

NOTATIONS

Spring 2013


CANADIAN MUSIC CENTRE
CENTRE DE MUSIQUE CANADIENNE

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Welcome to the digital Notations newsletter! This is the first issue of our newsletter that will not be circulated in print, and as you will read, it maintains much of the content that Notations readers have come to expect from the publication – with a few digital bells and whistles!

This issue of Notations looks at the various conditions composers experience while living and working in Ontario: what factors determine the course of a career in composition, what inspires their writing and performing, and ultimately, what distinguishes music made in Ontario. These themes continue to thrive in the discussions taking place in the pages that follow. Notations also provides the impetus for young and old generations of composers and musicians to come into dialogue – you will see this in the stories we cover, but also the variety of contributors featured in this issue.

Tony Leung offers an interesting glimpse into the world of writing for traditional Chinese instruments. There is an interesting shift in the perception of these traditional instruments and their role in contemporary composition, and cities like Toronto and Vancouver demonstrate an increasing affinity for these instruments and their specialists. To expand on Leung's discussion, Mei Han provides an overview of contemporary repertoire written for the zheng as part of our In Focus feature.

While Leung elaborates on the demographics of our largest urban centre, Samuel Bayefsky, a young composer studying in Toronto, shares a personal reflection on his recent experiences in rural Ontario. Bayefsky gained an unexpected perspective on his music inspired by the contrasting soundscapes of the big city and Algonquin Park where he spent some time in 2012.

Apart from exploring the conditions of music making, we summarize the achievements of CMC Associate Composers and Voting Members based in Ontario. We also welcome ten new Associate Composers to our region!

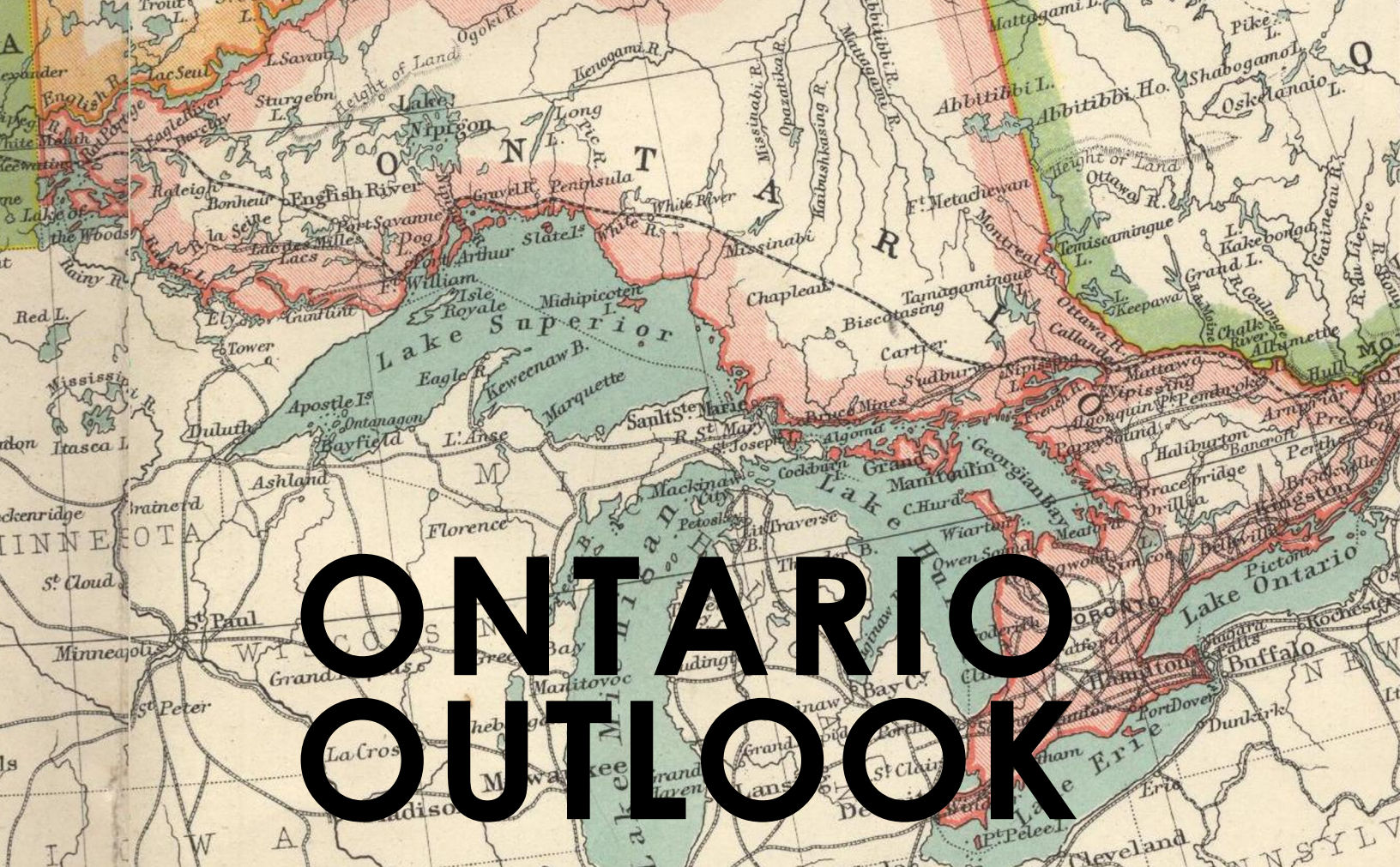
As an extension of the dialogue in Notations, we are introducing a new feature in this issue: Generations/Conversations pairs three young musicians and composers with some of our more senior composers in an inter-generational interview and discussion series. We will be treated to a transcription of excerpts from three interviews that include the words of Ruth Watson Henderson, Arsenio Giron, and Boyd McDonald.

You will also read a summary of recent initiatives and ongoing projects of the Ontario Region of the CMC, and we spotlight a new composer-performer collective that has been involved in our New Music in New Places Series – the Kitchener-Waterloo Guelph New Music Collective.

Notations will continue to grow as we explore our new format. Let us know if you want to be involved in future issues!

Matthew Fava
Jeremy Strachan

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



ONTARIO OUTLOOK

There is such a lot of new music going on in the Ontario Region these days! Canadian music is performed at least every week in Toronto and the GTA, often several times a week in all kinds of venues, including the new performance space at Chalmers House. But there is lots going on elsewhere, too, in Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph, Hamilton, London, Windsor, Kingston, Ottawa, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, and in other communities as well. The CMC is part of all this, with partnering activities such as the workshops through Conservatory Canada, the various workshops organized with the Canadian League of Composers, the New Music in News Places presentations, Centrediscs CD launches, and so on. There is much to celebrate!

The new CMC website has gone live; I encourage you all to check it out if you have not already, and to join the community. You can use the site to let everyone know what you are doing, whether you are a composer, performer, or promoter. Whoever you are, you can use the Community area to interact with other members. This important service of the CMC will be as valuable as you make it. The Calendar tool is another great service that is part of the new site. Check it out to see what is going on in your area and across the country, and do post your own events. Of course, there is all the information about Associate Composers and their music you would expect, but the new site enables richer content and links, so keep checking back to see what is new. The site is poised to become the online hub of the new music community in Canada.

As most of you know, the new performance space at Chalmers House in downtown Toronto is busy, with many school visits, workshops, and other events already past and many more lined up. Please do come by to experience it, if you have not visited already. And, please consider making a donation to help pay for the wonderful Steingraeber & Söhne piano. We can only keep it if we raise the funds!

The Ontario Regional Council of the CMC especially appreciates the support of our Voting Members—if you have ideas you want to bring forward, especially in the area of fundraising, which is a major priority for the Council, please contact Matthew or any of the Council. Our hope is to organize more regional events for our Associate Composers and Voting Members, to have conversations about how best the organization can move forward. Keep your eyes and ears open for news of those activities.



James Harley
Chair, CMC Ontario Regional Council

NOTE WORTHY

Recent Achievements and special events involving associates and voting members of the CMC



A scene from the performance of *Red Snow*, which features the music of Alice Ping Yee Ho.



Alice Ping Yee Ho and Chan Ka Nin conducting a master class with students at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Alice Ho in Hong Kong

CMC Associate Composer Alice Ping Yee Ho composed music for the play *Red Snow*, which was performed at the Shanghai International Contemporary Theatre Festival in November. The play is inspired by stories of survivors of the Rape of Nanking, and the production coincided with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the brutal series of events that took place in Mainland China.

Ho also enjoyed the Asian premiere of *Drunken Beauty* by the Hong Kong City Chamber Orchestra in October. While in Hong Kong, Ho also conducted a master class workshop with Chan Ka Nin at the University of Hong Kong.

Chan Ka Nin celebrates the Chinese Community in Victoria

CMC Associate Composer Chan Ka Nin was involved in the sesquicentennial of the City of Victoria, British Columbia, which was originally founded on August 2, 1862. Chan was commissioned to write *Harmonious Interest*, a symphonic theatre piece as part of a project with the Victoria Symphony Orchestra. *Harmonious Interest* is a reflection of 150 years of Chinese community contribution to the city of Victoria. *Harmonious Interest* is a seven-movement

“symphonic theatre” work for two actors/singers, a dancer, a percussion soloist, a Chinese instrumentalist for Hulusi, and orchestra. With the additional staged and dramatic elements, the piece tells the story of Victoria’s Chinatown capturing the images of workers, cultural celebrations, and also the struggles encountered by immigrants having to deal with the imposition of the Chinese head tax. Chan collaborated with writer Mark Brownell on the piece.



NAC and Louie in Northern Canada

In October and November, Alexina Louie had her piece *Take the Dog Sled* toured through Canada's Northern Territories by an ensemble of the National Arts Centre Orchestra under conductor Arild Remmereit with performances by throat singers Evie Mark and Akinisie Sivuarapik. The tour included stops in Iqaluit, Yellowknife, and Whitehorse.

The piece is dedicated to the people of Nunavik, and draws inspiration from Alexina Louie's early encounters with Inuit culture. Louie had the good fortune of visiting the North in 2000, and would be presented with the opportunity to incorporate these experiences in a new work when she was commissioned as part of the Montreal Symphony's 2008 Nunavik tour. Throat singer Evie Mark was involved from the beginning as a performer during the premiere, and as a repository of songs and stories to serve as source material for Louie's initial writing.

[Click here](#) for a sample video from the concert in Yellowknife.



Owen McCausland as Wilhelm Grimm and Music Director Timothy Cheung in a scene from the Canadian Opera Company's 2012 Xstrata Ensemble Studio School Tour production of *The Brothers Grimm*.

Photo: Chris Hutcheson

A milestone for Dean Burry's Opera, *The Brothers Grimm*

The Canadian Opera Company celebrated a momentous occasion in December: the 500th performance of CMC Associate Composer Dean Burry's opera, *The Brothers Grimm*. The one-act opera began as a millennium project, and was commissioned at a time when Burry was coordinating the COC's After School Opera Program. Burry found inspiration in the story of Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm whose collection of fairy tales have been retold and adapted in countless ways since being published. The original book, *Die Kinder - und Hausmärchen* or *Children's and Household Tales*, was published in December 1812, adding greater emphasis to the event which coincided with the 200 anniversary of the original publication. The event, titled Grimmfest, included a performance of the opera and various activities for families in attendance. After eleven years, the opera has been produced across North America and in Europe, and has been seen by an estimated 140,000 school children.

The Scotiabank Northern Lights Music Festival took place between February and early March in the Lake Chapala area of Mexico. The festival celebrated its tenth year. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Christopher Wilshire, the festival has been a conduit for various

Canadian and international musicians to support the development of Mexican classical musicians. Among the participants in this year's festival were CMC Associate Composer Christos Hatzis, and CMC Voting Member and violinist Jeremy Bell.

M Y L I F E
O N E A R T H &
E L S E W H E R E

R. Murray Schafer



Schafer releases his memoir

CMC Associate Composer R. Murray Schafer has released his memoir, *My Life on Earth and Elsewhere*. The book delves into many areas of the composer's life, within music and beyond, and illuminates entertaining and intriguing details that surround his music and career. The book is also replete with Schafer's distinct illustrations.

Schafer was on hand at the Esprit Orchestra's season opening concert in October to launch the memoir. [Buy it here.](#)



CMC Voting Member Lawrence Cherney was the recipient of the 2012 Friends of Canadian Music Award, which recognizes exceptional commitment, on a national scale, to Canadian composers and their music. The award was presented during the Soundstreams 30th Anniversary Concert at Koerner Hall in October by James Rolfe, Council member of the Canadian League of Composers, and Elisabeth Bihl, Executive Director of the CMC.

Impuls Power

Brian Harman in Graz

CMC Associate Composer Brian Harman was accepted to participate in the Impuls Academy in February. The Academy takes place every second year in Graz, Austria, and offers participants an intensive series of classes, workshops, and rehearsals over the course of two weeks. Harman worked with various composers and performers including Klangforum Wien ensemble, composer Georges Aperghis, and clarinetist Ernesto Molinari. Several of Harman's works were read and performed during the two-week workshop. A primary objective of the Impuls Academy is generating activity among a group of emerging artists from across the world, and building a stronger network among new music practitioners.



Composer Georges Aperghis conducting a workshop with Impuls participants.



Brian Harman out and about in Vienna

Aris Carastathis in Athens

Reclaiming the Past, Regaining the Real Festival took place in Athens Greece between September and October 2012. The festival presented concerts, screenings, and various other programs to showcase pieces exploring the intersections of visual arts, music, and science. CMC Associate Composer Aris Carastathis had a new work, *Tweet*, premiered by flutist Iwona Glinka as part of the festival. The piece accompanied a video installation by Mark Nisenholt.





LEFT: John Weinzweig with his son Paul

RIGHT: John Weinzweig pictured with his students

A CELEBRATION OF WEINZWEIG

The centenary of CMC Associate Composer John Weinzweig is upon us, and the music community is recognizing the achievements of this seminal figure in many ways. A centenary concert took place on March 8 at Walter Hall at the University of Toronto. The concert was curated by Lawrence Cherney and featured several major works by Weinzweig including his *Divertimento No. 1* and the amusing *Hockey Night in Canada*. CMC Associate Andrew Staniland, who received the John Weinzweig Graduate Scholarship at U of T, had a piece premiered at the concert: the commemorative *For John* is written for harp and soprano.

The U of T Faculty of Music also hosted a free day of lectures and lecture-recitals to illuminate Weinzweig's artistic achievements and influences. The events concluded on

March 11 and included a performance by the Cecilia String Quartet, and the unveiling of a commemorative plaque for the former Weinzweig family home as part of the City of Toronto's Legacy Project.

Weinzweig played a central role in founding the Canadian League of Composers, the Canadian Music Centre, and he also developed the composition department at the University of Toronto. Apart from impacting broader systemic issues facing Canadian composers, Weinzweig played a direct role as teacher in the careers of many illustrious composers. His tireless advocacy, along with his musical output, have left an impressive legacy. Centenary celebrations will continue throughout the year, and you can get more information by visiting www.johnweinzweig.com.



Soundmakers

Farah joins Soundstreams as composer in electronic residence

CMC Associate Composer John Kameel Farah has joined Soundstreams as their composer in electronic residence. His involvement coincides with the imminent launch of an exciting new sequencing application, Soundmakers, that Soundstreams has developed which allows you to incorporate samples from various pieces they have commissioned into your own remix. Farah will be incorporating some of these samples into his own music during his residency. He will also be writing a new piece for piano and electronics, and hosting a blog documenting his composition process.

Among other activities, Farah and Soundstreams were on hand during the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's New Creations Festival to demonstrate the Soundmakers application.

Evelyn Stroobach performed in Europe

CMC Associate Composer Evelyn Stroobach's orchestral composition *Aurora Borealis* received a concert performance by the best players from both the Bacau Philharmonic and the Ploiesti State Philharmonic orchestras from Romania. The concert took place in the Basilica of Martelago in Venice, Italy on September 12th, 2012. Maestra Sylvia Constantinidis conducted the orchestra at this concert performance, and following the concert she expressed her keen interest in the piece—she intends to keep it for her conducting repertoire. Stroobach enjoyed another performance in Europe shortly thereafter, when concert violinist Ralitsa Tcholakova presented *Into the Wind* at a concert in Sophia, Bulgaria on November 28th, 2012.





Generations/ Conversations

An inter-generational interview series

Generations/Conversations is a new feature of the Notations newsletter that connects young composers and performers with senior and established CMC Associate composers in Ontario. Participants are paired up to share their histories, and contrast their experiences in the field of music and the arts. In this edition, we are treated to conversations with three CMC Associate Composers who each celebrated their 80th birthday recently: Boyd McDonald, Ruth Watson Henderson, and Arsenio Giron.

A Conversation with Boyd McDonald

By Samuel Bayefsky

Boyd McDonald was born in Saskatchewan in 1932, and recently celebrated his 80th birthday. Apart from composing, McDonald has a profound history as a pianist, and piano pedagogue. He is now a Professor Emeritus at Wilfred Laurier University. During a recent visit to Toronto, he met with me in Chalmers House to reflect on his career, and also to delight the CMC staff with some impromptu piano playing.

SB. How did you begin to compose?

BM. I lived 30 miles away from any city. All I had were piano lessons with Lyell Gustin in Saskatoon. Although not a composer, he gave me some compositional projects along with my theory. After I had won a piano competition in a Saskatchewan anniversary celebration, Lyell suggested I use the money I won to go to a summer program in Fontainebleau, France, to study with Nadia Boulanger. Eventually I got a Canada Council grant to return and study with her for three years (1957-60).

SB. It's interesting that you returned from France in 1960, as the first piece of yours I played through is Three Preludes (for piano), from 1961.

BM. The second prelude is entirely 12-tone and the critic who reviewed my premier said, "Oh, at last we can hear some music that's not 12-tone!" The preludes were based on paintings made by students who were listening to and interpreting a CBC broadcast on music. Their teacher gave the paintings to my mother, who worked at the same school, and asked, "What would a composer do,

translating these paintings back into music?" Aside from this piece based on artwork, I also wrote *An Artist's Neighbourhood* which has been orchestrated for a number of ensembles. I hadn't planned on composing about artwork or for theatre but that's the way my career evolved and where my connections took me.

New music, if it has a connection to something we know, is going to reach people.

SB. How do you compose?

BM. I improvise and write in pencil. Nadia said, "Never erase," because even if you don't like it, it's something you can always refer to. Dreaming the structure of the piece is very important for what you're trying to describe once you have your ideas. My later teacher, Murray Adaskin, had a strong influence on how I wrote. If the music was too easy, it wasn't good.

SB. Easy for the listeners or performers?

BM. Both. I got involved in writing theatre with Richard Monette – *The Triumph of Love*, by [Pierre de] Marivaux. I learned then that if the music is too interesting, you don't pay attention to the theatre. But it has to be interesting enough...otherwise, why use it?

SB. One of my Teaching Assistants at the University of Toronto, Chris Thornborrow (a former student of yours), told me that a free-form teaching method was important to you. Do you have a teaching philosophy?

BM. You've got to kick the ball from where it lies. You can't plan too much in advance. "Do the best that you can," as John Cage says, and within the boundaries of whatever style you're in, make the most beautiful choices.

SB. Having lived and worked all over the country, what are your impressions of Canadian music?

BM. Starting in 1967, I taught serial music for nine years in Winnipeg at the University of Manitoba. But since then, Canadian music has widened to become a more broad culture. For instance, when my colleagues heard my work for *The Triumph of Love*, which is very popular, they enjoyed it very much. Before, I thought they would've snubbed it as "going Hollywood." Also, when I first came to Waterloo in 1976, there was very little new music so I would come down to Toronto regularly to hear Robert Aitken's series [New Music Concerts]. Now there's so much going on in Waterloo and elsewhere that there'll be four events going on in the same evening!

SB. Has your study of the fortepiano affected your writing?

BM. I think it has. I am aware that on earlier keyboards the bass is less muddy. On those models, the strings are parallel so there is no buildup of sound and the decay is direct. I never did study orchestration. I always felt inferior that way. But I got commissioned by Guy Few and Alain Trudel to write for trumpet and trombone, then I was commissioned to do a cello piece and a violin piece, and bit by bit I got to know the instruments. I learned to orchestrate by putting them together in a score. I transcribed my piece, *Artist's Neighbourhood* for wind ensemble and later for full orchestra, which was broadcast on CBC.

SB. You've studied old music and new music. How do you feel about the reconciliation between tradition and innovation?

BM. New music, if it has a connection to something we know, is going to reach people. Communication is a big factor in music and memory is too. If we are familiar with something, we attach our associations to it. Then it's not so much the music that drives the listener but the memories it evokes. Music is memory because after it's played, it's gone – unless you remember it.

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A Conversation with Ruth Watson Henderson By Jason Caron

Ruth Watson Henderson, one of the most celebrated composers of choral music in Canada, turned 80 in November. There was a birthday concert at Kingsway-Lambton United Church which included a performance by Watson Henderson and members of her family. Another event took place at the University of Toronto featuring the MacMillan singers performing some of her works. I was one of the lucky choristers involved with this concert, and I was very happy to sit with Ruth Watson Henderson shortly after these celebrations to learn more about her life and music.

JC. How do you go about composing?

RWH. Often I am writing choral music so looking for the right text can be a matter of days, weeks... sometimes it takes me ages depending on what is going to be performed, what kind of a concert it is and who's going to be singing it. Once I get a text that I like, I just mull that over in my mind for quite a while looking for the rhythmic pattern and the way it moves and flows. Usually I just start by improvising on the piano working out rhythmic patterns. Then I just start to improvise basic harmonic patterns that

I think will fit it, and then start working with developing the melodic line and counterpoint and so on for the vocal parts. But the idea comes really from the text.

Instrumental music, it's very different. I don't write a lot of instrumental music. Whether I am writing for piano or organ, there I just go to the instrument and look for motifs that I think will be interesting and have something different I can develop. There is a lot of improvisation involved.

One of my favorite places to write was up at the cottage, where, in the summer time, when there were times that there weren't too many kids around and it was fairly quiet, we had a wonderful old swing that stretched out. We have screens all across the front so you feel like you are out of doors, and I could just lie there by the hour and hum things to myself and hear things in my head with a few animals running around outside. But no city noise, anything!

JC. There seems to be somewhat of a division between choral and instrumental composers. What drew you to write primarily choral music?

RWH. I have always just loved the choral sound; I get real inspiration there. I am drawn to it because I have had such wonderful conductors to work with who were willing to perform my music, and when I was writing things for them I knew they were going to be well done --

JC. -- Elmer Iseler, of course!

RWH. And the same with Jean Bartle, and others. When I write instrumental music, so often it just sits there and people don't get to know about it. I just don't have the

same opportunities and connection. Now, mind you, sometimes you just write for the pleasure of writing, but because so much of my work has been commissioned, I usually write with a particular group or sound in mind.

*Watson-Henderson was accompanist for the Festival Singers [conducted by Elmer Iseler], and her first major piece, the *Missa Brevis*, was written for them.*

JC. As a modern composer, the choice between accepting and embracing tradition or resisting and expanding tradition is always a difficult one. As a composer, what would you say your relationship with tradition is, and how has it changed over the years?

RWH. So many people now are looking to all kinds of areas to come up with unusual sounds, and you know, different instruments and electric things that I have not gotten into. I rather take traditional forms as you know and just find ways where I think my ideas can expand a little differently depending on the text. If there is something unusual about the text, I can try to move harmonically in some unexpected ways. But, I never go into very dissonant choral music, because so few choirs can sing dissonance that is perfectly in tune. I used to have perfect pitch, and it

just drives me nuts that it has gone in the last few years. When I listen to a choral sound I expect it to be perfectly in tune, and when you get into a lot of contemporary things that are too dissonant, it is not satisfying for me to listen to. I tend to want to hear basic perfect 4ths and 5ths somewhere. They may be combined in odd ways sometimes, but I want a basic foundation.

JC. The story of Canadian music in the 20th and 21st centuries has been quite an exciting one. From the perspective of someone who has seen so much of such a dynamic time in Canadian culture, what do you think of the music culture of today and where do you see it going?

RWH. Well, I think there are lots of interesting things happening. But... I don't know whether we are going to see any dramatic changes. I think we are going to continue to expand and develop things that we have been using. I guess I see the foundation remaining constant, and people are just looking for new ways to branch out, but coming back to that basic foundation. I don't see radical changes coming about. There were things oh, fifty, seventy-five years ago that were dramatic, but I don't see those kinds of thing happening now. We have got so much to draw from, I think it is possible to be original and do different things but still having the same sort of foundation underneath what we are doing.

A CONVERSATION WITH ARSENIO GIRON BY LELLAND REED

I had the great pleasure to chat with composer Arsenio Giron for this issue of Notations. Although we spoke through an interview format, Giron's humble and friendly nature made our discussion feel much more like a conversation. We chatted about a wide range of topics including music and musicians in Canada, Sibelius notation software, the art of practicing, and his hobby of building dulcimers. Here is a snapshot of our conversation.

LR. Were there professional or personal colleagues that helped to shape your career in music when you arrived in Canada (Ontario) from the United States?

AG. It isn't so much simply arriving in Canada; my influences are very broad. They are a combination of many factors. I think back to the high school teachers who were very good, and [who] had a great impact on what I ended up doing in music. The professors and fellow students at University also had an influence in what I did. And I'll tell you teaching had great impact on how I think about music. But in the end, it was my own exposure to the study of music that really had the greatest impact.

LR. In addition to composition you have had a prolific career as a music educator at the University of Western Ontario, and have seen the beginnings of many musical careers. What are your thoughts about the music being created today by Canada's young emerging composers and musicians?

AG. The thing about young composers is, I'm impressed by their mastery of technique. What they do, they do very well. I am quite impressed. What I do not like is music that is either imitative or derivative of the 19th century common practice technique. This is a sentiment that I expressed throughout my teaching career.

LR. Aside from music, do you have other art forms from which you regularly draw inspiration?

AG. Aside from music I do a great deal of reading. My menu ranges from the classics to current authors, and as well an occasional throw-away paper back. I do also have an extensive library of art and history books which I dip into. Right now I have been concentrating

on religious books. Books that question the whole belief system we live under.

LR. What are you currently listening to?

AG. My taste in music ranges from renaissance to the modern. I am often asked... "Who is your favorite composer?" My answer is always... "It depends on how I feel, and my mood." I don't have a favorite composer.

It also depends on what I'm writing. If I happen to be writing a string quartet, I will put on CDs of string quartets. But I don't like Broadway music or the 20th Century English music, and can't stand minimalist music.

LR. Is your composition process different today than when you began your career?

AG. It's bound to be. As with most composers today, I have attempted several approaches to composition and have tried many styles of writing. But about thirty years ago I settled on my present style. It's a non-tonal style, but yet it's a style that in many ways does not break away from the music of the past; the music I grew up with practicing for hours on end. It's hard to break away from what one grows up with. It's ingrained. Years of listening and practice! You can't get away from it!

LR. What kinds of projects or compositions are you currently working on?

AG. Right now I am working on a trio. I have also recently tried writing some harp music which I find very difficult. The notation can be outrageous. What I have also been working on and have been for the last three years is converting my scores to Sibelius notation. Learning the system is very challenging. I have dozens of my scores translated into the Sibelius system, and it will take me a few more years to finish the task.





ALGONQUIN

INSPIRATION

Samuel Bayefsky



As a composer, I find it hard to be inspired when confined to a noisy city like Toronto. Music is ubiquitous: in stores, bars, homes, schools, and even in the streets. In a city so saturated with music, my own acts of creation seem unnecessary. And even in the absence of music, Toronto's perpetual din is practically unavoidable. Sometimes I find myself wondering, "why add to all the commotion?"

Looking back on the year 2012, I can pinpoint the period that I was most productive musically. Surprisingly, it was not during the school year, nor did it occur while cramming for application or project deadlines. It came after I had finished my second year at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music. Freed from other obligations, I went with my girlfriend and two friends on a camping trip in Algonquin Park at the beginning of May.

It was quite cold when we set off on our trip from Canoe Lake. Lingering patches of snow could be spotted on the ground. Although we did not travel very deep into the park, we were very much alone because it was so early in the season. It was peaceful and quiet. The lapping of the waves, the breeze on our faces, the cracking of twigs, and the hiss from the fire composed our soundscape. There was no need to raise our voices, as sounds traveled freely, unimpeded by city bustle. The birds chirped, the squirrels squeaked and the flies buzzed.

When I inevitably returned to Toronto, I wanted the quiet feeling of the trip to stay with me. I refused to listen to the radio or an Mp3 player. I even whispered when I spoke to friends and family. And yet, the quiet I craved completely disappeared when I sat down at the piano to improvise. The first time I let my fingers run over the keys (it must have been a week since I had done so), I let the strings bang louder and longer than I normally did. I listened more intently to the overtones clash. I sought out new voicings of old chords just to taste the subtle differences the ring left on the ear. That day, in the relative quiet of my home, I composed a piece of music roughly eleven minutes long - all of it improvised. All of it was drawn out so that the notes could ring and sing freely. My ear had been finely-tuned during the silent and serene trip in Algonquin Park.

The piece I composed upon my return stayed in my head and evolved as the weeks passed - the opening chord rings until it dissipates, and gets struck loudly many more times before any melody emerges. Although it is a rather simple piece, its heavy chords bang and crash on the keys at full volume. But where did all this sound come from? I returned from the peaceful surroundings of Algonquin, sought out quiet living at home, only to wind up banging on the piano keys as forcefully as I could. I would not find out until my next departure from the city.



In August I traveled to Phoenix, Arizona, where I stayed at the prestigious Biltmore Hotel, just outside of the city. Built in 1929, the Biltmore was designed by Albert Chase McArthur while under the guidance of Frank Lloyd Wright. One afternoon, while escaping the scorching Arizona sun, I flipped through the Biltmore's magazine, where an article about Frank Lloyd Wright grabbed my attention. In regard to the barren land on which the Biltmore was conceived, Frank Lloyd Wright was quoted saying, "there could be nothing more inspiring to an architect on this earth than [this] spot of pure Arizona desert."

I realized then that just as the vast open desert inspires the architect, the silent soundscape inspires the composer – it offers a remedy for anyone overwhelmed by a modern city, and a chance to approach the act of creation from a refreshed perspective. Wright had limitless possibilities for creation and design on the red desert floor. In my circumstance as a composer, I had an urge to write a full, boisterous piece after my time in a quiet, forested environment.

When I consider the contrasting experiences I have had in Toronto, and outside of the city, it is no wonder that my most developed, gratifying piece of the year was written after my trip to Algonquin Park. Like Frank Lloyd Wright and his passion for the empty desert, it took a quiet, natural environment to point out the importance of my music to me. That original inspiration remains, as I am now in the process of turning what was initially a piano piece into my first symphony.



WELCOME

NEW ASSOCIATE COMPOSERS OF THE CMC

Each year the CMC welcomes new Associate Composers into the organization. 2012 saw an impressive group of composers join here in Ontario, and across the country. You can learn about each composer listed in this issue by visiting their profile pages on the CMC website. In this section, you will get a more personal view of several new Associate Composers affiliated with the Ontario region.



BYRON BELLOWS

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profile](#)

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST INTEREST IN MUSIC?

I remember responding to the magic of radio at an early age; specifically, the music which took me to a place I desperately wanted to explore. I embraced the piano like an old lost friend and I was ecstatic when one arrived in our home when I was eight years old. Six months later, I was playing on the ACT Amateur Radio Show and everyone called me Liberace – although, I did not know who Liberace was.

AND YOUR MOST PROFOUND MUSICAL EXPERIENCE?

Hearing the “Adagietto” from Mahler’s *Fifth Symphony* in Visconti’s *Death in Venice* for the first time evoked such tearful emotion. That same night I received word that my father had died, and the piece articulated my feeling exactly. As a contrasting experience, while walking by Carnegie Hall one day I bought a scalper’s ticket to Gustavo Dudamel conducting the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela with 190 musicians in addition to the 150 members of the Westminster Symphonic Choir on stage. It was a profound, intense, and grandiose performance culminating in a twelve minute standing ovation. Joyful! Lastly, having my two musicals (*Circus Lane* and *Egg on my Face*) produced in Canada, as well as my three world premieres in New York for Chamber Orchestra and Classical

Saxophone in the last two years stand out as profound experiences amongst my professional output.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE COMPOSER?

I have many favorite composers for my many moods, from Antonio Carlos Jobim, Michel Legrand, Nino Rota, Dmitri Shostakovich, Gustav Mahler, and Richard Strauss. Broadway favorites are Yip Harburg, Fred Ebb and John Kander.

WHAT INTRIGUES YOU MOST IN CONTEMPORARY TRENDS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT?

I feel I have only just entered the realm of creating more serious music. I definitely gravitate to creating romantic, highly melodic works. I love it when I hear someone humming my work when leaving a concert hall and I cherish these moments. Everyday we are faced with discordance and abrasive sounds all around us, particularly those of us living in a metropolis. Taking the listener on a journey and embracing a better place captivates me. I believe in elevating musically to a safer place, and recognizing my own sensitivity in this chaotic, high-tech world. Itzhak Perlman’s words always are with me: “You know, sometimes it is the artist’s task to find out how much music you can still make with what you have left.”

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST INTEREST
IN MUSIC?

Mom and Dad told me they would play Chris de Burgh tapes just to watch me jump up and down and go bonkers. I don't remember this, but I definitely have a strange affinity for Chris de Burgh. Mom enrolled me in music lessons at the Humber College Community Music School when I was 2½ years old (even though the minimum age requirement was three). Cathy Mitro, my first ever music teacher, eventually asked my mom: "How old is Christopher really?" My mom, embarrassed from getting caught, admitted that I was only 2½ years old. Mom asked: "How did you know?" Cathy replied: "Well, Christopher doesn't know where his elbow is."

AND YOUR MOST PROFOUND MUSICAL
EXPERIENCE?

When I realized that G/F chords in jazz music usually function as dominant chords (V4/2) like in classical music (and vice versa). Worlds collided. I've never been the same since.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE COMPOSER?

Lately, I've been listening to lots of Squarepusher and James Blake. I have absolutely no idea how these guys produce their music. All I know is that I love it. That intrigues me.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIVING DO YOU MAKE
BY BEING A COMPOSER IN CANADA,
ELSEWHERE?

It depends on what you mean by "composer." Composing, improvising and performing are all different ways of expressing the same thing. Currently, I'm working on creating a presentation for students on the music business. The process of creating a presentation is the same as composing a piece of music. In this sense, all of my living is made being a composer. More sensibly though, I hardly make anything as a composer. I make most of my living through live performance.

WHAT INTRIGUES YOU MOST IN
CONTEMPORARY TRENDS, PARTICULARLY
WITH RESPECT TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT?

From Alex Ross's *The Rest is Noise*: "At the beginning of the 21st Century, the impulse to pit classical music against pop culture no longer makes intellectual or emotional sense. Young composers have grown up with pop music ringing in their ears, and they make use of it or ignore it as the occasion demands."



CHRIS
DONNELLY

A portrait of Aaron Jensen, a young man with short, light-colored hair and blue eyes, wearing a dark turtleneck sweater under a dark jacket. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a light-colored, textured wall.

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profile

AARON JENSEN

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST INTEREST IN MUSIC?

I was fascinated by my family's electric organ as a small child. I remember spending hours improvising (in the loosest sense of the term) and experimenting with the various timbres. Though I couldn't reach the pedals from a seated position, my parents enrolled me in my first lessons when I was three years old.

AND YOUR MOST PROFOUND MUSICAL EXPERIENCE?

I would say that my most profound musical experience to date would be the same as my most terrifying one. Some years ago, I was commissioned by the U.K.-based vocal ensemble, The Swingle Singers, to adapt an arrangement of a Bjork song that I had written for their last album, into a ten-minute orchestral work which they would tour across Europe. This was my first symphonic project and though I had spent months composing and preparing the scores, once they were sent off, I lost sleep in anticipation of the premiere—fearing that some missed courtesy accidental, or something of the sort, would cause a train wreck of epic proportions. I flew to Sao Paulo, Brazil with my wife Tara, to hear the work premiered by the TUCCA Philharmonic and The Swingle Singers. By the time my piece came up in the program I was a mass of nerves. Full marks to my wife for keeping me from crawling up the walls. All this said, once the dust had settled, hearing my work performed—and performed beautifully—was nothing short of magic to me. The juxtaposition of the piece as I'd been hearing it in my mind, with the live performance, hit me like an out-of-body experience.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE COMPOSER?

Ask me tomorrow, and I'll have a different answer. I've been listening to a lot of Messiaen lately. Of contemporary composers, I'm keen on Paul Frehner and Nico Muhly.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIVING DO YOU MAKE BY BEING A COMPOSER IN CANADA, ELSEWHERE?

Ever since completing my studies, I've made my living exclusively through music – as a composer, arranger, conductor, clinician, and performer. These days, I'd guess that roughly one third of that income is from commissioned new works for Canadian and international ensembles.

WHAT INTRIGUES YOU MOST IN CONTEMPORARY TRENDS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT?

I feel that it's a very exciting time to be creating new music. Innovative and fresh ensembles, collectives, and music festivals are coming out of the woodwork. It seems as though both players and patrons are increasingly open to new ideas. It is such a stock answer to comment on how the world becomes smaller every year, but it's true. You can be an active member of an artistic community with people whom you will never meet. Nothing is easier than cross-continental collaborations. Earlier this year, I gave the opening address for a Vocal Festival in Paraguay via Skype. On the flip-side, I'm seeing a newfound interest in intimate salon-style house concerts. This is a trend that I hope will continue to grow and flourish in the coming years, and one that I hope to play an active role in supporting.

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST INTEREST IN MUSIC?

During my childhood CBC Radio was always on at home. I also spent a great deal of time listening to my parents' records. I was particularly fond of Herb Alpert, and a series called *Trumpet à Gogo*. I specifically remember hearing Laurie Anderson's *Big Science* for the first time, and being completely captivated by her sound world. I was very involved with music through programs at school. I played in a ukulele ensemble, and later played trumpet in band and orchestra. I am certainly a product of growing up in a time when the arts in public schools were well supported, and Canada's public broadcaster had more robust funding and programming. I had access to experiences that expanded my imagination, and made me curious to seek out more new experiences in the arts.

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EMILIE LEBEL

AND YOUR MOST PROFOUND MUSICAL EXPERIENCE?

In my late teens I had the opportunity to play trumpet in an orchestra alongside some amazing musicians. Being part of this huge music-making machine was a profound musical experience for me. This is when I realized that my life would be in music.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE COMPOSER?

I have a hard time making definitive lists. I change my mind, a lot.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIVING DO YOU MAKE BY BEING A COMPOSER IN CANADA, OR ELSEWHERE?

I currently make my living from a variety of sources. I teach digital audio and electronic music as a sessional lecturer, and I usually have a few research projects or administrative contracts on the go. And of course, I also compose.

WHAT INTRIGUES YOU MOST IN CONTEMPORARY TRENDS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT?

In the face of such uncertainty on so many levels, artists are still out there finding ways to present their work. I find it incredibly heartening to see that even when times are difficult, artists are still finding ways to be seen and heard. We especially need art in times of crisis and uncertainty, and it is great to see so many composers and performers creating opportunities for themselves.

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST INTEREST IN MUSIC?

I started out by listening to the Beatles music. For my fifth birthday, I received a copy of *Abbey Road* on LP. I was very excited! At age nine, after years of begging my parents for a musical instrument, I started learning the piano, which was my first instrument. I switched to guitar at age thirteen, mainly so I could play some of the Beatles' tunes. Soon after, I discovered that there was also other music out there in the world!

AND YOUR MOST PROFOUND MUSICAL EXPERIENCES?

My favourite experiences are usually when I am composing. I enjoy the exploratory process of creating very much. I sometimes feel I am connecting with something spiritual when it is going well. It sometimes happens when I am playing the guitar and sometimes when I am connecting with other musicians. I am not a religious person, but I suppose these moments are ones I do not feel responsible for. I feel that part of me has to get out of the way and allow the music to happen.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE COMPOSER?

I do not have one favourite composer, but if I had to pick a few, I would choose Bach, Stravinsky, and my guitar teacher and mentor, Jim Hall. Currently, I am listening quite a bit to the music of Gubaidulina, Silvestrov and Schnittke. I named my daughter Sofia, after Gubaidulina.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIVING DO YOU MAKE BY BEING A COMPOSER IN CANADA, ELSEWHERE?

I have received some commissions, but I certainly do not make my living from them. I compose, play the guitar and teach to make a living. I enjoy doing it all. I do receive grants for composition which certainly helps! I have always felt that I am both a guitarist and composer, and I am sure some of the guitar and teaching work I get is because I also compose.

WHAT INTRIGUES YOU MOST IN CONTEMPORARY TRENDS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT?

I sometimes combine improvisatory ideas in my compositions and I see that happening quite a bit. At first I did not want to include improvised or random elements in my composed work because it was something I have done quite a bit in my jazz playing, but now I embrace it more, and I think that my music has benefitted from incorporating those elements.

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DAVID
OCCHIPINTI

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST INTEREST IN MUSIC?

I think what first tipped my family off to my very strong interest in music came from observing me watching *The Muppet Show* as a toddler. Apparently I didn't pay that much attention to the skits on the show; it was actually the musical guests that really got me engaged. On one fateful night when Dizzy Gillespie was featured, I promptly picked up a block, mirror neurons firing away vigorously, and attempted to buzz my lips against its surface, puffing out my cheeks. It was that, and an article about the local Suzuki school in the newspaper my mother worked for that prompted them to sign me up for cello lessons.

I can also distinctly remember a few years later spending countless hours in front of the amber monitor of the Atari 800XL computer my parents had with the program Music Composer. I was completely fascinated and engrossed by it.

AND YOUR MOST PROFOUND MUSICAL EXPERIENCES?

Profound is difficult. There are a few really crucial experiences I can recall though. I had a surprise encounter with a music video which really impacted the way I listened: *Are We Still Married?* by a Michigan group called His Name Is Alive. There were so many things that were alluring to me at the time but it all came down to the sense of mystery and dark wonder that it conveyed. The visual aspect, I later discovered was a specially-commissioned stop-motion animation piece by the (renowned) Quay Brothers, loosely based around images from *Alice in Wonderland*. But the music was equally difficult for me to parse: the voice was run through a strange watery echo effect, the guitar was dreamy but also aggressive, and it was all held together with an eerie, dimly-lit keyboard sound. Before seeing the video, I didn't know that music could articulate something so completely other and mysterious. It was a real turning

point for me, and it's what really got me into seeking out different types of music. After that I started researching music more, buying what I could and listening to CDs from the library.

Attending the first two Open Ears Festivals (in Kitchener), when I was still in high school provided several other paradigm-shattering experiences: I encountered Steve Reich's work for the first time, experienced a version of Lucier's *I Am Sitting In A Room* early in the morning in the auditorium of an abandoned high school, heard Pauline Oliveros lecture and perform, and heard multichannel diffusion work for the first time—among many other things.

One final very recent one: working with the Madawaska Quartet during their Young Composers' Workshop in 2009. This was profound for one simple reason—it's what got me back into writing chamber music.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE COMPOSER?

The simple answer is no. I'm a pretty eclectic listener and it's always difficult to narrow it down that much, even if we're referring to music that's impacting my musical thinking substantially. I do tend to find colour to be the thing that excites me the most about music, so most music I really love has a unique approach to timbre and orchestration.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIVING DO YOU MAKE BY BEING A COMPOSER IN CANADA, ELSEWHERE?

A lot of my income comes from composing in Canada. Yet, it's worth noting that I'm only making a very modest income. Also "composing" includes a lot of different things for me where I have varying degrees of freedom. On one hand I'm doing commissioned chamber and electroacoustic work for ensembles, soloists, and festivals, but then I'm also collaborating with theatre groups, and visual/multimedia artists. I also

occasionally do work of a more commercial nature for various online/screen media.

Yet, more commercial or more collaborative work (for instance for theatre) presents some intriguing challenges in terms of production aesthetic or adopting certain voices. Those dress-up-games can also inform decisions I make on the more personal side of things.

Other work that I do is often music-related and includes journalism, cello-related stuff (performance, session work) and private teaching (cello, theory, composition). Those things are all part of the same work for me and inform each other.

WHAT INTRIGUES YOU MOST IN CONTEMPORARY TRENDS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT?

I feel like trained capital-C composers of my age and younger (I'm currently 31) have a great advantage in that they're quite free to explore various aspects of their musical personality and tastes. In Toronto where I live there's an additional advantage in that there are so many very strong musical poles you can gravitate to (in and outside of so-called 'new music'), but none of them assert themselves too aggressively. It's very fragmented but rich here, so there's lots of inspiration in the community but few truly codified aesthetic elements. It feels easy to figure out your particular blend and pursue it. And in our time, where information is very accessible online, I've discovered a lot of musics I would have never originally expected to like. The social side of online things is also a factor, but I find we're at a weird crossroads in terms of our relationship with social technologies. On one hand people are really active on Twitter and Facebook, meanwhile I have friends making print-only 'zines and cassettes/vinyl again. It feels exciting and there is enormous potential for sincere and organic hybrid and pidgin styles to emerge and for audiences to also become more diverse.

NICK STORRING





CHRIS THORNBORROW

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DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST INTEREST IN MUSIC?

I think I was always interested in music. Some of my earliest memories are of my parents' record player. My brother and I had these children's records, and we knew how to work the record player at an early age. I do recall wrecking the turntable needle once or twice while doing this. As far as becoming passionate about being a musician, I was a bit of a late bloomer. I started taking piano at the age of five along with my twin brother, Nick. He hated it, and I was sort of indifferent. Around the age of twelve, Nick took a keen interest in art which eventually turned into a career. It was around the same time that I started taking music-making more seriously.

AND YOUR MOST PROFOUND MUSICAL EXPERIENCE?

I get really excited about live performances, particularly chamber music. I especially love the intimacy and community that surrounds contemporary chamber music. Whether or not that is profound for me, I'm not sure. But, it is definitely a very meaningful and important part of my life.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE COMPOSER?

I'm all over the map in terms of what I listen to. I really enjoy the music of John Adams, particularly his quirkier chamber symphonies and his string quartet. I think when I write, I am often tipping my hat to Stravinsky, John Adams, David Lang, Nico Muhly, and in a weird sort of way, Dave Brubeck. Right now I can't stop listening to Ann Southam's *Rivers*, and I'll never say no to Sibelius.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIVING DO YOU MAKE AS A COMPOSER?

Very little. I make the majority of my income from teaching. I am currently a Teaching Assistant in ear-training, theory, and film composition at the University of Toronto. I also teach piano and score the occasional short film.

WHAT INTRIGUES YOU MOST IN CONTEMPORARY TRENDS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT?

What intrigues me changes with my mood, and I may have a completely different answer a week from now. Nonetheless I think the changes in technology we've seen in the last ten years, and how it has affected music, are fascinating. It has become incredibly easy to access music, it can come free, and it is inescapable. Stores blast club-thumpers outside their doors to try and lure you in and get you to buy something. Subway stations use classical music as a weapon to drive away loitering teenagers. Hollywood directors are scared of silence; of the last three movies I've seen, I don't think there were ten minutes of film that did not have a soundtrack behind it. I don't think any of these things are good things, but I do find them intriguing.

MATTHEW WHITTAL

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST INTEREST IN MUSIC?

I've always made music in some way. I took violin and piano lessons when I was very young, sang, and learned recorder from my father. In high school I took up brass playing, and it was from there I decided on a career in music, starting out as a performer on the horn. Composing came later, in my early twenties.

AND YOUR MOST PROFOUND MUSICAL EXPERIENCES?

My most profound musical experiences have been in nature, because that's where the creative process usually starts for me. I recall trips to the Atlantic region, sitting by the sea and feeling the power of the waves hitting the rocks below me, or a huge display of the aurora borealis one early summer night. That's probably where the idea of composing took root. I wanted to make something that beautiful, that unnecessary. (Most natural beauty is utterly frivolous when you think about it.) I'm not interested in the emotional impact of nature, in the programmatic sense, but rather the raw physical power, the otherness of it. More literally, my most profound musical experiences have been as a performer, either of my own music or other people's. I love working with choirs and singing my music with them, because they take such ownership of a piece, such communal pride. Once I was in a performance of Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians*, which was just an earth-shattering experience of communal music-making.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE COMPOSER?

My favorite composer changes depending on the kind of music I'm writing at the time, and the kind of models I'm looking for, but my trinity consists of Debussy, Mahler and Sibelius. György Ligeti, Steve Reich and the Swedish composer Anders Hillborg are some of my contemporary favorites.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR LIVING DO YOU MAKE BY BEING A COMPOSER IN CANADA, ELSEWHERE?

I live in Finland, and I make most of my living from my composing work here, through commissions, grants and royalties. I do a small amount of university teaching, and other occasional jobs like program annotating and arranging.

WHAT INTRIGUES YOU MOST IN CONTEMPORARY TRENDS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT?

What appeals to me currently is the sheer diversity of ideas. There's so much to choose from as a listener, so much great music being made, and it's all so accessible with online distribution. As a composer, I find that diversity reflected in the way you don't have to choose sides anymore, one style, one technique, one way of making music. Music can be any way, as stylistically pure or as wildly inconsistent as you want, even within the same piece. Your own background and experiences are welcome rather than discouraged, creating a wonderful range of highly personal modes of expression, what some call "voice". Although there are still some people fighting the old style wars, those distinctions between styles, genres, what's acceptable in a piece or not, have become largely irrelevant to the present, post-prohibitionist discourse. We're finally free to simply talk about whether something works or not, whether a piece is good or not, on its own terms, and that's good for everyone.



MORE NEW ASSOCIATES FROM ACROSS CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA
DANIEL BRANDES

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PRAIRIES
CARMEN BRADEN

QUÉBEC
ZOSHA DI CASTRI

ONTARIO
MARC SABAT
LEO SPELLMAN (*POSTHUMOUS*)

NEW MUSIC CONCERTS 2013



Saturday April 6, 2013 Gallery 345 @ 8:00
SIX HUNDRED YEAR ANNIVERSARIES

To celebrate the centenaries of some of New Music Concerts most distinguished guest composers in a gala evening of music, words and pictures, a number of noted musicians and musical friends will play and reminisce about John Cage, Barbara Pentland, John Weinzweig, Witold Lutoslawski and Henry Brant. The evening will feature an auction of André Leduc photographs from our archives, fine food, and wine of course, plus a tribute to American rhythmic pioneer Conlon Nancarrow. Proceeds will benefit New Music Concerts, with charitable receipt for the CRA allowable portion.

Tickets \$100, 2 for \$150 | RSVP 416.961.9594



Saturday April 27, 2013
Gallery 345 @ 8:00
**LOUISE BESSETTE:
A TRIBUTE TO
GILLES TREMBLAY**

An evening of piano music devised and performed by Louise Besette in honour of Gilles Tremblay's 80th birthday. The recital includes Canadian works by Tremblay, Michel Gonneville, Silvio Palmieri and Walter Boudreau.

Concert Tickets \$35 | \$25 seniors/arts workers | \$10 students
Reservations: **Call NMC @ 416.961.9594**
April 27 only: **Introduction @ 7:15pm | Concert @ 8:00pm**



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REGIONAL UPDATES

SWAN SONG FOR NEW MUSIC IN NEW PLACES

Over several years, the CMC administered New Music in New Places series has sponsored numerous performances across Canada thanks to the generous support of the SOCAN Foundation through the Creators Assistance Program, and the Department of Canadian Heritage. The 2012-13 season will prove to be the last of its kind as the CMC explores new avenues for funding. With that in mind, we are pleased to recognize the throng of musical activity that is taking place across Ontario as part of NMINP.

YOU CAN
STILL CATCH
NMINP
EVENTS IN
MARCH!

MARCH 21 & 22

Toronto

Junction The Dry Featuring
Véronique Mathieu (violin),
Stephanie Chua (piano), and
Emilie LeBel (electronics)

[Click here for event details](#)

MUSIC AND POETRY IN TRANSIT

A capacity crowd at the Free Times Café in Toronto took in the world premiere performance of *Tramvay Lider (Streetcar Songs)*, a song cycle composed and performed by CMC Associate Composer Charles Heller. Heller was accompanied by Brahm Goldhammer on piano. *Tramvay Lider* sets the poetry of Shimen Nepom to music. Nepom's poems, written in Yiddish, explore the struggles of the working class in 1930s Toronto, and the role labour movements played for immigrant communities. The performance took place during a meeting of the Yiddish Vinkl, a decades-old gathering of individuals who celebrate Yiddish Language and culture. To the delight of the audience, the performance was accompanied by an impressive array of food including latkes, brisket, blintzes and more.

KWG NEW MUSIC COLLECTIVE

A group of young composers joined forces with CMC Associate Composer James Harley to coordinate a series of performances in the Kitchener-Waterloo and Guelph region. The first concert took place on Saturday, November 17 at the Button Factory, and included chamber pieces by the collective members who also act as performers. Another event took place on Tuesday, February 26 at the Macdonald Stewart Arts Centre in Guelph, with a final concert scheduled in March. We here at Notations had such a good time at the first concert we decided to spotlight the collective with an extended feature in this issue.

EARTH'S SHADOW



CMC Associate Composer William Beauvais curated a twelve-hour performance as part of Scotia Bank Nuit Blanche. The event was co-curated by dancer and choreographer Terrill Maguire. The night included marathon performances from Beauvais (guitar) and fellow CMC

Associate John Kameel Farah (piano, electronics). *Earth's Shadow* explored the interplay of light and shadow through sound and movement. The visual presentation was made all the more dynamic by the lighting design of Steve Lucas. The transfiguration of night and day can imply fear, anonymity and escape, notions defining the narrative that unfolded during the event. Visitors were treated to improvised, composed and choreographed works, and guest appearances from local dancers and musicians.

THE COMPOSER PERFORMS

CMC Associate Elise Letourneau has curated a three part concert series in Ottawa called *The Composer Performs*. The first concert took place on Friday, January 4 featuring the music of Jan Järvillepp—and as the title of the series suggests, Järvillepp contributed as a musician performing on electric guitar and cello. The concert was also an opportunity to celebrate Järvillepp's 60th birthday while showcasing several of his chamber works from the last twenty years. Included in the concert were pieces such as *The Tennis Game* for two violins, *Music from Mars* for flute and electric guitar, and *Trio No. 2* for piccolo, viola and cello. The audience got to interact with Järvillepp between sets, and enjoy the ambience of the Gigspace in Ottawa.

Letourneau also took part as performer and composer in the second installment in the series on February 1, wherein she served as pianist, bass flautist, chorister, and conductor. The final installment included a solo performance by percussionist and composer Jesse Stewart on March 1.



MASTER CLASS YOUTH SERIES CONTINUES

2012 marked the first year of the Maser Class Youth Series, a joint project of Conservatory Canada, and the Canadian Music Centre. During the fall, CMC Associate Composers Kelly-Marie Murphy, Robert Rosen, and Allison Cameron took part in two-day workshops in Kanata, Kingston, and Newmarket respectively. The classes focused on composition and performance for piano, and involved local piano students.

The composers helped students become more familiar with the mechanics of the piano, and the various sonorities achieved in contemporary piano music. In many cases, this was the first experience the students had playing a grand piano, making it all the more intriguing! The approach to the creative process was made less abstract as the students used line drawing and poetry as a source of shape and form for their musical ideas.

Year two of the master class, which focuses on voice is underway! You can encourage young musicians to contact the CMC if they would like to participate in classes. The project is made possible through the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

EMERGING COMPOSER MENTORSHIP PROJECT

After a successful start in British Columbia, the Canadian League of Composers and the Canadian Music Centre have launched the Ontario edition of the Emerging Composer Mentorship Project. The mentorship project provides support to composers who have completed their studies in composition and are now setting upon a career in the field.

Three emerging composers are selected through an application process, and they receive a stipend which affords them more time to consider artistic and personal choices during the six month program. In addition, each participant is paired with an established composer who acts as a career mentor. Various public and private workshops are also organized as part of the professional development component of the projects; the composers will learn about marketing, grant writing, copyright, web design, health and wellness, and more. As a final component, the composers will be working with the Contact Contemporary Music Ensemble, and with the Canadian Contemporary Music Workshop, to create new pieces, and gain invaluable skills from two commission-like experiences.

We would like to congratulate the three composers who have been selected for the current round of the project: Fiona Ryan, Jason Doell, and Saman Shahi.



NEW MUSIC FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS

Ping! is Heading North

CMC Ontario is taking our annual showcase of newly commissioned educational works on the road, and heading to Thunder Bay! With the help of Glenn Colton, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Music at Lakehead University, and CMC Associate Composer and Professor Aris Carastathis, CMC will be premiering two new solo works by local composers.

On April 2 Darlene Chepil Reid's new solo work for cello and E. Patrick Horn's new piece for viola with piano accompaniment will be performed for students, teachers, and community members in Thunder Bay. The event will also recognize some distinguished work from composition students at Lakehead, and feature Aris Carastathis' *Encounters* from the Norman Burgess catalogue. The generous support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation has allowed the CMC to expand our activities and reach many more communities in the province, and Ping! North demonstrates the impact of the project.

More success for the Norman Burgess Fund Commissions!

Two pieces from the Norman Burgess catalogue are appearing in RCM Syllabi: Christien Ledroit's *Wandering the Threshold of Delirium* for solo violin (with optional electroacoustics), and Rob Teehan's *Four Songs* for viola with piano accompaniment. Special thanks to string educators Joan Barrett and Katharine Rapoport who helped to craft these wonderful pieces!

Our friends at the Ontario String Association included Robert Rival's *Spring* as part of the OSA Youth Orchestra repertoire in the fall of 2012. Rival's piece was performed at multiple concerts in Southern Ontario, and also presented during a key note address at the Ontario Music Educator's Conference in November.

We also see demand for new works growing outside of the province! CMC Associate Composer Kye Marshall's *Bossa Antiqua* for string orchestra was performed in concert at Mount Royal University in Calgary on February 3.

CMC LAUNCHES THE SCORE READING CLUB IN ONTARIO!

With the help of our volunteers, CMC Ontario hosted the first score reading club at Chalmers House on February 7. This type of event offers a casual and inclusive opportunity for curious listeners to share, discuss, and hear new music. We were thrilled to have three profound contributions from community members! Pianist Réa Beaumont presented *Small Pieces for a Shrinking Planet* for piano by Barbara Pentland—an opportunity to reflect on a composer whose centenary just passed. Beaumont wrote a biography and intimate study of Pentland's music, which made for an engrossing discussion, and a very personal performance. Stephanie Chua and Véronique Mathieu gave us a glimpse of their repertoire for the upcoming concert, *Junction the Dry*, by performing *Drop* by James Rolfe. We also had CMC Associate Composer Norbert Palej present *Paramirabo* by Claude Vivier. All the presenters gave an introduction to their piece providing details about the composer, and the qualities of the music that appeal to them. More sessions of the score reading club are being planned, so watch for announcements of future dates.

Top to bottom:

Dr. Réa Beaumont, Norbert Palej, James Rolfe

PHOTOS: John S. Gray



Are you interested in participating in the Score Reading Club? Do you want to present a piece that you really love? Contact the Ontario regional office to find out how you can be involved!



At the Fringe: Looking Out from Ontario

Tony K.T. Leung

Art music composers exist at the fringe, where there is danger - a chance of success, but also a chance of failure. It is especially true for those in Ontario who choose to compose for Chinese musical instruments. There is uncertainty, and the simultaneous possibility of growth.

Where is the growth? This past summer, I had the good fortune of visiting a total of five Chinese orchestras in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Especially among the young people in those places, there is passion. As Canada is a desirable place to study and to immigrate, some of those trained instrumentalists will land here. I have already seen it in Toronto. At the Toronto Chinese Orchestra (TCO), where I am Composer-in-Residence, our orchestra is attracting an increasing number of young, trained instrumentalists - a new lifeblood. Not all were fed through China's art school stream. Some are here to study other subjects. This is in contrast to a decade ago, where musician immigrants were older and music was their livelihood.

In Vancouver, the music scene involving Chinese musical instruments is much more active than in Toronto, due to Vancouver's proximity to Asia. The Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra, Vancouver Chinese Music Ensemble, B.C. Chinese Music Ensemble, Big World Band, Orchid Ensemble, and Red Chamber are some groups whose concerts and recordings have propelled the music of Chinese instruments to greater prominence in their part of the country. More recently, Corey Hamm and Nicole Li started a Piano and Erhu Project (PEP), commissioning over twenty-four composers from across Canada thus far. This activity is encouraged and enabled by various organizations in the region;

Combined orchestra performing at 2010 Chinese Music Festival at Winspear Centre, Edmonton.
Chih-Sheng Chen, Conductor
PHOTO: Henry Van Roessel



for example, composer workshops organized by the Canadian League of Composers and the CMC-BC regional office have allowed Vancouver-based instrumentalists such as zheng player Mei Han, to discuss writing and notation for their instruments. In another exciting development, through the efforts of the B.C. Chinese Music Association, students passing a graded exam for a Chinese musical instrument receive a high school credit - a great stimulus for parents to send their kids to lessons. As a result, the Kiwanis Festival in Vancouver has many more participants for Chinese musical instruments than in Toronto.

Sadly, some in the mainland do not think that anyone outside of China cares about Chinese musical instruments

In Toronto, besides TCO, there are several other orchestras. Due to language barriers or cultural perspective, some of these orchestras remain within the walls of Chinatown. In mainstream concerts, the use of Chinese musical instruments remains a novelty, especially around the Lunar New Year, Asian Heritage month, or the Autumn Moon Festival. Thus far, the concert producers have been established music groups. This is not surprising, since it is difficult for people newly arrived to Canada to navigate the world of arts administration. Although commonplace for those who are active in Toronto's art scene, not-for-profit governance, fundraising, grant writing, and promotion are not skills that recent musician immigrants always possess.

Despite these barriers, Chinese music has been able to grow rapidly in cities such as Toronto and Vancouver, where there is a high concentration of Chinese diaspora. There are musicians that live in Calgary, Edmonton, or Montreal, but these cities do not attract the same level of Chinese immigration. Developments are underway at a national level which may increase activity in these and other cities. For instance, in 2010, I along with twelve others from TCO flew to Edmonton to participate in Canada's first Chinese Music Festival, where we performed with orchestras from Vancouver, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Hearing sixty musicians fill the Winspear Centre with sound was an unforgettable experience and this musical exchange greatly increases the profile of new music written for Chinese instruments.

Stylistic exchanges are also at work. In 2012, the Toronto Chinese Orchestra's annual concert fell on June 30. The proximity to Canada Day prompted the orchestra to ask me to compose a work using Canadian folk songs. The Toronto Chinese Orchestra is a large-scale orchestra that uses primarily Chinese musical instruments. As a proud Canadian, I was excited to research suitable Canadian folk songs that could be performed by a Chinese Orchestra—a historical first. In the end, I chose *À la Claire Fontaine* (French; Quebec), *Lullaby: Sung to Hiawatha* (Algonquin; Ontario), *When the Moon Comes Up* (Cree; Saskatchewan), *I'll Give My Love an Apple* (English; Nova Scotia), and *She's Like the Swallow* (Newfoundland). As bookends, I included the Chinese *Love Song of Kangding*, to form *Boundless Songs of Love*. What made this experience even more amazing is that I had the opportunity to export the music to Hong Kong in July, where the Hong Kong Juvenile & Youth Chinese Classical Orchestra performed it with the composer (myself) conducting.

I am very glad to live in Toronto, where there is artistic freedom – the freedom to pursue what is in your heart. Not everyone in this city of 2.7 million will take note, but it should be possible to find fifty people who do care to fill an intimate concert venue.



To that end, and with modest expectations, I have started on an exciting venture this past December. My wife Patty, an erhu player, and I decided that now was the right time to form a chamber ensemble specializing in new works for Chinese musical instruments. Given the increased interest from composers wanting to write for these instruments, and the number of young, trained instrumentalists landing in Toronto, we do not want to see their talents be neglected. We fill an unmet need since there is no such group in Toronto.

An additional catalyst in forming an ensemble came from meeting Andrew T. Chan, a young Toronto-based harp soloist. Andrew wanted to perform a new work with Chinese musical instruments. We also met several recently-arrived young players. Erhu player Linlin Wang is a graduate of the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts and was a member of the Guangdong National Orchestra for six years before migrating to Canada, and yangqin player Di Zhang is a recent graduate from Beijing's Minzu University now living in Toronto.

Once decided, our plans fell together within a month, and the freshly-minted Dim Sum Ensemble was underway—Dim Sum means “touch the heart”. The ensemble will be flexible and project-based, with no fixed members other than myself as Artistic Director and Patty as Executive Director. For the first project in October 2013, we have invited four composers to write works: Chan Ka Nin, Alice Ping Yee Ho, Matthew Van Driel from Canada, and Lan-chee Lam from Hong Kong. All of the composers have an affinity to writing for Chinese musical instruments. I will also be writing a piece for harp. For this project, the ensemble will consist of zheng, yangqin, percussion, two erhu, zhonghu, and cello. Hopefully, we will become more versed in the art of securing funding.

While we are promoting Chinese musical instruments in Canada, there is an ironic decline in those studying Chinese musical instruments in the mainland, where European musical instruments are favoured due to the stellar success of Lang Lang. Studying a western or international musical instrument is perceived as the ticket out of China for a better life. Sadly, some in the mainland do not think that anyone outside of China cares about Chinese musical instruments.

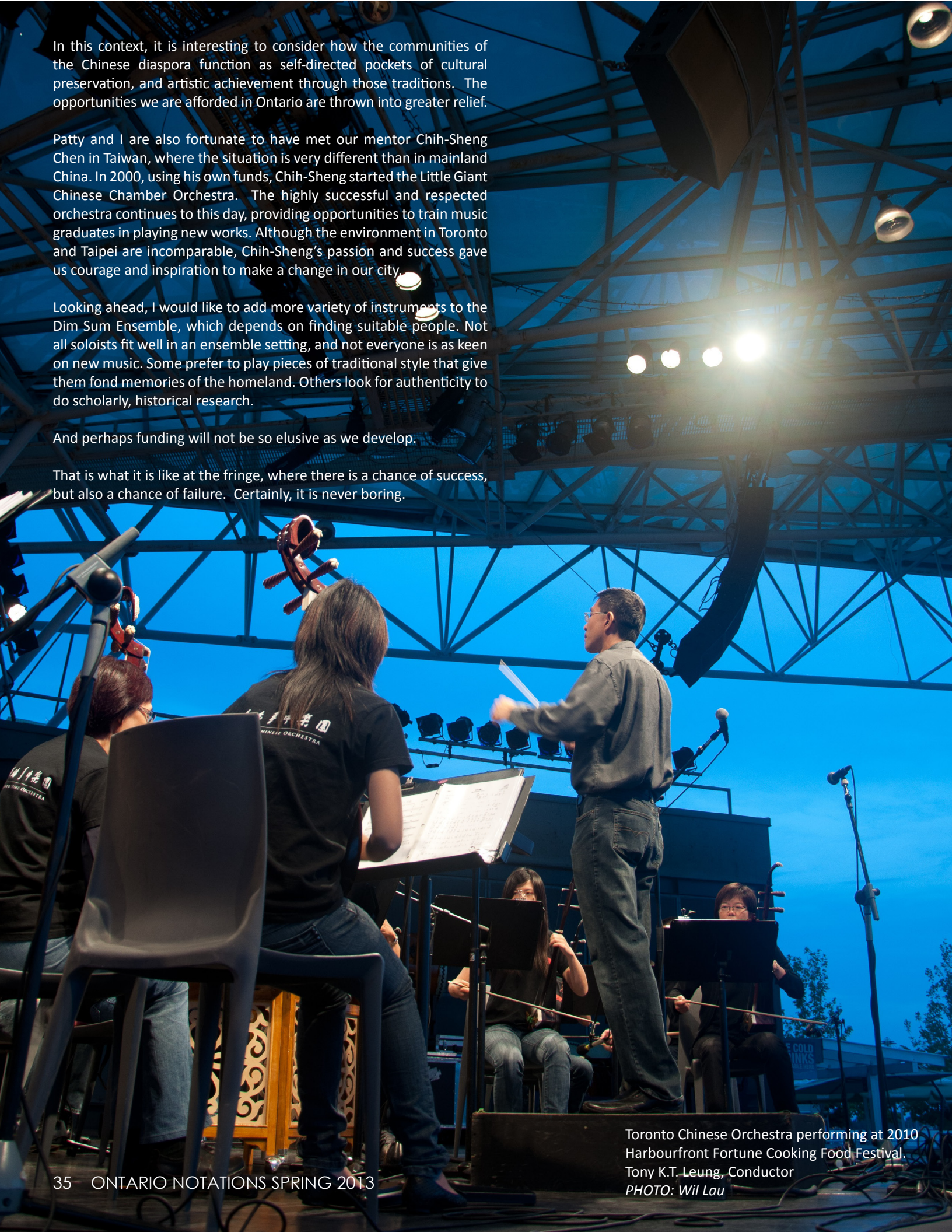
In this context, it is interesting to consider how the communities of the Chinese diaspora function as self-directed pockets of cultural preservation, and artistic achievement through those traditions. The opportunities we are afforded in Ontario are thrown into greater relief.

Patty and I are also fortunate to have met our mentor Chih-Sheng Chen in Taiwan, where the situation is very different than in mainland China. In 2000, using his own funds, Chih-Sheng started the Little Giant Chinese Chamber Orchestra. The highly successful and respected orchestra continues to this day, providing opportunities to train music graduates in playing new works. Although the environment in Toronto and Taipei are incomparable, Chih-Sheng's passion and success gave us courage and inspiration to make a change in our city.

Looking ahead, I would like to add more variety of instruments to the Dim Sum Ensemble, which depends on finding suitable people. Not all soloists fit well in an ensemble setting, and not everyone is as keen on new music. Some prefer to play pieces of traditional style that give them fond memories of the homeland. Others look for authenticity to do scholarly, historical research.

And perhaps funding will not be so elusive as we develop.

That is what it is like at the fringe, where there is a chance of success, but also a chance of failure. Certainly, it is never boring.





IN FOCUS

The Zheng in Contemporary Composition

Mei Han

As a professional zheng performer, I have premiered many new works written by Canadian composers internationally. The zheng is a Chinese long zither with a history tracing back to the fifth century BCE. Traditionally the zheng is tuned to anahemitonic-pentatonic scale (five notes without semitones) with each string having a movable bridge underneath. This tuning provides a framework for pitch movement of up to a minor third on a single string. This ability of producing pitch nuances by depressing the string with the left hand is the most significant characteristic of zheng music. The zheng has a rapidly growing contemporary repertoire in addition to traditional repertoire, mostly written for the twenty-one-string (metal wound with nylon) zheng. The challenge for many composers is to highlight the zheng's unique melodic nuances while finding common ground with other instruments in tonality, timbre, and texture. It is important to understand the rationale behind the zheng's pentatonic tuning and how to create functional alternatives and not to treat the zheng as a harp or piano.

An early Canadian zheng composition is *Bamboo, Silk and Stone* (1987), an electro-acoustic work for the zheng and tape, by Canadian composer and multi-instrumentalist Randy Raine-Reusch

and electro-acoustic composer Barry Truax. This was followed by another electro-acoustic composition, *Hsuan* (1992), by David Eagle of Calgary. Over the years since, CMC composers Hope Lee (Alberta), Moshe Denburg, Mark Armanini, Jin Zhang, John Oliver and Janet Danielson (BC), as well as Kevin Austin (Quebec) and Lee Pui Ming (Ontario), have written a considerable number of compositions that involve the zheng. These compositions are diverse, and many utilize a combination of zheng and Western instruments. With an increasing number of professional zheng musicians residing in Canada, there has been a growing interest in writing for the instrument and this has arguably made Canada one of the most fertile places for contemporary zheng composition globally.

The diversity of approaches to composing for the zheng is substantial. In the groundbreaking *Bamboo, Silk and Stone* the tape is primarily comprised of zheng samples, along with three other instruments, that begins by creating a subtle landscape supporting the nuances of the zheng, but grows to a percussive section that drives the performer to play jagged passages, which is uncharacteristically aggressive when compared to the typical sweet sound of the zheng.



Mei Han pictured
with her zheng

Purple Lotus Bud (John Oliver, 2004) is for zheng and string quartet (premiered with the Borealis String Quartet), in which Oliver uses a traditional zheng melody as the point of departure to explore the relationship between the moving pitches of the zheng and the harmony of Western classical music. In the opening section, he extracts a number of overtones from single note plucked by the zheng and redistributes them across the string quartet. The juxtaposition of the zheng's moving pitches and the soft overtones in the string quartet creates a beautiful extension and transformation of tone colours.

In *Enchanted Glass* (Janet Danielson, 2005) for zheng and harpsichord (premiered with Cynthia Hiebert), Danielson creates a unique conversation between the two instruments through subtle differences in tunings (the well-tempered tuning of the harpsichord and just intonation on the zheng), most evident when the decay of chords on the harpsichord converges with the bending tones of the zheng. Danielson notes: "there is a sardonic march which spirals into increasingly odd tunings with an almost electrical effect," to which some audience members likened the fizzle and pop of exploding candy!

The growing number of Canadian compositions for the zheng increasingly compels composers and performers to increase the instrument's musical vocabulary. As more composers discover the intricacies of the zheng and apply them in new contexts, the subtlety and versatility of the instrument will be more recognized as a unique international voice.

Mei Han is a Ph.D. candidate in Ethnomusicology at the School of Music, UBC. You can learn more about her by [clicking here!](#)

Composers in Canada have always had to be resourceful in finding new ways to have their music performed. In Ontario, there is a long history of composer collectives that have been established on the basis of this principle. The Kitchener - Waterloo - Guelph New Music Collective (KWG NMC) is one recent and exciting manifestation of this musical survivalism. Just under a year old, this collective of composition students and recent graduates of composition programs just completed its first concert season.

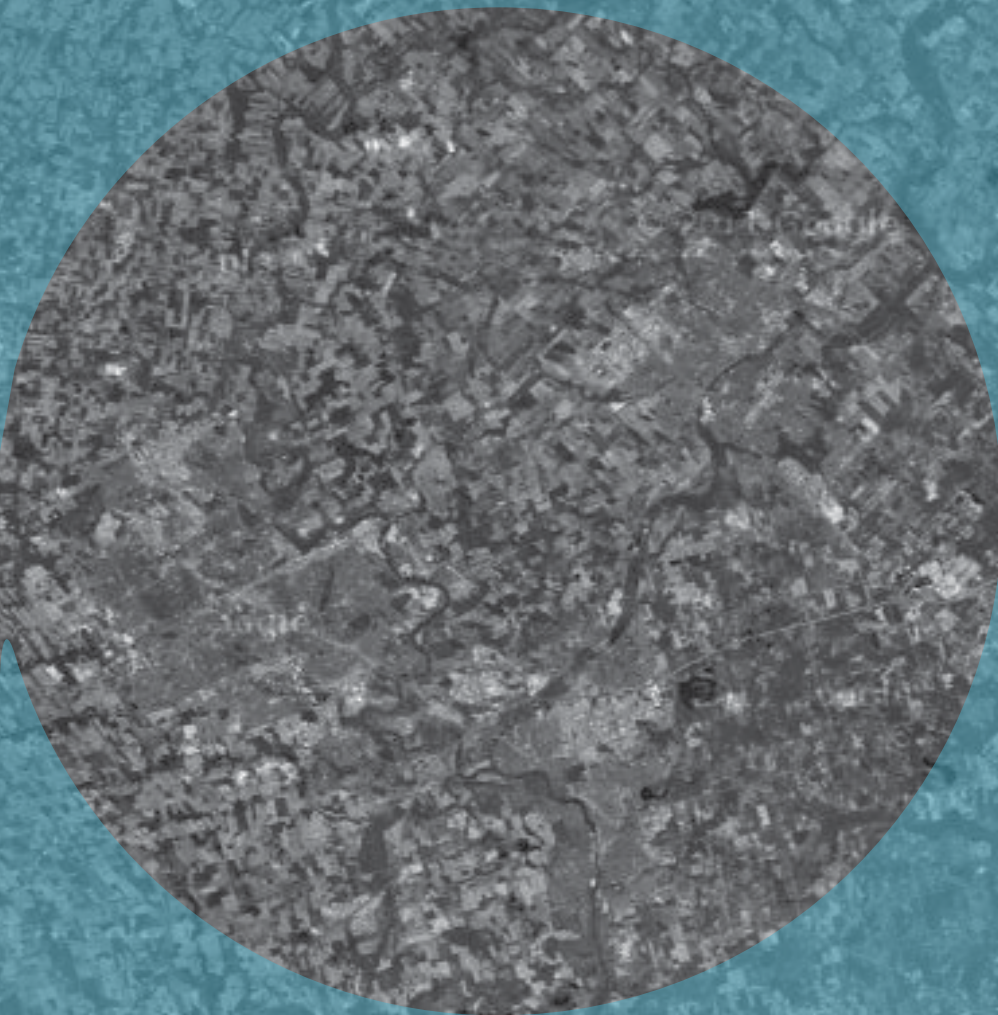
Theory in Practice

Creating opportunities in Kitchener-Waterloo and Guelph

Matthew Fava

Pictured: Kitchener, Waterloo, and Guelph as seen from space

Together the group delves more deeply into each others' music, exhibiting a collaborative spirit that allows for artistic criticism and refinement, and ultimately, ongoing performances of new works. The concerts offer eclectic musical experiences that reflect the various stages of each composer's career. We here at Notations caught up with the young composers and their mentor James Harley to find out more about their origins, current musical efforts, and aspirations.





Composer and bassist David Riedstra provided the original impetus for the group. He presented his Honours Recital in April 2012 at the University of Guelph, and given the amount of work that went into his compositions, wanted to have them performed again. He connected with close friends Patrick Horrigan, Christine Hudson, and Sandro Manzon with this goal in mind. Manzon, studying at Laurier, introduced the group to Keenan Reimer-Watts and Emily Walker. The composers came together and the collective was established to present a concert in May 2012 at the MacDonald Stewart Arts Centre in Guelph consisting of chamber music composed and performed by each member. CMC Associate Composer and University of Guelph Professor James Harley had taught Riedstra, Horrigan, and Manzon, and after attending the concert in May encouraged the group to apply to the Canadian Music Centre's New Music in New Places project. With Harley's involvement and leadership, the group presented a series of concerts in the KWG region.

Harley was immediately drawn to the enthusiasm and vision of the students, and aptly describes the collective's work as "reaching out beyond the isolated environment of universities." It is rare for composition students to find projects that transcend university affiliations, and it is this which makes the KWG collective so unique.

"James Harley has always been a very supportive composition teacher" says collective member Patrick Horrigan. "I think Dr. Harley realized the potential of our group and helped us to go further...and while he does act as a mentor, he allows each of us to have equal control of the group, finding venues, choosing music, handling publicity. I think that is important for us to work well as a collective, and really feel like we are a part of something."

During our conversations, I am aware of their fondness for Kitchener-Waterloo and Guelph. Collective members make

comparisons with Toronto, but they are unanimous in praising the sense of community and the climate for the arts in KWG. So, while Toronto is more saturated with new music activities than KWG, not one of the collective members views this as a detriment. Instead, it has shaped the ethos, music, and organization of the collective. "A smaller community like Guelph doesn't have the same resources as a place like Toronto," Hudson comments, "so I think that musicians here have learned to be adaptable and they are willing to step outside of their comfort zones. A lot of people create and perform in multiple genres."

Indeed, the region has a lot to offer, and has an impressive history of presenting concerts and festivals. "The Guelph Jazz Festival has helped me to realize how many people actually appreciate contemporary music and composition," says Horrigan. The collective members also draw attention to the offerings from the Open Ears Festival of Music and Sound, NUMUS, and ICASP (Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice) projects. This disposition towards local artists and creators in their region has allowed collective members to feel a strong sense of support in their own writing.

Several of the composers have close affiliations with teachers and mentors who, alongside Harley, have encouraged their work. Hudson mentioned that she received encouragement in her composing from a number of sources including the Guelph School of Music and the Guelph Youth Music Centre, where teachers would incorporate her original pieces into their lessons: "One of the violin teachers at the GSM coached one of her students and me for a couple of performances of *For Bissett Creek*. She is very encouraging and passionate about new music. It was amazing to work with someone so excited about the opportunity to interpret a new piece."

Reimer-Watts, the youngest composer in the group, started taking piano lessons in recent years, and was accepted at Wilfrid Laurier after auditioning for piano. His piano teacher, Heather Taves, embraces composition and new music, and the camaraderie at Laurier is such that Reimer-Watts asserts, "you can usually find performers willing to play your music." Reflecting on his experience in Kitchener-Waterloo, and as a member of the collective, Reimer-Watts states, "it has opened the door of composition, and really helped me as a performer."

Name one of your favourite pieces that you performed by a fellow composer in the collective...

DAVE RIEDSTRA

I am playing in Patrick's *Quartet for Oboe, Violin, Bass, and Piano*. It has a really nice shape: improvised-sounding melodies move through a couple contrapuntal ensemble textures to a strong pulsing section, and the whole piece is bookended by these really intense, loosely-notated gestures which have me sawing away on my bass. Coincidentally, we discovered that he used almost the exact same pitch-set as I did for the bulk of my new trio.

PATRICK HORRIGAN

During our concert at the Button Factory in November, I had an opportunity to play Jim Harley's *Jardinages*. This was a really fun piece to play, as it was mostly improvised, and it was an interactive piece between the music and pre-recorded electronics. It was cool to work with the electronics, using them for inspiration and as a basis for the music I played. It was the first time I had played with electronics and it really expanded my view as to the many ways they can be incorporated into chamber/instrumental music.

CHRISTINE HUDSON

I played Dave's piece *Pare* for solo Oboe last April. I liked the concept of removing excess. The piece was stark and free which was beautiful and fun to interpret. We talked about extended techniques ahead of time which was great because they fit in very naturally to the piece. I was able to play oboe in a few more pieces in our recent concert, which I really enjoyed.

KEENAN REIMER-WATTS

For Bissett Creek, by Christine Hudson. Fantastic use of the whole tone scale, well structured, very emotive. As intended, it brought images of nature to mind. I feel it holds a sense of purpose in the context of today's world, where our relationship to, and treatment of nature is often questioned or criticized.

Horrigan has created a lot of music as a student, but acknowledges, “most of what I wrote was theoretical, in the sense that unless there were specific students that I could convince to play my music it always remained on the page.” Reidstra points out how the circumstances of studying in a small liberal arts program forces a composer to adopt specific practices: “I’ve generally had to get players on board before pieces were written, and sometimes you end up with unconventional ensembles. The great flip side of this is that everyone is on a first-name basis and lots of people are willing to help out, be it performing or workshopping a piece.” The collective has become an extension of this; Reidstra comments, “the collective is great because it means we have even more of that—a guaranteed performance, audience, and set of players. Additionally, our players are all composers, so their input on our pieces is also valuable in that way.”

The collective not only provides the opportunity to hear each others’ music, but also get crucial feedback to develop as both performers and composers. The collective process has pushed each composer further, inviting more input as they evaluate and improve their organizational efforts, as well as their artistic output. With the series underway, they are also challenged to build audiences.

Manzon has spent time commuting back and forth between Toronto and KWG, attending a number of events in each city. Like other collective members he comments, “the KWG area

is constantly presenting new music concerts” and offers the observation that “one difference [with Toronto] is that the contemporary music audience of KWG contains significantly fewer practitioners.” Audiences are therefore differently compelled by the concert-going experience. Reidstra, while reflecting on his studies in Guelph, mentions that the city “has been great to me... there’s lots of support for anything local and self-made, which definitely works in our favour.”

The collective is taking significant steps this year, fuelled by greater ambitions. As each composer considers the future of the collective it is clear that they hypothesize while focusing their energies on the immediate tasks at hand. Certainly, each composer would like to see the group tour their programme to other parts of the province, and there is a pronounced value in any opportunity to perform, be it a house party, or a more traditional concert venue. Also, the composers want to see the KWG New Music Collective survive beyond their individual involvement. There is also discussion of fostering more of a dialogue between up-and-coming musicians and composers with more established figures in the music community (similar to their relationship to Harley).

As with many new music collectives, the energy and will is boundless for the KWG NMC. It will be rewarding to witness the advancement of the group as they further their craft, and build an excited and expectant audience in a region of the province so inclined to creative music.

- Thursday March 14** **CHRISTIEN LEDROIT**
Quebec City, QC *Interflow for chamber ensemble*
Ensemble Erreur de Type 27
Salle Multi de Méduse
- Friday March 14** **CHAN KA NIN**
Victoria, BC *Harmonious Interest*
Victoria Symphony, Tania Miller
(conductor), David Ferguson (director),
Mark Brownell (writer)
McPherson Playhouse
- Saturday March 23** **BRIAN HARMAN**
Sudbury, ON *New Work for instrumental septet*
5-Penny New Music Ensemble, Brian
Current (conductor)
St. Peter's United Church
- Sunday March 24** **JAMES HARLEY**
Calgary, AB *Etude pour une fete (Jazz II)*
Rubbing Stone Ensemble
Carboro United Church
- Thursday March 28** **JORDAN PAL**
Thunder Bay, ON *Starling: Concerto for Violin, Cello, Piano*
& Orchestra
Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra,
Arthur Post (conductor)
Thunder Bay Community Auditorium
- Wednesday April 3** **PETER HATCH**
Treviso, Italy *Il Cimento Dellaarmonia e*
dell'inventione
Philharmonic Violins Berlin
- Thursday April 11** **CHRISTIAN LEDROIT**
Hamilton, ON *Twice Removed for violin, piano, cello*
and marimba, Wandering the Threshold
of Delirium arranged for chamber
ensemble
Members of the Hamilton Philharmonic
Orchestra
Art Gallery of Hamilton
- Saturday April 13** **ALEX EDDINGTON**
Mississauga, ON *Eight Poems of Dennis Lee*
Jennifer Tung (soprano), Peggy Hills
McGuire (Violin), Chamber Music
Society of Mississauga
The Great Hall of the Unitarian
Congregation of Mississauga
- Wednesday April 24** **LINDA C. SMITH**
Toronto, ON *Thought and Desire*
Philip Thomas (piano), presented by
Continuum Contemporary Music
Gallery 345
- Sunday April 28** **ALEX EDDINGTON**
Guelph, ON *Living Soul for string orchestra (world*
premiere)
Students of the Suzuki String School of
Guelph
River Run Centre
- Saturday May 4** **JORDAN PAL**
Regina, SK *On the Double: Concert Overture for*
Orchestra
Regina Symphony Orchestra, Victor Sawa
(conductor)
Conexus Arts Centre
- Sunday May 5** **ALEX EDDINGTON**
New York, USA *The Stolen Child for tenor and piano*
(world premiere)
Nathan Létourneau (tenor)
Black Box Theatre, NYU Campus
- Saturday May 11** **ALICE PING YEE HO**
Toronto, ON *Lesson of Da Ji*
Marjorie Chan (Librettist), Larry
Beckwith (Artistic Director)
Masque Theatre - Al Green Theatre
- Monday May 13** **KELLY-MARIE MURPHY**
Ottawa, ON *Fallibility, Logic, and the Return of*
Wonder (saxophone concerto)
Jeremy Brown (saxophone), Ottawa
Symphony Orchestra, David Currie
(conductor)
Southern Hall, National Arts Centre
- Tuesday May 14** **CHRISTIEN LEDROIT**
Long Beach, USA *Elementalities for tabla, vibraphone and*
flute
Ironworks Percussion Duo
University of California, Long Beach
- Thursday May 16** **ALICE PING YEE HO**
Valletta, Malta *Qim for solo harpsichord*
LINDA C. SMITH
Sleeping Lady for solo harpsichord
Vivienne Spiteri (harpsichord)
Sala Isouard, Teatru Manoel
- Saturday May 25** **JAMES HARLEY**
Waterloo, ON *Night-flowering...not even sand II -*
Electroacoustic
QuantumNano Centre
- Saturday May 25** **BRIAN HARMAN**
Toronto, ON *New Work for solo piano*
Jane Wood (piano)
ANNA HÖSTMAN
New Work for solo baroque flute
Emma Elkinson (flute)
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- Monday May 27** **ALEX EDDINGTON**
Toronto, ON *Grasslands, Badlands, and Spirit Sands*
(world premiere), Big Muddy
MONICA PEARCE
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piano trio
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