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M.E.C. GUEST RECITAL .  
CAROL ROBINSON, BIRBYNÈ  
TOUCHER L'AIR

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2021 | 4pm  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LOS ANGELES (SHATTO CHAPEL)  
540 S. COMMONWEALTH AVE., LOS ANGELES, CA 90020

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Carol Robinson, photograph by Igor Juget

PROGRAM:

Xu YI - *ECHO NOCTURNE* (2021) [6']  
Éliane RADIGUE - *OCCAM III* (2012) [16']  
Carol ROBINSON - *FOREST GAZING* (2020) [11']  
Jürg FREY - *TOUCHER L'AIR* (2019) [8']  
Carol ROBINSON - *BILLOWS* (2009) [11']

Carol Robinson, birbynė

\*Program to be modified freely by the performer.

#### ABOUT THE CONCERT:

Monday Evening Concerts is happy to welcome the Franco-American composer, improviser, clarinetist and birbynė player **Carol Robinson** for a guest recital. An intimate collaborator of contemporary music icon Éliane Radigue, Carol will present a unique program of rarely-heard works performed on the birbynė, a Lithuanian wind instrument. We hope you'll join us for this special event!



Carol Robinson playing the birbynė, photo by Igor Juget

#### ABOUT THE BIRBYNĖ:

The birbynė is a traditional instrument found only in Lithuania. A member of the clarinet family, it has a single reed attached with a tightly wound string, and is typically made out of maple or cherry wood cured in hot flax oil or resin. The lower end is fitted with a flared cow horn. Though there are various models, the most commonly used modern version has ten finger holes (including holes for both thumbs!) and a brass register key. The bore is neither quite cylindrical nor quite conical, which allows the instrument to overblow at an unprecedented tenth. These physical traits have resulted an instrument capable of producing a warm rich sound closer to a human voice, an Asian flute, or an Armenian *doudouk* than to any sort of European single reed instrument. (Text by Carol Robinson)

#### ARTIST BIO:

To say that **Carol Robinson** is a Franco-American composer and clarinetist is perhaps too restrictive to describe the eclecticism of her

experience and passion. In fact, she seems interested in everything having to do with sound. She is not someone who likes the middle ground, preferring the edges, the extremes. Her music is situated in those places of tenderness and rage, gentleness and power that come from experience and mastery. Trained as a classical clarinetist, she graduated from the Oberlin Conservatory before continuing her study of contemporary music in Paris thanks to a H.H. Woolley grant. Whether playing repertoire or experimental material, she performs in major venues and festivals the world over (Festival d'Automne à Paris, MaerzMuzik, Archipel, RomaEuropa, Wien Modern, Huddersfield, Geometry of Now, Angelica, Crossing the Line...), and works closely with musicians from a wide stylistic spectrum. A fervent improviser, she prefers the most open musical situations and regularly collaborates with photographers, visual artists and videographers.

In parallel, it was through writing music theater pieces that she began composing seriously. She started with small ensembles, and rapidly received commissions for larger works. Recent compositions include: **Mr Barbe bleue** a chamber opera for baroque ensemble produced by the Opéra de Reims (commission – French Ministry of Culture), **Forest Gazing** for birbyne and string quartet (commission – Radio France), **Georg** for bass clarinet, electric guitar and live electronics (premiere CCAM – Vandœuvre-lès-Nancy).

Long fascinated by the extended possibilities of live and fixed electronic music, Carol has written numerous pieces for acoustic instruments and electronics. Her exploration and use of aleatory procedures is distinctive.

In 2012, she began a cycle called **The Weather Pieces** that incorporates these methods. Three of these pieces will be released on MODE RECORDS: **Nacarat** for electric guitar and quadriphonic electronics (co-production La Muse en Circuit, Césaré, Art Zoyd), **Black on Green** for double bass and tri-phonic electronics (commission – GMEM), and **Les si doux redoux** for basset horn and mobile stereo electronics.

Carol particularly enjoys writing for dance, working with choreographers Susan Buirge, **La terrasse à l'ombre de la lune**, **Le chasseur au lac**, **Dogu Déterré** (all commissioned by La Fondation Royaumont), Nadège MacLeay, **Le Carreau** (commission – French Ministry of Culture), **M-Music**, **Just Let it Go**, **Nana's Flight**, **Ratatatat**, **Pôles**, **Creases**, Young Ho Nam, **Composé / Décomposé** (commission – Radio France), Robert Swinston / Cunningham, **Event**, François Verret **Contrecoup...**

Since 2007, she has worked closely with Éliane Radigue, premiering **Naldjorlak** and fifteen pieces from **Occam Ocean**. In 2015, Radigue and Robinson began co-composing pieces for the Occam cycle: **Occam Hexa II** (Decibel – Perth, Australia), **Occam River XXII** (for bass clarinet and saxophone), **Occam Hexa V** (Ensemble Klang – The Hague).

Carol Robinson's discography demonstrates the breadth of her work. In addition to her own compositions **Billows** (PLUS), **Laima** (Expériences de Vol) adn **Cross-Currents** (SHIIN), there are also award winning monographic recordings of composers such as Giacinto Scelsi, Luigi Nono, Morton Fedlman, Luciano Berio (MODE), Éliane Radigue (SHIIN), Phill Niblock (TOUCH), Jürg Frey (LCMS). Her recordings of alternative rock, jazz, and classical music are equally important.