

New Music Concerts and The Music Gallery present
THE BASEL ELECTRIC ART MESSENGERS
Sunday February 22, 2004 • Church of St. George the Martyr

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New Music Concerts
Robert Aitken, director
NM | 03
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33rd season | 275th event

Sunday February 22, 2004 • 8:00 pm

Church of St. George the Martyr

Illuminating Introduction at 7:15

MUSIC GALLERY
AT ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR

New Music Concerts and The Music Gallery present

THE BASEL ELECTRIC ART MESSENGERS

Sylvia Nopper | voice, computer, percussion

Matthias Würsch | percussion, computer

Wolfgang Heiniger | camera, computer, percussion

Thomas Kessler | sound diffusion and live electronics

Programme:

Rudolf Kelterborn (Switzerland 1931)

Erinnerungen an Shakespeare (1999)

Cléo Palacio-Quintin (Canada 1971)

Le chant des nébuleuses (world premiere) (2004)

Georges Aperghis (Greece 1945)

Le Corps à Corps (1981)

— *Intermission* —

Wolfgang Heiniger (Switzerland 1964)

Scannings (2002)

Thomas Kessler (Switzerland 1937)

Dichterlesung (2002)

Please join us for a post concert Reception presented with the cooperation of the Swiss Consulate General and the financial support of

Hottinger Assets Management Canada Inc.

Minister
of Canadian Heritage



Ministre
du Patrimoine canadien



Welcome to all those taking part in the New Music Concerts presentation of **The BEAM: Basel Electric Art Messengers**.

Music is a powerful art form that plays an integral role in the lives of all Canadians. It cuts across cultural boundaries and connects us with each other and with the rest of the world. Since 1971, New Music Concerts has helped enrich our communities by exposing audiences to diverse and innovative contemporary music. Its unique programming brings high-calibre artists from across Canada and around the world to the Greater Toronto Area, to the benefit of both audiences and our local musicians. Tonight's performance by the Basel Electric Art Messengers is a welcome addition to another successful year of music.

As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I would like to thank all the organizers, volunteers, and artists who, each season, offer music lovers the chance to enjoy exciting and imaginative performances. Your efforts and dedication make an invaluable contribution to Canada's thriving music scene.

Enjoy the performance!

Hélène Chalifour Scherrer

Basically, the **BEAM** is an experimental band, which means that we do not play any "repertoire" pieces (with some little exceptions) but only commissions. Since all the musicians are well known in their field in Switzerland and Central Europe, you might consider the **BEAM** as a "soloist-ensemble" or a kind of "all-star-band" that takes the liberty and privilege to play only what they want. We do not play very often and concentrate on special events and programs. Our commitment and goal is to explore the live-electronic and theatric potential of chamber music. So you will find in our repertoire pieces that are played only on and with turntables, videocameras, motors, dishes etc.

The specialty of the **BEAM** is that we try to break the usual composer-performer relationship in the way that we change and sometimes even recompose some of the pieces from concert to concert in close collaboration with the composer. Since two of us are composers as well we understand our shows as "works in progress". It is not only our goal to tour to foreign countries and cultures but to interact with them. Most of the tours are accompanied by lectures and workshops in which we present our work and try to learn from the audience as well as they might learn from us. The **BEAM** is presently the only active ensemble that combines theatre, music and advanced live-electronics, and one of the few ensembles that were chosen by the Swiss governmental board PRO HELVETIA to act as "cultural ambassadors".

—Thomas Kessler

Thomas Kessler was born in 1937 in Zürich. He studied German and Romanic linguistics at the Universities of Zürich and Paris. He studied composition with Heinz Friedrich Hartig, Ernst Pepping and Boris Blacher in Berlin, and founded his own electronic studio there in 1965. In the following years he was director of Berlin Electronic Beat Studio and musical director of the Centre Universitaire International de Formation et de Recherche Dramatiques at Nancy, France. From 1973 to 2000 he taught composition and theory at the Basel Music Academy and established the well-known electronic studio there. As a composer of numerous instrumental chamber music, orchestral music and live-electronic music compositions he is most interested in the interactions between musicians and electronics. Thomas Kessler lives in Basel and Toronto.

Wolfgang Heiniger was born in 1964 in Basel. He graduated as percussionist at the Musikhochschule Basel and later studied electronic music and composition with Thomas Kessler. In 1991/92 he was as a guest composer at the computer music center at Stanford University (CCRMA). He writes primarily works for live electronics and computer music but also chamber music and for stage and film. Apart from his educational activity as professor of Audio Design at the electronic studio of the Musikhochschule Basel, he also tours as a performer of live electronic music.

The German soprano **Sylvia Nopper** finished her vocal studies at the Musikhochschule Basel, earning a masters degree as a soloist. During her studies, she won first prize in the Swiss Othmar Schoeck Competition. Her repertory spans several centuries with special emphasis on contemporary works through which she has established her good reputation. She has had many works written especially for her and premiered many others. Sylvia Nopper has participated in festivals all over the world and worked, among others, with Heinz Holliger, Jürg Wyttenbach, Detlev Müller-Siemens, Ensemble Contrechamps, Klangforum Wien, ensemble recherche and the B.E.A.M.

The percussionist, cimbalonist and Glassharmonica player **Matthias Würsch** graduated from the Musikhochschule Basel with a masters degree as a soloist and continued his studies in Paris. He performs frequently in numerous festivals and broadcasts, as a member of distinguished ensembles including the Basler Kammerensemble, the ensemble recherche, and as a soloist. His special interest in the Glassharmonica and the Hungarian Cimbalon has led to concerts with orchestras including the Orchestre National de France, the NDR Rundfunkorchester and the Orchestre de Paris. In 1996 he was distinguished with the music prize of the Swiss canton of Basel-Landschaft. Apart from his concert activities Matthias Würsch also dedicates himself intensively to the possibilities of theatrical expression.

Our next event:

*Co-presented with **Two New Hours** on **CBC Radio Two**
Sunday March 7, 2004 • 8⁰⁰ • The Music Gallery*

A Sacred Place

New Music Concerts Ensemble • Robert Aitken, conductor

world premieres by **Barbara Croall, Daniel Foley,**
Jim O'Leary and Juhan Puhm

Rudolf Kelterborn (Switzerland 1931)

Erinnerungen an Shakespeare (1999)

Rudolf Kelterborn was born in 1931 in Basel, Switzerland. After finishing his studies at the Musik-Akademie der Stadt Basel (theory, composition and conducting), he continued studying with composers Günter Bialas and Wolfgang Fortner as well as the conductor Igor Markevitch. He has taught at academies in Basel, Detmold, Zürich and Karlsruhe, and from 1974-1980 was the head of the Music Division of the Swiss German Broadcasting Corporation. He also served as the chief-editor of the Swiss Music Review from 1969-1975. Since 1987 he has been responsible, together with Heinz Holliger and Jürg Wyttenbach, for the programming of the Basler Musik Forum (orchestral concerts with unconventional programs).

Kelterborn's compositional work, which was awarded several prizes (among others the "composer's prize" of the Association of Swiss Musicians and the "Kunstpreis" of the City of Basel, both in 1984), comprises all musical genres and has come to international attention with performances throughout Europe and North America. He is also active as a conductor, especially of his own works, has published theoretical and analytical essays and articles and has been a guest lecturer in the USA, Great Britain, China and Japan.

Erinnerungen an Shakespeare (1999) is Kelterborn's settings of passages of Juliet and Ophelia for soprano, two percussionists and live electronics.

Cléo Palacio-Quintin (Canada 1971)

Le chant des nébuleuses (world premiere) (2004)

Cléo Palacio-Quintin grew up in the province of Québec and studied music at the Université de Montréal where she completed a Masters degree in Flute Performance specializing in contemporary music (1997). Her previous studies included different styles of music (classical, pop and jazz) and her work in the fields of music analysis and ethnomusicology has been a great influence on her musical development. She did several performance courses with Robert Dick, and composition courses at the CEAMC (Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Musica Contemporánea, Buenos Aires 1997), IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Création Acoustique/Musique, Paris 1999) and Dartington International School of Music (1999). In 1998-1999, she was

Wolfgang Heiniger (Switzerland 1964)

Scannings (2002)

The most surprising instrument used in *Scannings* is a little web cam. Its pictures are analyzed and control sound generation. Those who look closely will also see that the arm of the percussionist is turned into an instrument by means of a sensor. *Scannings* is a visual piece as well. It's about the difference of seeing a sound and hearing it.

Thomas Kessler (Switzerland 1937)

Dichterlesung (2002)

Dichterlesung (Poetry Reading) was composed in the winter of 2001-02 for the B.E.A.M.. It is a musical exploration of the relationships between computer generated voice synthesis and the human act of reading.

Even reading silently, we react to the book we are reading. We become involved in the progress of the work and hear in our minds the sonic inflections that correspond to the emotions of the text.

A computer, though capable of translating text to speech, cannot yet understand the context of words or respond to them with the appropriate vocal inflections. If, for example, we place a question mark after the word "singing", the best it can do is to raise the pitch of the final syllable to suggest that a question is being asked.

Voice synthesis programs are being developed that may someday eliminate the need for literacy. It may be premature to speculate whether they will have the same impact as Gutenberg's printing press. However, they will undoubtedly have a profound impact on the nature of our reading and listening. It remains to be seen if the neutral tone of voice synthesis will ever equal the drama of a reading by a poet of his own work.

Dichterlesung includes excerpts from the literature of Samuel Beckett, John Cage, the Koran, Milan Kundera, Murray Schafer, Saul Williams and others. MSP software design by Wolfgang Heiniger.

New Music Concerts

Robert Aitken, c.m., Artistic Director

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