

canadian league of composers bulletin



“I love the CBC!”

With this resounding affirmation, Canadian League of Composers President John Burge kicked off the Canadian League of Composers – Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Roundtable, Sunday, October 27 at the Delta Chelsea Hotel in Toronto. Supported by the SOCAN Foundation and the Government of Canada through the Canada Music Fund, the Roundtable brought together CBC producers, executive producers, recording engineers, and on air hosts; new music producers; and composers; as well as Rick MacMillan, the SOCAN Foundation, David Parsons, Ontario Arts Council, and Elisabeth Bird, Executive Director CIMC, for a lively discussion of the role of the CBC in supporting Canadian music.



Janet Dea, Head of English Radio Music, began by giving an overview of the role the CBC currently played in the support and dissemination of Canadian music, listing such activities as the Commissioning Program, the Young Composers Contest, their support of festivals, and the Composers Portrait Series, as well as less visible activities such as encouraging programming by giving priority to concerts with Canadian content, and their various partnerships and activities on a regional basis.

The early part of the afternoon was largely informational as various current programs were discussed. Adrian Goffman, (CBC, Halifax) former head of the Commissioning Program Committee, began by giving a brief history of this program and describing the procedures. In the discussion that followed several points of special interest to composers were discussed.

1. Unlike the Canada Council, whose function is to provide funds for artists, the CBC Commissioning Program's mandate is to create broadcasting. Therefore decisions have to be driven by merit and suitability of the project for a producer's needs.
2. The amount that the CBC currently sets aside for the program is unlikely to be raised in the foreseeable future. However, the fact that the commissioning fees are often below the new CBC rates was cited as a possible argument for an increase.

In other discussion of funding the idea of partnerships was also stressed as a way to enable larger projects to be funded.

The CIMC- CBC Composer Portrait Series was cited as an example of a partnership that met the goal of each organization – introducing more Canadian music to Canadians and creating excellent radio. The CBC reaffirmed their commitment to the series, hoping to produce the next five in the series this year. In a fascinating aside during the discussion, Brian Cornfield, series producer, played a clip from the March 1, 1952 broadcast of the first major CBC Concert. The intermission presentation showed that in presenting new music to the listening audience, the challenges are hardly new.

continued

World Commissioning Rates Analysis

Randy Barnard, General Manager CBC Records, gave an overview of the for-profit centre and the role it filled in the Canadian recording industry. He discussed such items as the newer policy of favoring single composer disks (more options for broadcasters and easier display for retailers), sales and distribution, the fact that CBC Records is one of the few Canadian labels that could favor orchestral recordings, and future directions for the label (a small entry into world music and DVD format). In the discussion that followed, live broadcast releases, limited releases, and the untapped choral market, were mentioned. The group was reminded that Barbara Brown from CBC licensing deals with lease back requests and issues. Elisabeth Bilal, Executive Director CMC, stressed the need for an accommodation from the AIFM to the issuance of archival material.

The second half of the afternoon session was devoted to ideas to improve the profile of composers on the CBC. Ideas discussed included a regional show on the model of Writers and Company that focused on the creators (performers and composers) as well as the music [CBC seemed to feel that the Regions had the flexibility for this already], commissions for Radiophonic documentaries given the ubiquity of composer studios [some issues of quality control were discussed, but the idea was favorably received], tenders for music used in dramas, etc. [to be passed on to the appropriate area as not part of Radio Music's activities], and Governor General Prizes for Music [CMC is pursuing this but the issue is largely money].

In summation, Moderator Harry Wake (Host/Producer Two New Flowers) noted several points – the importance of partnerships, that the producer can be an advocate for a composer, and the importance of knowing and using your local producers as contacts for other parts of the CBC. The CMC is preparing a 2003 Membership Booklet which will include not only our own members' contact information, but also an up-dated list of CBC producers across the country and the CBC's internal commissioning deadlines. The CMC will also provide copies of the booklet to all CBC producers to enable them to more easily contact our members.

Perhaps the one theme that recurred throughout the afternoon was the need for communication. Composers reiterated the need to know what sort of decisions drove programming, stressing that Canadian music was out there that met these needs. The CBC indicated their need to hear from composers concerning exciting new music and how to present pieces. To this end, a commitment was made to repeat the Roundtable on a regular basis.

The Roundtable was followed by a reception and dinner, at which time David Jaeger, Two New Flowers, and Harry Wake received the CMC/CMC Friend of Canadian Music Award. Two framed certificates and the \$1,000.00 prize were presented by Elisabeth Bilal and John Bunge.

- Laura Hoffman

BULLETIN

Laura Hoffman, editor
Canadian League of Composers
20 St. Joseph St.
Toronto, ON M4Y 1J9
CANADA
www.composition.org
info@composition.org
877-964-1364



For the past several years, the Music Commissioning Programme at the Canada Council has been seriously lagging behind the needs of the community. In studying models from around the Western world, it was found that the programme is lacking in four major areas, when compared with practices in other countries.

1) Low level of base funding - most countries spend a significantly higher per capita sum on the music commissioning programme. The Canada Council's annual commissioning budget of "around 1 million dollars" (they are not allowed to be more precise) amounts to \$0.03 per capita, versus the Netherlands' \$0.11 per capita and Denmark's \$0.32 per capita.

2) Low level of commissioning fees - the CMC suggested Rates are amongst the lowest in the Western world. Of the countries surveyed, only Australia consistently pays less per minute for commissioned work.

3) Lack of flexible fee structure - most countries have a scope of fees, reflecting the fact that older composers often deserve somewhat higher fees, reflecting greater artistic experience. The CMC rates are technically only suggested maximums, but in reality they are used as maximums, with larger commissions often falling below CMC rates.

4) Low success rate - the low success rate of the Commissioning Programme (1 to 4) has created great difficulties for the community. Producers and ensembles find it very difficult to plan new works and build successful programming as funding is so hard to predict. This means they must either change their programming constantly at the last minute, or consistently ask composers to work for free, neither of which is good for the long term development of creative music and the artistic community. The low success rate has also begun to undermine the community's confidence in the effectiveness of the jury system and therefore its motivation to participate in it. This is a very negative message to be sending to the community and it is difficult to maintain positive, forward momentum for the arts in Canada if artists and their art are not felt to have some value and significance in the process.

The CMC believes strongly that funding for the programme must be raised in order to address these issues.

For more detail on rates used for comparison, check the CMC Website at: www.composition.org

- Tom Brady

WORLD MUSIC DAYS 2002 - HONG KONG



The International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) held its World Music Days in Hong Kong between October 11 and October 19 this year. There were 21 concerts of every imaginable genre: orchestral, chamber, electroacoustic, Chinese ensembles, children, solo, etc. In total there were 115 works from 58 different countries presented at this year's festival.

Compared to recent World Music Days festivals, the organizers worked hard at being as inclusive as possible. There were two Canadian works presented at the festival: *Wistful Waltzing* by Hope Lee and *Symphonic Minute* by José Evangelista. Evangelista's work was performed by the Symphony Orchestra from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, and although it was a student ensemble, they played with remarkable precision and enthusiasm. Hope Lee's work was scored for traditional Chinese instruments: Zheng, Erhu, Xiao, and Dizi. The composition was very well performed, especially the challenging Zheng part, and it was one of the most successful cross-cultural pieces of the festival. Although neither composer was able to attend the festival, another Canadian - Robert Aiken - was present in Hong Kong because he was the soloist in Richard Tsang's flute concerto - *Spiroff* - which was performed during the opening concert. Unfortunately my plane had not yet arrived in Hong Kong so I missed this concert, but by all accounts it was a stunningly virtuosic performance.

Each of the evening concerts of the festival was curated by a "Signature" composer. The concept of a "Signature" composer is that an invited composer selects works (from among the submissions) and tries to create a concert that has both coherence and aesthetic consistency. In some cases, this worked very well: the concerts chosen by Per Nørgaard and Kaija Saariaho were wonderful events, while those chosen by Jo Kondo and Michael Nyman contained far too much of the same kind of music and were too consistent for my taste. The other "Signature" composers were Krzysztof Penderecki, Zhu Jianer, Domingo Elma, and Tan Dun. Unfortunately, several of the "Signature" composers were unable to attend the festival - some because of prior commitments, others because of ill health. Michael Nyman did send a tape recording explaining that he was just too busy to be there...

In addition to the concerts, there was a three day symposium which gave delegates and guest composers an opportunity to discuss common issues such as "globalization" and "cross-cultural fusion". I moderated one of these sessions, and I found it to be a fascinating insight both into the vast culture differences that exist between us as well as into the common concerns which bind all creators together regardless of where they originate. Most of the participants would like to see the symposium continued, and perhaps even expanded, to future festivals.

Another new feature to the 2002 World Music Days was the announcement of a Young Composer award. Over the next three years, a commission (\$10,000 USD) will be awarded to a selected composer under 35 who has a work presented at the World Music Days Festival. The composer will be commissioned to write a large chamber work which will be premiered in Amsterdam. The funds for this award have been donated by the Composer and Authors Society of Hong Kong (CASHK). It is hoped that the award can be continued after the initial 3-year period, so that it will become an ongoing feature of the ISCM World Music Days. This year's recipient of the award has not been announced yet.

In the ISCM elections, Richard Tsang (Hong Kong) was elected as the new ISCM President and Gill Graham (UK) was elected Vice-President - they replace Anne Mellnäs (Sweden) and John Davies (Australia), both of whom have provided excellent leadership for this organization. Newly elected onto the ISCM Executive Committee are Anna Dorota Wladyczka (Poland) and Keith Hamel (Canada). Since I am now on the ISCM Executive and can no longer be a representative of Canada, Paul Steinhilber has been elected by the GAC Council to be the new Canadian ISCM delegate. Paul will be chairing the ISCM National Selection Jury at the end of January 2003 to choose works which will form our national submission to the 2004 World Music Days in Switzerland. Information is included with this issue of the Bulletin.

- Keith Hamel

Congratulations to Keith Hamel on his election to the International Executive of the ISCM. This is a fabulous achievement as he is the first North American Composer elected to this council in the 80 year history of the ISCM.

At its last meeting, the Executive Council elected Paul Steinhilber as the new Canadian Director/Representative.

The ISCM Canadian Section is supported by the:



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada

The CLC thanks the SOCAN FOUNDATION and our members for their generous support!

The 2003 Canadian League of Composers Annual General Meeting will take place in Montreal, Sunday morning March 9. Please make plans to attend the meeting – and *Musique de la création au Canada: Réseautage et communications / New music in Canada: networking and communication.*

ATTEND! COMPOSERS, PERFORMERS, PRODUCERS, ADMINISTRATORS, MUSIC LOVERS ***Musique de la création au Canada: Réseautage et communications / New music in Canada: networking and communication***

From March 6th to 8th, 2003, Montréal is hosting a major conference in order to discuss the future of new music in Canada. This event, which will coincide with the first biannual “Montréal Nouvelles Musiques” international festival (March 3 - 10) will bring together all members of the new music community for a series of round table discussions, forums and meetings in order to create better networking and communication across the country.

The goals are very simple:

- 1) to increase knowledge and understanding of the scope and diversity of new music in Canada within the community
- 2) to create effective, realistic tools in order to help the entire community work together in order to better present new Canadian music to the public.

We all know what amazing events happen in each of our cities. Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Vancouver (to name just a few) all have great new music communities. But we need to move to a new level of cooperation in order for these local centres to reach a “critical mass” in terms of funding, media and public outreach. This is the goal of this conference.

All members of the new music community are invited to attend - composers, performers, producers, administrators and music lovers.

All forms of creative music must be represented at this event - contemporary notated chamber and orchestral music, electroacoustic music, improvised music, experimental music, *musique actuelle*, contemporary jazz, new media practices and beyond.

A series of 6 formal discussions will be held during the daytime from March 6 - 8th at the Chapelle Historique du Bon-Pasteur in downtown Montreal. All conferences will have full simultaneous translation. Topics include touring in Canada, a panel on “distances and dynamics” (the diversity of each city), tools for networking, a discussion on the role of the Canadian Music Centre, and a presentation on new music concert presenters in Canada. A final plenary session is planned where new, concrete steps will be taken to help new music in Canada move forward.

Two noted guest speakers have been invited to share their experiences from Europe and the USA: Jean-Dominique Marco - founder of the “Varèse” touring network in Europe and Phillip Blackburn - Executive Director of the American Composers’ Forum

Conference registration will start soon in order to allow as many participants to come to the event, and in order for participants to apply for travel funding at various agencies so that they can attend this event.

This event is produced by the Conseil québécois de la musique, in collaboration SIMCQ, and organised by the Conseil québécois de la musique “table sectorielle - musique d’aujourd’hui” (a coalition of all Montreal’s new music groups), and funded in part by the Canada Council for the arts and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Conseil québécois de la musique - (514) 524 - 1310 / adm@cqm.qc.ca WEB: www.cqm.qc.ca

John Brady

The CMC Bulletin is now available electronically! You may chose to receive the Bulletin as a pdf attachment via e-mail rather than through regular mail. Just let the office know by sending an e-mail to: clc@musiccentre.ca

CMC Founding Member and President Emeritus, John Weinzwieg, was recently awarded a Commemorative Medal for the Golden Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This medal is given to those people who, over the past 50 years, have helped create the Canada of today. Recipients are Canadian citizens who have made an outstanding and exemplary contribution to the community or to Canada as a whole.

We couldn’t agree more – Congratulations!

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Do you know of a CMC member who would be willing to work on the Executive Committee? We need people with expertise in lobbying, an ability to communicate effectively and a desire to improve the conditions that are facing composers today. If you have a nomination in mind, please inform Laura Goffman by January 31, 2003 at Laura.Goffman@tdmusic.com.