



Donald F. Cook Recital Hall  
M.O. Morgan Building  
Sunday, 18 March 2001 at 8:00 pm

## WHALE SPIRIT RISING

featuring  
Jazz Guitarist - Composer

**Roddy Ellias**

with

*MUN Jazz Ensemble, MUN Faculty Quartet, MUN Chamber Orchestra*

Sun  
Child's Play  
Innocence  
Nardis (Miles Davis)  
Café

Roddy Ellias  
(b. 1949)

Roddy Ellias, Solo Guitar

Waltzin' Walkin'  
WAIL!

Jim Duff

MUN Jazz Ensemble

Five Portraits (2001) *First performance*

Roddy Ellias

Nancy Dahn, violin   Paul Bendzsa, clarinet  
Thomas Loewenheim, cello   Roddy Ellias, guitar

WHALE SPIRIT RISING (1996)

Roddy Ellias

Paul Bendzsa, clarinet  
MUN Chamber Orchestra  
Thomas Loewenheim, conductor



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*The SOCAN Foundation/La Fondation SOCAN*



**Memorial**  
University of Newfoundland

## Roddy Ellias

*"Exquisite...a most thoughtful soloist...the kind of subtlety you don't often hear...anywhere." Mark Miller, The Globe and Mail, June 1999.*

Quebec-born, Ottawa-based Roddy Ellias is a unique composer/guitarist whose work in both classical and jazz music has received national and international acclaim. An in-demand artist and a true innovator, you can find Ellias just about everywhere these days - joining composers Keith Jarrett and Marjan Mosestich on the title release of "Whale Spirit Rising", issued worldwide last November on the Chandos label (a 26-minute original composition for I Musici and saxophonist David Mott); writing a violin sonata commissioned by the American virtuoso violinist Anne Akiki Meyers; writing commissioned songs for Canadian mezzo soprano Anne-Marie Donovan and saxophone quartet Saxart; soloing on his acoustic guitar on "Oasis", a brand new CD of thirteen original compositions; performing chamber music concerts; performing with the NAC Orchestra; or performing and recording with Canadian jazz icons Guido Basso and Dave Turner.

*"Plenty of harmonic and formal sophistication as a writer...an adventurous streak as a performer..." Peter Hum, The Ottawa Citizen, Jan., 2000*

Ellias has also performed with some of the most luminous names in the contemporary jazz world, including Lee Konitz, Kenny Wheeler, Tom Harrel, and Ray Anderson. Ellias' reputation both as a composer and a performer of both classical and jazz music have made him an invaluable member Concordia University's Department of Music, where, as Associate Professor, he teaches composition, guitar and improvisation.

### PROGRAMME NOTES

**Five Portraits**, a newly commissioned work funded by The Canada Council, was written especially for this occasion and for this ensemble. The entire work is based on three main melodic ideas which run throughout the piece.

**Whale Spirit Rising** This piece began with no preconceived programmatic ideas. The genesis of it was simply the idea of writing music that allowed both I Musici and David Mott to perform together and in their own genres. The first genre involves the hundreds of years of glorious tradition that go to make up the heart and soul of an ensemble that interprets little squiggly dots left on a page by the composer. The second involves the equally wonderful tradition of improvisation. (At one time these were part of the same genre!) The challenge was to bring the two evolved styles together in such a way that it still sounded like a cohesive piece of music. I wanted David Mott to sound like he belonged to I Musici and vice versa. It wasn't until the piece was underway that it started to take on a meaning beyond the purely musical one I was working with. It soon became clear to me that this piece was about whales, and more importantly, about their spirit and soul.

*Whale Spirit Rising is dedicated to the memory and spirit of my father, Eli Ellias, whose peace, tranquillity, wisdom and harmony with nature was like that of a great whale, and whose spirit, like that of the whale, will always triumph over and survive the pollution that often surrounds its environment.*