



## SHIFT

***Movement and meaning between Canada and the Netherlands***  
**A Festival of Canadian and Dutch Music, Film and Literature**

**Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ, Amsterdam: November 18 – 22, 2008**  
**Harbourfront and the Music Gallery: February 25 – March 3, Toronto, 2009**

**For Immediate Release – Toronto, October 29, 2008:** Continuum Contemporary Music is pleased to announce **SHIFT**, a festival of Canadian and Dutch music, film and literature, taking place **November 18-22, 2008 in Amsterdam** and **February 25-March 3, 2009 in Toronto**. Programmed by some of Canada's top artistic voices – **Continuum Contemporary Music, Authors at Harbourfront Centre** and **The Images Festival**, in collaboration with The Netherlands' influential **Muziek Centrum Nederland** (formerly Gaudeamus) and the internationally acclaimed **AskO|Schönberg** and **Ives ensembles** -- in Amsterdam **SHIFT** is hosted by the architecturally stunning new **Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ** while Canadian activities take place at Toronto's jewel of the waterfront, **Harbourfront Centre**, as well as the **Music Gallery**.

Amsterdam events include concerts, pre-concert talks moderated by well-known Dutch cultural critics, a live VPRO Radio broadcast, film and live music collaborations, late night screenings of film and video, and panel discussions featuring authors from both countries, one of which will be recorded for later broadcast on CBC radio. With 36 Canadian artists represented, 29 of them present, **SHIFT** is the largest festival of Canadian art to take place in Europe in many years. Added to those numbers are 42 Dutch musicians, composers, filmmakers and writers, making **SHIFT** an exceptional cultural event.

**SHIFT** was conceived by Continuum's Artistic Director **Jennifer Waring** during her Metcalf Foundation funded residency with Gaudeamus in 2005-06. At its root, the festival is an investigation of the bond between the two markedly different countries, created during the Second World War and through the subsequent wave of immigration to Canada, and provides a new perspective on the relationship. She writes, "*The Netherlands is small, rich in human history, and still comparatively uniform in makeup; Canada is large, young as a modern state, and diverse in its population. In these rather obvious factors the countries are diametrically opposed, and to an expatriate – a privilege I had on and off over seven years – the contrast is a head-swiveling, breathtaking experience that can provoke hyperactive theorizing. But a base of common outlook and perception prevents total disorientation and makes comparison possible. Beyond these is an ineffable but strong affinity.*"

### **SHIFT's musical highlights include:**

- On November 18, a performance by the one of the world's premiere new music ensembles, the **ASKO|Schönberg Ensemble**, with internationally acclaimed Canadian soprano **Barbara Hannigan** and conductor **Etienne Siebens**. The programme features premieres funded by The Canada Council for the Arts by **James Rolfe** and **Michael Oesterle**, as well as the Dutch premiere of *Lettura di Dante* by the late **Claude Vivier** and a new work by the young Dutch composer **Corrie van Binsbergen**;
- On November 19, a performance by **Quatuor Bozzini**, twice winner of the Prix Opus from Conseil québécois de la musique featuring works by Canadian composers **Martin Arnold** and **Michael Oesterle**, and Dutch composers **Richard Ayres**, **Hanna Kulenty** and **Martijn Voorvelt**.
- On November 20, a joint concert by **Continuum** and the **Ives Ensemble**. Recognized as leaders in new music in their respective countries, IE and Continuum premiere music written for the combined ensembles – **Linda Bouchard** (CA) (funded by the Canada Council for the Arts) and **Guus Janssen** (NL) (funded by Nederlands Fonds voor de Podiumkunsten NFPK+) and for the separate ensembles – **Makye Nas** (NL) for Continuum, and **Gyula Csapo** for IE. Continuum also performs *raW* (by James Rolfe), winner of the 2006 Jules-Léger Prize. The concert will be broadcast live by VPRO Radio;



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**SHIFT** features an ambitious programme of film and music collaboration in **Notes on Composing: 5 collaborations in film and music**, November 21. The result of a programming collaboration between Continuum Contemporary Music and **The Images Festival**, *Notes on Composing* features world premieres of five short films with live music performed by **Continuum** and violinist/composer **Malcolm Goldstein**. Most of the collaborating artists had never met or worked together – as Images Festival Artistic Director **Pablo de Ocampo** writes, “*these collaborations represent something of a leap in faith, or a dare on the part of all the parties involved.*”

- Winnipeg-based **Guy Maddin** (a multiple award-winner at local and international film festivals including Best Canadian Feature at the 2007 Toronto International Film Festival for *My Winnipeg*) working with the brilliant British/Dutch composer **Richard Ayres**;
- video artist **Vera Frenkel** (winner of the 2006 Governor General’s Award in Visual and Media Arts, the Canada Council Molson Prize, the Bell Canada Award for Video Art, the 2006 Governor General’s Award and a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts) working with acclaimed Toronto percussionist and composer **Rick Sacks**;
- Canadian filmmaker **Daichi Saito** working with one of the originators of North American musical experimentalism, Montreal-based **Malcolm Goldstein**;
- environmental biologist turned filmmaker **Christina Battle** working with Toronto composer **Martin Arnold**;
- Toronto-based filmmaker and poet **Clive Holden** working with Rotterdam composer **Oscar van Dillen**.

The program will be repeated in Toronto on opening night of The Images Festival in April 2009.

**SHIFT** will also feature two nights of screenings of short films from Canada and The Netherlands, curated by The Images Festival and The Impakt Festival (Utrecht) respectively.

Programming for the literature component of **SHIFT** has been undertaken by **Authors at Harbourfront Centre**, with events in Amsterdam falling under the banner of the **International Festival of Authors (IFOA)**. In its 35 year history, Authors at Harbourfront Centre has presented more than 5,000 authors from more than 100 countries. The world-renowned IFOA, now in its 29th year, annually presents more than 100 authors – established and emerging – from around the world as part of an 11-day festival each October. **IFOA Amsterdam** is the first time an element of the Festival has been presented overseas. Events in both Amsterdam and in Toronto feature panel discussions in which Canadian and Dutch authors at different stages in their career open up new debates around literature, culture, and shared international perspectives. The line-up for Amsterdam is: From Canada: **Dionne Brand** (*What We All Long For, Inventory*), **Lewis DeSoto** (*A Blade of Grass*), **Helen Humphreys** (*Wild Dogs, Coventry*), **Andrew Pyper** (*Lost Girls, The Killing Circle*), and, as event moderator, **Eleanor Wachtel** (host of CBC Radio’s *Writers & Company*). From The Netherlands: **Gerbrand Bakker** (*The Twin*), **Lieve Joris** (*The Rebels’ Hour*), **Lucette ter Borg** (*The Gift from Berlin*), **Anja Sicking** (*The Silent Sin*), and, as event moderator, **Michaël Zeeman** (cultural correspondent for *de Volkskrant*). Canadian author **Richard Clewes** (*Finding Lily*) hosts all events. The discussion moderated by Eleanor Wachtel will be recorded for broadcast on CBC Radio. Continuum has worked with **Authors at Harbourfront Centre Director Geoffrey Taylor** to set up these author events.

**Continuum Contemporary Music** presents the work of emerging Canadian composers alongside works by established national and international composers in its concert series, at festivals, on tour, over the air waves and through recordings. The Chalmers Award-winning group has generated interdisciplinary projects with celebrated Vancouver choreographer Conrad Alexandrowicz; Montreal video artist Ramona Ramlochand; and John Oswald. For *l’Oreille Fine*, Continuum combined new music and philosophy in concerts and a symposium



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wherein philosophers, poets and critics dealt with the subject of new music. Formed in 1985, Continuum has a core ensemble of flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion which is often varied and combined with electronics. The organization has commissioned and premiered over 100 new works from emerging and established Canadian composers; increasingly it commissions international composers. Continuum toured Canada in 1999 and Europe in 2003, and will be on tour again in the fall of 2008, with performances in Aberdeen, 's-Hertogenbosch, Amsterdam and Huddersfield. It has released two CD's on its own label, recorded one for Centrediscs and has two CD projects in the works.

Established in 1987, **The Images Festival** is the largest festival in North America for experimental and independent moving image culture, showcasing the innovative edge of international contemporary media art both on and off the screen. From Super-8 and hand-tinted celluloid to the latest video art, Images has presented thousands of films and media based projects in our 21+ year history. Images is committed to an expanded concept of film and video practice: alongside film and video screenings, the festival presents groundbreaking live performances, media art installations in local galleries and new media projects by many renowned Canadian and international artists. We go out of our way and over the edge to provide Toronto with an annual extravaganza of image making. Attended by more than 30,000 people each year, Toronto's 2nd oldest film festival is a critical forum for the independent media arts in Canada and around the world and provides artists with a supportive and professional forum in which to present their projects. Many influential media artists have been nurtured by Images' willingness to embrace new creative concepts and modes of expression in the media arts field. The Images Festival exhibits and encourages the work of artists producing film and video outside of mainstream commercial production, distribution systems and aesthetic conventions. In addition to the international competition programs drawn from submissions to the festival, Images includes artists' retrospectives, national and regional cinema spotlights, publishing projects, touring programs and special guest-curated sections.

The world renowned **Authors at Harbourfront Centre** programme is home to a weekly reading series (September to June), the annual International Festival of Authors (IFOA) (October) and, for younger readers, YoungIFOA (October), ALOUD: a Celebration for Young Readers (May) and Forest of Reading® Festival of Trees™ (May). Established in 1974, Authors at Harbourfront Centre's mandate is to present the world's most important and influential authors and distinctive new writers, Canadian and international, in a forum that celebrates books and writing. The programme provides Canadian authors with an internationally recognized platform on which to present their work, and fosters an awareness in its audiences of the variety and richness of writing from Canada and around the world. Since programming began, Authors at Harbourfront Centre has presented more than 5,000 authors, including 15 Nobel Laureates and countless other prize winners, on its stages. In 1980, the fledgling IFOA became the first international literary festival in North America. At that time it presented 18 poets over 6 days. Twenty-nine years later, IFOA continues to grow. The 2008 festival included nearly 70 public events, featuring writers of fiction, non-fiction, travel writing, poetry, graphic novels, and books for younger readers in a series of readings, interviews, and panel discussions. Annual special events include readings by the authors shortlisted for the three major Canadian fiction awards, the awarding of the \$10,000 Harbourfront Festival Prize, and a gala benefit to support of PEN Canada.

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