



continuum

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Welcome:

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Continuum newsletter. This season has seen a big increase in activity, and as we hurry along at a lunatic pace immersed in the details of concert production, budgeting, grant writing and co-operative ventures, Jennifer and I sometimes feel that we shortchange our audience and long-time supporters. We would like you to know more about the development of upcoming projects, and share the ups and downs as we push ambitious plans through to completion. We are fortunate to work with some extremely dedicated, talented and just plain intriguing people, and we would like you meet them too. And so, although we really don't need anything extra to do, we want to pass along a sense of the energy and enthusiasm that propels all of us at here at Continuum. We hope it's contagious! **S.S.**

Next concert: "Brassage"

"Brassage"

The Music Gallery

(197 John Street at Stephanie)

February 17, 2004 – 8 PM

Meet Gyula Csapo & Juliet Kiri Palmer

Plus: a photo display from our recent European Tour

In brass production "brassage" is the mixing of melted metals. For Continuum's concert, the title refers to the mixing of brass, celeste and harp timbres with Continuum's regular ensemble of flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion and tape. The result is an extraordinary soundscape.

More About "Brassage"

In keeping with Continuum's practice, three works on the programme are by Canadian composers: Serge Arcuri (*Lueurs* for French horn, percussion and tape), Gyula Csapo (*Sonate, que veut tu?* for 3 French horns, violin, harp and celeste) and Juliet Kiri Palmer (*Foundry* for the ensemble plus horn and trombone). This last is a Continuum commission with the support of the Laidlaw Foundation. Of her new work Palmer writes,

"With the help of neighbours and a precarious arrangement of plywood and castors, we hauled an old cast iron bath tub from the back garden to the curb. Within hours it had vanished. Scooped up by scrap metal scavengers the tub was on its way to a new life ...girder, park bench, pipe, rebar, nail, hammer...who knows. This piece is a musical foundry. My focus is on metal: sawn, hammered, melted, poured. The melodic material is based on pitch analyses of the sounds of drilling, hammering and sawing. I want to melt the material down to a metallic gleam".

Also on the programme are pieces by Leilei Tian, a Taiwanese composer now living in France who has won numerous awards, (*Dyeing*, for violin, horn and celeste), and German composer and mentor of composers and artistic directors everywhere, Gerhard Stabler (*Affiliert* for flute, clarinet, cello, trombone and piano). His week-long residency at the Music Faculty of the University of Toronto last year created fruitful aesthetic chaos and yet more acolytes for this powerfully imaginative composer.

Patrick Gallois rejoins Continuum as conductor for this concert. One of the leading flutists of his generation, Gallois is also a conductor with his own orchestra in Jynaskyla, Finland and has regular conducting engagements throughout Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

This concert promises rich rewards through its unusual instrumentation and the composers' inspired musical insights.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW:

Upcoming concerts for Continuum Contemporary Music:

"Inbreath" -- The Music Gallery, Toronto, March 13th, 8:00 PM

"Inbreath" -- The Registry Theatre, Kitchener, March 21st, 8:00 PM

European Tour Update:

Continuum has returned from its first international tour. As with any under-taking of this size, there were a few surprises along the way. Things began smoothly at the expertly run and ever-supportive new music institute De IJsbreker in **Amsterdam**. A reasonably large and very knowledgeable audience, (including the mayor of Amsterdam) turned out to hear works by Canadian and Dutch composers reflective of the aesthetic ties between the two countries. Amsterdam's largest daily, *De Telegraaf*, gave us a very favourable review, declaring "Ensemble Continuum performs magic with sound". Of Allison Cameron's work "Retablo" they wrote "the result was intriguing; especially because the perfect ensemble playing creates the impression of listening to two completely new instruments instead of four familiar ones". The concert was recorded by VPRO Radio for later broadcast.

Our second concert was in the north of the Netherlands in **Leeuwarden**. Unfortunately, it fell on the night of an all-important Holland/Scotland world championship soccer game. Although attendance was low, the performance was impressive; and the acoustics of the converted church, which is a favoured recording space of musicians like Reinbert deLeeuw and Louis Andreissen, were a treat. (Holland won the soccer match.)

Continuum stopped next in **London**, where Canadian composers Linda C. Smith and Scott Wilson joined the ensemble. The first event was a workshop of their pieces at the Trinity College of Music. The composers went on to present seminars at the Royal Academy of Music, while the musician continued with open rehearsals at Trinity. The following day, we were presented jointly by the Canadian High Commission and the British Section of the International Society for Contemporary Music in a concert at Canada House preceded by a talk moderated by BBC producer Philip Tanguay. The concert was well attended and very well received. British composer Geoff Hannan declared that the group's performance of his piece *Centrifugal Bumblepuppy* was the best he had heard. Clarinetist Peter Stoll faced special challenges for this concert. His clarinets were stolen on his arrival in London, and he played the remainder of the tour on unfamiliar instruments with new reeds.

Next on the itinerary, and a focal point of the tour, was the **Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival**. The Continuum entourage, already impressive with six musicians, conductor Rosemary Thompson along with her five month old baby and husband, two composers and the artistic director, became yet larger and more colourful with the addition of composer Michael Oesterle from Montreal. Continuum's performance took place at St. Paul's Hall in the afternoon and was recorded by BBC Radio. It was electric. There were about 175 people in attendance and it was rumoured to be one of the best concerts of the festival to that point.

Back in the Netherlands the group pushed on to '**s-Hertogenbosch** for a concert at Het Muziekcentrum. The performance took place in a beautiful converted nineteenth century synagogue and was recorded by Dutch radio broadcaster Concertzender.

The tour concluded in **Ghent**, Belgium at Stichting Logos. Logos is a fabled experimental facility devoted primarily to electronic music. The pyramidal space is littered with computers and robotic instruments, and the adjoining rooms are crammed with thirty years of archival recordings. Continuum capped the two and a half week tour with a programme of predominantly electronic repertoire.

What next?

While the artistic challenges of mounting such a tour are considerable, the logistical and financial hurdles are equally daunting. Billets fell through, resulting in a big increase in accommodation costs, and many expenses in Europe are nearly triple what they are in Canada. But, as we are already receiving inquiries about future engagements abroad and at home, we know that the investment of funds, energy and daring will pay off.

To build on this artistic success, and to continue to meet our commitments for this season, we are currently looking for new sources of funding. Our gala fundraiser is scheduled for May, and many of our long-time supporters have historically made their donations toward the end of our season. But in the meantime, your support would be greatly appreciated. Come to a concert, bring a friend (or ten), and please consider making a donation now. Thank you.

Yes, I would like to make a donation:

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