

October 24, 2011



Anita Sleeman (1930-2011)



CMC Associate Composer Anita Sleeman passed away on October 18, 2011. A great musician and composer, her loss is truly felt by the Canadian music community.

Inspired by the music of Stravinsky, Ligeti, and Bartok, her eclectic style was also influenced by her diverse ethnic background and her interest

in jazz. She greatly admired the work of the late Frank Zappa, to whose memory she dedicated several performances of her own pieces.

Anita Sleeman was born on December 12, 1930 in San Jose, California to a creative family. Her father was a graphic artist and painter, and her mother was an art student and milliner. While studying music at Placer College in California she met her husband Evan Sleeman. They and their six children eventually moved to the Bella Coola region of British Columbia, where she taught music appreciation, ear training, and band to the children at the local one-room school.

She would go on to study at the University of British Columbia with Jean Coulthard and Cortland Hultberg, earning a degree of B. Mus in 1971. The same year she and four other founding members formed the Delta Youth Orchestra, which remains a training program for young musicians in the Vancouver area. While continuing her studies at UBC she obtained a Graduate Fellowship and taught in the Electronic Music Studio, and earned her M. Mus. in 1974.

Sleeman was a member of the Music Faculty at Capilano College for a number of years before she returned to California to attend graduate school at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. There she studied composition with Frederick

National Office/Bureau national
Chalmers House/Maison Chalmers
20 St. Joseph Street
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1J9
(416) 961-6601
FAX (416) 961-7198
info@musiccentre.ca
www.musiccentre.ca/www.centremusique.ca

Région du Québec
416, rue McGill
Montréal, Québec
H2Y 2G1
(514) 866-0456
quebec@musiccentre.ca

Ontario Region
Chalmers House
20 St. Joseph Street
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1J9
(416) 961-6601 Ext. #207
FAX: (416) 961-7198
ontario@musiccentre.ca

Prairie Region
911 MacKimmie Library Tower
2500 University Drive N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4
(403) 220-7403
FAX (403) 289-4877
prairie@musiccentre.ca

British Columbia Region
837 Davie Street
Vancouver, British Columbia
V6Z 1B7
(604) 734-4622
FAX (604) 734-4627
bcregion@musiccentre.ca

Atlantic Region
134 Main Street
Sackville, New Brunswick
E4L 1A6
(506) 536-4263
atlantic@musiccentre.ca

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Lesemann, composition and orchestration with James Hopkins, and contemporary conducting and composition with Earle Brown. Sleeman also attended Master Classes with Luciano Berio, Luigi Nono and Charles Wuorinen, and received her Doctorate in 1982. During this time she also studied at the Dick Grove Jazz School in Los Angeles.

As a grandmother and great-grandmother, Sleeman later lived in West Vancouver, British Columbia, where she conducted the Ambleside Orchestra, and composed at her home studio.

There will be a service for friends, family, colleagues, and public at a date yet to be announced.

May she have a peaceful journey.

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For further information please contact

Bob Baker
BC Regional Director
Canadian Music Centre
bbaker@musiccentre.ca
www.musiccentre.ca
www.bccreativehub.com
604-734-4622

National Office/Bureau national
Chalmers House/Maison Chalmers
20 St. Joseph Street
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FAX (416) 961-7198
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