

E. Scott Wilkinson (1962-2011)



CMC Associate Composer E. Scott Wilkinson passed away on October 24, 2011 in Berlin, Germany after a short illness. An excellent composer, conductor and teacher, he will be missed by the music communities that he impacted throughout his life, in Canada, Germany, and elsewhere.

Wilkinson began his musical training as a classical guitarist at the age of six. After completing a Music Degree in both Performance and Composition at the University of Toronto, Mr. Wilkinson was invited to move to Havana to continue his studies in composition with the celebrated Cuban composer Leo Brouwer. While living in the Caribbean, Scott was asked to compose his first large orchestral work for the Cuban National Symphony Orchestra. What resulted was *Symphony of the North* (1987) which garnered him a national young composer's award in Canada.

Wilkinson's music attracted many prominent musical figures - he went on to study with Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki, who would later be instrumental in introducing Wilkinson's work to European audiences. American Composer John Corigliano was enamoured with Wilkinson's work and encouraged him to expand his writing for large orchestra. Corigliano was also pivotal in bringing Scott to New York.

While enrolled at New York University in the Masters of Composition programme, Wilkinson composed a series of chamber works which helped to secure his presence within the musical community in that city. Wilkinson become involved in composing for the stage after his ballet, *Dances in the Square*, was premiered in the summer of 1993, drawing the attention of both choreographers and writers.

In 2000, Wilkinson moved to Europe and settled in Berlin in 2002 where he lived until his death. While in Europe his music enjoyed a steady rise in popularity. His pieces have been premiered and performed by the Moravian Symphony Orchestra, and the Czech Philharmonic among others. In 2001, Wilkinson had

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the honour of being the only North American composer selected for inclusion in the "Millennium Concert" held in the European cultural city of 2001, Bologne. At the Millenium Concert, his *Lyra: Fantasy for Guitar and Chamber Orchestra* shared the programme with internationally chosen works to represent music of a new century.

Outside of his composing, Wilkinson was a guest conductor with a number of European orchestras, including the Vorpommern-Mecklenburg Symphony Orchestra, the St. Petersburg State Symphony and more recently the Bucharest-Radio-Symphony and the Bulgarian State Opera.

As a teacher, composer, and conductor, Scott had a clear musical vision which he articulated so well: "In a musical world of such complexity, stylistic diversity and experimentation, one thing has never been more necessary - music of clear and honest communication from the composer to the listener, no matter what the vocabulary."

The board, staff and membership of the Canadian Music Centre send our deepest condolences to the friends and family of E. Scott Wilkinson. As of this date, memorial services have not been arranged. Community members are welcome to contact the Ontario office of the CMC for further updates as they become available.

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