under the baton of Igor Stravinsky when he recorded in Toronto. While at Curtis, she was a concerto soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ms. Goodman made her New York debut as a soloist with the National Arts Centre Orchestra during that orchestra's American debut concert at Lincoln Center in 1972. In the course of her career, she has performed for such dignitaries as President John F. Kennedy, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and Queen Elizabeth II. She has been featured at numerous international festivals, as well as with leading orchestras and ensembles in Canada, the U.S.A., Europe and Japan. Recent performances include concerts in Tokyo, Milan, Stockholm, Amsterdam and Tel Aviv. Buffalo, N.Y. music critic Richard Chon extolled Ms. Goodman as "...a stunningly virtuostic harpist whose very presence on the scene is an incentive for the creation of new works." Canadian composers inspired by her artistry include Alexina Louie, Oskar Morawetz, Milton Barnes, Marjan Mozetich, Lothar Klein and Harry Freedman. Ms. Goodman can be heard in several recordings on the BIS, Marquis, Opening Day and CBC labels. In 1995, she won the prestigious Juno award in Canada for her solo recording, Erica Goodman Plays Canadian Harb Music.

#### DAVID HETHERINGTON

David Hetherington is a graduate of the Royal Conservatory of Music and the University of Toronto. He also studied with the renowned cellists Claus Adam, Andre Navarra and Paul Tortelier. A member of the Toronto Symphony since 1970, he has gained a reputation as both teacher and performer. He teaches cello at the Royal Conservatory and chamber music at the University of Toronto, where his chamber music ensemble, AMICI, is in residence. In addition to playing a series of concerts with international artists at the Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto, this popular chamber group toured Canada, Europe and Mexico. Mr. Hetherington is also a founding member of the string quartet, "Accordes", which often performs for New Music Concerts and has recorded for Centrediscs and the CBC.

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New Music Concerts gratefully acknowledges the financial support of The Canada Council, The Province of Ontario through the Ontario Arts Council, The Toronto Arts Council, The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Cultural Affairs Division, The Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, Mrs H.S. Aitken, Amphion Foundation, Louis Applebaum, Banca Commerciale Italiano of Canada, Barclays Bank of Canada, Thomas G. Bata, Marcia Beach, John Beckwith, Norma Beecroft, Jessie W. Bird, The British Council, CAE Industries Ltd., Canada Trust, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Canadian Tire Corporation, Austin Clarkson, Beverly Clarkson, The Max Clarkson Foundation, Mr. & Mrs. Max B.E. Clarkson, CN Rail, Co-Steel Inc., Composers and Authors Society of Hong Kong Ltd., Sibylle Dickstein, Michael Doleschell, First Marathon Securities Ltd., James D. Fleck, R.P. Fournier, Harry Freedman, Vera Frenkel Productions, Arthur Gelber, Goethe-Institut (Toronto), Grand and Toy Ltd., Morgan Harris, Sam Harrison, H.J. Heinz Company of Canada, Helix Investments Ltd., Barbara Ivey, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, The Jackman Foundation, The Japan Foundation, George B. Kiddell, The Henry White Kinnear Foundation, Michael Koemer, The Koemer Foundation, The Laidlaw Foundation, Doming Lam, Doris Lau, John Lawson, Long and McQuade Ltd., D. Bain MacCaskill, Magna International Canada Ltd., lan Mateicek, Matsushita Electric of Canada Ltd., Joanne Mazzoleni, Kathleen McMorrow, David Mirvish, The Mitsui Foundation, George Montague, Mary Morrison, Nabisco Brands Ltd., David Olds, Peter Oliphant, M.G. Oliver, Harvey Olnick, Mary Ellen Perkins, Petro-Canada Products Inc., Pioneer Electronics of Canada Inc., Sue Polanyi, Pratt and Whitney Canada Inc., Lisa Rapoport, Dr. Paul Rapoport, Redpath Industries Ltd., River Oaks Homes and Merrick Homes, Patricia Rideout, Royal Bank of Canada, Royal LePage Charitable Foundation, Royal Trust, Robert Sanderson, Michael I. Scott, Jeffrey Symth, SOCAN, Ann Southam, Southam Inc., Eleanor Beecroft Stewart, Suncor Inc., Terrance A. Sweeney, David Tarnow, Teleglobe Canada Inc., James Tenney, The Harry and Florence Topper Charitable Foundation, Toronto-Dominion Bank, Toronto Life, Toronto Sun, Trans-Canada Pipelines. University of Toronto, Patricia Wardrop, Dr. Katherine M. Warne, W. Weinstein, The M. M. Webb Foundation, Michael J. Wiggan, Christine Woinicki.

