

Tonus Vivus Society for New Music
Presents
Sprightly Reeds, Hammering Keys:
Beth Levia and Sylvia Shadick-Taylor in Recital

8 p.m.

Friday, February 17, 2012

Holy Trinity Anglican Church

Edmonton, Alberta



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Arctic Dances (1984)

John Beckwith (b. 1927)

- I
- II
- III
- IV

Tre Toccate per Pianoforte (1987)

Malcolm Forsyth (1936-2011)

- I. Squilli e Scherzi*
- II. Miraggio*
- III. baChopi*

INTERMISSION

Copralite Culture and Analysis #21-33;
Subject Berio's Sequenza VII (2012)

Paul Steenhuisen (b. 1965)

- 21. *Out, damn'd spot*
- 22. *Luciano, what a relief it is*
- 23. *Sfera con sfera (à propos de Pomodoro)*
- 24. *Out damn'd spot with Mr. Clean*
- 25. *La Belle Apocryphonic I: by Damien Hirst*
- 26. *La Belle Apocryphonic II: à Christian Marclay et John Oswald*
- 27. *West Banksy*
- 28. *La Belle Apocryphonic III: "Aria" from The Goldseq Variations*
- 29. *Readymade to be free and alive everywhere that you go*
- 30. *OMG GMO (Oryza Sativa)*
- 31. *La Belle Apocryphonic IV: Coke on VIII with VII*
- 32. *Pong d'Or*
- 33. *De staat, de corp, te koop*

(Commissioned by Tonus Vivus, Society for New Music)

Pulse Sampler (1981)

Harrison Birtwistle (b. 1934)

Obsession (1960)

Makoto Shinohara (b. 1931)

Program Notes

Arctic Dances (1984)

John Beckwith

Arctic Dances uses no fewer than 20 Inuit dance-songs. These songs were transcribed by ethnomusicologist Beverly Diamond and explore a range of subjects relating to life in the north. Many of the songs relate to hunting, how difficult it is to hunt successfully, how successful hunters will be popular and how the unsuccessful will be shunned. The oboe is used effectively in imitation of animal sounds, specifically seagulls and loons.

The first movement juxtaposes eight song and dance quotes. It opens with a song about hunting swans and also includes a comical sexual song and a song recanting the adventures of the legendary Kiviug. The second movement includes a song of a young orphan who feels inadequate as a hunter and another song referring to nightmares of struggles while seal hunting.

The third movement, in ternary form, begins with a song telling the hardship of the distances a hunter travels to find food and musically describes the expansive, open landscape. The middle section conveys an unsuccessful hunter's feelings of shame at not being able to sing of great exploits.

The rousing fourth movement is a song about a brother considered to be crazy or possibly magical because he says that in the middle of winter he has seen loons and seagulls. Beckwith very effectively adapts these birdcalls to the oboe. The final movement is a rondo with a victorious hunting song as the principal theme. The excitement of the kill is heightened since it is the first successful hunt after a long period of near starvation. The episodic material includes a song from a shy woman who only wants to sing of female matters to other women and a hauntingly sad song of an orphan who feels she is treated worse than an injured dog. Interspersed through the movements are dances and their drumbeats, often in the piano, which have tempi and meters set independently of the oboe's song material.

Tre Toccate per Pianoforte (1987)

Malcolm Forsyth

This work was totally conceived and completed while the composer was living in Rome in 1987. The third movement was written first; the second movement followed and the opening movement was last to appear.

In Squilli e Scherzi (Signals and Jokes), the idea of a series of trumpet fanfares interspersed with mocking parodies demands many different styles of touch from the player, thus suggesting the title, Toccate, after the Baroque form of keyboard improvisation for purposes of signalling, trying out an instrument, or just "filling-in". The three Scherzi parody, in turn, little bells, harmonics, and finally bassoons.

Miraggio (Mirage), is another kind of touch-piece, this time presenting motives of contrasting character in an atmosphere of desolation and foreboding. The interval of the minor ninth serves as a unifying principle in all three movements; here it appears in the triple-forte, martellato statements of the passionate central motive, and also the pianissimo chords in the highest register of the piano.

The baChopi are the people of central Mozambique whose tribal music is regarded as the only orchestrated music of sub-Saharan Africa. Their xylophone orchestras (often of a dozen or more players) consist of several different-sized instruments from a very small soprano to an enormous bass with 44-gallon oil drums used as resonators under the huge wooden sound bars. The polyphony of this music has inspired this final movement, with its layers of complex cross-rhythms and ostinati. The opening accompaniment motive (presaged in the dying moments of Miraggio) grows incrementally from a group of four to seven notes -- this becoming the basic meter of the first section. The middle section is in six-sixteen time. One of the scherzi of the first movement reappears in a greatly expanded form here, and the mood intensifies in power as it does rhythmically, thus leading to a brilliant finale, where the indication is *con tutta forza*.

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Paul Steenhuisen

Coprolites/copralites are fossilized pieces of dung.
Copra is also the dried meat of the coconut, from which oil is extracted.

The premise of this work is introduced in the context of my interview with composer Michael Finnissy: "The reality that we, as living composers, are forced to accept - as natural - that the music of the past is unquestionably so much better than anything we might write and is going to be played so much more than ours is just bizarre. ...it began to happen in the nineteenth century, a facet of bourgeois culture, that the good old days are better than the here and now. The past is more secure, more comfortable, you can tell more lies about it."

On occasion my solution to the scenario described by Finnissy is to examine music of the overarching past, to engage it as a solid object that is analyzed, filtered, and cultured – to determine what it is, where it came from, what grew from it, and construct other fictions of uncertain date and authorship.

From 1963 to 1971, composer Luciano Berio lived in New York City, where he wrote the classic work *Sequenza VII*, for oboe (1969). The aesthetic of his piece, while broad in some ways, successfully ignored the bombarding sounds of the people and commerce in that golden age, focussing instead on a gravitational centre pitch and self-referentially tight harmonic cycles. In this, the second set of *Copralite* pieces, the point of departure is Berio's magnificent work, ethnographically re-infused with disparate musics from outside his piece, feeding it with grains stolen from the time and place he lived – conflicting hegemonies, modified composites, hybrids, amalgamations, and recognitions, painted with the graffiti of the street, and more...

What the experts have to say:

Luciano Berio (1925-2003)

"I'd like to thank Dr. Steenhuisen for giving my work new life – or killing it so that we need more new pieces – I'm not quite sure which." March, 2012.

Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986)

"Before my death we ordered several copies of this new work for the Library at Babel."

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

"I like the one about the cats."

Kodak Ad

"Have more fun with your memories."

Commissioned by the Tonus Vivus Music Society

Pulse Sampler (1981)

Harrison Birtwistle

In Harrison Birtwistle's *Pulse Sampler* the composer juxtaposes pulse and melody in their most elementary linear forms; the interaction and contradiction between them, and the friction they generate, provides this virtuoso work with its character and prodigious energy. The pulse in this work is defined by the claves player, who is provided with a 'pulse mobile' a series of four rhythmic cells that can be repeated and varied at will as long as their basic sequence is preserved. The oboe takes its tempo from the claves but always finds itself one step behind.

Obsession (1960)

Makoto Shinohara

Obsession for Oboe and Piano was composed in 1960 for an oboe class competition at the Paris Conservatory, during the time Shinohara was studying with Messiaen in Paris. Shinohara is known for his skill in combining elements of Western and traditional Japanese music in his compositions, and this combination can be heard in *Obsession*. The piece begins with a mysterious brooding mood as if some creature is emerging from the deep. There is a repressed feeling, but things do not stay repressed for long. Whatever energy was pent up is eventually expressed to the point of being frightening. At the end after a primal scream in the extreme high register, the creature slinks back into his cave.

Biographies

Beth Levia has played third oboe and substitute Principal Oboe with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and frequently freelances with several Edmonton based ensembles including the Alberta Baroque Ensemble, Pro Coro Canada, Edmonton Opera, Alberta Ballet, and Richard Eaton Singers.

She has also played with the Red Deer Symphony, Lethbridge Symphony, New Brunswick Symphony, National Ballet of Canada, Citadel Theatre Orchestra, and Kamloops Symphony. A founding member of WindRose Trio, Ms. Levia can be heard on their debut recording Path of Contact, the 2009 winner of the Western Canadian Music Award for Best Classical Recording. She has been a featured soloist performing Albinoni's Double Concerto Op.9 with ESO Principal Oboist Lidia Khaner and the Alberta Baroque Ensemble; Bach's Double concerto with the Wye String Ensemble and ESO Principal flutist Elizabeth Koch; and Vaughan-William's Concerto for Oboe with the Concordia Orchestra.

She is a teaching artist at the Conservatory of Music at Grant MacEwan University, maintains a private studio and is in demand as a Clinician and Adjudicator. For more than a decade Beth has spent part of her summer teaching at MusiCamp Alberta. Ms. Levia holds a Masters degree in Oboe Performance from McGill University and a Bachelors degree in Oboe Performance (with honour) from Michigan State University. Her principal teachers have been Suzanne Lemieux, Daniel Stolper and Normand Forget and she has attended Master classes with oboists John Mack and Richard Kilmer.

Edmonton pianist **Sylvia Shadick-Taylor** is known for her diverse talents. She excels as a soloist, yet is equally comfortable as a chamber musician, accompanist and teacher.

As a soloist Sylvia has a strong interest in contemporary music. Premiering many Canadian and American works, she has performed in Canada and the United States, including her highly successful New York concert debut in 1997. In 2009 she was named an Ambassador of the Canadian Music Centre for her promotion of Canadian music.

Ms. Shadick-Taylor has also performed as a chamber musician with many ensembles. Recent performances include concerts in Canada, Thailand, Germany, France, Japan and performances at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in New York City with Hungarian/Canadian violinist Nándor Szederkényi (1998) and more recently with Canadian cellist, Tanya Prochazka (2011). A popular accompanist, she adeptly spans opera classics to demanding contemporary concert repertoire, and her work can frequently be heard on CBC Radio.

A respected name in the musical community, Sylvia works as a private teacher, vocal coach, adjudicator and clinician, and has worked for the University of Alberta, Edmonton Opera, the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Alberta College and Pro Coro Canada.

Sylvia has released three CDs on the Arktos label: *Caprice; Intimate Impressions* (winner of the 2000 Alberta Recording Industry Award for Best Classical Artist); and *At Your Service*, which focuses on the art of accompanying. She can also be heard on several other CDs, including *Northern Arch*, *soundland alberta* and *Lucidae*.

Paul Steenhuisen (Vancouver, Canada, 1965) is an independent composer of concert music, radio works, and installation pieces. He studied with Keith Hamel (DMA, UBC), Louis Andriessen (Royal Conservatory, The Hague), Michael Finnissy (Hove, UK), and Tristan Murail (IRCAM, Paris). Steenhuisen has been a laureate of more than a dozen national and international awards, including four prizes in the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) Young Composers Competition, seven in the PROCAN/SOCAN Competition, first prize in the Vancouver New Music Competition, a selection at the International Rostrum of Composers, and the Governor General of Canada Gold Medal as the top student in all faculties (UBC). In 2011, he was awarded the Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award as the outstanding mid-career artist in music (through the Canada Council for the Arts). He competed in the Gaudeamus Music Week (Amsterdam), and was Composer in Residence with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (1998-2000, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Music Director).

In early 2009, the University of Alberta Press published its first music text, Steenhuisen's 'Sonic Mosaics: Conversations with Composers', a collection of interviews with thirty-two composers. He has continued to interview composers as part of the SOUNDLAB New Music Podcast, available for free download on iTunes. Paul Steenhuisen also contributes all audio content and interactive programming to the Hyposurface Project, based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Hyposurface team was awarded a 2011 international Tomorrow Award for technological innovation, and is currently building a large-scale version for permanent installation in Spain's National Museum of Energy.

In addition to his creative work, Steenhuisen also directs AMP, a consortium of composers including André RISTIC, Keith HAMEL, Aaron GERVAIS, Bob PRITCHARD, Howard BASHAW, Gordon FITZELL, and James HARLEY.

www.artmusicpromotion.org
www.paulsteehuisen.com



John Beckwith. Composer, writer, educator, pianist, broadcaster, b Victoria, BC, 9 Mar 1927; B MUS (Toronto) 1947, M MUS (Toronto) 1961, honorary D MUS (Mount Allison) 1974, honorary D MUS (McGill) 1978, honorary D MUS (Guelph) 1995, honorary LLD (Queen's) 1998, honorary D MUS (Victoria) 1999. His paternal forebears settled in Nova Scotia in 1760. Both parents were musical and encouraged the development of his talent. In Victoria he sang in the Anglican Cathedral choir directed by Stanley Bulley and studied piano at the age of six with Ogreta McNeill, then with Gwendoline Harper. In 1945 he went to Toronto to study on a TCM scholarship with Alberto Guerrero, who was his most influential teacher.

Sir Harrison Birtwistle was born in Accrington in the north of England in 1934 and studied clarinet and composition at the Royal Manchester College of Music, making contact with a highly talented group of contemporaries including Peter Maxwell Davies, Alexander Goehr, John Ogdon and Elgar Howarth. In 1965 he sold his clarinets to devote all his efforts to composition, and travelled to Princeton as a Harkness Fellow where he completed the opera *Punch and Judy*. This work, together with *Verses for Ensembles* and *The Triumph of Time*, firmly established Birtwistle as a leading voice in British music.

Birtwistle's works of recent decades include *Exody*, premiered by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Daniel Barenboim, *Panic* which received a high profile premiere at the Last Night of the 1995 BBC Proms with an estimated worldwide audience of 100 million, and *The Shadow of Night* commissioned by the Cleveland Orchestra and Christoph von Dohnányi. *The Last Supper* received its first performances at the Deutsche Staatsoper in Berlin and at Glyndebourne in 2000. *Pulse Shadows*, a meditation for soprano, string quartet and chamber ensemble on poetry by Paul Celan, was released on disc by Teldec and won the 2002 Gramophone Award for best contemporary recording. *Theseus Game*, co-commissioned by RUHRtriennale, Ensemble Modern and the London Sinfonietta, was premiered in 2003. The following year brought first performances of *The Io Passion* for Aldeburgh Almeida Opera and *Night's Black Bird* commissioned by Roche for the Lucerne Festival. His opera *The Minotaur* received its premiere at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden in 2008 and has been released on DVD by Opus Arte. His music theatre work *The Corridor* opened the Aldeburgh Festival in 2009, with a further staging at the Holland Festival the following year. *Angel-Fighter* for voices and ensemble was premiered at the Leipzig BachFest in 2010, and Christian Tetzlaff premiered *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 2011.

Birtwistle has received many honours, including the Grawemeyer Award in 1968 and the Siemens Prize in 1995; he was made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 1986, awarded a British knighthood in 1988 and made a Companion of Honour in 2001. He was Henry Purcell Professor of Music at King's College, University of London (1995-2001) and was Director of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Recordings of Birtwistle's music are available on the Decca, Philips, Deutsche Grammophon, Teldec, Black Box, NMC, CPO and Soundcircus labels.

Malcolm Forsyth was born and educated in South Africa before settling in Canada in 1968 where he became a faculty member of the University of Alberta in Edmonton. He studied at the University of Cape Town majoring initially in trombone, and later, for his Masters' and Doctoral degrees, in conducting and composition. His teachers included Erik Chisholm, Stanley Glasser, Stefans Grové and Georg Tintner. After spending eight years in the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra, where he experienced the conducting of the likes of Silvestri, Cosma and Stravinsky, and after obtaining the Masters' degree in musicology, he decided to emigrate. Later he obtained the Doctoral degree and also studied conducting in England under George Hurst. At the University of Alberta he taught theory, composition, conducting and trombone and held the position of Composer-in-Residence and conductor of the University Symphony Orchestra. It was his work as a composer which brought his name to international attention, however. Internationally acclaimed artists and orchestras commissioned Malcolm Forsyth, with his compositions being performed throughout the world. Remarkable amongst Forsyth's achievements are his three JUNO awards (1987, 1994, 1998) and three more nominations, all for "Best Classical Composition". In 2003 he was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal and was inducted into the Order of Canada. Most recently he made the national news when the National Arts Centre Orchestra performed his Ballad of Canada in Ottawa.

Malcolm Forsyth passed away in 2011 at the age of 74. Edmontonians can be proud that Dr. Forsyth called this city home.

Makoto Shinohara was born in 1931 in Osaka, Japan. He studied composition with Ikenouchi at the Tokyo Arts Academy, electronic music with Koenig, and composition with Stockhausen in Cologne.



The Tonus Vivus Society for New Music is Edmonton's premier organization for the promotion and presentation of contemporary music and sound-related arts. Now in its third decade of operations, The Society is committed to the goal of seeking out and bringing to its audiences the widest possible spectrum of musical and sonic art practices. Our core, founding principles were conceived by a group of Edmonton composers in 1985 who, at the suggestion of the late Violet Archer, began a new series of concerts. Their mandate: to create a forum for their compositions through public performances by committed, professional musicians from the area. In the quarter century since, those principles have remained and *Tonus Vivus* continues to encourage and support its members' creativity at every opportunity.

Tonus Vivus is moving full speed ahead into its next quarter century. The creative work of our members is a source of great pride for us and we will continue to foster development of our members' work through concerts, festivals, promotion, recordings and other special projects. We will also provide mentoring and career-development assistance for members just beginning their creative life. Our long history of producing outstanding concerts will continue through live performances by local, national and international artists, and will bring cutting edge repertoire, leading performers, and newly commissioned works to our audiences.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Julie-Anne Derome, violin and electronics

3 p.m. Sunday, March 11, 2012

L'uni Théâtre, La Cité francophone

126, 8627 rue Marie-Anne-Gabourey, Edmonton

Renowned soloist and member of Trio Fibonacci, Julie-Anne Derome will bring an extraordinary and innovative program to our series. The works feature violin with multi-channel electronics and video, include the stunning *Anthèmes II* of Pierre Boulez and pieces by Canadian composers David Eagle, Serge Provost and Laurie Radford.

David Eagle, Soundplay 2 // Serge Provost, Journal d'une enfant reveuse... 1935 // Laurie Radford, Tracking // Pierre Boulez, Anthèmes II

The Warszynski Trio

8 p.m. Friday, April 13, 2012

Muttart Hall, Edmonton

10050 Macdonald Drive

The final concert of our Main Series season is a rich combination of works performed by The Warszynski Trio. New works by Thom Golub, Dan Brophy and Piotr Grella-Mozejko will give us an opportunity to hear music by three eminent local composers. The international scene will be represented by such towering figures as Pärt, Lutoslawski and Schnittke and Edmonton will have its first opportunity to hear a major composition by Canada's Ana Sokolovic.

Piotr Grella-Mozejko, new piece // Alfred Schnittke, Piano Trio // Thom Golub, Exteroceptions, commissioned by the Warszynski Trio // Dan Brophy, Piano Trio // Jonathan Maywood, Apprehension // Ana Sokolovic, Portrait Parle // Giuseppe Lupis, 8 Variations, One Crazy, on Ah! Vous Dirai-je, Maman // Arvo Part, Fratres // Witold Lutoslawski, Subito

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