

BEVERLEY JOHNSTON

Percussion

A charismatic performer and an outstanding musician, Canada's premiere percussionist Beverley Johnston is internationally recognized for her virtuosic and dynamic performances on a wide range of percussion instruments. Her exciting performances have been distinguished as unconventional, effectively combining classical transcriptions, contemporary music, and a touch of theatre. She has captivated audiences across North America and overseas with her personal charm and her unique style. Her performances and recordings have been broadcast on radio networks all over the world. She has released five solo CDs: *Ming* (2009, Centrediscs); *Garden of Delights* (2004, independent release); *Alternate Currents* (1992, Centrediscs); *Marimbach* (1989, CBC Records Musica Viva); and *Impact* (1986, Centrediscs, JUNO nominee). She can also be heard as soloist or chamber musician on numerous other recordings.

Beverley Johnston's schedule is booked a couple of years in advance, and includes performances at several different percussion festivals in the United States, Europe and South America. She will also work on a recording project for release in 2012, which involves four Ontario composers who have written works specifically for her. Several world premieres are in the works as well.

In the past decade, Ms. Johnston maintained a full schedule of concerto and recital appearances across North America and abroad. In 2011, Beverley was a featured soloist at the Stratford Summer Music Festival. In 2010, she was invited to perform at the International Marimba Festival and Conference in Minneapolis and in the fall at the International Percussion Festival in Shenyang, China. In 2009 she was involved in the Zeltsman New Music Marimba Project and was a guest artist at the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival. In the same year she was given the distinction of becoming an Ambassador of the Canadian Music Centre in honour of her exemplary commitment to the performance of Canadian composers. 2008 saw, amongst other things, the Canadian premiere of Tan Dun's evocative *Water Concerto* with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra; Beverley was also the special guest at the 4th International Summer Academy for Marimba and Percussion with Nebojsa Zivkovic in Germany. In 2007, she performed the world premiere performance of Christos Hatzis' percussion concerto called *Tongues of Fire* with the Scotia Music Festival. In 2006 Beverley was a guest soloist at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention in Austin, Texas, for an audience of 1500 percussionists. She gave the world premiere of *Pyrrichean Dances* for percussion, viola, and string orchestra by Christos Hatzis with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra in 2003, and performed James MacMillan's well-known percussion concerto *Veni, Veni Emmanuel* in 2002 with Symphony Nova Scotia. That same year she played Canadian composer Alice Ho's evocative concerto *Radiantia* with the Hamilton Philharmonic and South Dakota Symphony.

Beverley Johnston has been a featured soloist with both the Symphony Nova Scotia and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestras, along with guest appearances with Amici Chamber Ensemble, the Penderecki String Quartet, The Blue Rider Ensemble, and Soundstreams Canada. Beverley is a regular on the festival circuit; she's appeared at the Open Ears Festival, the Zeltsman Marimba Festival, Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, the Parry Sound Festival, and the Uxbridge Celebration of the Arts. In recital,

she appeared at the Orillia Opera House, was featured soloist with Sinfonia Toronto, and was special guest artist with flautist Lorna McGhee at Vancouver's Music in the Morning.

In the 1990's Beverley has performed in Japan and has done several cross-Canada tours. She has performed the North American premiere of Japanese composer Maki Ishii's powerful work *Afro Concerto* with the Esprit Orchestra, and two concerti with the CBC Vancouver Orchestra written especially for her by Canadian composers Gary Kulesha and Patrick Cardy. In 1998 she was invited to perform at the Stockholm International Percussion Event which included many of the world's finest percussionists. Other guest solo appearances included the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, the Scotia Festival of Music, Vancouver New Music Society and the Journees de la Percussion in Paris, France. In the 1995/96 season, Ms. Johnston was showcased at the renowned International Percussive Arts Society Convention in Phoenix, Arizona and was also the subject of an hour-long documentary on CBC Television's nationally broadcast "Sunday Arts and Entertainment". Her performance on this program was nominated for a Gemini Award in the category of "Best Performance in a Performing Arts Program". After that, Ms. Johnston toured England, Norway and Sweden and was invited to perform a solo recital at the prestigious Ford Centre in North York, which was an outstanding success. She has made several successful appearances at the Winnipeg New Music Festival which has included a virtuosic concerto by Canadian composer Omar Daniel with The Hannaford Street Silver Band. This work is one of the featured pieces on their recording entitled *Heavy Metal*. At the 1994 Guelph Spring Festival she performed the world premiere of Michael Colgrass' outstanding work *Te Tuma Te Papa* with subsequent performances by her all over the world.

Among Beverley's other performing interests, she has been keen in developing her passion for performance collaborations, which has included the combination of dance, movement, art and theatre. From the 1990s to the present, she has worked with such organizations as Urge (the women's collective), the Blue Rider Ensemble, Valerie Kuinka's Collaborations series, Winnipeg's performance artist/pianist/composer Diana McIntosh, and has worked with renowned theatre/opera director Richard Armstrong and television/theatre directors Joanna McIntyre and George Bloomfield. One of her highlights in 1998 was working with composer Peter Hatch, costume designers Steve Topping and Aniko Fenyvesi and choreographer Bill James to create a solo dance/music work titled *Psionic Interference* where she played small percussion instruments attached to her costume. Over the past few years she has been involved with the multi-disciplinary project entitled "Frankenstein's Ghosts" with the Blue Rider Ensemble and choreographer/director Michael Montanaro.

Beverley's interest in music outreach programs for the past 25 years is reflected in her performances of hundreds of school concerts both as a soloist and with the Toronto Percussion Ensemble.

Beverley Johnston received her training at Vanier College in her native Montreal and studied with Russell Hartenberger at the University of Toronto, where she now teaches. She currently lives in rural Ontario with her husband, composer Christos Hatzis, where she has built a percussion studio that can finally fit all of her exotic instruments! Beverley is a Marimba One and Paiste Artist.

For more information, please visit www.beverleyjohnston.com.