

New Music Concerts

157 Carlton Suite 203 Toronto m5a 2k3

<http://www.interlog.com/-nmc>

Tel. 416-961-9594 Fax 416-961-9508

New Music Concerts

Robert Aitken, artistic director

2000 – 2001 season

New Music Concerts & The Music Gallery present

Caput

Friday October 27, 2000 • Church of Saint George the Martyr
Tears of Stone 5:00 pm • Introduction 7:15 pm • Concert 8:00 pm

Programme:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Jón LEIFS (1899–1968)
<i>solo piano</i> ①3' | <i>Torrek</i> (1919) |
| Jón NORDAL (b. 1926)
<i>clarinet, piano</i> ①9' | <i>Ristur</i> (1985) |
| Leifur THÓRARINSSON (1934–1998)
<i>flute, cello, piano</i> ①10' | <i>Trio</i> (1975) |
| Haukur TÓMASSON (b. 1960)
<i>clarinet, cello, bass</i> ①9' | <i>Trio animato</i> (1993) |
| Atli INGÓLFSSON (b. 1962)
<i>flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano</i> ①10' | <i>The Elves, Accent</i> (1998) |
| Sveinn Lúdvík BJÖRNSSON (b. 1962)
<i>for cellist</i> ①3' | <i>Ego is Emptiness</i> (1997) |

— intermission —

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Jónas TÓMASSON (b. 1946)
<i>solo violin</i> ①12' | <i>Vetraré</i> (Winter Trees, 1983) |
| Áskell MÁSSON (b. 1953)
<i>flute, oboe, clarinet, violin, cello, bass, piano</i> ①13' | <i>Ymni</i> (2000) |
| Thorsteinn HAUKSSON (b. 1949)
<i>flute, oboe, clarinet, violin, cello, bass</i> ①14' | <i>Sextet</i> (2000) |
| Jón LEIFS
<i>arranged for septet by Atli Heimir SVEINSSON (b. 1938)</i> ①4' | <i>Rímnadansar</i> (1931) |

THE CAPUT ENSEMBLE:

Sif Tulinius, violin, Eydís Franzdóttir, oboe, Daníel
Thorsteinsson, piano, Guðni Franzson, clarinet, Kolbeinn
Bjarnason, flute, Sigurdur Halldórsson, cello, Valur Pálsson, bass.

CAPUT's North American Tour is sponsored by:

THE LEIFUR EIRÍKSSON MILLENNIUM COMMISSION OF ICELAND

Programme Notes

The opening concert of New Music Concerts' 2000-2001 30th anniversary season presents Iceland's CAPUT ensemble in their first North American tour. They will offer a panorama of Icelandic music with works dating from 1919 to the present.

CAPUT was founded in 1987 and has since grown to be Iceland's most prominent contemporary chamber ensemble. Their name refers to the Latin word for "head" as well as the expression "kaput." From their beginnings as a quartet, when the group feared they might indeed lose their heads for having the audacity to enter into the risky business of presenting such challenging repertoire, they have grown to a chamber orchestra of 20 players. They have toured extensively in Europe and have recorded several CDs which have brought them international praise for the brilliance and integrity of their performances.

Jón LEIFS (1899–1968) *Torrek* (1919)

"Torrek" is an obsolete Icelandic word meaning Lament, mostly associated with the great poem "Sonartorrek" that Egill Skallagrímsson (tenth century) wrote in memory of his son. *Torrek* is one of Leifs' first pieces, probably composed in Leipzig, before he developed his own unique style.

A controversial figure in his own lifetime, Jón Leifs' seminal contribution to Icelandic music was his attempt to integrate elements of native folk music into the Western art music tradition in which he was trained. Jón Leifs was born in Sólheimar in northern Iceland on 1 May 1899, but moved to Reykjavík with his family a year later. As a teenager, he studied piano with local teachers, and performed music by Grieg and Beethoven in public recitals. He journeyed to the Leipzig Conservatory in the fall of 1916, where he studied with pianist Robert Teichmüller and conductor Hermann Scherchen, among others. During his student years Leifs fell in love with a young pianist of Jewish descent, Annie Riethof, and the two were married in June 1921, only days after Leifs graduated from the Conservatory. At first, Leifs had hopes of making a career as a conductor and pianist, and did not intend to concentrate exclusively on composition. Shortly following his graduation, however, Leifs discovered the possibilities of a native style based on Icelandic folk music, and began his career as a composer in earnest.

Leifs continued his conducting career in the twenties, and among the ensembles he directed were the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and the Hamburg Philharmonic. In 1925-28, Leifs traveled around the Icelandic countryside collecting what then remained of Icelandic folk music, later using the melodies as the basis for his compositions. Leifs continued to live in Germany with his wife and two young daughters, where his works were generally well received. His arrangements of folk songs, including the Icelandic Dances op. 11 (1929) and op. 14b (1931) were especially popular, and were widely performed by salon orchestras.

Leifs regarded his music as an attempt to revive Nordic culture, which he felt had been suppressed ever since Iceland lost its independence to Norway in 1262. Leifs' native style of composition, as well as his ideas of a "Nordic renaissance", was often well received by Nazi ideologues during the early years of the Third Reich. As the decade drew to a close, however, Leifs' career in Germany came to a grinding halt, not least due to the Jewish origins of his wife. Leifs, along with his wife and daughters, finally managed to leave Germany for Sweden in February 1944. Shortly thereafter, Leifs and his wife were divorced, and he returned to Iceland in the summer of 1945. Leifs immediately founded the Icelandic Composers' Association and established the national performing rights organization, the Icelandic Music Bureau STEF, in 1948.

Leifs' private life was soon beset by crises and traumatic events. On 12 July 1947 his younger daughter, Líf, drowned at age 17 while swimming off the coast of Sweden. During the early fifties, Leifs also spent much time trying to refute accusations that he had cooperated with the Nazis during his years in Germany, to the point where it almost became an obsession. As if these personal setbacks were not enough, Leifs' works were received with indignation and ridicule during this period. Leifs' creativity diminished rapidly as a result: in the years 1950-55 he completed only two new works. Only after his third and final marriage to Thorbjörg Möller in 1956 did Leifs return to his earlier rate of artistic production. More than a decade was to pass from Leifs' death until the gradual re-awakening of interest in his music. It was only with Hilmar Oddson's motion picture *Tears of Stone* (1995), that Leifs' life and work were made accessible to a larger audience. With an ever-increasing number of his compositions available on CD (including a commitment by the Swedish record label BIS to record all of his works), an overall view of Leifs' music is gradually becoming possible.

Jón NORDAL (b. 1926) *Ristur* (1985)

Jón Nordal was born in 1926. He studied piano and composition at the Reykjavík College of Music and pursued further studies in Zurich with Walter Frey and Willy Burkhard in 1949-51. Later came years of study in Copenhagen, Paris and Rome before he attended the summer course in Darmstadt in 1957. Jón Nordal has made an important contribution to Icelandic musical life as a composer, pianist, teacher and as director of the Reykjavík College of Music from 1957 to 1992. He was one of the founders of Musica Nova, a forum for the performance of contemporary music, and as such has helped to introduce contemporary musical currents to younger generations.

Ristur could be translated as “carvings.” The title is intended to emphasize the simplicity of the music, as if it had been cut with a knife in wood. It has three untitled movements, each drawing a very clear musical line or image.

Leifur THÓRARINSSON (1934–1998) *Trio* (1975)

Leifur Thórarinsson was born in Reykjavík on 13 August 1934, and died on 24 April 1998 at the age of only 63. He began violin studies at an early age, at the Reykjavík College of Music. At the age of twenty Leifur Thórarinsson left Iceland to pursue further studies in Vienna and Munich in 1954-56, under the supervision of Hans Jelinek, a student of Alban Berg. In 1959 Thórarinsson travelled to the USA, where he remained off-and-on until 1966. He studied initially with Wallingford Riegger at the Manhattan School of Music, and subsequently in all fields of composition in New York and Tanglewood. His oeuvre includes a number of large, impressive symphonic works, several dozen works of chamber music, and compositions for solo instruments, solo singers and choirs. He wrote popular songs and jazz along with his purely classical concert pieces, and also composed music for over 40 theatrical productions.

Thórarinsson's intent in his ***Trio*** for flute, cello and piano was to amalgamate the rigours of total serialism with the rhythmic verve of Charlie Parker. The work was performed widely by the trio of Canadian flutist Robert Aitken, cellist Haflídi Hallgrímsson and pianist Thorkell Sigurbjörnsson. In 1999 CAPUT recorded a memorial album of Thórarinsson's music on the GM label which was produced by the composer's close friend and mentor, Gunther Schuller, to whom this score was dedicated in 1975.

Haukur TÓMASSON (b. 1960) *Trio animato* (1993)

Haukur Tómasson studied composition in Reykjavík, Cologne, Amsterdam, and in San Diego, California. Among his composition teachers were Thorkell Sigurbjörnsson, Atli Heimir Sveinsson, Ton de Leeuw and Brian Ferneyhough. Mr. Tómasson's music has been performed in Scandinavia, The Netherlands, France, Germany, Poland, Canada, Italy, the Soviet Union and the USA. Haukur Tómasson was nominated for the Nordic Council Music Prize in 1995 for his composition *Spiral*, and in 1998 for his work *Concerto for Violin*, both pieces composed for the CAPUT ensemble. ***Trio Animato*** is divided into six sections in which the instruments play at creating their own voices in a weaving of sound based on different unison and polyphonic passages.

Atli INGÓLFSSON (b. 1962) *The Elves, Accent* (1998)

Atli Ingólfsson, poet and composer, graduated from the Reykjavík College of Music in 1984 with a B.M. in theory and composition. In October 1985 he published a book of poetry, and in the same month his quintet for woodwinds received first prize in the Icelandic Radio composition competition for young composers. He graduated with a B.A. degree in philosophy from the University of Iceland in 1986. In 1988 he attended the summer course held by Franco Donatoni at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, and moved to Paris, where he studied with Gérard Grisey, subsequently working as his assistant. At present he lives in Bologna, dedicating himself exclusively to composition.

The Elves, Accent (1996) originated as an arrangement of a solo viola piece entitled *The Elves, other Self*, composed in 1994. During the transcription into the quintet form the material soon took another direction, and at the end the new piece had little more in common with its predecessor than the rhythmic structure of the beginning and part of the harmonic matrix.

Sveinn Lúdvík BJÖRNSSON (b. 1962) *Ego is Emptiness* (1997)

Sveinn Lúdvík Björnsson studied composition at the Reykjavík College of Music and with various composers abroad, including Witold Lutoslawski. He lives in Reykjavík devoting his time solely to composition. Most of his works are miniatures, very short lyrical pieces written for soloists or small chamber groups. Most of his music has been released on the Bad Taste label in performances by

members of the CAPUT ensemble. Björnsson has written in connection with *Ego is Emptiness* that "We are always searching for a haven in our lives and it is this search that creates the suffering... However there is nothing special in my suffering... The truth appears when the inner self is not at odd with the reality and one can begin to sing in harmony with life...."

Jónas TÓMASSON (b. 1946) *Vetrartré* (Winter Trees, 1983)

Jónas Tómasson is a graduate of the Reykjavík College of Music and has studied with Ton de Leeuw in Holland and Brian Ferneyhough and Roger Reynolds in San Diego. Since 1978 he has worked as a composer, conductor and teacher in the small fishing village of Ísafjörður, Iceland. This situation has stimulated him to write for the occasions, the musicians, and the ensembles existing around him. Tómasson composed *Winter Trees* in the course of observing a tree in his garden. The trees in Ísafjörður are few, small and bent by the wind. The four movements of the piece are: Good Trees, Sad Trees, Crazy Trees and Silent....

Áskell MÁSSON (b. 1953) *Ymni* (2000)

Áskell Másson (b. 1953) began his musical studies on clarinet in Reykjavík and later studied percussion under the eminent English pedagogue, James Blades. From 1973-75 he worked as a composer and percussionist of the Ballet of the National Theatre in Iceland and 1978-83 he was a producer at the Music Department of the Iceland State Radio, after which he has devoted his time exclusively to composition. He has worked in Copenhagen, Stockholm, London and Paris, collaborating with soloists like Gert Mortensen, Roger Woodward, Benny Sluchin, Evelyn Glennie and Christian Lindberg. In addition to concert music, he has composed music to numerous plays and films as well as television. *Ymni* was written for Caput last spring on the Danish Island of Fyn. It is a meditation on a well known folk-song, *Kvöldá tekur* (The Evening Is Coming).

Thorsteinn HAUSSON (b. 1949) *Sextet* (2000)

Thorsteinn Hauksson studied at the University of Illinois and at Stanford University following his training as a pianist and composer at the Reykjavík College of Music, where he has taught composition and computer music since 1985. Among his awards are a Fulbright Scholarship, Stanford University Fellowship, State

from the University of Illinois, and most recently a three year Icelandic government stipend. Hauksson's new *Sextet* is dedicated to Native Americans and is composed in three movements. It was commissioned by CAPUT for this tour with the assistance of the Leifur Eiriksson Millennium Commission of Iceland.

Jón LEIFS *Rímnadansar* (1931)

arranged for septet by Atli Heimir SVEINSSON (b. 1938)

The Icelandic "Rímur" are Medieval epic poems, typically chanted in irregular meters, or sung by two singers in parallel fifths. Jón Leifs emulated their style in this danceable, lively selection. Atli Heimir Sveinsson first arranged *Rímnadansar* for quintet for a CAPUT concert in Wigmore Hall, London, and has made this new arrangement for septet for the ensemble's Canadian tour.

Atli Heimir Sveinsson, a student of several eminent European composers including B.A. Zimmermann, Stockhausen, Pousseur and G. M. Koenig, founded the composition class at the Reykjavík College of Music, where his students have included Atli Ingólfsson, Haukur Tómasson, Thorsteinn Hauksson, Kjartan Ólafsson and Helgi Pétursson. In 1976 Sveinsson was awarded the Nordic Music Prize for his *Flute Concerto*, composed in 1973 for Robert Aitken. Since 1992 Sveinsson has received a lifetime honorary salary from the Icelandic Parliament.

members of the CAPUT ensemble. Björnsson has written in connection with *Ego is Emptiness* that "We are always searching for a haven in our lives and it is this search that creates the suffering... However there is nothing special in my suffering... The truth appears when the inner self is not at odd with the reality and one can begin to sing in harmony with life...."

Jónas TÓMASSON (b. 1946) *Vetrartré* (Winter Trees, 1983)

Jónas Tómasson is a graduate of the Reykjavík College of Music and has studied with Ton de Leeuw in Holland and Brian Ferneyhough and Roger Reynolds in San Diego. Since 1978 he has worked as a composer, conductor and teacher in the small fishing village of Ísafjörður, Iceland. This situation has stimulated him to write for the occasions, the musicians, and the ensembles existing around him. Tómasson composed *Winter Trees* in the course of observing a tree in his garden. The trees in Ísafjörður are few, small and bent by the wind. The four movements of the piece are: Good Trees, Sad Trees, Crazy Trees and Silent....

Áskell MÁSSON (b. 1953) *Ymni* (2000)

Áskell Másson (b. 1953) began his musical studies on clarinet in Reykjavík and later studied percussion under the eminent English pedagogue, James Blades. From 1973-75 he worked as a composer and percussionist of the Ballet of the National Theatre in Iceland and 1978-83 he was a producer at the Music Department of the Iceland State Radio, after which he has devoted his time exclusively to composition. He has worked in Copenhagen, Stockholm, London and Paris, collaborating with soloists like Gert Mortensen, Roger Woodward, Benny Sluchin, Evelyn Glennie and Christian Lindberg. In addition to concert music, he has composed music to numerous plays and films as well as television. *Ymni* was written for Caput last spring on the Danish Island of Fyn. It is a meditation on a well known folk-song, *Kvöldá tekur* (The Evening Is Coming).

Thorsteinn HÁUKSSON (b. 1949) *Sextet* (2000)

Thorsteinn Hauksson studied at the University of Illinois and at Stanford University following his training as a pianist and composer at the Reykjavík College of Music, where he has taught composition and computer music since 1985. Among his awards are a Fulbright Scholarship, Stanford University Fellowship, State

Leifs continued his conducting career in the twenties, and among the ensembles he directed were the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and the Hamburg Philharmonic. In 1925-28, Leifs traveled around the Icelandic countryside collecting what then remained of Icelandic folk music, later using the melodies as the basis for his compositions. Leifs continued to live in Germany with his wife and two young daughters, where his works were generally well received. His arrangements of folk songs, including the Icelandic Dances op. 11 (1929) and op. 14b (1931) were especially popular, and were widely performed by salon orchestras.

Leifs regarded his music as an attempt to revive Nordic culture, which he felt had been suppressed ever since Iceland lost its independence to Norway in 1262. Leifs's native style of composition, as well as his ideas of a "Nordic renaissance", was often well received by Nazi ideologues during the early years of the Third Reich. As the decade drew to a close, however, Leifs' career in Germany came to a grinding halt, not least due to the Jewish origins of his wife. Leifs, along with his wife and daughters, finally managed to leave Germany for Sweden in February 1944. Shortly thereafter, Leifs and his wife were divorced, and he returned to Iceland in the summer of 1945. Leifs immediately founded the Icelandic Composers' Association and established the national performing rights organization, the Icelandic Music Bureau STEF, in 1948.

New Music Concerts

157 Carlton • Suite 203 • M5A 2K3
(416) 961-9594 • nmc@interlog.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Austin Clarkson, president
Robert Aitken, c.m., artistic director
Jeffrey Smyth, secretary/treasurer
Michael Koerner, c.m., Mary Morrison, o.c.,
Joseph Macerollo, Marvin Green,

David Olds, general manager
Daniel Foley, associate and editor
Francine Labelle, publicist
André Leduc, photographer

New Music Concerts gratefully acknowledges the financial support of:

The Canada Council for the Arts and its Millennium Fund; Toronto Arts Council; The Province of Ontario through the Ontario Arts Council and the Ontario Arts Council Foundation Arts Endowment Fund; The Herbert Green Family Charitable Foundation; The Koerner Foundation; The Julie-Jiggs Foundation; The McLean Foundation; Music Canada Musique 2000; The SOCAN Foundation.

New Music Concerts thanks the following generous individuals for their support:

Mrs. H.S. Aitken; Istvan Anhalt; Louis Applebaum; David and Marcia Beach; Bob Becker; John Beckwith; David Bourque; Harriet Bunting-Weld; Chan Ka Nin; Max Christie; Barbara Chilcott-Somers; Austin Clarkson; Madeleine Clarkson; Dorith Cooper; Elizabeth Frecaut and Paul Walty; Simon Fryer; Mary Gardiner; Rachel Gauk and Omar Daniel; Erica Goodman; Anne and Lyman Henderson; Marcus Hennigar; David Hetherington; Fujiko Imajishi; Scott Irvine; Linda Johnston; Stefanos Karabekos; Michael Koerner; Doming Lam; John Lawson; Ray Luedeke; Jan Matejcek; Bruce Mather; Kathleen McMorro; George Montague; Jim Montgomery; Roger D. Moore; Ruth Morawetz; Mary Morrison; Keith Ngan; David Olds and Sharon Lovett; Grace and Donovan Olds; Douglas Perry; Sue Davidson Polanyi; Lisa Rapoport and Christopher Pommer; Patricia Rideout; Ann and Ezra Schabas; Gwendolyn Setterfield; Jeffrey Smyth; Ann Southam; Douglas Stewart and Kathleen Woodard; John Weinzwieg; Christine O. Wojnicki.



The Canada Council
for the Arts | Le Conseil des Arts
du Canada

ONTARIO ARTS
COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS
DE L'ONTARIO

torontoartscouncil

An arm's length body of the City of Toronto

The SOCAN Foundation/La Fondation SOCAN

New Music Concerts in November

Thursday November 9th through Sunday the 26th
Gordon Monahan • When It Rains

an interactive environment of natural, musical, and prehistoric sounds
(Music Canada Musique 2000 commission)

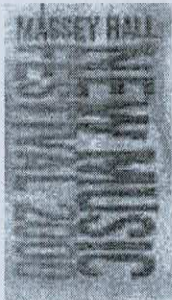
Gallery oneZone • 326 Carlaw Ave. • Suite 121

Opening Reception **Wednesday the 8th, 4-7 pm • RSVP (416) 961-9594**

Free admission • Gallery Hours: Thursday-Sunday 2-7 & by appointment (416) 405-9996



2000



Saturday November 11th • 8:00 pm • Introduction 7:00
Massey Hall New Music Festival

Ensemble contemporain de Montréal • Generation 2000

five young composers' visions of Canada and the presentation of

The 2000 Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music

music by Doolittle, Laporte, Bolton, Fitzell, Talpash & Ristic
178 Victoria St. • Tickets \$20 / 10 • (416) 593-4828

New Music Concerts

157 Carlton • Suite 203 • M5A 2K3

Robert Aitken, artistic director

www.interlog.com/~nmc • (416) 961-9594

Friday November 17th • 8:00 pm
An Evening with R. Murray Schafer

Winter Diary • a radiophonic soundscape
composed in collaboration with Claude Schryer

Gallery oneZone • 326 Carlaw Ave. • Suite 121

Free admission • (416) 405-9996