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40<sup>th</sup> season | 333<sup>rd</sup> event

New Music Concerts presents

## DIOTIMA QUARTET

The Music Gallery 197 John Street

Friday January 14, 2011



40<sup>th</sup> season | 333<sup>rd</sup> event  
Friday January 14, 2011  
The Music Gallery, 197 John Street  
7:15 Introduction | 8:00 pm Concert

Robert Aitken, artistic director

New Music Concerts presents

## DIOTIMA QUARTET

Naaman Sluchin, violin 1 & 2 | Yun-Peng Zhao, violin 1 & 2  
Franck Chevalier, viola | Pierre Morlet, violoncello

*Programme:*

**James Dillon** (Scotland 1950)

Quartet No. 6 (2010) (Canadian premiere)

**Emmanuel Nunes** (Portugal 1941)

*Improvisation IV* (2009) (Canadian premiere)

**Chaya Czernowin** (Israel 1957)

*Seed I & Seed II* (2008) (Canadian premiere)

— *Intermission* —

**Roger Reynolds** (USA 1934)

*ELLIOTT* (2007-2008) (Canadian premiere)

**Thomas Larcher** (Austria 1963)

String Quartet No. 3 "Madhares" (2007)

I. Madhares (Andante) II. honey from Anopolis (Adagio – attacca);

III. sleepless 1 (attacca:) IV. sleepless 2 – Madhares (Very fast)

V. a song from? (Allegretto)

The Diotima Quartet is represented by Sempre Musica | [www.sempremusica.com](http://www.sempremusica.com)

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By arrangement with Graham Hayter CMPromotions, London UK

*Please join us in the Friendship Room for a reception following the concert*

performed by Elision. In 2009 Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival featured several new works by Dillon, including *The Leuven Triptych*, a large scale work for ensemble Ictus, his Fifth String Quartet, given its world premiere by the Arditti Quartet, and two new pieces for piano. A Sixth String Quartet was premiered in Donaueschingen by the Diotima, Arditti and JACK string quartets. Dillon is closely associated with a number of the world's leading contemporary music ensembles. He has been a guest lecturer at many universities throughout the world, and was named Distinguished International Visitor by New York University in 2001–2002. In 2003 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Huddersfield and in 2007 took up the position of Professor of Composition at the University of Minnesota.

### String Quartet No. 6

The medium of the string quartet has held for me a fascination beyond its instrumental make-up, spread (journal-like) through my work. Historically poised at the heart of some 'chamber music ideal' the potential for a virtuosic and yet intimate space, both conversational and rhetorical remains fascinating. Contained, in the case of the string quartet, by the homogeneity of its sound world, this 'ideal' invites interrogation.

Written between May and August 2010 my sixth string quartet is in a single movement of around 16 minutes and is organized as five parts or states the work forming a simple (symmetrical) arc: - A - B - C - B(i) - A(i). This 'arc' traces a path from an opening montage-like construct of heterogeneous elements through to the obsessive iteration of a central tone and back. The outer states are dominated by the juxtaposition of angular blocks of material constructed from a set of articulation axis (arco/pizzicato, normal/harmonic, ponticello/tastiera, etc.). In these opening (and closing) states the musical material is characterized by the demands of contrast where textural blocks (often in rhythmic unison) rapidly change places. The second and fourth states superimpose a set of 'intercut' figures between different combinations of players; these figures are continuously divided and re-combined to create new soli/duo/trio/tutti groupings. The discursive intimacy of the string quartet as a tradition, a medium, a genre, its character defined by a uniformity of instrumental sonority, has for me always suggested a need for the stretching of individual and ensemble techniques. Interconnected, contradictory and dynamic, the outer states of my sixth quartet contrast the 'kinesic' with the 'discursive'; orbiting as they do a central state which is built around the extremely narrow

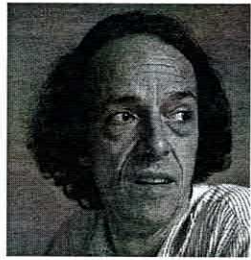
ambitus of a whole tone, this tight bandwidth here is a micro-tonally inflected space with the note Eb (277Hz) at its centre. The compressed swarm-like movement of this central part is internally varied by a micro-polyphony and the linear expansion/contraction of durational groups. Individually layered this expansion and contraction nevertheless is bound to tutti dynamics and is contained across a uniform metre. This central section is also the longest and most continuous of the five states; the following two arching back towards the montage-like material of the opening and tracing a global trajectory from a fabrication of gesture to the internal vibration of sound itself, only to re-trace a path back to an altered glimpse of the opening material. Any cross-section at any moment of this 'arc' however will display a self-similarity whereby by the expressive syntax of gesture is subject to a dialectic between the artifice of construction and the fragility of sound.

Composed between May and August 2010 the work is dedicated to the memory of James 'Jimmy' Reid (1932 – 2010) trade union leader who died in August 2010. Born in Govan (Glasgow), Reid left school at fourteen and served his apprenticeship as an engineer. He led his first strike at nineteen and was soon elected a shop-steward. He came to prominence in the early 1970s as a leader of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (UCS) work-in – an alternative to a strike, which persuaded the Conservative government not to close the shipyards. Through Reid's use of the media and tight discipline, the campaign attracted widespread public support. Reid was noted for his widely-broadcast speech to the workers which made clear that "there will be no hooliganism, there will be no vandalism, and there will be no bevvying, because the world is watching us." A speech Reid made to University of Glasgow students on "rejecting the rat race" in 1971 appeared in full in the New York Times and he was elected Rector of the University the following year.

String Quartet No. 6 was commissioned by the 2010 Donaueschinger Musiktage for the festival's 'QUARDITTIADÉ'. The first performance(s) were given simultaneously on 16th October, 2010 by the Arditti Quartet, Quatuor Diotima and JACK Quartet in Donaueschingen.

— James Dillon

## EMMANUEL NUNES



Emmanuel Nunes was born in Lisbon, where he studied composition, first from 1959 to 1963 at the Academia de Amadores de Música with Francine Benoit, and with Fernando Lopes Graça at the University of Lisbon (1962–64). He then attended courses at the Darmstädter Ferienkurse (1963–65), and in 1964 moved to Paris.

A year later he moved to Cologne and enrolled at the Hochschule für Musik Köln, and studied composition with Henri Pousseur, electronic music with Jaap Spek, and phonetics with Georg Heike, while also taking courses with Karlheinz Stockhausen. In 1971 he was awarded the Premier Prix d'Esthétique Musicale in the class of Marcel Beuflers at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris, in 1999 won the UNESCO Composition Prize, and in 2000 was the winner of the Prémio Pessoa.

Since the 1980s he has become a teacher, amongst other places at the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, Harvard University in the USA, at the Paris Conservatory, and at the Darmstadt Summer Courses. From 1986 to 1992 he held a professorship in composition at the New Music Institute of the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg. Nunes was named an Officer of the French Order of Arts and Letters in 1986, and in 1991 was appointed Comendador da Ordem de Santiago da Espada by the President of Portugal. From 1992 until 2006 Nunes was Professor of Composition at the Paris Conservatory.

### Improvisation IV – L'électricité de la pensée humaine (2009)

Between 2002 and 2009 Emmanuel Nunes worked on a series of chamber music pieces entitled 'Improvisations' directly related to his music-theatre project *La Douce* (2008-2009). Based upon Dostoevsky's short story *A Gentle Creature* (sometimes also translated as *The Meek One*), *La Douce* is not an opera, the music being rather a "sound landscape" where the play takes place. In this sense the music functions as an acoustic equivalent of the visual scenery, defining together with it (and with the stage direction) the capsule where the actors express themselves, even if strictly following the composer's dramaturgical conception. The score of *La Douce* and the scores of the five 'Improvisations' are closely affiliated to each other, *La Douce* being the result of a kaleidoscopic fragmentation of the 'Improvisations', whereby Emmanuel Nunes assembles anew short fragments (made of one to six bars) of the 'Improvisations'.

Dostoevsky's *A Gentle Creature* (1876) chronicles the relationship between a pawnbroker aged forty-one years old and a sixteen-year-old girl who frequents his shop, becomes his wife and, finally, commits suicide jumping out of a window with a Russian icon in her hands. The title of the Improvisation IV – *L'électricité de la pensée humaine* – is a quotation from Dostoevsky's original text, a moment of the highest tension, and the turning point of the whole story: the pawnbroker lies sleeping on his bed while his young wife approaches him with a revolver on her hands – in the uncertainty of her intentions and/or power to kill him the pawnbroker decides to stay still, as if he were really asleep. The idea that she might have realized that he is awake, thus facing death with courage, leads him to an immediate inner explosion of thoughts and sensations, saying to himself: "Vive l'électricité de la pensée humaine!".

– Paulo de Assis

## CHAYA CZERNOWIN



Chaya Czernowin was born on 7 December 1957 in Haifa and was brought up in Israel. She commenced studies in composition at the Rubin Academy in Tel Aviv and from the age of 25 has lived in Germany, Japan, the USA and Austria. Thanks to her teachers Abel Ehrlich, Dieter Schnebel, Brian Ferneyhough and Roger Reynolds and also a series of scholarships and prizes, she was able to devote herself intensely to the development of her musical language.

Czernowin's compositions have been performed at more than forty festivals throughout the world including the 20th Century Music Festival in Mexico, at the Wien Modern in Vienna, the Asia Pacific Triennial in Australia and in Huddersfield. She has been in great demand as a teacher due to her profound knowledge of experimental contemporary music. She taught composition at the Yoshiro Irino Institute in Tokyo in 1993/94 and at the International Summer Courses for New Music in Darmstadt between 1990 and 1998. She was professor for composition at the University of California San Diego from 1997 to 2006 and taught at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna from 2006 to 2009. She received invitations to attend as a guest professor in Göteborg and Seoul. She has been the director of the International Summer Academy for young Composers in Schloss Solitude near Stuttgart since 2003 and was appointed professor for composition at Harvard University in 2009.

Czernowin composed the opera *Pnima...ins Innere* for the Munich Biennale in the year 2000. The work is based on the story "Momik" from David

Grossman's book "See Under: Love". An Israeli boy attempts to comprehend the Holocaust experiences of the generations of his parents and grandparents, but these persons are unable to talk about their traumatic memories. Czernowin has transposed the impossibility of liberating communication into an independent musical concept: the language disintegrates into sounds, the music explores the borders of tonal sound effects and the plot remains within the realms of the subconscious. The first production of *Prima* won the Bavarian Theatre Prize and was acclaimed by the periodical *Opernwelt* as the "Best performance of the year". The musical theatre fragment *Adama* (2004/05) was created as a contemporary counterpoint to Mozart's unfinished singspiel *Zaïde*. *Adama* and was premiered at the Salzburg Festival in 2006. Czernowin's music is created on an independent level in parallel to Mozart's musical numbers – in part simultaneously and in part replacing the missing dialogues. The theme of Zaïde's flight is reflected in with the hopeless love relationship between an Israeli and a Palestinian. Czernowin's full-length composition *Pilgerfahrten* (2006/07) for narrator, boy's choir and instrumental ensemble also possesses musical dramatic characteristics. The adventurous journey of the bizarre "Mumins" to the dreaded "Hatifnatten" is described in the form of "klangtheater" [sound theatre]. The text is based on poems by Stefan George and the children's books "Mumin" by Tove Jansson. The first performance was conducted by Roderich Kreile in the Festspielhaus Hellerau in Dresden with the Dresden Kreuzchor and the Ensemble Courage.

In addition to music theatre compositions, Czernowin has composed numerous works for chamber music groups and ensembles. In 2003, *Winter Songs* was completed. All three parts - *Pending Light* (2002/03, a commission by IRCAM), *Stones* (2003, Ensemble Modern) and *Roots* (2003, Sospeso), are based on an identical musical core played by seven instrumentalists which appears in each part in a different tonal guise with the aid of electronics, percussion and samplers. The large-scale triptych *Maim* (2001/2007) for orchestra and five solo instruments which traces the movements of water was premiered at the Festival MaerzMusik in Berlin under the baton of Johannes Kalitzke with the Konzerthausorchester Berlin.

Czernowin has received numerous awards for her compositions, including the Kranichstein Music Prize (1992), Asahi Shimbun Fellowship Prize (1993), the Schloss Solitude Fellowship (1996), the IRCAM reading panel (1998), the Encouragement Prize by the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation (2003) and the Rockefeller Foundation Prize (2004) as well as the Fromm Foundation Award (2008) and a nomination of the Berlin Wissenschaftskolleg (2008). Czernowin received invitations to become Composer in Residence from festivals in Dresden and Darmstadt in 2004 and in 2006 from the Salzburg Festival.

## Anea Crystal (2008): Seed I; Seed II

"Anea" is an invented name for a music-crystal modeled on an ionic crystal. It is a piece written in three independent and individual movements which can be played separately or together. *Seed I* and *Seed II* are for string quartet and *Anea* is for string octet, being built of both *Seeds* together played simultaneously with some changes. The pieces belong to the series "Shifting Gravity" together with the pieces *Sheva* (Seven) and *Sahaf* (Drift).

The five pieces on this series are each a concise and concentrated focus on a singular physical gesture. Close examination of the gesture reveals the strange physical laws of the world in which the gesture exists, and the body performing it. One could conceive of *Anea Crystal* as an ionic crystal of gestures. *Anea Crystal* is dedicated to Johannes Kalitzke.

— Chaya Czernowin

## ROGER REYNOLDS



Roger Reynolds grew up in Detroit. As a child he was absorbed with internal imaginings of sound and movement. Later, he had not one but two inspirational teachers, Ross Lee Finney and Roberto Gerhard. While still at the University of Michigan, he co-founded the maverick ONCE Group, then embarked on seven years of wanderings through Europe and Asia. In 1969, Reynolds took up a tenured position at the University of California San Diego's Department of Music, founding the Center for Music Experiment there.

Reynolds's singular exploration of sound spatialization has helped him create site-responsive works for distinctive architecture (Isozaki's, Kahn's, Wright's and Gehry's). He has worked with Esa-Pekka Salonen, David Robertson, Seiji Ozawa, Gunther Schuller, and Leonard Slatkin, with the Ensemble InterContemporain, Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, Ensemble Recherche, Alarm Will Sound, Court-Circuit, choreographers Lucinda Childs and Bill T. Jones, and particularly with Irvine Arditti's string quartet. He has collaborated with John Ashbery (*Whispers Out of Time*, a string orchestra work arising out of an Ashbery poem, garnered him the 1989 Pulitzer Prize) as well as inventor-philosopher Buckminster Fuller. Other alliances have led to a wealth of literary, artistic, cinematic, theatrical, and dance engagements. Reynolds is a sought-after mentor involving master classes at the major North American universities, the Beijing National Conservatory, the Sibelius Academy, and the Paris Conservatoire.

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Reynolds's music is published exclusively by C.F. Peters, New York, and is also widely represented on foreign and domestic recordings. The Library of Congress established the Roger Reynolds Special Collection in 1998 and supports an extensive web page detailing his work. He is the author of *Mind Models: New Forms of Music Experience* (1975; 2nd edition, 2000) and *Form and Method: Composing Music* (2002). Writing about the première of ILLUSION at Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles Times critic Mark Swed described him as "an all-around sonic visionary".

#### **Elliott (2007-08) for String Quartet**

*Elliott* was commissioned by the Cité de la musique in Paris to honor Elliott Carter on his 100th birthday. It was première there by the Arditti Quartet – along with tributes by Harrison Birtwistle and Brian Ferneyhough. At the time I received this invitation, I was already planning a quartet that would comprise a set of shorter movements, each introduced by an extended solo from one of the members of the ensemble. In addition to Carter, I was also planning to remember Takemitsu and Xenakis – both of whom had been good friends – as well as several locations (Ryoanji, Giverny, the Aegean) that have touched me. My plan was to select an epitomizing passage from each composer's music, and to use these passages as central destinations into and out of which I would travel with my own music.

For *Elliott* I chose the moment in his Third String Quartet when the cello soars briefly but gorgeously above a weave of densely pulsating double-stops. At nearly twelve minutes in length, *Elliott* emerged at a larger scale than I had originally planned. I began with an extended solo for the first violin and a framing, tutti arch of music that embraces the central Carter passage. Next, I revisited these two bodies of material, using an algorithmic transformation that reshuffles its subject. So, over the work's course, the opening solo is extended as its contents are kaleidoscopically elaborated, and a similar process plays out for the following tutti section.

In an abbreviated form, *Elliott* then became a movement in my quartet, *not forgotten*, also première by the Arditti Quartet, at the 2010 Wittener Tage.

— Roger Reynolds

#### **THOMAS LARCHER**



Born in Innsbruck in 1963, Larcher grew up in the Austrian Tyrol. After studying piano and composition in Vienna, he embarked on a career combining composition, performing, teaching and festival direction. Composing and performing are now his key activities.

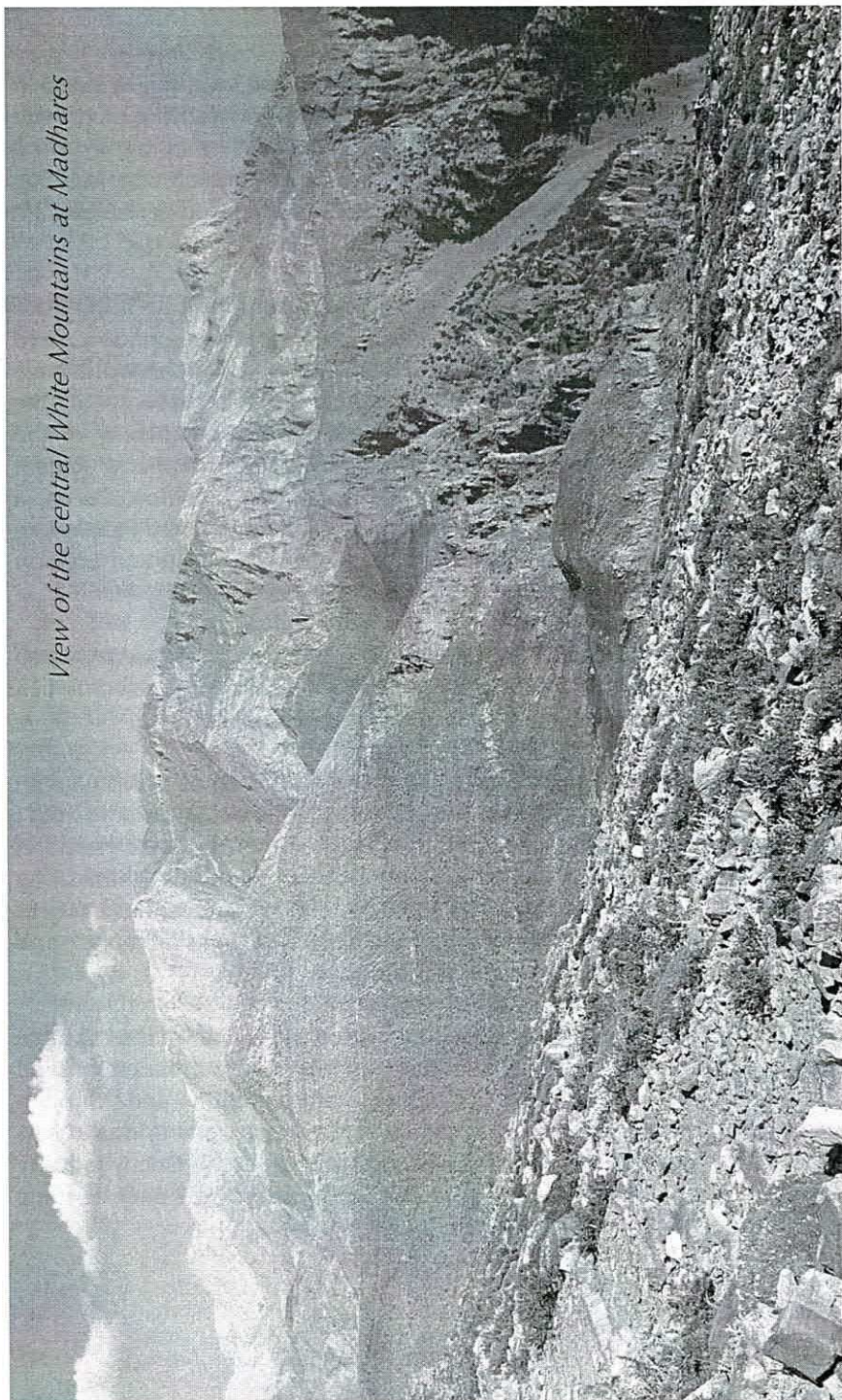
Thomas Larcher's compositions take an immediate hold on the listener. Notable for their confidence and momentum, directness of expression and quality of invention, his works have been described as occupying 'a refreshing middle ground in the contemporary music scene, somewhere between the complexity of the Boulez-Stockhausen avant-garde and the newer wave of simplicity.' Recent and forthcoming compositions include his Piano Concerto *Bose Zellen*, a new string quartet, *Madhares*, for the Artemis Quartet premiered in Salzburg in 2008 and *Die Nacht der Verlorenen* for Matthias Goerne and London Sinfonietta which was first heard in London in September 2008.

A violin concerto for Isabella Faust received its premiere in Vienna in March 2009, while his work *What Becomes* for solo piano was premiered by Leif Ove Andsnes at Lincoln Center, New York in November 2009.

Larcher has an ongoing association with the record label ECM; *Naunz*, released in 2002 was followed by *Ixxu*, released to critical acclaim in 2007; a new disc was released in June 2010 with Larcher's concertos for viola and piano with soloists Kim Kashkashian and Till Fellner and the third string quartet *Madhares* performed by the Diotima Quartet – 'Larcher has a way of convincing you, like Morton Feldman, that every note is in its right place and should be nowhere else.'

As a pianist, Larcher is a particularly illuminating performer of the music of our time. He also has a special ability to cast new light on the established repertoire, both through his searching interpretation and through programming that reveals links, contrasts and comparisons in music. His recital discs are often thought-provoking and have earned him many industry awards, including the Preis den Deutschen Schallplattenkritik and the Choc de la Musique.

View of the central White Mountains at Madhares



## Madhares for string quartet (2006/07)

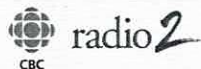
(Third string quartet)

- I. Madhares (Andante)
- II. honey from Anopolis (Adagio – attacca;)
- III. sleepless 1 (attacca:)
- IV. sleepless 2 – Madhares (Very fast)
- V. a song from? (Allegretto)

The string quartet *Madhares* (2006/7) was composed for the Artemis Quartet in response to a commission from the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum Salzburg and the Cincinnati Chamber Music Festival. The Madhares is a region in the White Mountains in western Crete. On a visit to the island, Larcher frequently heard talk of this region, but never saw it with his own eyes – an object of desire and vanishing point in one. The titles of the movements outline an implicit autobiographical programme ranging from sensory impressions of a landscape shimmering in the heat to the tormenting unease of inner anxieties and longings. The compositional point of departure is the slow “Honey from Anopolis”, a three-minute movement faintly reminiscent of Schubert, whose intricate melodic lines demanded from Larcher a new intensity in meticulously detailed writing. Once again Larcher takes a traditional configuration of players and breathes complex new life into it – from harmonious total togetherness to the specified aleatoric, bitingly dissonant passages of the first “Sleepless” movement. And, again, he is able to avail himself of a remarkable wealth of acoustic ideas, as in the first movement when the string players place coins on the strings to produce sliding tremolos that in turn release delicate, stratospheric cantilenas. In this piece Larcher evolves ever more sophisticated internal differentiations between extremes of expression. The last movement, “A Song from?”, consists entirely of “white notes” (without accidentals) in a Lydian melody that alludes to another encoded memory, this time of a Nepalese song. Rarely has Larcher explored the mystery of calm delight as he does in the finale, which projects longing from the Tyrol to Crete and on to the Himalayas. Yet, as he himself has said, after this refinement he had to come back again – back to the ur-patterns of his own writing...

– Anselm Cybinski





**New Music Concerts on CBC Radio 2**  
*The Signal* at 10<sup>pm</sup> with host Laurie Brown:  
**Elliott Carter at 102** – March 19 2011



In conjunctions with Elliott Carter's 102nd birthday, Caravanserai Records is launching a digital EP release of the Piano Sonata (1945-6) recorded by Canadian pianist Heather Taves at the Maureen Forrester Recital Hall. As a participant in the Banff Centre seminars with Elliott Carter organized by Robert Aitken in 1985, Taves worked with Carter to perform his Sonata for oboe, flute, cello and harpsichord there. Later, she studied Carter's music with Gilbert Kalish, performing the Piano Sonata during her final doctoral recital at Stony Brook. The EP digital release is available at CDbaby.com. More information is available at heathertaves.com.

***Our next event:***

**Sunday March 6, 2011 • 8<sup>pm</sup>**

**Jonathan Harvey**

Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street  
Fujiko Imajishi, solo violin New Music Concerts Ensemble  
Robert Aitken, solo flute and direction

**Jonathan Harvey** (England 1939)

*Mortuos Plango Vivos Voco* (1980)

*Hidden Voice 2* (1999) (Canadian premiere)

*The rioT* (1993)

*Wheel of Emptiness* (1997) (Canadian premiere)

*Scena* (1992) (Canadian premiere)

**Geoffrey Palmer** (England 1951)

*Flute Concerto: Cancri 55* (2009)

(World premiere, NMC commission)

**Friday March 4, 2011 • 7<sup>30pm</sup>**

**Jonathan Harvey Affiliated Event**

Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park, at Walter Hall:

**Free Concert** by the gamUT ensemble

Norbert Palej, director – World premiere of Harvey's *Vajra*  
(Commissioned by Michael and Sonja Koerner)