

LOUISE BESSETTE

Pianist

Louise Bessette is one of Canada's leading interpreters of piano music of our time. Six solo recordings and an additional ten CD's in which she collaborates with other artists have brought her critical acclaim in repertory as diverse as Messiaen, Tango and Jazz, and she has won such important competitions as the Concours International de Musique Contemporaine (France) and the Gaud-eamus Competition for Contemporary Music (Netherlands).

As soloist, she has appeared internationally with the Orchestre National de Lyon (France), the Orchestra Philharmonique de Radio-France, the Arhus Symphony (Denmark) the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra (Poland) and the New York Chamber Symphony, as well as with such important Canadian ensembles as the Montréal Symphony, the National Arts Centre Orchestra (Ottawa), Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (Montréal) and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony.

As recitalist, Louise Bessette has been invited to such international festivals as the Festival de Musique Française da Laon (France), the Festiva Musica Strasbourg (France), Festival Tivoli (Denmark), the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (UK), Festival Nieuwe Muziek Middelburg (Netherlands), as well as making appearances at the World Music Days in Warsaw (1992) and Mexico City (1993).

One of her specialties is the music of Olivier Messiaen, whose birth centenary is being celebrated worldwide in 2008. "In Louise Bessette, Messiaen has found his most inspired modern-day interpreter, undoubtedly for many years to come", wrote Yves Allaz in the Journal de Genève, and The Musical Times of London reported that "she responded to the glittering splendours of Olivier Messiaen's *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus* with playing of genuine grandeur...delivered faultlessly from memory and with astonishing reserves of controlled, relaxed virtuosity."

Her Messiaen interpretations have been richly informed by study in Paris with Messiaen's widow, Yvonne Loriod, following her early training at the Montréal Conservatory, where she returned to become Professor of Piano in 1996.

Louise Bessette recently performed during the 11th International Piano Week at Wavre in Belgium (celebrating the Messiaen centenary). Forthcoming Messiaen concerts in Montréal feature the artist in the *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus* and *Oiseaux Exotiques*. In January 2009, she will appear with the Victoria Symphony in a program of Arcuri and Messiaen.