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Four Perspectives on John Beckwith

The symposium 'Four Perspectives on John Beckwith' provided a chance to reflect on Beckwith's long and productive career in composition, scholarship, and teaching. It was hosted by the Institute for Canadian Music on March 10th, 2007, the day after Beckwith's 80th birthday. There was also a celebratory concert in Walter Hall in the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music at 2:30 pm on March 11th.

In Beckwith's book *Music Papers*, we learn that on March 9th, 1967, he gave a talk titled 'Music, the Elusive Art' on his 40th birthday for a lecture series organized by Marshall McLuhan that took place in the Royal Ontario Museum.<sup>1</sup> This seemed to set a pattern for his future birthday celebrations. He celebrated his 65th birthday by doing an external review of the music department at Dalhousie University, and for his 70th he attended a music conference in Seattle and then gave lectures at the University of Victoria and UBC.

For his 80th birthday he sat and listened to others speak about him and perform his music. But in the lead up to that weekend, he worked hard to help out with every aspect of the arrangements for these events, from looking after the publicity to transporting the life-size puppets for *Crazy to Kill* by Anna Wagner-Ott that were on display in Room 130 of the Edward Johnson Building, where the symposium was held. I am pleased

to thank John Beckwith, not just for having reached an age that is nicely divisible by tens, but also for his help, his support, and his friendship in everything that I have undertaken since assuming the Chalmers Chair in 2002, up to and including this symposium.

I would also like to thank Istvan Anhalt, who first suggested the idea for this symposium when I was casting about for a suitable way to celebrate Beckwith's birthday; I was delighted that he and his wife Beate were able to attend the event. Colleen Renihan and Erin Bustin kindly attended to many organizational details for the symposium, for which I am very grateful. Finally I thank my co-presenters for their interest and enthusiasm, for their willingness to participate in this event, and for allowing me to publish their work in this issue of the *ICM Newsletter*. R.E.

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<sup>1</sup> John Beckwith, *Music Papers: Articles and Talks by a Canadian Composer 1961-1994* (Ottawa: Golden Dog Press, 1997): 9