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Saturday February 14, 2015

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New Music Concerts presents

New Works from East & West

Programme:

Fuhong Shi (China 1976)

World premiere, commissioned by New Music Concerts with the financial assistance of The Royal Conservatory
Weiwei Lan pipa Dianne Aitken flute Max Christie clarinet Erica Goodman harp
Rick Sacks percussion Steven Sitarski violin David Hetherington cello Robert Aitken direction

Mountains and Seas (2015)

Norbert Palej (Poland/Canada 1977)

World premiere, commissioned by New Music Concerts with the financial assistance of the Ontario Arts Council
Stacie Dunlop soprano Robert Aitken flute Max Christie clarinet Stephen Clarke piano
Rick Sacks percussion Steven Sitarski violin David Hetherington cello Norbert Palej direction

The Grey Hour (2015)

Yanqiao Wang (China/Canada 1937)

World premiere, commissioned by New Music Concerts
Weiwei Lan pipa Dianne Aitken flute Stephen Clarke piano Erica Goodman harp
Rick Sacks percussion David Schotzko marimba Adam Scime contrabass Robert Aitken direction

Impression (2015)

— *Intermission* —

Adam Scime (Canada 1982)

World premiere, commissioned by Daniel Cooper
Stacie Dunlop soprano Véronique Mathieu violin

from what hand to speak (2015)

Laurie Radford (Canada 1958)

World premiere, commissioned by Chantal Perrot for New Music Concerts
Stacie Dunlop soprano Dianne Aitken flute Erica Goodman harp David Schotzko percussion
Steven Sitarski, Véronique Mathieu violins Doug Perry viola David Hetherington cello
Laurie Radford signal processing Robert Aitken direction

meaninglessnessingisms (2015)

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New Music Concerts

Robert Aitken, c.m., Artistic Director

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Fuhong Shi is an Associate Professor of the Central Conservatory of Music (CCoM) in Beijing. She is an active composer and curator of musical activities. Fuhong received her Doctoral degree in composition from the University of Toronto in 2009. She has studied with a number of world renowned composers and composition professors, such as Gary Kulesha, Chen Yi, Chou Wen-Chung, Tang Jianping, Guo Wenjing, Chen Qigang, James MacMillan, Salvatore Sciarrino, Murray Schafer, Gilles Tremblay, Brian Cherney and Augusta Read Thomas among others.



Anonymous: Nü Wa and Fu Xi

In 2005, her orchestral work *Dialogue II* was read by Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and her string quartet *Refractions* was selected for the inaugural Masterclass held by the Quatuor Bozzini. She was the recipient of the 2007 Karen Kieser Prize in Canadian Music and won the Generation 2008 Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal Composer's Competition. She was also awarded a scholarship from Acanthes International Composition Workshop in France in 2008.

Fuhong has collaborated with numerous Canadian orchestras and ensembles including the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, New Music Concerts, Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal, Queen of Puddings Music Theatre, Orchestre de la Francophonie Canadienne, Continuum Contemporary Music, Taiwan Symphony Orchestra, Esprit Orchestra, Quatuor Bozzini, and Soundstreams. In China her music has been performed by ensembles in Hong Kong, Guangdong and Beijing. Her compositions have been broadcast in the USA, Canada, Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Europe and Southeast Asia.

Mountains and Seas

Mountains and Seas is composed for the traditional pipa and sextet. The work is inspired by the primeval goddess Nü Wa (also known as Nü Gua or Nü Kua) in *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* as well as the ancient Chinese myths

and legend. Nü Wa is the creatrix of humankind and the Mother of the Land who symbolizes the greatness and solemnness of creating and producing life. At the beginning of time, Nü Wa awoke. She used the moist clay to create mankind. Her hands unfolded and bloomed like pieces of flower petals. Nü Wa and Fu Xi (Fu-shi) tightly twisted themselves together like vines around a tree. Suddenly, the four pillars of the sky were broken. She ran quickly and shouted loudly, at the same time repairing the pillars of heaven with smelted five-colored stones. Passing through time and space, Nü Wa's life-affirming power unceasingly influences the contemporary sensibility and souls. Listen! Her sweet singing floats from the rosy clouds and the remote horizon. — *Fuhong Shi*

Mountains and Seas was commissioned by New Music Concerts with the financial assistance of **The Royal Conservatory**.

Norbert Palej is Associate Professor of Composition at the University of Toronto. He also serves as the director of the University of Toronto gamUT chamber orchestra, and as the artistic director of the annual New Music Festival. He holds composition degrees from Cornell University (D.M.A.), The Juilliard School (M.M.), and the New England Conservatory (B.M.).

Recent commissions include an orchestral work for the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony, operas for Tapestry New Opera and the Canadian Children's Opera Company, two string quartets for the Penderecki String Quartet, a percussion concerto for Evelyn Glennie, chamber works for the Canadian Art Song Project and for NEXUS, and a choral work for Soundstreams Canada, featuring the Elmer Iseler Singers, the Polish Chamber Choir, and the Toronto Children's Chorus. His music has been performed worldwide.—A guest composer at the 2012 Beijing Modern Music Festival and the 2013 Thailand International Composition Festival, he is a recipient of the Toru Takemitsu Award from the Japan Society in Boston, the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, the Robbins Family Prize in Music Composition, the Benjamin Britten Memorial Fellowship, the Susan and Ford Schumann Fellowship, as well as Ontario and Toronto Arts Council Recording and Commissioning grants. He participated in the Tapestry New Opera's Composer-Librettist Laboratory, the Minnesota Orchestra Composers Institute, the American Composers Orchestra Underwood New Music Readings, the Academy for New Music and Audio-Art in Tyrol, Austria, as well

as the Tanglewood, Aspen, Caramoor, and Budapest music festivals. His recent CD was nominated for a JUNO Award.

The Grey Hour

Commissioned by NMC with the assistance of the **Ontario Arts Council**

Between day's indifferent eye (*Set, dear sun!*) and hollow night: the grey hour of hopelessness. All that remains: *Ächzen und Erbärmlich Weinen*. But who hears? There are no ears here. — *Norbert Palej*

TEXT:

Zachodźże, słoneczko, skoro masz zachodzić, Bo nas nogi bolą po tym polu chodzić.

Nogi bolą chodzić, ręce bolą robić, Zachodźże, słoneczko, skoro masz zachodzić.

Za las, słonko, za las, nie wyglądamy na nas, Wrócisz do nas jutro, jak będzie raniutko.

— *old Polish peasant song*

[Do set, dear sun, since you must set anyway, For our legs hurt from walking this field.

Our legs hurt from walking, our arms hurt from working, Do set, little sun, since you must set anyway.

Go behind the forest, dear sun, behind the forest, don't peek out at us, You will return to us tomorrow, in the early morning.]

Mój Boże!
[My God!]

Yanqiao Wang, composer and conductor, graduated from the Central Conservatory of Music (CCM) in Beijing. He is a guest professor of CCM, and emeritus professor of Xinjiang Arts University. He is a member of the Chinese Association of Musicians, and the North American Association of Composers. Before going abroad, he was composer in residence for the China National Symphony Orchestra, where he, Mr. Wu Zuqiang and others composed the famous Chinese ballet *The Red Detachment of Women* and a pipa concerto, *Prairie Little Sisters*. He also composed music for the movies *Large Running River*, *Drizzly Spring Rain*, *Wedding* and others.

Mr. Wang went to Japan in 1980 as an International Cultural Exchange Foundation fellow, and then became professor and deputy dean of the Japan International Academy of Music. Immigrating to Canada in 1991, Wang continued composing, teaching and conducting. Many of his students, including his son, Li Wang, are outstanding musicians active in China and on the international music scene. Mr. Wang has been serving as music director and conductor of the Chinese Canadian Choir of Toronto for over 13 years.

Mr. Wang came to the attention of New Music Concerts last May when Xiaoyong Chen, who wrote a piece for Bob Aitken and Weiwei Lan for performance at the 21C Festival, introduced Wang as his former teacher and mentor. When we confirmed that Weiwei Lan was returning to Toronto for tonight's concert, NMC took the opportunity to invite Mr. Wang to compose a new piece for pipa and our ensemble for the occasion.

Impression: Qing Shui Jiang at Night

This is one of Mr. Yanqiao Wang's productions on Chinese chamber folk music about love stories of the Miao ethnic group young people living along the banks of Qingshui River in Guizhou Province, China.

Qingshui River looks like a green silk belt, passing through hills, mountains, rocks and rapids. The Miao, a typical agrarian society in southwestern China, are generally adept singers and dancers and specialize in love songs and songs for toasting. They celebrate many festivals, such as the Sister's Meals Festival. This festival is considered as celebration of love, similar to the western Valentine's Day. The traditional love stories evolve around canvassing activities, especially during the nighttime, through the main dating way of antiphonal singing.

Toronto composer and performer **Adam Scime** has received many awards including the SOCAN Young Composer's Competition, the Karen Keiser Prize in Canadian Music, The Esprit Young Composer Competition, and the Electro-Acoustic Composer's Competition. His music has been performed by many renowned ensembles and soloists including Nouvelle Ensemble Moderne, The Esprit Orchestra, The Gryphon Trio, New Music Concerts, Soundstreams, Nadina Mackie Jackson, Carla Huhtanen, and l'Orchestre de la Francophonie among others.

In November of 2012, Adam's work was featured in the Emergents Concert Series, a series that showcases emerging artists from across Canada and is hosted by the Music Gallery. In early 2012, Adam (along with three other composers) wrote music for *Rob Ford, An Operatic Life*, an opera that attracted an audience of over 800 people, and was received with much critical praise. New Music Concerts premiered Adam's new trio, *After the riot*, in March of 2011 for a concert celebrating the music of the prominent late English composer Jonathan Harvey, subsequently commissioning his *In The Earth And Air* for soprano Carla Huhtanen for the 2012/2013 concert season. Adam has been selected for numerous composer workshops including Domaine Forget, The Soundstreams Emerging Composer Workshop, The Vocalypse Opera from Scratch Workshop, The National Arts Centre composer training program, the Canadian Contemporary Music Workshop and the Chrysalis Workshop with the Continuum Contemporary Ensemble.

In addition to his activities as a composer, Adam also works frequently as a freelance double bassist specializing in new music, appearing regularly with the Arraymusic Ensemble and New Music Concerts. Adam is currently studying with Gary Kulesha at the University of Toronto where he has been awarded a full fellowship as a doctoral student in composition. He initially studied composition at The University of Western Ontario, where his teachers included Peter Paul Koprowski and Paul Frehner. Adam has also received private lessons with Roberto Sierra, Anders Hillborg, Vinko Globokar, Colin Mathews, Chen Yi, and Osvaldo Golijov.

from what hand to speak

eight settings of Oana Avasilichioaei

The tradition of oral storytelling is an ancient and intimate ritual between any type of narrator and audience. The intimacy and connection between narrator and audience member is strengthened if the narrator shapes the story to suit the needs of a particular listener. One may also experience the immediacy and personal impact of the creative process taking place in front of them, and as a result become empowered with the creative spirit. As a story is passed from person to person and retold countless times, any number of events may change, or perhaps be left out completely. This effect is often augmented if translation from one language to another is to occur. How our narrator looks and acts may also have an influence on

how we envision the story in our mind. Throughout her book, *We Beasts*, poet Oana Avasilichioaei has been inspired by how a collection of text may be altered and in turn experienced in the aforementioned ways. Oana's text undergoes many transformations from translation to unique page placement throughout *We Beasts* in order to engender a sense of flexibility of implication in the reader. After reading *We Beasts* and speaking to Oana about the creative intention behind the book, I was quite enthusiastic to set a selection of this text to my music, and in turn create yet another mode of communicative metamorphosis for those who are to experience Oana's words. I have extracted eight brief selections from *We Beasts* for this piece. Some of these selections are full poems, others are fragments of poems all of which I felt were especially suited not only for musical treatment, but also for my particular aesthetic. The piece was written especially for violinist Véronique Mathieu and soprano Stacie Dunlop. My gratitude extends to Oana Avasilichioaei, and her publisher, Wolsak and Wynn, for allowing me to set the chosen text. I would like to dedicate this piece to Mr. **Daniel Cooper** whose generosity and dedication to Canadian music made this collaboration possible. I would also like to thank New Music Concerts for supporting this project. — *Adam Scime*

Composer **Laurie Radford** creates music for diverse combinations of instruments and voices, electroacoustic media, and performers in interaction with computer-controlled signal processing of sound and image. His music fuses timbral and spatial characteristics of instruments and voices with mediated sound and image in a sonic art that is rhythmically visceral, formally exploratory and sonically engaging.

His music has been performed and broadcast throughout North and South America, Europe and Asia. He has received commissions and performances from ensembles including the Aventa Ensemble, GroundSwell, Earplay, Ensemble Transmission, Esprit Orchestra, New Music Concerts, Le Nouvel Ensemble Modern, L'Ensemble contemporain de Montréal, Pro Coro Canada, Totem contemporain, Trio Fibonacci, Trio Phoenix, the Penderecki, Bozzini and Molinari String Quartets, and the Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Montréal Symphony Orchestras.

Radford's music is available on empreintes DIGITALes, McGill Records, PeP Recordings, Clef Records, Ecliptica Records, Centrediscs and Fidelio Audiophile Recordings. He has taught composition, electroacoustic music and music technology at McGill University, Concordia University, Bishop's University, University of Alberta, City University (London, UK), and is presently an Associate Professor at the University of Calgary.

meaninglessnessisms

Aphorism. Mechanism. Fetishism. Hedonism.
Euphemism. Eroticism. Schism. Prism.

Spoken language is fluid, malleable, in constant evolution as we push and pull the words and phrases, the accents and rhythms that rush forth and express the forces that move about and within us. The border between sound and meaning in language is in constant negotiation, defended or breached, abandoned or embraced. Likewise, the "isms" that describe knowledge, belief, and action; they rise and fall, adapt and dissolve with the forces of change and the shifting of perspective. *meaninglessnessisms* addresses the inherent instability of language, the playground of sound and sense so akin to the world of music, yet so distinct as primal human utterance. The "play on words" here is overt as new words are created and strive towards sense, established words are fragmented towards the nonsensical, and phase and meaning teeter on the brink of (in)coherence.

At times in support of the solo voice, at others times in competition, solo flute and harp serve as driving forces in the work, with percussion and strings reacting, enabling, and providing commentary. The 8-channel audio processing bends and extends the voice and instruments, casting additional layers of sound and (non)sense about the listener. — *Laurie Radford*

meaninglessnessisms was commissioned by Robert Aitken and New Music Concerts of Toronto with funding generously provided by **Chantal Perrot**.

SOLOISTS

With a voice that has been described as a “powerful demonstration of musical artistry wed to superb technique”, soprano **Stacie Dunlop** is an avid performer of contemporary music. Highly involved in the creation of new music, Stacie has commissioned works from Canadian composers R. Murray Schafer, Harry Freedman, Juhan Puhm, Clark Ross, Scott Godin, Tawnie Olson and British composers Sam Hayden and Paul Whitty. Her repertoire spans from song through chamber, orchestral and operatic mediums with performances across Canada and the UK. Recent performances include a solo recital of Canadian compositions with pianist Cheryl Duvall at the CMC Toronto, Arnold Schoenberg’s String Quartet N° 2, Op. 10 and *Down from Heaven* by NYC based composer Ed Harsh with The Cecilia String Quartet, and a cross-Canada tour of Kurtág’s *Kafka Fragments* with violinist Andrea Neumann. As a member of Toronto’s Thin Edge New Music Collective, Stacie will be performing on three concerts in the 2014/15 season which include works by Alex Mincek, Lukas Foss and a new work by Tawnie Olson.

Weiwei Lan was born in Sichuan, China, 1980. She has pursued the career of a pipa-player for more than 20 years and is considered one of the best-pipa players in China. She has won a multitude of prizes since childhood. In recent years, Weiwei Lan has been invited to guest-perform in Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Mongolia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Canada, Mexico, Vietnam, Indonesia and elsewhere. From the very start of her artistic career she has dedicated herself to introducing the traditional and folk music of China to the Western world. In addition, she has intense passion in playing contemporary music in many forms — solo pieces, ensemble music, and concertos with symphony orchestras. She has co-operated with various orchestras around China such as Beijing, Shanghai, Henan, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Hong Kong as well as in Taipei, Estonia, Freiburg and Toronto. In February 2015 she gave the world premiere of Hu Xiao-ou’s concerto *Fire, Illusion and Instinct* with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Through her performing art pipa music has become a bridge between ancient and modern times as well as between the East and the West. Weiwei Lan is currently teaching at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China.

Canadian violinist **Véronique Mathieu** has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in Europe, South Africa, South America, and the United States. She is a prizewinner of the 2012 Eckhardt-Gramatté Contemporary Music Competition, the 2010 Krakow International Contemporary Music Competition, and a three-time winner of the Canada Council Bank of Instruments Competition. Ms. Mathieu has broadcast recitals for the Canadian Broadcasting Company, Radio-Canada, Radio Universidad Clásica in Costa Rica, and Radio Suisse-Romande. Ms. Mathieu is currently an assistant professor of violin at the University of Kansas, and was previously on faculty at State University of New York in Buffalo. An avid contemporary music performer, Véronique commissioned and premiered many works by American and Canadian composers, and recorded for the CD series New Music at Indiana University, the label of Radio-Canada, Centrediscs, and Pheromone. Ms. Mathieu completed a Doctor of Music degree, a Performer Diploma and a Master’s Degree in Music at Indiana University with professors Miriam Fried and Mark Kaplan while working as an Associate Instructor in violin. Véronique wishes to thank the Canada Council for the Arts for its generous support through the loan of the 1820 Joannes Franciscus Pressenda violin.

Our next event:

Sunday March 1, 2015

An Evening with Sir Paul Griffiths

Special Fundraising Event – Doors open at 7:00.
The noted British music critic, novelist and librettist
will discuss his collaboration with Elliott Carter
on the opera *What Next?*

Gallery 345, 345 Sorauren Avenue. 416.961.9594.

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