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40th season | 334th event

New Music Concerts and the
Faculty of Music, University of Toronto present


JONATHAN HARVEY

Betty Oliphant Theatre 404 Jarvis Street
Sunday March 6, 2011

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Robert Aitken, artistic director

40th season | 334th event
Sunday March 6, 2011
Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street
7:15 Introduction | 8:00 pm Concert

New Music Concerts and the
Faculty of Music, University of Toronto present

JONATHAN HARVEY

Programme:

7:15^{pm} Illuminating Introduction

Jonathan Harvey (UK 1939) *Vajra* (1972/2009)

commissioned by Michael and Sonja Koerner

gamUT ensemble: **Tristan Durie** flute **Emily Willmon** oboe **Mike Dassios** clarinet

Sheba Thibideau bassoon **Wesley Shen** piano **Jonathan Smith** percussion

Coco Chen, Linnea Thacker, violins **Alexander McLeod** viola

Rachel Gauntlett cello **Norbert Palej** conductor

Adam Scime (Canada 1982) *After the Riot* (2011)

Three short movements for flute, double bass and piano

Tristan Durie flute **Adam Scime** contrabass **Wesley Shen** piano

Jonathan Harvey *Mortuos Plango, Vivos Voco* (1980)
(electronic)



8:00^{pm} • Concert

Jonathan Harvey *Scena* (1992) **
Fujiko Imajishi solo violin Dianne Aitken flute Michele Verheul clarinet
Raffi Altounian guitar Erica Goodman harp Gregory Oh piano
Rick Sacks percussion Timothy Ying violin Virginia Barron viola
Brian Baty contrabass Robert Aitken conductor

Jonathan Harvey *The Riot* (1993)
Robert Aitken flute Lori Freedman bass clarinet Stephen Clarke piano

Jonathan Harvey (UK 1939) *Hidden Voice 2* (1999) **
Timothy Ying solo violin Virginia Barron solo viola Simon Fryer solo cello
Dianne Aitken flute Keith Atkinson oboe Michele Verheul clarinet
Fraser Jackson bassoon Christopher Gongos, Erin Cooper Gay horns
Rick Sacks percussion Carol Lynn Fujino violin Brian Baty contrabass
Robert Aitken conductor

— Intermission —

Geoffrey Palmer (UK 1951) *Flute Concerto: Cancri 55* (2009) *
Robert Aitken, solo flute Keith Atkinson oboe Michele Verheul clarinet
Lori Freedman bass clarinet Fraser Jackson bassoon Christopher Gongos horn
James Gardiner trumpet David Pell trombone Erica Goodman harp
Rick Sacks, Mark Duggan percussion Parmela Attariwala, Carol Lynn Fujino, violins
Virginia Barron viola Simon Fryer cello Brian Baty contrabass
Gregory Oh conductor

Jonathan Harvey *Wheel of Emptiness* (1997) **
Dianne Aitken flute Keith Atkinson oboe Michele Verheul clarinet
Fraser Jackson bassoon Christopher Gongos horn James Gardiner trumpet
David Pell trombone Stephen Clarke piano Gregory Oh keyboard
Rick Sacks, Mark Duggan percussion Parmela Attariwala, Carol Lynn Fujino, violins
Virginia Barron viola Simon Fryer cello Brian Baty contrabass
Robert Aitken conductor

** Canadian premiere | * World premiere

— Kudos to André Ristic for the Emu migration! —

~ Please join us in the lobby for a reception following the concert ~

JONATHAN HARVEY

Born in Warwickshire in 1939, Jonathan Harvey was a chorister at St Michael's College, Tenbury and later a major music scholar at St John's College, Cambridge. He gained doctorates from the universities of Glasgow and Cambridge and (on the advice of Benjamin Britten) also studied privately with Erwin Stein and Hans Keller. He was a Harkness Fellow at Princeton (1969-70).

An invitation from Boulez to work at IRCAM in the early 1980s has so far resulted in eight realisations at the Institute, and two for the Ensemble Intercontemporain, including the celebrated tape piece *Mortuos Plango, Vivos Voco, Bhakti* for ensemble and electronics, and String Quartet No.4, with live electronics. Harvey has also composed for most other genres, orchestra and chamber as well as works for solo instruments, many widely-performed unaccompanied works for choir and three operas.

Harvey is now in constant demand from a host of international organisations, attracting commissions far into the future, and his music is extensively played and toured by the major ensembles of our time (Musikfabrik, Ensemble Modern, Ensemble Intercontemporain, ASKO, Nieuw Ensemble of Amsterdam and Ictus Ensemble, to name but a few). Some 150-200 performances are given or broadcast each year and about 100 recordings of his music are issued on CD. He has honorary doctorates from the universities of Southampton, Sussex, Bristol, Birmingham and Huddersfield, is a Member of Academia Europaea, and in 1993 was awarded the prestigious Britten Award for composition. In 2007 he was awarded the Giga-Hertz Prize for a lifetime's work in electronic music. He published two books in 1999, on inspiration and spirituality respectively.

Harvey was Professor of Music at Sussex University between 1977 and 1993 where he is currently an Honorary Professor. He was Professor of Music at Stanford University (US) between 1995 and 2000, is an Honorary Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge and was a Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Study in Berlin in 2009.

— © Faber Music Ltd

SCENA (1992 – 14') is a quasi-operatic scene either for singer and ensemble or for a singer-like solo instrument and ensemble. In this case the solo violin proceeds through several dramatic events roughly signalled in the score as Lament, Mystical Event (the arrival of woodwind), Romantic Event, Dream (slow tremolando swells) and Metamorphosis (which takes and transforms a melody - one I have used in my work *Lotuses*). *Scena* was written for Irvine Arditti and the Nieuw Ensemble of Amsterdam, who commissioned it with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

— Jonathan Harvey

THE RIOT (1993 – 9') is a work in which virtuoso exhilaration is predominant. The game is to throw around themes which retain their identity sufficiently to bounce off each other sharply, even when combined polyphonically or mixed up together in new configurations. Each theme belongs to a distinctive harmonic field characterised by about two intervals, for example the first is based on fourths and whole tones creating also minor sevenths and, as a further development, linear unfoldings in circles of fourths (or fifths). From time to time energy runs out and a mechanical repetition of an element takes over, dying away like an electronic 'delay'. Such a process in extended form provides the ending. The work was written for HET TRIO and commissioned by Bristol University Music Department, with funds provided in part by South West Arts, especially for the Colston Symposium 1994. — Jonathan Harvey

HIDDEN VOICE (2) (1999 – 7') is a companion piece to my HIDDEN VOICE (1). The basic idea is that the principal material - rather chorale or song-like – is played very softly and tenderly throughout and is often almost hidden by the other sounds of the ensemble. Referring to Baudelaire's 'douce langue natale' the music invokes the secret language of the 'mother' or God or of a past life - however the most intimate inner voice is described: the voice that is usually suppressed in the psychology of ordinary life but which occasionally and sensationally surfaces. The two layers of the music are an expressionistic string trio which is violently active, and behind it, in the distance, the winds which remain serene, slow and chorale-like, in a different time-world, turning round and round on the same few chords and eventually transforming into a gentle lullaby of sweetness. The trio also transforms - into an ethereal weightless and rapid sheen. There is also a third layer played back electronically from distant speakers; this echoes the first movement in a dream like memory giving a vast spatial expansion to the inner memories. Hidden Voice (2) was written for and commissioned by two ensembles to which I am very attached: Sinfonia 21 and Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, to whose tenth birthday celebrations this is a small contribution. My thanks also to the Arts Council of England for help with the English part. — Jonathan Harvey

WHEEL OF EMPTINESS (1997 - 16') was commissioned by the Ictus Ensemble. Wheel of Emptiness is an attempt to reconcile flowing almost chaotic music and cool, discrete objects, which have no connection with each other, but which repeat in a repetitive pattern. 'Subjective' and 'objective' are in dialectic and ultimately transcended. From a technical point of view, the harmony is based on a modulating sequence of "equal addition compressed spectra", like my other recent works. The microtones are supported by a sampler in the ensemble which plays the spectra, usually in sea-wave patterns wheeling round and round. The Buddhist notion of "emptiness" was foremost in my mind. — Jonathan Harvey

"What I really liked as a small boy was to remove the panel below the keyboard of my father's upright piano, and play with the magical resonances of the strings, absorbed in the atmospheres that these sounds created. I would also graft my own voice into this welter of sound – much more fun than doing the piano practice I was supposed to be doing."

Not much has changed in the past fifty years, claims Geoffrey Palmer. The creation of soundworlds, exploration of resonance and purity of melodic line still dominate his musical endeavour. In this he often uses quartertones – the notes between the notes of the piano – beginning in the 1990s with *La Maestà* and *Paradis moins cinq*, and continuing with the Third String Quartet (2000), *Crystallisations* (2003) and the Bassoon Concerto (2008).

Palmer studied at Huddersfield in the 1970s, then came doctoral research at Bristol, together with less formal contact with Michael Tippett and Jonathan Harvey. He won the 1997 Classic CD Composing Competition and the 1998 Music Haven Composing Competition and was awarded Second Prize in the 1999 English Poetry and Song Society competition. BBC broadcasts have included premières from the Cheltenham Festival and BBC Young Musician of the Year. Canadian premières have included *Reconciliation* (Fujiko Imajishi, 2002), and the Fourth String Quartet (Windermere Quartet, 2009). He currently works as a cellist and composer in the north of Scotland, teaching part-time at the University of Aberdeen.

Future works include a new quintet, *Auriga*, for the wind soloists of the Lapland Chamber Orchestra for performance at Scotland's **sound** Festival (2011) and subsequently in Finland, and two major works to be performed in 2012 – *Caedmon* for symphony orchestra, two choirs and electronics, and a Violin Concerto for his daughter, violinist Ruth Palmer.

Geoffrey Palmer – Flute Concerto: Cancri 55 (2009)

"for Jonathan Harvey, with affection, respect and gratitude"

In 2007 astronomers at the University of California announced that they had found for the first time a star around which exists a quintuple planetary system: Cancri 55 is a star roughly the same size as our sun, and the fourth planet out – and the last to be discovered – appears to be in the "Goldilocks zone" at such a distance from its star so as to be neither too hot nor too cold for life.

The tremendous excitement we might feel for what might be "up there" is tempered by the knowledge that no one is likely to know anything much for centuries – if ever. However we can go there in our imaginations! In my piece I invite you to join me in a musical journey visiting these five planets.

Right at the beginning we hear a single crotale note, a pinpoint of light which we soon discover to be concealing five distinct “soundworlds”. Each planet, as we approach, we find to have its own timbre, its own pulse and harmonies, its own musical idiosyncrasies.

We do not simply fly from one soundworld to the other. Often planets will eclipse each other, and sometimes we are overwhelmed with a richness of aural vision as we go through the awesome complexity of a planetary conjunction. We find that some of the planets are busy little places – like the earth – whilst on others we find maybe beautiful and unusual landscapes but little else.

The flautist – in my imagination the traveler – looks on, takes part in the planetary music, and even sets up a dialogue with musical fragments (life forms?) it finds – listen to the duet with the double bass ten minutes into the work. Throughout its musings, never far away is the melody of Samuel Rudigast’s joyful chorale *Was Gott thut, das ist wohlgetan* (What God has done is well done). This pervades the harmonies of the planets; and the flute “tries out” the melody in the alien modes of the five soundworlds, before it bursts out in a quotation of one of Bach’s own settings (from Cantata 100).

As a small boy, I remember wondering whether, if there are intelligent beings on other planets, there might also be music elsewhere. Is there another Bach in the universe? And if so does his music have the same wholeness and strength? Does it rejoice in the same God?

Perhaps these are idle musings for a grown man. Yet consider the words of Gaston Bachelard: “In a flash the stars break our solitude..... Distance is abolished. An infinity of communion erases an infinity of size. The world of stars touches our soul”.

– Geoffrey Palmer



PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

World renowned Canadian flutist, composer and conductor **Robert Aitken** has been honoured with the Order of Canada and is a Chevalier de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres (France). In 1970, having previously served as principal flute for both the Vancouver and Toronto Symphony Orchestras, Aitken embarked on a solo career that has taken him to virtually every corner of the globe. He has more than 70 recordings to his credit and such notables as John Cage, George Crumb, Elliott Carter, Toru Takemitsu, Gilles Tremblay, John Beckwith and Bruce Mather have dedicated works to him. In 2003 he was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Flute Association (USA). In 2004, he retired as Professor für Flöte at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany, a position he had held for 16 years. In 2009 Aitken was the recipient Canada’s largest arts award, the prestigious Walter Carsen Prize for Excellence in the Performing Arts. As a composer, he holds Bachelor and Masters degrees from the University of Toronto and all of his works are published by Universal Edition, Salabert, Ricordi and Peer Music. Robert Aitken was director of the Banff Centre Winter Program in Music, founder and artistic director of Music Today, Music at Shawnigan and co-founder, with Norma Beecroft, of New Music Concerts which he has directed since its inception in 1971.

Japanese-born **Fujiko Imajishi** has made her home in Canada since 1968. After studies with Lorand Fenyves, Ruggiero Ricci, Franco Gulli and the Hungarian Quartet she went on to win both the Montreal and Toronto Symphony Competitions. Imajishi is concertmaster of the Esprit Orchestra and until 2009 was concertmaster of the National Ballet of Canada. Imajishi is a founding member and first violinist of the string quartet Accordes and has enjoyed a long association with New Music Concerts with whom she performed Lutoslawski’s solo works for violin and orchestra *Partita* and *Chain II* conducted by the composer, which were later released on CD. She has also given the Canadian premiere of Ligeti’s Violin Concerto in 1999. In 2002 she performed *Anthèmes* for violin solo in the presence of composer Pierre Boulez on the occasion of the presentation of the International Glenn Gould Prize. In 2006 Imajishi gave the North American premiere of the violin concerto *Vortex* by Raminta Serksnyte with New Music Concerts and in 2008 the first Canadian performance of two solo violin works by Elliott Carter, which were also included on a CD to mark his hundredth birthday. [Naxos 8.559614].

Fujiko Imajishi now divides her time between Canada and Norway where she and her husband, flutist Andrew Cunningham, perform with the Oslo Philharmonic.

Canadian pianist and conductor **Gregory Oh** holds graduate degrees from the University of Toronto and the University of Michigan. He is the artistic director of Toca Loca, conducts Continuum Contemporary Music, and also works with New Music Concerts, Arraymusic, CONTACT, the Toronto Symphony and the NACO. Formerly the musical director of the San Diego Opera Ensemble, he has also taught at the Banff Centre's Contemporary Opera and Song Training program and worked at Florida State Opera, Lyric Opera San Diego and the Canadian Opera Company. Most recently, he was music director for the premiere of Sean Griffin's opera *Cold Spring* at New York's EMPAC and also for Native Earth's *Giiweden*, for which he was nominated for a Dora Award. He is the music committee co-chair of the Toronto Arts Council, teaches at the University of Toronto, is on faculty at the National Youth Orchestra of Canada and is the contemporary music curator at Toronto's Music Gallery. He was recently named a resident artist at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts.

Our next events:

Sunday April 10, 2011

Art Music Promotion

The Music Gallery, 197 John Street • NMC Ensemble • Robert Aitken, direction

Music by ♣ Paul Steenhuisen ♣ Keith Hamel ♣ André Ristic

♣ Bob Pritchard ♣ Gordon Fitzell

Sunday May 8, 2011

Malaysian Voices

The Music Gallery, 197 John Street • NMC Ensemble • Robert Aitken, direction

Music by Kee Yong Chong, Chow Jun Yi, Yii Kah Hoe

Tazul Izan Tajuddin, Neo Nai Wen

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