

For immediate release

May 17, 2011



## Recording collection of Harry Somers' music culminates with DVD release of the opera *Louis Riel* and CD release of *Live from Toronto*

MAY 17, 2011 – TORONTO

The *A Window on Somers* recording project has, for twelve years, worked to immortalize the music of one of Canada's most eminent composers and bring it to a wider public. Now, with the DVD release of the opera *Louis Riel* and the CD release of Harry Somers' major orchestral works, *Live from Toronto* the collection comes to an exceptional close.

The three-act opera *Louis Riel*, with music by **Harry Somers**, libretto by **Mavor Moore** and **Jacques Languirand**, and conducted by **Victor Feldbrill**, was originally commissioned by the **Floyd S. Chalmers Foundation** for the 1967 Canadian centennial. This DVD release of *Louis Riel* presents the cast from the **Canadian Opera Company** performing Franz Kraemer's adaptation for CBC-TV in 1969.

*Live from Toronto* brings us some of Somers' most powerful orchestral works, including *Stereophony*, performed by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and conductor Jukka-Pekka Saraste, *Piano Concerto #2*, performed by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and conductor Victor Feldbrill, and *Those Silent, Awe-Filled Spaces*, performed by Esprit Orchestra and conductor Alex Pauk..

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***Louis Riel* and *Live from Toronto* are  
available on CD or as a digital download at  
[www.musiccentre.ca](http://www.musiccentre.ca) | [www.centremusique.ca](http://www.centremusique.ca)**

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The **Canadian Music Centre (CMC)** is most grateful and extends great thanks to **Robert Cram** of **Pierrot Concerts**, and **Barbara Chilcott Somers**, Executive Producers of *A Window on Somers*. The **CMC** is extremely honoured to be the recipients of this remarkable catalogue of Harry Somers' music. As **CMC** Executive Director Elisabeth Bihl iterated at the launch of the *Louis Riel* DVD and *Harry Somers Live from Toronto* CD, the *A Window on Somers* catalogue is indeed a "true Canadian gift, with a lasting impact."

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Born in Toronto, Ontario in 1925, **Harry Somers, O.C.**, is one of Canada's most recognized and internationally-known composers. Named a Companion of the Order of Canada, he also received honorary doctorates from the University of Ottawa (1975), the University of Toronto (1976) and York University (1975). He showed an interest in music only in his early teens and entered the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto at the age of 16. There he studied piano with Reginald Godden and Weldon Kilburn, and composition with John Weinzwieg. In the late 40s, he went first to San Francisco to continue piano with E. Robert Schmitz, and then to Paris to study composition under Darius Milhaud (1949-50). His luminous career included the creation of more than 400 works, heard around the world. Harry Somers passed away on March 9, 1999

**A *Window on Somers*** received support from the **Canada Council for the Arts**, the **Ontario Arts Council**, the **Canada Millennium Partnership Program** and the **Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)**. Private sector support came from hundreds of individual donors, and many foundations including the **Julie-Jiggs Foundation**, the **Max Clarkson Foundation**, the **Abraham and Malka Green Foundation**, the **Charles H. Ivey Foundation**, the **McLean Foundation**, the **George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation**, the **R. Howard Webster Foundation**, and **The Woodlawn Arts Foundation**.

The **Canadian Music Centre (CMC)** is Canada's largest community of professional composers. It promotes, publishes and distributes the music of Canada's contemporary music composers across the country and around the world. With over 800 established Associate Composers to date, the CMC is Canada's primary resource for scores, parts, recordings and information about Canadian composition. It plays an essential role in documenting, preserving, and facilitating the growth of Canadian musical culture through its *Centrediscs* recording label, libraries, events, and online. Learn more about the CMC at [www.musiccentre.ca](http://www.musiccentre.ca), [www.facebook.com/canadianmusic](https://www.facebook.com/canadianmusic), [www.twitter.com/CMCNational](https://www.twitter.com/CMCNational), or visit one of its five regional centres across Canada.

**Centrediscs** was created in 1981 as Canada's foremost label of Canadian contemporary concert music, recording the works of composers associated with the CMC. Visit [www.musiccentre.ca](http://www.musiccentre.ca) for more information.

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