

Jocelyne Fleury, mezzo-soprano

Biographical notes

A singer of great versatility, mezzo-soprano Jocelyne Fleury has taken part in many world/Canadian premieres of contemporary works, in Canada and in Europe. Among the composers whose work she has introduced are Vivier, Mather, Evangelista, Brégent, Shinohara, Boucher, Cage, Lauber, and Stockhausen, including three operatic premières (Vivier's *Kopernikus*; Saint-Marcoux's *Transit*, and Plant's *The Shadowy Waters*.)

She has been the guest artist of many orchestras and ensembles, including the Liège Philharmonic, l'Ensemble Itinéraire de Paris, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, l'Orchestre Métropolitain, Société de Musique Contemporaine du Québec, Les Evenements du Neuf, L'Ensemble du Jeu Présent, Ensemble Orphée, Ensemble Les Nations, Quatuor Molinari, the Montreal Chamber Orchestra, and Ensemble Prima. She has sung in international festivals, including those of Montepulciano (Italy) and Almeida (England).

She is an ardent defender of new music, on stage, television, disc, and the airwaves of Radio-Canada and Radio-France. With the support of the Canada Council, Bruce Mather, Michel Longtin, John Plant and Walter Boudreau have been commissioned to write works especially for her voice.

Her repertoire also encompasses a wide range of traditional operatic and song repertoire from all periods; she has a particular affinity for Spanish and Russian repertoire, and for the music of Bach and Mahler.

Her CD (SNE 629) with Quatuor Claudel "Canciones del Alma" features works by Plant, Wagner, Obradors and Barber.

She has taught voice at McGill University, University of Montreal, Vanier College, and Concordia University. She is presently engaged in developing 'Qi-Song', a method of singing she has devised which incorporates techniques from the Chinese practice of energy manipulation, known as Qigong.

John Plant, composer/pianist.

Biographical notes

JOHN PLANT was born in Yonkers, New York, in 1945. He studied composition with George Todd at Middlebury College (Vermont), where he also pursued intensive literary and classical studies. A Woodrow Wilson Fellow in comparative literature at Harvard, he interrupted his studies in order to evade military service. Immigrating to Canada in 1968, he studied composition at McGill University with Bruce Mather and Charles Palmer.

A series of works for choreographers Peter Boneham and Jean-Pierre Perrault of Le Groupe de la Place Royale culminated in the dance-operas *What Happened*, *The Collector of Cold Weather*, and *Faustus: An Opera for Dancers*. These works were premiered at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, and subsequently performed on tour throughout Canada, England and France.

His works reflect his intense love of literature, languages, and the human voice. Among the poets whose work he has set to music are Sappho, St. John of the Cross, W. B. Yeats, E. E. Cummings, and Lawrence Raab, in addition to the poets represented on this disc. His opera, *The Shadowy Waters*, was first performed at the Oscar Peterson Concert Hall in February 2005. His works have been performed by the Molinari and Claudel Quartets, the Montreal Chamber Orchestra, the Talisker Players, l'Ensemble du Jeu Présent, Ensemble Phoenix, and Ensemble Prima. He has recently completed a setting of Elizabeth Bishop's poem *Sandpiper* for soprano Suzie LeBlanc.

Plant taught composition and music history at Concordia University from 1993-2008; he retired in 2008 to devote himself to composition. He is an associate composer of the Canadian Music Centre and a member of the American Music Centre. He lives in West Jeddore, Nova Scotia.