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42nd season | 352nd event

New Music Concerts presents

A Tribute to GILLES TREMBLAY with Louise Bessette

Saturday April 27, 2013 Gallery 345 | 345 Sorauren Avenue



Robert Aitken, artistic director

42nd season | 352nd event **Saturday April 27, 2013**Gallery 345 @ 8^{pm} | 345 Sorauren Avenue

New Music Concerts presents

A Tribute to GILLES TREMBLAY with Louise Bessette

Programme:

Gilles Tremblay

Phases (1956)

Gilles Tremblay

Réseaux (1958)

Michel Gonneville

Volées (2010)

Carillons d'oiseaux (pour Gilles Tremblay)

Silvio Palmieri

Prélude XI : Elevazione (2010)

Disperate vibrazioni raschiano il silenzio, à Monsieur Gilles Tremblay

Gilles Tremblay

Traçantes (auprès, au loin...) (1976)

Gilles Tremblay

Musiques de l'eau (2008)

- Intermission -

Walter Boudreau

Les Planètes (1983-1998-2011)

I. Mercure II. Le Soleil III. Re-Mercure IV. Vénus V. Terre VI. Re-Soleil VII. Mars VIII. Jupiter IX. Saturne X. Uranus XI. Neptune XII. Pluton XIII. L'espace, l'infini

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New Music Concerts

Robert Aitken, c.m., Artistic Director

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LOUISE BESSETTE January 1986 marked a turning point in the career of Louise Bessette. Since winning the First Prize at the Concours International de Musique Contemporaine in Saint-Germain-en-Laye (France), she has gone on to become recognized as a leading light in the interpretation of twentieth-century music. Most notably, she has added to her list of accomplishments both the First Prize and the Special Prize for Piano at the Rotterdam 1989 International Gaudeamus Competition for Contemporary Music and the 1991 Flandre-Québec Award in recognition of her contribution to contemporary music. The Conseil Québécois de la Musique awarded her the Prix Opus 1996-1997 in the category conductor or soloist of the year for her recital devoted to the Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus by Olivier Messiaen. In January 2010, she received two Prix Opus: Performer of the year and Musical event of the year for Automne Messiaen 2008. In January 2013, Bessette was declared the winner of the Prix Opus for "Concert of the Year-Montreal" as well as "Concert of the Year-Modern and Contemporary" for her extraordinary 30vear Career Celebration of last March, presented by Société de musique contemporaine du Québec (SMCQ), in collaboration with Chapelle historique du Bon-Pasteur. The multi-faceted three-part concert included four world premieres written for the occasion. along with music by her signature composer, Olivier Messiaen. An exceedingly appealing performer, Louise Bessette has made a personal hallmark of offering inspired, energetic interpretations of the finest in original music, whether in recital or as a soloist with orchestras or chamber formations.

Her eclectic repertoire has earned Louise Bessette numerous recital invitations at major music festivals, including the Festival de Musique Française de Laon (France), the Radio-France Festival Présences, the Festival Musica in Strasbourg (France), the Festival 38e Rugissants in Grenoble (France), the Festival Tivoli in Copenhagen, the Numus Festival in Arhus, the Huddersfield (U.K.) Contemporary Music Festival, the Festival Nieuwe Muziek in Middelburg (Netherlands), the Festival International de Lanaudière (Québec) and the Festival International du Domaine Forget (Québec). Also to her credit are performances at the World Music Days, in Warsaw in 1992 and Mexico City in 1993.

Louise Bessette dedicated 2008 to the centenary of the birth of Olivier Messiaen. Her efforts and enthusiasm led to the organization of Automne Messiaen, which featured more than 50 performers, ensembles and organizations celebrating Messiaen in Montreal. In order to perform the Quatuor pour la fin du temps, a seminal piece in Olivier Messiaen's oeuvre, Louise Bessette formed

an ensemble, now known on the name ARTefact, with Simon Aldrich, Yegor Dyachkov, and Jonathan Crow. On December 10. 2008, the date of Messiaen's centenary, Louise Bessette performed the complete Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus at the Chapelle historique du Bon-Pasteur in Montreal. Louise Bessette has made about twenty recordings. Messiaen: Les oiseaux, received an eloquent review by the Gramophone magazine in December 2009. Her double solo album on the Atma Classique label features her highly acclaimed performance of Messiaen's Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus. As well, on chamber music recordings, she has ioined forces with such outstanding artists as Angèle Dubeau, Marc-André Hamelin, the Quatuor Alcan, and the London-based Arditti Quartet. In Canada, Louise Bessette has recorded with SNE. CBC Records, Doberman-Yppan, Analekta, Atma Classique, Riche Lieu and Fonovox; in France for the Disques Montaigne and Salabert/Actuels labels, and in United States for Mode Records. Composers from all over the world send Louise Bessette their works, while others have created pieces especially for her. including Canadians Serge Arcuri, François Dompierre, Serge Provost, Raoul Sosa and André Villeneuve, and French composers Claude Ballif, Philippe Boivin, Bruno Ducol and Jacques Leieune.

Born in Montréal, Louise Bessette began studying piano at the age of five. Admitted to the Montréal Conservatory in 1971, she studied with Georges Savaria and Raoul Sosa. She earned five first prizes, notably a First Prize in Chamber Music in 1979, and a First Prize for Piano in 1980. She subsequently perfected her skills with Eugene List in New York. In 1982, she set her sights on Paris, where her masters were Yvonne Loriod, Claude Helffer, Jay Gottlieb and Dominique Merlet. In addition to performing and recording, Louise Bessette has contributed to the advancement and dissemination of music by participating in the juries of numerous musical competitions, and by offering master classes in both France and Canada. In October 2007, she was invited to perform and teach young students at the 4th International Piano Festival of Shanghai. Furthermore, since fall 1996, she has been Professor of piano at the Montreal Conservatory of Music.

TRANSIAN received his early music training in Montreal from Jocelyne Binet, Edmond Trudel and Gabriel Cusson; later on, he attended the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal where he studied piano with Germaine Malépart and composition with Claude Champagne. In 1954, he took part in the first genuine new music concert organized in Montreal. He pursued his studies in Paris with Olivier Messiaen. Yvonne Loriod, Maurice Martenot and Andrée Vaurabourg-Honegger, receiving a First Prize in musical analysis as well as a First Medal in ondes Martenot at the Conservatoire de Paris. While in Europe he met Pierre Boulez, Iannis Xenakis and Karlheinz Stockhausen, and he was introduced to electroacoustic techniques through Pierre Schaeffer's Groupe de recherches musicales. Upon his return to Quebec, Gilles Tremblay undertook numerous activities, dividing his time between teaching - he was a professor at the Conservatoire de musique du Québec lecturing and working for CBC radio where he hosted the Festivals series and took part in several programs with Fernand Ouellette. In spite of his busy schedule, he pursued his own research, composed music, received many commissions and dedicated much time to the sound installation for the Quebec Pavilion at Expo '67, which won him the Calixa-Lavallée Prize. Major works were composed in the following years, including Fleuves (1976), Vers le Soleil (1978) and Compostelle I (1978), a tribute to Messiaen on his 70th birthday, and more recently Avec, Wampum symphonique (1992) for soprano, bass, narrator, mixed choir and orchestra to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the founding of Montréal, the cello concerto Les pierres crieront (1998). En partage (2002) for viola and orchestra and the Enchanted Opera L'eau qui danse, la pomme qui chante, et l'oiseau qui dit la vérité (2004-2007). Acclaimed for its richness of sound and aesthetics, Tremblay's music has earned an international reputation and strongly influenced the development of music and contemporary art in Canada.

Gilles Tremblay

Phases (1956) & Réseaux (1958)

The incredible sounds of the overtones of the piano reveal a whole new dimension, fresh and virtually unexplored, hitherto evident only as a momentary superimposed decoration, not yet articulated within the inner substance of the music (Schumann - Shoenberg).

In order to incorporate certain elements into the pianistic language – to 'compose' them in the etymological sense of

the word, I used non-tempered tones with a tempered instrument. This allows the listener to discover, experiment, and marvel at these vibrations as they trigger a thousand effects, and to think about the new relationship between sounds-natural-causes and their outcome.

Technically: at the keyboard a harmonic resonance is achieved by striking a note while a note related to the one being played is depressed without sounding. It is well known that complex sounds are composed of several harmonics that follow an arithmetic progression (1 -2-3-4-5 etc...). The closer the degree of relationship between the sounding and non-sounding tones the greater the intensity of the sympathetic resonance will be.

It goes without saying that the great refinement required in obtaining these tones implies an equally great sensitivity in the process of articulation for the sound with a real attack, every event becoming a new colour to create through aggregation, filtering, new types of attack or intensity, etc. ... The piano becomes an orchestra. All the pianistic language was influenced and enriched by this new graft. It was not, however, polarized by it (which would simply have become additional decoration) since it is part of the syntax to form a harmonious balance.

In *Phases* (the title refers to the process of time), an order of sounds and intervals gives rise to magmas that generate resonances and timbres. Intensities are influenced by the decreasing strength of the harmonics relative to the fundamental. The duration of each phrase is tied to the material used. Thus, the degree of "beating" (vibrato) of a C# (respectively, the 6th and 5th harmonics of A # and A natural) determine the tempo of the subsequent phase.

In *Réseaux* [Networks], a primary harmonic network establishes a sound field. The acoustic form of this field (its formant) is then developed from its intervals, giving rise to other networks which in turn undergo the same process. The original network, fertilized by the superposition of networks from its development, generates shocks ("clusters") and fallouts (sprawls) that contain power, despite their verticality impact over time. The piano writing is here conditioned by the repercussion of the sound matter over time and then, reciprocally — once the time acquired — by a transformation of matter by this time.

Some features of the piano writing include: neumes, embracing the entire keyboard, that operate within a narrow register; successive events unfolding simultaneously; multitudes of events evoked by a single, tapering sound; cascades of notes that coagulate into clusters; accents filtered by their decays; counterpoints between resonance and silence, transforming their normal limits. The frontier of the ending becomes non-linear. Connections with what happens afterwards. The sounds stop but the music continues...

— Gilles Tremblay Translation: Francine Labelle & Daniel Foley

Gilles Tremblay

Traçantes (auprès, au loin...) (1976)

This piece was commissioned by the Festival of La Rochelle for the Piano Competition in 1976. It is composed in the form of a series of nine parts, mostly very short, with two being especially developed; these parts, within limits, can be linked at the discretion of the performer. They make substantial use of effects of resonance of the piano: the extensive use of the pedals and the exploitation of the sympathetic resonance of beats that arise between neighboring sounds. As always with Tremblay, large blocks of sound are opposed to isolated events. Nothing can better express the sense of the work than these few lines written by the composer: "So music, by blending with the present, somehow aligns itself with terrestrial motions and their play of shadow and light."

— Claude Helffer Translation: Daniel Foley & Francine Labelle

Gilles Tremblay

Musiques de l'eau (2008)

Musiques de l'eau [Water Music] for piano is derived from an extract (transformed by additions and interpolations) from my opera L'eau qui danse, la pomme qui chante et l'oiseau qui dit la vérité. Its origin came from listening to water flowing; from the rustling, lapping and trilling of the stream a jet bursts forth in a torrent. This listening soon becomes mesmerizing and after multiple splashes the imagination is surprised to hear distinct and continuous frequencies along with the echoes of their harmonic resonances... Opening a door to another world.

- Gilles Tremblay

MCHEL GONNEVILLE During the 30 years of his career as a composer, Michel Gonneville has complied with many commissions and worked on projects for local and international soloists and groups. He collaborated with artists of various disciplines, has been involved in many projects and with many societies connected with new music, served on juries, written analytical and general papers, given conferences and master classes in Canada and abroad. While composing his music, Gonneville strives to reconcile his inclination for research and for unheard syntactic combinations with what appears to him as fundamentals of music perception. He has developed a personal path rooted in techniques and models proposed by Stockhausen and Pousseur as well as by the post-modernists composers of Québec and elsewhere in the world. His works, prospective and expressive, often follow a strong narrative or dramatic form. An appreciated pedagogue, Michel Gonneville has taught composition and analysis at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal since 1997.

Michel Gonneville

Volées (2010)

Volées was composed at the request of the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec [SMCQ] to be included in the program of one of the group's concerts of the season, alongside the piano concerto *Envoi* by Quebec composer Gilles Tremblay. The concert was part of a yearlong homage to Gilles Tremblay.

I studied under Tremblay, a renowned teacher and deeply original creator. With *Envoi* (1982), he produced an emblematic work blending rhythmic force, convincing improvisational interplay and extensive research of sound. I wanted to draw inspiration from certain passages of this work to make *Volées* a sort of reverential companion piece that can also function on its own.

Among the passages I retained is a sort of "chorale" of slow audible chords toward the end of the concerto that, here, became a slow progression of chords from low to high and whose fragments serve as a link between the sections and as a general introduction and conclusion. I also retained sequences that might call to mind imaginary birds. The most striking is probably the sequence of chords that are repeated rapidly in rising or falling groups, a sort of toccata that reminded me of the tapping of certain woodpeckers.

There were also small phrases of four notes (three short and one long) that might evoke a robin, and echoing passages that I wanted to sound like a cross between the song of a hermit thrush and the call of a tree frog.

The four sections of the work grow ever shorter and are given poetic titles in the score for the performer to interpret: Sonneries de grives-rainettes (The Sounds of Thrushes and Tree Frogs), Résonances de pics-chamanes (The Echoes of Woodpeckers and Shamans), Sonnailles aux deux merles insomnieux (The Trilling of Two Sleepless Robins) and Carillon éolien de jaseurs-antenne (The Wind Chime of Waxwings and Antennae).

The work is dedicated with great admiration to the pianist who has brought it to life, Louise Bessette, a brilliant performer of works by Tremblay and by his teacher, Olivier Messiaen. The Tremblay-birdsong-Messiaen conjuncture was an obvious choice. As Louise had hoped, I also evoked bells and chimes, which determined the dominant sound and rhythmic structure of the four sections of the piece. The title, *Volées*, refers to both birds and bells.

- Michel Gonneville

SILVIO PALMERI Silvio Palmieri's principal teachers were Gilles Tremblay and Clermont Pépin at the Conservatoire de musique du Québec in Montreal. His compositions have been performed by the Ensemble contemporain de Montréal with conductor Véronique Lacroix; Les événements du neuf conducted by Lorraine Vaillancourt; the SMCQ Ensemble; ARRAYMUSIC of Toronto; the Ondes Martenot Ensemble of Montréal; ondes Martenot performer Estelle Lemire. the soprano Natalie Choquette, the Claudel Quartet, pianists André Ristic and Marc Courroux, trombonist Alain Trudel, the Alizée flute ensemble, violinist Silvia Mandolini, soprano Chantal Lambert and the pianist Angela Tosheva in Montréal, Toronto, Paris, Rome and Milan. His works include the opera Elia, incidental music for Shakespeare's Hamlet, a string quartet, the violin concerto Versetto, the trio Versetti and several preludes for piano. Poesiole notturne I-II-III-IV for soprano and chamber orchestra are based on poetry by Pasolini and are part of a larger cycle dedicated to the poetic universe of the Italian poet Pier Paolo Pasolini.

Prélude XI: Elevazione (2010)

(Disperate vibrazioni raschiano il silenzio, à Monsieur Gilles Tremblay)

Desperate vibrations erode the silence.

To my master, wise king, my friend, Gilles Tremblay!

— Silvio Palmieri

ITER BOUDREAU Composer and conductor Walter Boudreau has created over sixty works for various types of ensembles, as well as fifteen film scores and two ballets. His works have been performed in Canada, the United States, France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, and Finland. In 1998 he was awarded the prix Opus "Composer of the year" (Conseil québécois de la musique). Since 1988 Boudreau has been artistic director and principal conductor of the Ensemble de la Société de musique contemporaine du Québec (SMCQ). In 1990 he was appointed as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's first composer in residence for a period of three years. Boudreau has directed various contemporary music groups. With Denys Bouliane. he assumed the artistic direction of the Millennium Symphony (2000) and the Montreal New Music Festival (MNM) (2003-05-07-09-11-13). Jointly, they received the prix Opus "Musical Event of the vear." Among other distinctions, in 2003 Boudreau was awarded the Molson Prize by the Canadian Council for the Arts, quickly followed in 2004 by the Prix Denise-Pelletier for the performing arts (Prix du Québec).

Walter Boudreau

Les Planètes (1983-1998-2011)

I. Mercure II. Le Soleil III. Re-Mercure IV. Vénus V. Terre VI. Re-Soleil VII. Mars VIII. Jupiter IX. Saturne X. Uranus XI. Neptune XII. Pluton XIII. L'espace, l'infini

Commissioned by Louis-Philippe Pelletier in 1983, *The Planets* were (finally) premiered by their sponsor on May 21, 1998 at the Chapelle historique du Bon-Pasteur in Montreal after traversing a long and winding road. Indeed, the creation of *The Planets* was compromised several times over the years for a variety of reasons completely beyond my control. I stopped its composition along the way to

devote myself to other more pressing concerns. This work occupies a special place in my work, because the composition is spread over a very long period, with a "hole" of thirteen years between the time of conception and its completion.

As in all of the series of works subtitled *The Gnostic Circle*, the gist of the discourse focuses on an exploration of some musical analogies for the characteristics of the nine main planets of the solar system. (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto).

One would seek in vain for a programmatic or "cinematic" interpretation or direct references to symbolic and cultural icons usually associated with "cosmic" music...

"Calculated" at the time largely on the CYBER 7400 computer of the Computing Center of the University of Montreal, this music thrives and grows exclusively from structural premises encompassing a huge range of registers and sounds in which the delicate psychological balance between container and content, expression and impressions simultaneously serve as subject and object.

The Planets are very affectionately dedicated to Louis-Philippe Pelletier.

- Walter Boudreau







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2013-2014 SEASON PREVIEW

Confirmed dates for 2013-2014

(more events to be announced shortly)

October 6, 2013 at Betty Oliphant Theatre Stefan Meets Anton and Morty Meets John

Curated by Austin Clarkson A concert featuring works by Stefan Wolpe, Anton Webern, Morton Feldman and John Cage

November 1, 2013 at Betty Oliphant Theatre Interactive Electronics, Curated by David Eagle

Works by Jimmie Leblanc, Anthony Tan, Anna Pidgorna, Hans Tutschku and David Eagle

March 20, 2014 at Jane Mallett Theatre The Arditti String Quartet

co-presented with Music Toronto Music written for the quartet by Elliott Carter, Hilda Paredes, Brian Ferneyhough and Helmut Lachenmann

April 18, 2014 at Betty Oliphant Theatre (Good Friday) A Portrait of Jörg Widmann

The star German composer and clarinet virtuoso returns for a concert of large chamber works.

May 21, 2014 at Mazzoleni Concert Hall Wei-wei Lan and composers from Beijing

co-presented by the 21^c Music Fest at the RCMT
The Chinese pipa virtuoso is featured in works by
her colleagues from the Beijing Conservatory.
The concert also includes Alexina Louie's Imaginary Opera.