

Denys Bouliane was born in 1955 in Grand-Mère, a small town in the Province of Quebec. His first musical experiences occurred in the 1960s playing guitar in an amateur rock band. After studies in a liberal arts college he began his first musical training in 1972 at Laval University (Quebec City) where he studied piano and violin and completed a Master's degree in composition in 1979. With grants from both the Quebec and Canadian governments he first attended in 1980 the Darmstadt Summer Courses, settled down in Cologne and then continued his studies with György Ligeti at the Hochschule für Musik in Hamburg from 1980 to 1985. He has lived primarily in Cologne between 1980 and 1991; he now shares his time between Montréal and Cologne.

Bouliane is considered one of the most prominent Canadian composers; since two decades his music has received much international attention in festivals like ISCM (International Society for Contemporary Music), Musik der Zeit Köln, Musik der Zeit Stuttgart, Schleswig-Holstein Festival, Pro Musica Nova Bremen, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Wittener Tage für Neue Musik, Darmstadt, A\*Devantgarde in Munich, Tage für Neue Musik Zürich, Wien Incident in Jazz, Salzburg stART Festival, Gaudeamus MusikWeek, Holland Festival, Ars Musica Brussels, Rencontres internationales de Metz, "38è Rugissants" in Grenoble, Musiques en scène Lyon, Royaumont Voix Nouvelles, Radio-France Présences, Canterbury Festival, London South Bank, Music of Today, San Francisco Wet Ink, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Telluride Colorado, Québec Musiques-au-présent, MNM (Montréal/Nouvelles Musiques) international Festival, Toronto Massey Hall Festival, Toronto Encounters, Winnipeg New Music Festival, Ekatarinenburg Music Festival, a.o.

His works have been regularly broadcast in North America and throughout Europe, commissioned and performed by such Canadian ensembles as the SMCQ (Société de musique contemporaine du Québec), the NEM (Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, Montréal), the Fibonacci Trio and the Bozzini Quartet, New Music Concerts, Soundstream, by European ensembles such as Ensemble Köln, Ensemble Modern, MusikFabrik, the Stuttgart Windquintet, the Calamus Quintet, Contrasts (West Germany), KlangForum Wien (Austria), the Delta Ensemble and the Nederlands Blazers Ensemble (Amsterdam), the London Sinfonietta, the Nash Ensemble, Lontano and Continuum (London), l'Itinéraire, Court-Circuit (Paris), orchestras like l'Orchestre symphonique de Québec, l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, the Toronto Symphony, Esprit Orchestra, the Winnipeg Symphony, the National Arts Center Orchestra (Ottawa), the Philharmonia Orchestra (London), the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Heidelberg Philharmonisches Orchester, the Bochumer Symphoniker, the WDR Sinfonieorchester, the Mozarteum Orchester Salzburg, a.o.

He is currently Composer-in-Residence at the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa, a position he occupied from 1992 to 1995 at the Orchestre symphonique de Québec and in 1995-96 at the Heidelberg Philharmonisches Orchester in Germany.

Bouliane is equally very active as a pedagogue, conductor and new music organizer in Canada and abroad.

Since 1995 he has been Professor of composition at McGill University and since 1996 Music Director of the McGill Contemporary Music Ensemble. He has been regularly guest lecturer at several universities, conservatories and international festivals, as well as a contributor to radio programs and specialized periodicals in America and Europe. He has been guest to the Darmstädter Ferienkurse, the Kölner Hochschule für Musik, the Hochschule für Musik in Stuttgart, the Musikkonservatorium in Zürich, the Royal College of Music in London, the Trinity College of Music, the Moscow Conservatory, the University of Toronto, the Université de Montréal, the Escuela Superior de Musica (CENART) and the Conservatorio Nacional de Musica in Mexico, the Northwestern University, the Levine School of Music in Washington, the Peabody Conservatory and the Manhattan School of Music.

As a conductor, he has worked with the Ensemble Modern, MusikFabrik, Série B (Germany) Court-Circuit (France), New Music Concerts, Soundstream, Esprit Orchestra (Toronto), the McGill CME, the Orchestre symphonique de Québec (OSQ), the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal and the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa. He is has been regular Conductor in the 1990s of the Ensemble XXe siècle of the OSQ (of which he is the initiator) as well as a Special Counselor to the orchestra.

He is currently Artistic Coordinator of the *MusiMarch* Festival (McGill University, SMCQ and Orchestre symphonique de Montréal) as well as co-Artistic Director with Walter Boudreau of the new international biennale *Montréal/Nouvelles Musiques* (First Edition in March 2003 and Second in March 2005). During the late 1970s he was Program Director of l'Association de musique actuelle de Québec and between 1990 and 1993 on the board of directors of the KGNM (Kölner Gesellschaft für Neue Musik—Cologne's new music society—). In the 1980's he has toured Europe extensively as Sound Regisseur for Ensemble Köln. In 1991, Bouliane has founded the group *Série B*, a Cologne-based ensemble of 9 musicians who extend the acoustic potential of their resources through an array of new electronic instruments. He was with his colleague Walter Boudreau Artistic Coordinator and Principal Conductor of the new music festival *Québec-Musiques-au-présent* held in the spring of 1998, 1999 and 2000. He has also been co-Artistic Director with Boudreau of the *Millennium Symphony*, a large-scale work for 19 composers and 350 performers premiered at Oratoire St-Joseph in Montreal on June 3, 2000. He has founded in 1995 the *Rencontres de Musique Nouvelle* (New Music Symposium) held every August at the summer resort of Domaine Forget in the Charlevoix County, northeast of Quebec, of which he is currently co-Artistic Director with Lorraine Vaillancourt, from Nouvel Ensemble Moderne. Since 1995 he has been member of the Artistic Committee of the SMCQ (Société de musique contemporaine du Québec).

Bouliane has also worked in close collaboration with Director Denis Marleau and written stage music for Büchner's *Woyzeck* (Belgium's Théâtre National and Centre dramatique Hainnuyer, 1993) as well as for Wedekind's *Lulu* (Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, in Montreal, 1995-96).

Many of Bouliane's works have been awarded prizes in national and international competitions (Prizes from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and from the Gaudeamus Foundation in Holland in 1982 for *Jeux de Société*, Prize of the Performing Rights Organization of Canada, for *Douze tiroirs de demi-vérités pour alléger votre descente*, among others). He was named composer of the year by the Canadian Music Council in 1983 and in 1987 was awarded the Léger Governor General's Chamber Music Prize for *A propos... et le Baron perché?*. In 1985 the City of Cologne awarded him the "Förderpreis für Musik" and in 1989 *Le cactus rieur et la demoiselle qui souffrait d'une soif insatiable* won the orchestral prize of the international "Forum junger Komponisten" of the West German Radio (WDR). In 1991 he was the first composer given the Serge Garant Award of the Nelligan Foundation in Montreal for his musical achievements. In December 1999, he received the Opus prize "Musical Personality of the year" awarded by the Quebec Music Council as well as collection of many others since putting forward his activities as organizer: "Musical Event of the year" for the *Millenium Symphony* in 2000, "Artistic Director of the year" (with Walter Boudreau) and again "Musical Event of the year" for *Montréal/Nouvelles Musiques* in 2003.

Bouliane's original stylistical approach, described by German musicologist Peter Niklas Wilson as the Music of Magic Realism, is akin to a virtuoso game of criticism bordering on stylistical mystification, following in the footsteps of Jorge-Luis Borges, Italo Calvino and Boris Vian. A subject of controversy in so-called avant-garde milieus, his music seems to lie at the crossroads between America and Europe, and at the center of debates on modernity and postmodernity.

*Source: Documentation Dr. Hermann Conen (Cologne, January 2005)*