



*New Music Concerts*

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*New Music Concerts*

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Robert Aitken, artistic director

**2000 – 2001 season**

New Music Concerts & The Music Gallery present

# ~infoweaver

Thursday December 7, 2000 @ 8:00 pm

Friday December 8, 2000 @ 8:00 pm

Saturday December 9, 2000 @ 8:00 pm

Sunday December 10, 2000 @ 3:00 pm

Robert Gill Theatre, University of Toronto

*Programme:*

*-infoweaver* (2000)  
(world premiere)

**Kristi Allik and Robert Mulder**

1. Songs for Anna
2. Ecotonal Landscapes
3. Memories of Things To Be

Duration ca. 110 minutes

*(There will be no intermission between the sections of the work)*

Commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of  
The Canada Council for the Arts Millennium Fund



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Le Conseil des Arts du Canada

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# -inforeaver

*-inforeaver* is a tribute to our grandparents who have given us so much and to whom we owe so much of ourselves, our experiences and our perception of ourselves and the world. The key sources of inspiration came from Allik's grandfather's journal, which she translated to English in the 1998-99 year and stories about Mulder's paternal grandmother Anna Meijer who died in 1944.

*-inforeaver* emerges from the principle that each individual — human being — is a unique entity, with his/her own memories, and associations. It is this individual which we want to celebrate — in this case our own humanity with its related memories.

As a composition and work of art *-inforeaver* tries to make sense of our collective memories, experiences, and associations through various connections made through our past, present and to some extent, our future. Thus, *-inforeaver* is about the accumulation of experiences of many generations including our ancestors in Europe as well as ourselves. *-inforeaver* takes the audience through a journey of past, present and future landscapes. The past focuses on memories of our grandparents in Europe and may be seen as a genesis for the parts to come.

The first section of *-inforeaver*, 'Songs for Anna', deals with the European aspect of our heritage, focusing on our grandparents. Musically, this section is in fact a composition for percussion and percussion like instruments.

The second section, 'Ecotonal Landscapes' deals with the present, namely, our experiences as Canadians experiencing the Canadian landscape (i.e., intellectual and emotional as well as the physical landscape). This section features spectacular vistas of Canadian landscape accompanied by appropriate music.

The third section, 'Memories of Things to Be' portrays a vision — ours and humanity's in general — of the future. This section is necessarily somewhat fragmented and hazy, since the future itself to us is rather indistinct. Some of the elements include: panoramas of urban settings, scenes from War ridden Europe juxtaposed with present day Europe in the fragments of "natural" landscapes projected into the future and aspects of cyber-life such as computer viruses and cyber-landscapes.

*-inforeaver* ends as it began: quietly, in black and white, with just the ringing of a bell. Thus the composition (and, it is suggested, humanity) has come full circle: the past has become the present and the future has become the past. A fitting end quote might be an excerpt from the lyrics of Guillaume de Machaut's rondeau,

*Ma fin est mon commencement  
et mon commencement est ma fin.*

# technology

Early in 1998 Allik and Mulder designed a performance system that would allow them to create develop and stage live digital media works in real-time performance. Much of these early specifications are implemented in this version of *-inforeaver*. The rapid development of new hardware and software technology has created affordable possibilities for creative expression that was unheard of just a year ago. *-inforeaver* makes use of these new technologies by creating a continuously malleable work by digital means. Currently the work has a variable duration of 140 minutes.

The sound in *-inforeaver* is a continuous texture that comes from six high quality speakers placed in a 360° circle around the audience. A centrally positioned sub woofer complements the low part of the frequency spectrum. The sound comes from various sources that are mixed down to six channels by means of an on-stage mixer. These sound sources are:



- a) A Digidesign AudioMedia III sound card
- b) The internal CD-player of the Macintosh
- c) Two MIDI controlled Digidesign Cell samplers
- d) MIDI Controlled E-mu ESI 4000 sampler
- e) MIDI controlled Korg Wavestation A/D
- f) The two internal CD Players of the Dell computer

The soundscape is initiated and controlled during the performance with patches created in Cycling74's MAX and MSP software. The projected image in *-inforeaver* is designed for a high resolution 1024x768 image in uncompressed 32 bit format. These images make extensive use of the alpha channel properties of the image. The resulting high-resolution image is projected with a 4700 lumen video projector onto a 4 meter screen.

Images are controlled and manipulated in real-time with a master program written in Macromedia Authorware using various "Xtras" to control the image properties, CD players, MIDI in the Mac, QTVR movies, MPEG movies etc. Many of the graphic components make use of OpenGL mapping to the 32Mb S3 video card of the Dell. QTVR and movie files are loaded/streamed in real-time from a 18Gb 15k RPM Cheetah SCSI harddrive. Images, movies and sounds are initiated and controlled by means of a Wacom graphics tablet that holds the "score" for various movements of the work.

# composition

*- inforeaver* uses computer-generated visuals and electro-acoustic music, both initiated and manipulated in real-time. During the staging of the work, a system of networked computers gives two onstage performers access to various music and visual components. Interaction with these music and image components occurs via various hardware and software interfaces including the projected image itself. Many of the permutations of this piece involve chance or semi randomized operations in which a number of visual and sound elements are called up in a uniquely new order. While the emphasis in respect to both the music and the visuals is on immediacy, an important

aspect of the work as a whole is the use of extended periods of silence and a subsequent dilation of the perceived passage of memories, time and space. The visuals are projected on a large screen in a 32 bit RGB hi-resolution format, directly from the computer. Various CD-players, synthesizers & computer software generate sound in six channels that is played back via a seven-speaker surround sound system.

The first section of the work is a composition for percussion instruments, computer music, and slowly sequenced black-and-white images. It begins very quietly, with just the tiny sound of the bell, which is echoed by a similar computer-generated sound. Gradually the music acquires a somewhat thicker and more complex texture. Throughout this section the image is an interactive interface; imagery initiated by the sound is superimposed on the main image, where it becomes a short-lived part of the composition. Most images in this section are created by means of fractal graphics software. Creating images this way is more akin to gardening than painting. Images are "bred" by careful manipulation of fractal parent/child formulae.

In the following section, the sounds have a more textural and haunting quality; the system or the performers can initiate several iterations of the same music/visual component or passage. The new sounds are introduced gradually, initially with relatively long spaces in between. Eventually the discrete sounds give way to a musical continuum, consisting of four separate layers that are triggered according to the existing visual imagery. Images in this section consist of multi-layered composite panoramas compounded from photographs; many of these panoramas can be manipulated through 360° of the visual field. Other visual objects such as the synthetic "interactive" rocks are created by means of Quaternion and Cogiternion fractal generation.

The last section of the work starts with a rather pastoral sound and gradually develops into a more fragmented and darker vision of the future. Musically this section is a slightly humorous, quasi-sinister reflection on computers, and urban living. Sound



sources for this music are derived from video games, sounds of machinery and from various computer commands and error messages; towards the end of this section, these same messages are used to create a computer "fuguetta", celebrating in musical form our multifaceted relationship with our cyber helpmates. The section ends with a mantra-type chant, using the quasi-Latin nonsense passage which most people in the digital publishing/graphics and general computer industry are familiar with:

*...Dolor lorem ipsum sit amet...*

The interpretation of the significance of this passage is left to the listener: is this a prayer of solemn thanksgiving? Is this an awe inspired homily to the god of technology? Or is this a fearful plea for mercy? Finally, at the very end, quiet bell sounds, similar to the beginning of *-infoweaver*, return.

This section makes extensive use of the layering of multiple QTVR (QuickTime Virtual Reality) 360° panoramas of subjects that, when encountered during the past six years, seemed to call for inclusion in this initially frenzied and collage-like section. Often certain aspects of the "look" of a site instill very precise but no doubt personal memories. Others such as the billboard that frames the remnants of Hitler's bunker in Berlin invokes an immensely strong but unfocussed emotion, which will be common to most of us and is included for that purpose.

The work culminates with a panorama that contains remnants of various constituents of the work, presenting core encounters in the piece as an archeological timeline.

*The creation of -infoweaver was generously supported by:*

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario; Canada Council for the Arts Millennium Fund; Robert Aitken, New Music Concerts, Toronto; Dr. H. F. Mulder, Hengelo, The Netherlands; Mrs. E. Allik, Toronto, Canada; Mr. A. Tindale, Kingston, Canada; Mr. W. Mulder, Den Haag, The Netherlands.

**Kristi A. Allik** was born in Toronto, Canada.

She has received degrees from the University of Southern California, Princeton University and the University of Toronto. She has received numerous commissions and awards including grants from the Canada Council and Ontario Arts Council and has won prizes from the Bourges Electroacoustic Music Competition ('94) and Prix Ars Electronica ('90, '91 and '92). Allik's work synthesizes stylistic and cultural resources of serialism, jazz, Estonian folk songs and the influence of minimalism. She has created electroacoustic music compositions, music for soloist and electroacoustic accompaniment, an opera, compositions for veena and orchestra, theatrical productions, and integrated media. Her works have been performed in Europe, the USA, South America and Canada. Kristi Allik is currently Director of the Electroacoustic Music Studios and the Computer Laboratory for Applications in Music at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

**Robert Mulder** was born in The Hague, Holland.

He has lived and worked in Ontario since 1967. His creative work merges music, dance, visuals, drama, video and new media (computer-based) arts into a coherent whole. His works have been exhibited, played or have been performed in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Estonia, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Norway, USA, Switzerland, Poland, and Russia. He was a co-recipient of three prestigious Prix Ars Electronica awards. Robert is active in Ontario primary, secondary and post secondary schools as an artist-in-residence. Recently he received a degree from Queen's University Faculty of Education and subsequent Teacher certification in Communications Technology. He lives and works as an independent freelance new media artist and arts & technology educator in Kingston, Ontario.



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Robert Aitken, artistic director

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# MUSIC SPEAKS

## David Hetherington, cello

Sunday January 28, 2001, 2:30 pm at the

**NEILSON PARK CREATIVE CENTRE**

56 Neilson Dr., Toronto (Etobicoke) • 416 622-5294

*(3 blocks west of The West Mall, south from Bloor)*

Sunday February 18, 2001, 2:00 pm at the

**GARDINER MUSEUM OF CERAMIC ART**

III Queen's Park, Toronto • 416 586-8080

*(1 block south of Bloor, opposite the Royal Ontario Museum)*

### ADMISSION IS FREE

In its 2000/01 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary season **New Music Concerts** presents **Music Speaks**. Each concert will involve an exceptional artist presenting selections from the extensive solo repertoire they have developed for **New Music Concerts** over the years. **Music Speaks** takes place in informal, intimate settings where the musicians can talk about the pieces they are performing and answer questions from the audience.

**David Hetherington** will discuss and perform selections from the solo cello repertoire of the 20th century. The presentation will include music by such modern masters as **Henri Dutilleux** and **Ernst Krenek** along with recent works by Toronto composers **Alice Ping Yee Ho** and **Chan Ka Nin**.