



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 and Two New Hours present

All Canadian, eh?



Saturday May 26, 2001
Glenn Gould Studio

a co-presentation with

TWO NEW HOURS

on CBC Radio Two

New Music Concerts presents

All Canadian, eh?

Saturday May 26, 2001 • Glenn Gould Studio, Toronto
Illuminating Introduction @ 7:15 • Concert @ 8:00 pm

Programme:

Entendre marcher un ange... (1998)

Brian Cherney (b.1942)

Robert Aitken, flute, Trevor Tureski, percussion

Incidental Music of my Mind (1998) ●

Rose Bolton (b.1971)

NMC ensemble conducted by Robert Aitken

NorthEaster (2001) ● ◆

Yannick Plamondon (b.1970)

NMC ensemble conducted by Robert Aitken

—Intermission—

The Seven Sides of Maxine's Silver Die (1998-99)

Rudolph Komoros (b.1931)

I. *The Split* • II. *The Squint* • III. *The Strip* • IV. *The Claw-back Swoon*
V. *The Spell* • VI. *The Switch* • VII. *The Spur*

Eve Egoyan, piano, Robert Aitken, conductor

AMERIKA (2001) ● ◆

Chris Paul Harman (b.1970)

NMC ensemble conducted by Robert Aitken

New Music Concerts ensemble

Dianne Aitken, flute, Keith Atkinson, oboe, Max Christie and Colleen Cook, clarinets, Kathleen McLean, bassoon, James Gardiner, trumpet, Joan Watson, horn, Robert Ferguson, trombone, Trevor Tureski and Rick Sacks, percussion, David Swan, piano and celesta, Fujiko Imajishi, violin I, Carol Fujino, violin II, Aidan Pendleton, viola, David Hetherington, cello, Tom Hazlitt, contrabass

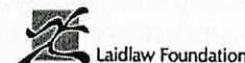
- ◆ Commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of the Laidlaw Foundation and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec
- ◆ Commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for New Music Concerts
 - World Premiere

Tonight's concert is being recorded by **Two New Hours** for broadcast on July 22, 2001 on CBC Radio Two (94.1 FM, Sundays at 10:05 pm) with host Larry Lake

Special thanks to **Roger D. Moore** for his generous support



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Notes

Oh, I can always tell a Canadian piece. It always sounds so lonely.

—Darius Milhaud

Canadian composer **Brian Cherney** studied composition with Samuel Dolin at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and with John Weinzweig at the University of Toronto and received graduate degrees from the University of Toronto in both composition (M.Mus. 1967) and musicology (Ph.D. 1974). Since 1972 he has been on the staff of the Faculty of Music at McGill University in Montréal, where he teaches composition and the analysis and history of 20th century music. Since 1995 he has been chairman of the Composition Area.

Since 1974 alone, Cherney has written nearly sixty pieces, which have been performed and broadcast throughout Canada and also in Europe, the United States, South America and Japan. He has received commissions from many organizations and performers over the years, including the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, La Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, the Esprit Orchestra, the 1990 New Music America Festival, Le Nouvel ensemble moderne, Amici, the Pierrot Ensemble, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Strings of the Future, Rivka Golani, Lawrence Cherney, Louis Philippe Pelletier, Robert Aitken, Antonio Lysy, Vivienne Spiteri, Marc Couroux and Julie Anne Derome.

In 1979 Cherney's String Trio, a CBC commission, tied for first place among the "recommended" works at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris. In 1985 he was awarded the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music for *River of Fire*, a work for oboe d'amore and harp. He is presently working on a new piece for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, to be performed November 22, 2001 as part of the Massey Hall New Music Festival.

Entendre marcher un ange... (1998)

Programme Note by Brian Cherney

Entendre marcher un ange... ["To Hear an Angel Walk"], for flute / alto flute and percussion, was written during the late spring of 1998 especially for flutist Andrée Martin and percussionist Paul Vaillancourt. In July 1998, the piece was premiered by these musicians at the Sound Symposium in St. John's, Newfoundland and they have performed it a number of times since. The piece was inspired by an early play of Maurice Maeterlinck, *L'Intruse* (1891), in which the use of silence, short fragments of conversation and acute sensitivity to the sounds of the night contribute to an atmosphere heavy with foreboding. The title was directly suggested by several lines of the play:

La père: Il y a un silence extraordinaire.

La fille: On entendrait marcher un ange.

Indeed, no man can roam or inhabit the Canadian North without it affecting him. The North will give [the Canadian] a different outlook from the men of other lands, [through] the feel of the soil and rocks, the rhythms of its hills and the roll of its valleys, from its clear skies, great waters, endless little lakes, streams and forests, from snows and horizons of swift silver.

—Lawren Harris (1926)

In 1995 **Rose Bolton** became the first recipient of the H.C. Aitken Prize, the top award in a New Music Concerts composers competition. *Incidental Music of my Mind* is her Master's Thesis, a six movement work for large chamber ensemble composed in 1998 which will receive its first professional performance this evening.

Ms. Bolton holds a Master of Music degree in composition from McGill University and earned her Bachelor of Music at the University of Western Ontario where she studied the violin as well as composition. Her teachers have included composers Denys Bouliane, John Rea, Alexina Louie, Peter Paul Koprowski and Jack Behrens. This fall she was one of five "Generation 2000" composers commissioned for the Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal's first national tour; their appearance here was hosted by New Music Concerts as our contribution to the Massey Hall New Music Festival. Ms. Bolton is currently a member of the Canadian Electronic Ensemble, and composes improvisatory works for their concert series. In addition to her activities as a composer, Ms. Bolton performs regularly as a fiddler, playing the traditional music of the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario and Ireland as well as American influenced country and bluegrass.

Among Ms. Bolton's sources of inspiration for her music is the sonic environment. Having spent many summers camping and canoe tripping in northern Ontario's Canadian Shield regions, the natural sounds of the forests have made a permanent impression on her. Her first compositions were electroacoustic works for tape, in the tradition of the *musique concrète* composers, and although she now writes mainly for live media, her compositional style reveals her early interest in this genre. Some of her works, such as *Incidental Music of my Mind* (1998), are inspired by the sonic environment of the city; and lately, although these "sonic" themes are still present, her compositions are beginning to venture beyond simply the imitative, becoming inwardly contemplative.

Incidental Music of my Mind (1998) — for Mark, Denys, Don and Pamela
Programme Note by Rose Bolton.

Incidental Music of my Mind consists of six movements that make up a series of musical tableaux, which take their inspiration from activities or situations encountered in everyday life.

Movement I is largely arrhythmic and is gradual in its accumulation of momentum. The harmonies are meant to allude to the haziness and freshness of early morning sunlight shining through mist.

Movement II represents the city sounds and rush hour traffic. It evokes the sensation of stepping out from a quiet home into the busy street.

Movement III is about the human being as machine, and the passage of time while performing necessary mechanical tasks. It is about the daily grind, and the effort required to persist with one's work. Near the end of the movement, a melodic phrase emerges which represents the mind starting to drift.

The fourth movement is the shortest, and also evokes the passage of time (heard by a "clock tick" played on the vibraphone), but during a period of rest. The tune played by the clarinet and bassoon independently of the ensemble represents the mind drifting, and the individual's freed imagination.

Movement V focuses on the inspired creative imagination at work. The tune that first appeared in movement III is developed and exaggerated.

The final movement represents closure and repose, where the music slowly winds down. Material from earlier movements is distorted to evoke human perception of memories of sounds that occurred over the course of the passing day.

In any world menu, Canada must be considered the vichyssoise of nations—it's cold, half-French, and difficult to stir.

—Stuart Kate

The music of **Yannick Plamondon** has been described by pianist and author Marc Couroux as deriving from "a rigorous questioning (and plundering) of his Québec heritage and his affinity for a potential 'unsanctioned' culture off the beaten track... in so doing, he manages to throw a spanner in the ubiquitous dialectic between the self-made American frontiersman and the dutiful inheritor of unwieldy European mantles. Sedimental culture? Perhaps. But it is one which still has a palpable distance to go before its ultimate entropic termination..."

Born in 1970 in Québec City, Plamondon studied composition with Armando Santiago and analysis with Roger Bédard in Québec and computer-assisted composition with Serge Provost in Montréal. Since 1996, he has worked with Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (Montréal), the Netherlands Radio Kamer Orkest, the Québec Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal, Trio Fibonacci, Ensemble KORE, the KIEV New Music Ensemble and the Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra (Leipzig). His works have won prizes which include the National Arts Centre award in 1995, the 1998 NEM Forum, the CBC Competition for Young Composers and the International Rostrum of Composers.

NorthEaster (2001) — for Patrick St. Denis

Programme Note by Yannick Plamondon (*translation by Marc Couroux*)

[...] What kind of civilization can we hope for when the stock market is the foundation of our nation?

"Exxon Valdez, the movie."

This work begins with a deep feeling of failure, with the shame I have for my own species, the human race. It stems from my inability to exclude myself from the horrors of civilization, even though I don't believe I consciously contribute to the multifarious horrors that take place throughout the world on a daily basis.

The worst part of it all is that nowadays, it is totally impossible to ignore what happens around us. While all the information at our disposal enables us to become fully conscious, our apathy is ever more obvious, providing the most irresponsible of us with an unlimited freedom in the exercise of unreason. I believe we will live through a century of guilt and deep remorse.

Long ago, there existed many ways to interpret the world around us. One of the most essential functions of our tradition consisted, among other things, in evaluating the pertinence, the originality, or the value of individual opinions. Even though non-linear and always at the mercy of censorship, the random turns of history and other incalculable factors, the continuum of human knowledge had been erected upon an assimilation, in the largest sense, of whatever individual experience could offer of use.

More and more, it appears to me that this process has been gradually splitting apart, even though it continues to operate by systematically entertaining the illusion of "evolution" as the motor of human "improvement".

But who's at the helm?

It is easy for me to experience this on a daily basis, and to observe that this process has by and large favored the emergence of the "human machine": a productive contraption, hungry for speed, opulence and other "values of excess".

Thus, this work is a formalistic incarnation of the lines of force derived from this intuition.

It is a chromatic mix of terror, of formal distress engendered by a lyricism developed according to inorganic criteria, of virtuosity and its most questionable products, of narrative paradoxes, of sedimented information — in short, a theatre of panic in the face of the absurd.

This composition is meant as the abstract expression of a reflection on the brutality of our environment, at least, the one we have willingly accepted to live in.

Inaction sanctions the worst possible outcome. Art is laughable when it pretends to expand consciousness. The spectacle is no longer taking place on stage for the clowns are sitting in the audience.

Who is being entertained?

When they said Canada, I thought it would be up in the mountains somewhere.
—Marilyn Monroe

Rudolf Komorous, born and educated in Prague, Czech Republic, emigrated to Canada in 1969. In 1971 he joined the faculty of the School of Music at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, and later became its Director. From 1989–1996 he served as Director of the School for the Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University.

Komorous' involvement with the Czech avant-garde in the 1950s and '60s led to a close association with painters, sculptors and writers. This circle, known as the "Smidra Group", was influenced by Dada and surrealism. Their motto was the "aesthetic of the wonderful" through which common materials could be transformed into something sublime, mysterious or even magical.

Komorous has an extensive catalogue of compositions for orchestra (including four symphonies), solo instruments, voice and ensembles. His works have been featured at music festivals including the Venice Bienalle, Warsaw Autumn, Prague Spring and Donaueschingen. His two operas were produced in Vancouver, Toronto, Buffalo, Victoria, and New York.

The Seven Sides of Maxine's Silver Die (1998)

Programme Note by Rudolph Komorous

The most precious object in her capricious repository was a seven-sided die made of silver, its six edges inlaid with blue-brushed ivory.

Some academicians, including several mathematicians of note, considered the image of a six edged seven-sided perfect cube absurd; its physical manifestation therefore spurious.

But Maxine knew better.

Wilhelm Emmet Cafu:
Basic Principles of Fluidic Geometry
(Antwerp, 1864)

Pianist **Eve Egoyan** specializes in the performance of new solo piano works which have been heard on CBC's *Two New Hours* and abroad on the BBC. She has appeared as a soloist in festivals in Kobe, Montréal, Ottawa, Paris, San Francisco, St. John's, and Vancouver, and has been presented by Debut Atlantic, Music Toronto, and Soundstreams Canada among others. Eve has performed the North American premieres of works by composers Gavin Bryars, Maria de Alvear, Masahiro Miwa, Karen Tanaka, and Judith Weir. Her first solo CD, *the things in between*, received excellent reviews and was included in The Globe and Mail's 1999 "Top Ten" list. *The Seven Sides of Maxine's Silver Die* was premiered by Eve Egoyan with Concentus Corwinus in Victoria in 1998. This evening marks Eve's first performance of the revised version.

Canada is the only country in the world that knows how to live without an identity.
—Marshall McLuhan

Chris Paul Harman was born in Toronto in 1970, where he studied classical guitar, cello, and electronic music with Barton Wigg, Alan Stellings, and Wes Wraggett respectively. His works have been performed by the Edmonton Symphony, the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony, the Toronto Symphony, the Tokyo Symphony, the Windsor Symphony, the Winnipeg Symphony, the CBC Vancouver Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the National Youth Orchestra, the Composers' Orchestra, the Esprit Orchestra, and l'Orchestre de Chambre de Radio-Canada.

Mr. Harman has been commissioned by guitarists William Beauvais and Sylvie Proulx, violinist Jacques Israelievitch, oboist Lawrence Cherney, Continuum, the Esprit Orchestra, the Guelph Spring Festival, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Sabat-Clarke duo, the Societé de Musique Contemporaine du Québec, the Societ Radio-Canada, and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. In addition, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has commissioned his *Sonata for Viola and Piano*, *String Quartet No. 1*, *Irisation*, *Theme and Variations*, *C Section*, *The Dawn Of Each New Day Brings Us Each A Little Closer To Our Inevitable Demise*, *String Quartet No.2*, and *Globus Hystericus*, which served as the test piece in the piano category of their 1993 National Competition for Young Performers.

In 1986, Chris Paul Harman was a finalist in the CBC Radio National Competition for Young Composers, and was the Grand Prize winner at that same competition in 1990. *Iridescence*, the work that earned him the Grand Prize, was subsequently awarded first prize in the under-30 category at the 1991 International Rostrum of Composers in Paris, France. At the 1994 Rostrum, Harman's *Concerto for Oboe and Strings* was chosen as a Recommended Work in the General Category for composers of all ages. In consequence, both works have been broadcast in over twenty countries. In 1998, his orchestral work *Blur* was awarded first prize at the duMaurier Arts Limited Canadian Composers Competition with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. Most recently, his work *Let Me Die Before I Wake* was jointly awarded first prize with Gary Kulesha's *Symphony* at the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestras "Best of the '90s" competition.

AMERIKA (2001)

Programme Note by Chris Paul Harman

AMERIKA was commissioned by David Jaeger, through the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, for premiere on the final concert of the 2000-2001 season of New Music Concerts in Toronto.

The final concert of New Music Concerts' 2000-2001 season is called "All Canadian, eh?" In response to this, I felt moved to create a work using source material that was distinctly non-Canadian. As such, I decided to use the principal melodies from Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*. The title of course comes from the song whose lyrics feature "I want to live in America." This irony is further encapsulated in the title, whose spelling with a "k" is used by the Japanese, the Dutch, and others.

Stylistically, the source material for the piece never really manifests itself in more than an abstract way. In the opening section, there are playful figurations which may recall the cha-cha, or other moments from Bernstein's musical. The romantic elements from songs such as "Somewhere" are magnified to a degree that becomes rather grotesque. As the work progresses, the identity of the source material is very subtly hinted at, but is never allowed to be released from its context of abstraction.

The structure of this piece is in keeping with the kinds of large scale "fragment structure" pieces I have been working with in the last three years. To this end however, I have endeavoured to create a greater overall disparity between the lengths of sections (ranging from 6 to 60 seconds), as well as the stylistic sensibility within each individual section. The climax of the piece is not attained by dynamic, rhythmic, or harmonic intensity per se, but rather through an extended period where several closely spaced consecutive sections move away from disparity to homogeneity.



TWO NEW HOURS

with host **Larry Lake**

Sundays at

10:05pm ET

11:05 AT, 11:35 NT

CBC  **radio** *Two*

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Robert Aitken, artistic director

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