

NOTATIONS

SPRING 2014

Allison Cameron

In the Field in Svalbard

In Focus

*Adaskin's Qalala and Nilaula of
the North*

Conversations with

Norma Beecroft & Kristi Allik

In profile

**New Associate Composers of
Ontario Region**

Remembering Larry Lake

And updates from the CMC



CANADIAN MUSIC CENTRE
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Letter from Editors
- 4 Ontario Regional Council
- 6 Ontario Project Updates
- 14 Generations/Conversations:
A Conversation with Norma Beecroft
- 18 New Associate Composers
- 29 Album reviews
- 31 Noteworthy
- 36 Generations/Conversations:
A Conversation with Kristi Allik
- 40 Svalbard Skrivebok:
Tales from an Arctic Sound Expedition
- 48 In Focus: Resituating Sounds
- 50 In memoriam: Larry Lake

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

The complex and distinct qualities of our everyday soundscape are often lost on us. It is no surprise that an artist (in any medium) will find a renewed sense of inspiration when they travel, and escape what might feel like the monotonous confines of their day-to-day life. Suddenly you are immersed in a new palette of sounds, colours, and textures.

In this issue of *Notations*, our main article takes a personal look at the process a composer adopts when using field recordings, and also the lessons an artist learns when displacing themselves for their art. CMC Associate Composer Allison Cameron recently participated in a residency that took her on an arctic expedition on a tall ship, which is a markedly different space compared to her Toronto home despite the cold temperatures this winter.

Jeremy Strachan continues the discussion of field recordings from a different perspective in our *In Focus* feature, as he discusses Murray Adaskin's trip to Rankin Inlet in 1965. During the trip Adaskin recorded two elderly Inuit singers, which became the basis of his work *Qalala and Nilaula of the North*.

Cross-generational discussion continues in other sections of our newsletter, as we feature two interviews from our *Generations/Conversations* project. In this issue we hear from Norma Beecroft who is celebrating her 80th birthday this year, and Kristi Allik who recently retired from Queen's University.

Our *Noteworthy* section features updates on the activities and achievements of CMC Associates here in Ontario, and elsewhere. We also spotlight two recent commercial recordings featuring CMC Associates Alice Ping Yee Ho, Nick Storrington, and Daniel Brandes. In addition, we get a glimpse of the new composers who have joined the CMC as associates in the Ontario region.

We also devote the last part of this issue to CMC Associate Composer, and former CMC board member, Larry Lake. Lake is well-known for his role as a radio broadcaster, having spent the better part of his professional life showcasing and cultivating Canadian composers. Our memorial section includes a few reflections on his accomplishments and unique personality. During the production of this Newsletter, CMC Associate Composer Udo Kasemets passed away, and we will devote a portion of our next issue to a reflection on his achievements.

We hope you enjoy the current issue, and as always we welcome your feedback, and involvement!

NOTATIONS EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE

Matthew Fava
Donald Pounsett
Jeremy Strachan
Alexa Woloshyn

Regional Council Report

December was a momentous month for the Canadian Music Centre. Elisabeth Bihl, our Executive Director, stepped down after leading the organization for 14 years. To celebrate, the National Board fêted Elisabeth during its meeting early in the month, then everyone else had a chance to express gratitude and best wishes at a gathering at Chalmers House on December 13th. Hosted by Ontario Associate Composer Brian Current, the evening included speeches and tributes, champagne, tears, and musical performances by Christina Petrowska-Quilico, Joseph Petric with David Mott, and Adam Sherkin, all musicians well known in Ontario and beyond for their commitment to Canadian music (David is not only a respected saxophonist but an Associate Composer). Christina and Joseph are both past recipients of the Friends of Canadian Music Award, jointly administered by the CMC and the Canadian League of Composers.

The end of an era also means the beginning of a new one. The search to find a new Executive Director began in October, the process greatly aided by recruitment consultant Daniel Weinzwieg, who has a long family connection to the CMC (his father, John, was one of the principal founders of the organization). The search committee, made up of National Board members Owen Underhill, Nicolas Gilbert, and myself, and CMC staff member Caroline Hughey, was joined by John Brotman, former Executive Director of the Ontario Arts Council. John's experience and perspective were extremely valuable for the process. There were many highly qualified applicants for the position, and it is gratifying to realize the esteem the CMC is held in that such people would take the

time to consider the position and to apply. As is now public knowledge, Glenn Hodgins was offered, and has accepted, the position. By the time this issue of *Notations* come out, Glenn will be on the job.

Not only is Glenn moving to the CMC from the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, where he has been Executive Director for several years, he is coming out of the CMC Ontario Regional Council, where he has been serving as Vice-Chair, and as a representative on the national board, since 2012. On behalf of the Council, I would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Glenn. We look forward to working with him in his new capacity. In particular, we look forward to collaborating on the implementation of the new Strategic Plan, which has been in development over the past 18 months or so. Indeed, this renewed vision of the CMC is another marker that we are entering a new era!

*Jim Harley, Chair
Ontario Regional Council*





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 Jane Mallett Theatre | 27 Front St. E. | 416.366.7723
 co-production with Music Toronto



Friday April 18, 2014 • 8pm
A Portrait of Jörg Widmann
 Jörg Widmann, clarinet/direction
 Betty Oliphant Theatre
 404 Jarvis Street | 416.961.9594



Wednesday May 21, 2014 • 8pm
Beijing Composers with Wei-wei Lan
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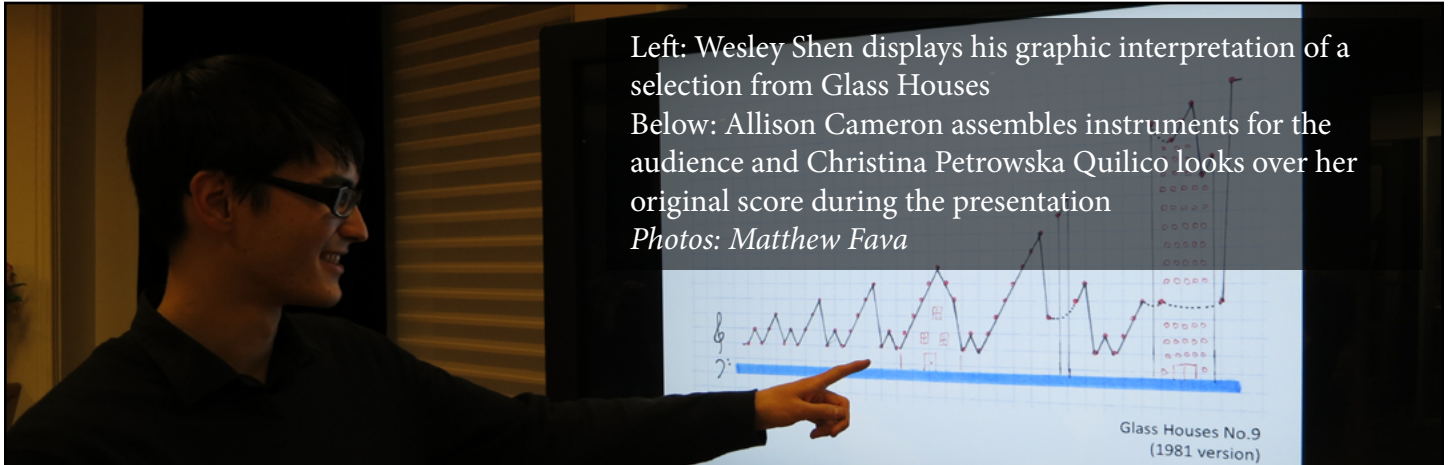


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Ontario Region Updates

Here are some updates regarding CMC administered projects! If you are interested to learn about the other activities involving the CMC, visit our website.



Take a look and a listen The Score Reading Club

By Jason Caron

The score reading club had a fantastic first year in 2013, culminating in a three-part session in early December. The session began with Toronto-based pianist and harpsichordist Wesley Shen presenting selections from Ann Southam's *Glass Houses*. Shen had due reason to be a little bit nervous; after all, Christina Petrowska Quilico, who was in attendance, was good friends with Ann Southam and helped prepare the latest edition of *Glass Houses*. A large collection of minimalist piano pieces with repeated melodies of various length and character stratified over a bass ostinato, *Glass Houses* puts the listener into a joyous trance, a-la Reich. Wesley played wonderfully and brought some great insight to the structure of the piece.

Even Christina agreed with his observations.

CMC Associate Allison Cameron's presentation followed Chen's, and included a live performance of an excerpt of *Burdocks* by Fluxus-ite Christian Wolff performed by the audience! After a cautionary explanation by Cameron of the inherent complexities and nuance of Wolff's notation and performance practice, a collection of small instruments and, in Fluxus fashion, "instruments" were handed out (for example, I had a wooden ruler) and an impromptu reading session of an excerpt of *Burdocks* commenced. The audience had to grapple with cueing and exploring multiple soundings for their instruments, capturing something of the experience an ensemble would have with Wolff's piece.

Lastly was a short preface on Violet Archer's *First Piano Concerto* by pianist Christina

Petrowska Quilico accompanied by a listen to a complete recording of the work from Christina's recording, *3 Concerti*, which is available through Centrediscs. The concerto is a brilliant work, full of Bartók-like flourish and *perpetua mobile*. Christina managed to find her original handwritten score from her performance, hoping to find some pearls of wisdom from the composer herself; alas, not much besides a small accidental correction seemed to be there. Christina supposed, then, that she must have played it perfectly the first time.




TPC in residence Supporting new creation

In 2013 the Toy Piano Composers issued a call for works, inviting composers to write for their newly formed chamber ensemble. The *TBA project* came to fruition this winter, with five guest composers writing new works that were premiered as part of the TPC Concert in early February. The CMC was proud to sponsor the project, and invite the ensemble and artistic leadership of the TPC into the performance space in Chalmers House. The guest composers included Jason Doell, Sophie Dupuis, August Murphy-King, Robert Taylor, and Tyler Versluis. The guest composers expressed their distinct musical voices, and the range of creativity accurately captured the spirit of the TPC whose collective members evince a similar variety in their standard programming.

Ontario Band Association Connecting composers, educators and conductors

The CMC is collaborating with the Ontario Band Association to present a score reading project dedicated to music for beginner and intermediate concert band. In early February the CMC and OBA issued a call for scores, and the composers who are selected to participate will have their work performed at two sessions. The first session will take place at the CMC National offices in April. CMC Associate Composer Michael Colgrass will participate in the April session providing introductory remarks and observations during the readings. Performers will include music teachers and other professional players with an interest in contemporary Canadian repertoire. Composers will gain insight into writing for student performers. A second session will take place at Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts in Toronto's north end in May, and will involve the school's award winning concert band, conducted by Mary Evered.

The CMC is thrilled to be collaborating with the OBA and we look forward to more opportunities to showcase and promote Canadian concert band music.



TPC ensemble and artistic directors posing with the composers who participated in the TBA project – the ensemble appeared in masks and coloured outfits for Sophie Dupuis' piece which ended the concert.

Photo: Tim Crouch

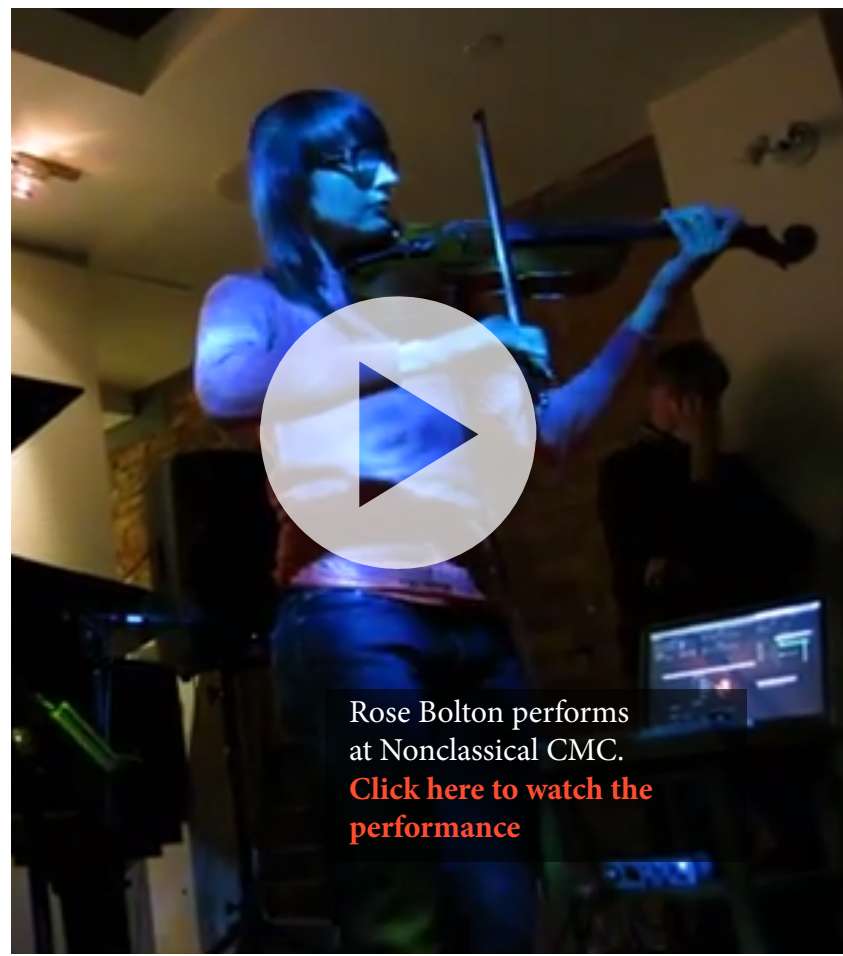
*Nonclassical at the CMC
Part of the U of T New Music
Festival Expansion Pack*

The CMC and Centrediscs hosted a special event as part of the University of Toronto New Music Festival featuring UK-based composer, DJ, and Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor in Composition at the Faculty of Music, Gabriel Prokofiev. Composition students from the University participated in a forum with Prokofiev at Chalmers house in the evening on January 28. Apart from discussing his approach to writing music, Prokofiev focused on his motivation to establish a record label and concert series that appealed broadly to music listeners. He commented that in his early

career he did not see many younger listeners taking an interest in contemporary classical music, and this had as much to do with the format of concerts as the music itself.

Following the forum, guests were treated to a demonstration of Prokofiev's approach to programming. The performance space and atmosphere in Chalmers House were transformed, becoming, as the heading suggests, "nonclassical." The experience at the CMC felt more like the club events that Prokofiev hosts in the UK, and included three short sets broken up by DJing. CMC associates Rose Bolton and Laura Silberberg, as well as cellist Bryan Holt, performed a mix of pieces, and the audience stuck around late into the

Gabriel Prokofiev presents during the forum with University of Toronto Students at Chalmers House
Photo: John S. Gray



Rose Bolton performs at Nonclassical CMC.
[Click here to watch the performance](#)

A Noisome Pestilence *The Hugh Le Caine Centenary*

The CMC is participating in a number of initiatives to commemorate 100 years of CMC Associate Composer Hugh Le Caine. Le Caine's electronic instruments and compositions defined an era of musical creativity in Canada, and this was the focus of our previous *Notations* issue. The Music Gallery in Toronto will be hosting a special concert event on Friday, May 30 that will include performances and installations by Rob Cruikshank, and Dave MacKinnon, and reflections from Bob Aitken, Alcides Lanza, and Le Caine's biographer, Gayle Young. You can find out more about the Le Caine event at the Music Gallery by [clicking here!](#)

The Toronto International Electroacoustic Symposium will also be hosting a special afternoon session dedicated to Le Caine titled "A Noisome Pestilence." They have issued a call for submissions for this special session and you can learn more by [clicking here!](#)





CMC Associate Composer Nick Storrington (centre) speaking with CMC Ontario Regional Director Matthew Fava during the Ping! Chamber concert at CMC in Toronto.
Photo: John S. Gray

New Music For Young Musicians Chamber showcase

For the past three years, the New Music For Young Musicians project has extended across Ontario, commissioning fifteen new works for strings, establishing numerous connections with string educators, and showcasing contemporary works in countless settings. The CMC was the fortunate recipient of a generous grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation which allowed for these achievements, and to celebrate these successes a final concert was hosted at the CMC Offices in Toronto.

The event featured two world premieres: *Hinting* for solo harp written by Nick Storrington and performed by Emma Blackburn, and *basement apartments* for double bass and piano

by Monica Pearce performed by bassist Alex Kotyk and Saman Shahi. A capacity audience also enjoyed the Toronto premieres of NMFYM commissions by Thunder Bay-based composers Patrick Horn and Darlene Chepil Reid. The event was brimming with music as guest performers Heather Schmidt (piano) and Shauna Rolston (cello) were on hand performing solo and duo repertoire.

During the concert, CMC Ontario launched a specially developed guide for composers that outlines writing effective pedagogical music for string instruments. The guide was compiled with input from more than a dozen project participants including composers and consulting educators and offers a summary of the various lessons learned through the NMFYM process.



Erika Raum (left) rehearsing with Lydia Wong (right) for the Ping String Orchestra Showcase in October
 Photo: John S. Gray

NMFYM Field Notes

Gathering research about the project

By Bernie Andrews

Professor Bernie W. Andrews works in the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa. Through interviews, surveys, and journal entries he has tracked the experiences of composers, educators, and students who have participated in the NMFYM project. Below, Andrews comments on his findings.

In the early stages of my career when I was heavily involved in teaching and administering music programs, I was often frustrated by the lack of available Canadian repertoire for school ensembles. During my years as a member and vice-chair of the Ontario Regional Council of the CMC, I became aware of the efforts of the organization to promote Canadian music in education across a very large country. For example, guidelists of Canadian music appropriate for young musicians were produced under the auspices of the *John Adaskin Project* under the direction of Professor Patricia Shand of the University of Toronto,

composers created new music for schools in *Creating Music in the Classroom*, teaching resources were disseminated in the *Composer Project*, and student compositions were critiqued by professional composers in *Composer in Electronic Residence*.

It was brought to my attention on several occasions that many composers were unfamiliar with the parameters of educational music. Composers are trained to compose at ever-increasing levels of complexity and seldom have the opportunity to write for young musicians.

The string orchestra from Agincourt Collegiate rehearsing for Ping! at UTS in October with conductor Amanda Tulk-O'Reilly
Photo: Matthew Fava



Indeed, in studies of programs in faculties of music across Ontario which I conducted with Glen Carruthers, Dean of the Faculty of Music at Wilfrid Laurier University, we found that composers are not trained to compose for educational purposes and moreover, there is very limited Canadian repertoire studied and performed in post-secondary institutions. Further, there is limited Canadian repertoire taught in schools; instead, American film music and Western-European transcriptions for concert band and vocal ensembles are more commonly used. These issues prompted me to collaborate with CMC staff to apply for funds for commissioning educational music, while also conducting research tracking the experience of participating composers.

Commencing in 2000, several commissioning

programs were initiated for CMC composers. The Canada Council in collaboration with provincial arts agencies commissioned 98 new educational works in a project entitled *New Music for Young Musicians (NMFYM)*. In my research with Ontario-based composers involved in *NMFYM*, I found that they employ specific compositional techniques to reinforce different types of music learning, and prior experiences teaching young people are important for creating educational music appropriate for those young people. The adoption of a flexible form allows a composer to adapt more easily to students' needs, and blending atonal and tonal idioms challenges students and retains their attention. Rehearsing new works on-site in classrooms and studios enables composers to effectively assess students' technical proficiency and ensure an appropriate interpretation of a new

work. Compositional techniques, such as short pulsating rhythms to refine motor responses and equality of parts to maintain interest, can impact positively on students' musical skill development.

The *Norman Burgess Memorial Fund* built on the work of *NMFYM* and began commissioning new string works for educational purposes commencing in 2005. Commissioning activity was expanded in 2007 with support from the Ontario Arts Foundation with funds from the Ontario Ministry of Education and Ministry of Culture. At this same time, the Ottawa Catholic Board also commissioned 8 new wind works, adopting a similar model to the *NMFYM* project.

Beginning in 2010, with the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation the CMC commissioned another 15 compositions for young musicians, and the research component, entitled *Sound Connections: Composing Educational Music*, has focused on the relationship of compositional techniques to musical skill development. With additional commissioning activity in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board we have observed the creation of more than 150 new Canadian works for young musicians since 2000 – an incredible achievement! I am excited about the current research projects, and expect that significant findings will result that will assist composers to create educational music more effectively, and increase Canadian repertoire for school ensembles and private studio instruction.

Upcoming Release! On April 22 pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico launches *Glass Houses Volume 2* on Centrediscs featuring the music of Ann Southam at the CMC in Toronto.

[Click here to register to attend!](#)

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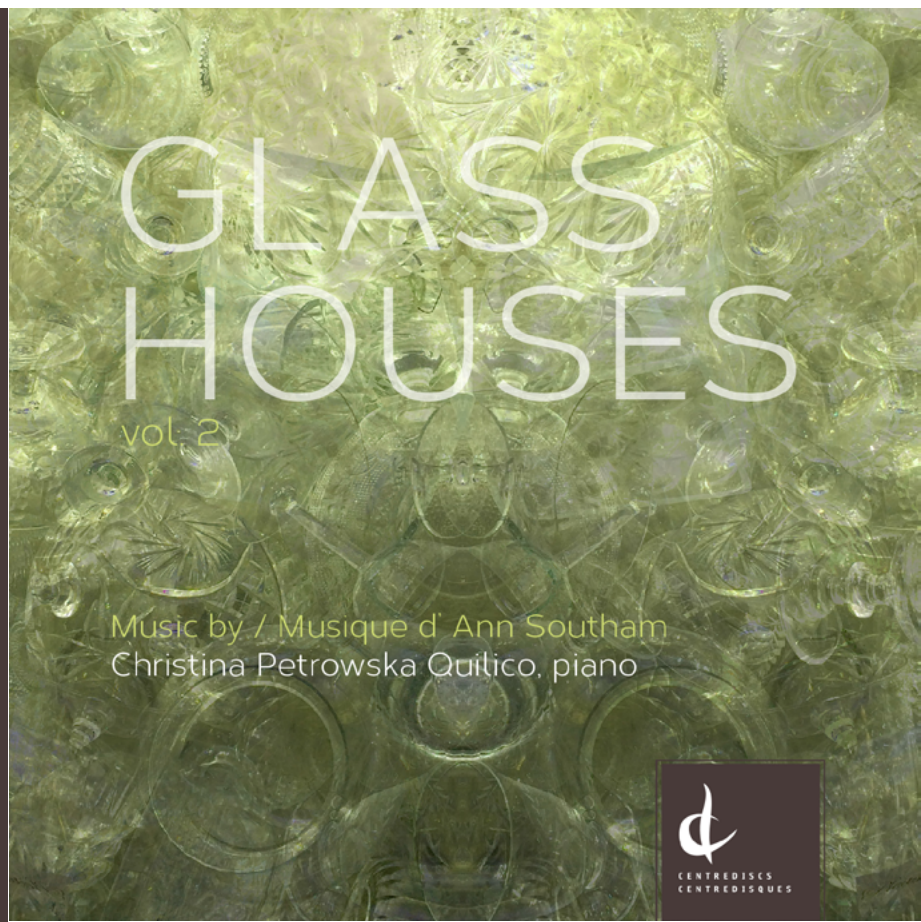


Photo: John Reeves

A Conversation with Norma Beecroft

GENERATIONS/CONVERSATIONS

Generations/Conversations is an inter-generational interview series pairing young artists with senior and established composers in Ontario.

by Lelland Reed

This spring, CMC Associate Composer Norma Beecroft celebrates her 80th birthday. From her involvement in the early years of electronic music, to her interest in documenting and supporting fellow composers, and her co-founding of Toronto-based New Music Concerts, Beecroft has demonstrated an undeniable flare for making things happen. Her relative absence in her later career from the music world is by no means a measure of inactivity; I was pleased to speak with her in the fall of 2013 regarding her musical and extra-musical life, as well as her impressions of the state of Canadian music today. Reproduced here is a portion of our discussion.

LR: How did your childhood and early adult life orient you towards your path in music?

NB: My father was a musician and he was always playing the piano, and my mother sang; granted I didn't like particularly what my mother sang, but there was always music in the house. My father during the Second World War had a dance band; he did arrangements for them. I found out much later he had really wanted to study composition, and he knew quite a lot about it because I found after he died some old scores of his, and he knew all about instrumentation and transposition, so he must have

had some training somewhere. I inherited his interest, and I'm the only one in the family who was involved in music as a career.

Later on it was late night radio that got me involved with music in a much bigger way. There was an old program on the CBC called *Escape With Me* with Burt Devitt, and he took you to a Caribbean island; there was Smitty on the beach playing piano and it was all Debussy and Ravel, and this was to me absolutely the cat's meow: that was a sound that I really reacted and responded to more than anything else.

LR: When did you begin to view music and composition as a career?

NB: It's all part of the same story. My parents separated when I was 12 years old; it was not a very happy time in my life. I realized that my parents would not be able to give me any guidance about what to do with my life, and I thought to myself, "what is it I am sympathetic to?" Music was the only thing I had a feeling for. I started studying piano, paying for lessons myself. It didn't work out; it was too late to start a career as a performer. Then I started to write things down, and I realized I didn't know how, so I had to learn the rudiments of composition.

I was a pretty young thing, and I thought maybe I could do some part time work in modeling, so I took a course in modeling; of course I hated it, every inch of it, but through that I met a salesman in one of these wholesale houses down on Spadina, and he told me "If you're going to study composition, go to John Weinzweig, don't waste your time going to anybody else." So I called John Weinzweig, and he said "sure come on up and we'll talk about it." That's how it all started. From there I went to Tanglewood; that opened my eyes up, and then I went to Europe where I was in Italy for three years.

LR: In addition to composition you have had a significant career as an administrator, broadcaster, and producer. Having worked in various roles during your early career, what were conditions like for composers?

NB: John Weinzweig was heavily involved with the founding of the League of Composers, which in turn was responsible for its involvement in the founding of the Canada Council. I was right there, this was the 50's. I started studying with John in 1952, and John got me into thinking that if you want to be a composer you've got to be able to help other composers. This is a social responsibility. I guess I took it to heart. I ended up being a secretary for the Canadian Music Associates, which was the concert committee of the League of Composers. I typed up the very first catalogue for the Canadian Music Centre, which was just starting up at that time. I wasn't really a typist particularly, so it was painstaking.

The Canadian Music Associates did put on a series of concerts. The critics at the time ridiculed a lot of Canadian composers and their output; they didn't understand what was going on in music at all. It was embarrassing in a way to hear intelligent people making funny comments about Canadian music. It was not a very happy time for Canadian composers. But you know the League kept pushing and pushing and pushing, and of course



Photo: Ken Bell



Leland Reed (left) speaking with Norma Beecroft in the lounge at the CMC offices in Toronto.

when the Canada Council was formed, there was support to subsidize their work. I went to Europe, and of course it was a totally different atmosphere over there towards music and people making it. You were respected [in Europe] for being a composer, even if you were just a young composer; it had another aura which was very positive. I often thought in retrospect, “if I had stayed there what would have happened to me, how different would my life been?” I guess I was tied to Canada, and making things happen was part of my makeup, my DNA as it were.

LR: When electronic music studios became a more common resource for the composer, was there a consensus among composers about these tools regarding their benefit, artistic merit, and longevity of the medium?

NB: Oh it was controversial for sure, and it didn’t appeal to everybody. Of my own particular generation it became the subject of a lot of conferences and things like that. I think now that they would have had more performances if they weren’t hamstrung with the fact that they needed tape and the equipment to play it on. This became a problem for performance. I never thought about the future of my piece — that didn’t concern me at all. You would have to ask that question of other composers. It was a very creative period of time; I have no regrets about what I did at that particular time. I don’t know if when you’re creating a piece of music you’re wondering about what’s going to happen to it 50 years from now. I never thought on those terms.

LR: What are your thoughts about Canadian music and musicians today?

NB: I think it’s a hundred percent improved. We now have a plethora of small organizations dedicated to contemporary music, including Canadian music. I wish the orchestras were more responsive to Canadian content; they only perform it because they have to in order to get their Canada Council grants and things like that. The musicians I think are more willing. They have been more exposed, but in the larger ensembles it’s up to the conductor; it’s really up to the artistic direction of the organization. It’s up to the administration — I feel very strongly about that — and I think in this country Quebec is much further along than we are in terms of acceptance of Canadian music.

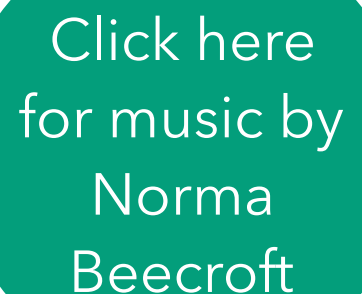
LR: Do you have any composition projects on the go right now? I also understand that you are in the final stages of completing Music and Technology, a major project of yours.

NB: I'm waiting to hear the premiere of a piece I wrote for Ryan Scott and Sanya Eng, for harp and percussion. I was sort of thinking of writing a sequel to that piece but I really want to hear the piece before I write the sequel. I'm more involved with completing my *Music and Technology* project, which are these interviews I did thirty five years ago with major people whose creative output included electronic sounds. These tapes have been sitting around. Thirty years ago I couldn't interest anybody in it, but now there is a lot of interest. I wanted to document that time because it was a hugely creative time. I felt it was a new phase in the history of music. I wanted to have their thoughts and feelings about what they were doing at that particular period in time. To me it was something important to do, and now I view it as more important than ever because there is very little documentation available. Why would composers turn to this kind of idea? What motivated them to get involved with this new media? That was the whole thrust of my questioning. What in their background interested them in this whole thing?

LR: Could you talk about your current activities apart from composition? I understand you are very active when you are not composing.

NB: I founded a food business in 1996 — *Norma's Edible Flowers and Herbs* — and I guess in a way that became an extension of my creativity. In order to make that a success I had to put a lot of energy into it. I am half farmer, half composer. There is a part of me that really loves living in the country, and working with the earth, and that's perhaps taken over more of my personality at this point in time. I was born out of the depression and before the Second World War. There was no refrigeration way back then. One of the properties which belonged to my family had been initially a farm; there were a lot of fruit trees and I grew up with this around me and it was very influential. Even in Collingwood, where I went to high school, you worked on farms in the summertime. It didn't matter how old you were, you were supposed to grow your own stuff; it was wartime.

Composing is a solitary life. I mean you are literally working in your own brain quietly by yourself. When you're out there marketing your product you're making contacts with people, it becomes your social life in a sort of way. You get to be too much like a monk if you're hibernating over a drawing board for days on end. We're not intended to be solitary people I don't think, at least most of us are not. We like it as a relief from crowds of people, but not all the time. That's part of the appeal to me.



Click here
for music by
Norma
Beecroft

NEW ASSOCIATE COMPOSERS

In this section we learn more about the composers who have joined the CMC in the Ontario Region. You can learn more about each composer by visiting their profile page on the CMC website.



SAMUEL ANDREYEV

What got you excited about music at a young age?

A feeling of intense and immediate association, coupled with an almost insane compulsion to create. I never doubted my calling, though I was profoundly involved in other things as well (literature and poetry, the visual arts). A poet friend of mine once said, “I write because I have a problem with language.” I would say: “I’m a musician because composition presents me with fascinating problems, which can only provisionally be resolved, through the prism of my own subjectivity.” Anything so mysterious has to be worth doing!

What was the most important music concert/event you attended?

When I was about 20, I took the bus from Toronto to New York to hear Ives’ 4th Symphony played by the American Composers Orchestra. It made an overwhelming impression, and helped me to calibrate my own musical ambition, though my own style couldn’t be more different. Years later, in Strasbourg, I heard Stockhausen’s *Gruppen*, which similarly impressed me with the sheer audacity and ambition of the composer’s vision. Courage and intransigence always leave a mark.

What is on your personal playlist?

I listen to music every day, so my ‘playlist’ is constantly changing. Also, my job as analysis professor at a conservatoire in France requires me to assimilate large amounts of repertoire every week. Nevertheless, there are certain pieces to which I return relatively frequently. They are almost all works I encountered in my teens, which may speak more of the indelibility of formative memory than my current musical inclinations. Bach’s *Musical Offering* and *Orgelbüchlein*, the Fauré Requiem, Webern’s early works, Feldman’s Piano and String Quartet, Strauss’ *Four Last Songs*, Rameau’s *Pièces de clavecin* are all on that list. Right now though

it’s Ockeghem’s *Missa Caput*, Thelonius Monk’s Riverside recordings, and Heinrich Biber’s “Mystery” sonatas.

How is the field of composition changing, and how do you fit in?

The 19th-century model of concert practice has been almost comically anachronistic, both sociologically and aesthetically, for quite some time now. Many composers, festivals and ensembles are starting to react to this new reality, and to investigate other ways of presenting music (and sound art) publicly, with vast implications for the art of composition. We are not suffering from any shortage of 10-minute pieces for Pierrot-type ensemble, nor concerts consisting of 5 or 6 unrelated premieres one after the other. My priorities are different: my current projects involve either very long pieces, or monographic concerts in which the interrelations between pieces can be heard. Also, many of my pieces require rare instruments in unusual combinations. I prefer to work with performers I know very well, whenever possible, because you can get a more intense result that way. My worklist is maybe a bit shorter than it would be otherwise, but I have no regrets!



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EUGENE ASTAPOV

What got you excited about music at a young age?

I wrote my first composition at the age of 9 and since then I was always fascinated by the limitless capabilities that the sound world opened up. It was exciting and inspirational to be able to put notes together and touch upon the surface of this great art. As a kid I was stimulated by various performance opportunities. At that time I was still fearless about going onto the stage and playing for audiences. As I grew older, being able to express myself through this great language grew into more of a necessity to share my music with people, even though it is quite a stressful job.

What was the most important music concert/event you attended?


Throughout my school years I have been very fortunate to have attended a multitude of concerts and recitals all over the world - from London to Paris, Moscow to Kiev, Milan to Zurich, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco and I could talk about these events for a long time, as they have had an ongoing influence on my musical personality. Perhaps the most important event was when I heard an orchestra play for the first time in my life. Growing up in Ukraine I did not have access to large ensembles; therefore, coming to Canada opened up this possibility for me. It was the Toronto Symphony playing Beethoven 8. I felt as if a gate to a new world had opened at that moment and that I was thrown into the ocean of sounds which actually felt overwhelming, yet natural.

What is on your personal playlist?

I listen to all kinds of music and have a lot of favorites. Although I try to listen to some new pieces of music every week to expand my knowledge, I constantly go back to Mozart, Bach and Shostakovich. I also don't hesitate to enjoy more mainstream kinds of music, always following the latest hits in pop culture.

How is the field of composition changing, and how do you fit in?

As my graduate advisor Christos Hatzis often mentions, in 20-30 years when the time comes for our generation to take over the field of composition, there might not be a lot of symphony orchestras left around, perhaps even live performances would mostly cease to exist making way for online concerts; therefore, it is the job of young composers to adjust to the ever changing environment of classical music. I always try to follow the most advanced technological developments not only in the music industry, but in other aspects of technology that may affect our lifestyles.



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VICTOR HERBIET

What got you excited about music at a young age?

My parents were listening to a lot of classical music around the house. My father would often point out stylistic aspects of various composers and what he liked and disliked in each style. We also went to see many live concerts at the National Arts Centre, which I enjoyed greatly. This said, my true excitement for music started when playing saxophone in my high school band. I found that actively playing works as part of a group was an electrifying experience and I chose to pursue music performance as a career. I also found that playing in part of an ensemble allowed me to hear all the individual parts clearly and prompted me to be more analytical of the music I was playing. My curiosity for the functioning of music led me to dissect some of the music I liked the most and, with the knowledge I had gained in the process, try my hand at actually creating new music.

What was the most important music concert/event you attended?

The most important concert I've had the opportunity to attend was in Paris during my honeymoon in 2010. We had bought tickets to the Paris National Opera performing the *Rite of Spring* choreographed by Pina Bausch at the Palais Garnier and I knew we were in for a good show. The first half featured two short ballets, which were quite interesting and marvelously rendered. During the intermission a dozen stagehands came out with brooms. At first I thought they were sweeping the stage, but then I realized they were actually covering it with a half-inch layer of soil. When the performance started, the soil was decorative and emphasized the footsteps of the dancers. As the story evolved and the music and dancing intensified, the dirt started sticking to the dancers' skin, becoming part of their costume. The explicit relationship between the adoration of the earth in the *Rite* and its physical representation on stage resounded deeply for me. Moreover, the astonishing quality and energy of the performance gave me renewed hope in music. At that moment in time I thought to myself: "I didn't think music could be this good."

What is on your personal playlist?

My personal playlist has an eclectic mix of genres. Of course you will find the usual suspects: Beethoven, Brahms, Debussy, Ravel, Mahler, Stravinsky and so forth, but you'll also find a wide range of lesser-known composers of classical works for saxophone such as Desenclos, Creston, Villa-Lobos, Absil, Noda and many more. I also have an interest in jazz music, particularly the works of John Coltrane and Miles Davis, and I enjoy listening to rock music not so much as a source of influence or inspiration but more as

a hobby because I find the autodidact approach of rock musicians refreshing and somewhat humbling.

How is the field of composition changing, and how do you fit in?

Readily available technology has drastically changed the composition process in the last forty years. Playback from a digital score allows composers to hear without technical error what they wrote over and over again leaving their hands free to take notes or to improvise supplementary lines on top of the ones being rendered by the computer. The wide access to information and recordings via the internet also makes a big difference in the research composers can do when exploring new ideas and new sounds. Essentially, writing intricate and virtuosic music has never been as easy as it is today. The problem lies in getting this music played by human beings. The economic climate of recent years seems to have scared some music promoters from taking risks. Since doing something new usually implies taking a risk, new music must fit certain formats in order to have a chance to get played or published. Composing a ninety-minute virtuosic work for double orchestra and choir may require much time and effort but convincing someone to play that work may be an even greater task. From personal experience as a performer I've noticed that, when new music is concerned, shorter but effective pieces seem to be in vogue where the risk is minimal for the organization promoting the works. As a composer I'm redirecting my style towards composing more concise programmatic works that captivate the imagination of the audience while not overtaxing the average attention span.

CECILIA LIVINGSTON

What got you excited about music at a young age?

My parents had a great LP collection and made a huge range of tapes to play in the car – those were the days! So I got to know a lot of music in the most casual, unforced way; I can still sing by heart large sections of eclectic repertoire, from Monteverdi to Motown. I only realized later how much canonical listening I'd done “ahead of time!” I think my sense of musical adventure comes from this.

What was the most important music concert/event you attended?

There've been several of these pivotal moments, these sublime experiences that echo across a whole life; they seem to form a constellation, a sort of ghostly trajectory. But often what is most important is being moved with the people around me. The shared experience reminds me why I'm doing this in the first place.

A top three might include: hearing/seeing Philip Glass's score for *Kundun*, an early signal of the role that minimalism would play in the rest of my creative and academic life; hearing my brother sing the Lamentations of Jeremiah at the Church of St Mary Magdalene; listening to Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians* while driving into a prairie thunderstorm – one of the most perfect meetings of the visual and musical I can imagine.

What is on your personal playlist?

There are certainly things I come back to again and again, that tantalize and seduce, that are mysterious and intriguing. I'm pretty curious; I'll listen to anything twice! So my playlist is all over the place, in the best 21st-century way. A High Fidelity random five in alphabetical order: Bach, Britten, Daft Punk, Radiohead, Schneider...

How is the field of composition changing, and how do you fit in?

This is a fortunate time to be writing: I find such a sense of adventure and a real open-mindedness to new ideas, and also a regrowth of respect for things so many of us hold on to because they give us pleasure and delight. But such a wide field requires stronger individual voices and greater courage. I'm really happy to see the tremendous energy in opera: one of my favourite forms, and one that I've really enjoyed working in recently. Here I find the greatest stylistic freedom, the greatest collaborative enthusiasm, and the strongest listener responses. An effective synthesis between drama and music is visceral: it just feels right and cuts through any agonizing or preconceived ideas about what is or is not aesthetically acceptable. And its audience comes to it so well-prepared (by film, visual media, song), and its storytelling can support all sorts of musical adventures! I really believe that the intersection of words, music, and drama is where composers, listeners, and performers can discover our mutual strengths and the basis for a shared language in our conversation about what it is to be human.



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KAREN RYMAL

What got you excited about music at a young age?

I was born in Hamilton, Ontario, but raised in Bruce Mines, a small town 35 miles east of Sault Ste. Marie. When I was nine, my piano arrived on the train and there never was any question as to whether I wanted to play it or not – I just got at it. With a little help, I mostly taught myself until I was twelve, at which point I started travelling to Sault Ste. Marie for lessons. At that time I played the piano for the Sunday school in the local United Church, and at fourteen I played the Hammond organ for full church services. I started teaching piano and theory at age fifteen to all the local kids who didn't have the time or money to go to the Sault; basically, I was totally engulfed in music at a young age and never thought to change that. My Dad was an accordion player – one of the last dance band musicians who played on CHML radio in Hamilton. I started jamming with him when I was thirteen. My technique wasn't very good but when he said "Karen, take it!" something came out. At age sixteen I was accompanying two professional singers and a church choir in the Sault. I was on the moon when I first played a real pipe organ at St. Andrew's United Church. My Dad was pretty upset that I was fully into classical music but I had no exposure to jazz, and the pop music at the time was of no interest to me.

What was the most important music concert/event you attended?

When I was sixteen, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra with soprano Lois Marshall gave a concert in the "Hockey Rink" in the Sault. I don't remember what the music was, but I was immensely excited by the experience of hearing real live music of this genre for the first time. Definitely I had found my niche.

What is on your personal playlist?

As a whole, the kind of music I enjoy listening to stems from what I've been involved in. As an accompanist, German lieder and French art song are a focal point for me. As an organist, I'm particularly



attracted to Buxtehude, J.S.Bach, Mendelssohn, Franck, and Vierne. As a church organist I improvise a lot, often using Gregorian chant as a source and a bass line, while playing the chant in canon with one hand and adding another hymn with the other hand. It's a compositional tool I use as well. So for me it all stems from improvising and exploring many different styles from the polyphony of the Renaissance to me jamming with my Dad. I love playing a bit of jazz and I will listen to anything that Oscar Peterson has recorded. I also introduce Peterson's music to my classically trained pianists who find inspiration through the solid sense of rhythm and the harmony.

How is the field of composition changing, and how do you fit in?

I see composers starting from certain base points, drawing upon all of their life's experiences and moving forward. For me, I use what's in front of me – a Gregorian chant can lead to a church anthem, or a Canadian folk song becomes a piano piece. When I studied with Dr. Samuel Dolin, his best advice was "Start, and don't look for anything else. Use what you have." He always had me start the lesson by improvising at the piano, then he'd say, "Start writing." So for me, it all stems from what's at your disposal.

SAMAN SHAHI

What got you excited about music at a young age?

I was always fascinated by the way sounds made me picture things in my imagination. I used to listen to music and come up with stories, and the ups and downs of the music would shape the stories. Later on, a year into my piano lessons, I realized that even with the limited knowledge that I had, the reverse was possible – I could turn images into music. That to me was a profoundly beautiful moment.

What was the most important music concert/event you attended?

I couldn't put one concert over the other, but I think the most influential concert I attended was Maestro Shajarian's concert in 2005 in Toronto. I was engulfed in the music, and given that I was in the midst of my first year living in Canada (having moved here from Iran), the music just washed over me, and made me realize how much I missed home. That concert was a really affective experience; it made me even more diligent as I continued my music education.

Another magical concert that I always recall is the TSO's Tan Dun concert from 2011 when he conducted his Water and Paper concertos. An hour and a half of

music went by so quickly. It was powerful, and I was in awe of the integrated elements of water and paper. That concert kind of changed me as a composer. It made me realize that contemporary music, despite an emphasis on intellectualism, can still be fantastically entertaining and beautiful.

What is on your personal playlist?

Louis CK and George Carlin mostly. It's true! Here is a short list: Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, Shostakovich's 10th Symphony, Brahms' *German Requiem*, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, and John Adams' *Grand Pianola Music*. I also love *Twice* by Little Dragon, Radiohead (just lots of it), Keith Jarrett (a few of his albums but mostly *Jasmin*), Hossein Alizadeh's *Sallaneh*, Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon*, and Radio Tehran (a Persian rock band, they are awesome!).

How is the field of composition changing, and how do you fit in?

I think both composers and audiences are realizing that distancing yourself from something is not a solution to help understand it. Some composers can be guilty of

not caring about the dissemination or comprehension of their work by audiences. However, music listeners are becoming more receptive and I think that understanding is coming slowly. This means that as creators we can gain recognition, and can exercise artistic leverage, thus creating something personal and not complying with the "status quo" (both in the mainstream and academic sense). Making music that is free from rigid definitions creates an environment with a "meta-genre" fluidity which allows for artistic growth and connecting with audiences in a meaningful way.

I am more or less a composer-performer, and as a bi-cultural individual, I feel at home in today's music. I am able to write music and collaborate with many different musicians and artists and have a free and direct relationship with them. In my own work as a composer and concert organizer, my aim is to bring people back to concert halls, and get them to enjoy what might at first be perceived negatively as "Contemporary Art Music". A receptive attitude will allow for more connections, and with that we can truly enrich and grow an all-encompassing musical community. I am very excited for that!

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W. MARK SUTHERLAND

What got you excited about music at a young age?

My father was an Anglican Church minister and a classically trained pianist. He also taught harmony and theory as an associate of the Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto), tangential to his ministerial duties. My mother was able to sight-read music and likewise, played piano. She loved Broadway show tunes and Frank Sinatra — the result of my parents living in New York City in the early 1950s. From the moment of my birth I was surrounded by sounds from the piano, the record player, the church organ, and church choir. It was a strange sonic mixture of classical and pop culture, the sacred and the profane! Subsequently, I have not really known a conscious moment in my life when my attention was not acutely focused on sound or music.

What was the most important music concert/event you attended?

The most important music concert/event I attended is always the next music concert/event I will attend! Jimi Hendrix, Miles Davis, Ornette Coleman, Muddy Waters, James Tenney, Phil Minton, Otomo Yoshihide, The Ramones... just a few of the transcendent concerts I've attended over the past fifty years.

What is on your personal play list?

My present listening habits are predicated on research for two immediate recording projects: an electronic, vocal sound-poetry, dance record (EDM) and an ambient electronic, vocal sound-poetry recording. Research for these projects include listening to Aphex Twin, Daft Punk, Richie Hawtin, Deadmau5, Viceroy, Skrillex, Tangerine Dream, Karl Stockhausen, Neu!, Cluster, Eno, Milton Babbitt, Henri Chopin, La Monte Young, etc.

How is the field of composition changing, and how do you fit in?

As an intermedia artist my creative practice blurs the borders between poetry, visual art, music and performance art. I believe that the prevailing cultural conditions of the early 21st century point towards aesthetic hybridism achieved through the blurring of all artistic borders. My art/poetry/music/compositions are informed by traditional methodologies and various elements of digital elegance such as mixing, mashing, jamming, sampling, scratching, circuit bending, circuit breaking, coding, decoding, and recoding.

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A short reflection on

CHRISTOPHER DEDRICK

(1947 – 2010)

Christopher Dedrick joins the CMC posthumously, having passed away in 2010 following a long battle with cancer. Throughout his life Dedrick was active as a composer, arranger, and conductor. Chris was born in the US, and his professional career began in his late teens as a singer and principal songwriter in the vocal group Free Design. Dedrick settled in Canada in 1972 and focused more of his work around composing and arranging for film and television. While film and television became a focal point, Dedrick continued to generate new concert music for various chamber ensembles, jazz band, choir, and symphony orchestra. Dedrick's film and television materials are currently housed at the Toronto International Film Festival Reference Library. The CMC is pleased to have Dedrick's concert music in our archive, making it available for future study and performance.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW ASSOCIATE COMPOSERS FROM ACROSS CANADA

Prairies

Ron Paley
Mark Hannesson
Michael van der Sloot

Ontario

John Laing

Quebec

Symon Henry

Atlantic

Richard Covey



GLISTENING PIANOS

Alice Ping Yee Ho
Centrediscs

By: Jason Caron

Maintaining interest on a recording comprised almost exclusively of the same instrument is the paramount challenge in releasing a record like *Glistening Pianos*, featuring the music of Alice Ping Yee Ho. I'm reminded of some other records I have reviewed in the pages of *Notations* that faced variants of this same challenge: Beverly Johnston's *Woman Runs With Wolves* and Yoko Hirota's *Voces Boreals* – both are impressive albums. Johnston, of course, had the luxury of being able to switch to several different kinds of percussion instruments, and Hirota's CD featured compositions from a sensitively chosen variety of different composers. *Glistening Pianos* has neither of these advantages. As well, adding guest instrumentalists, using extended techniques, and carefully sequencing the album will only take you so far, and can often land a record into the pitfall of sounding contrived or, even worse, gimmicky. Only the strength of the chosen compositions will support an album, and this record could not have succeeded more! The CD includes very strong compositions by Ho, and just enough variety

in instrumentation, musical features, and extended techniques to fill out the needed sonic variety. I am pleased to say that this release meets and surpasses even this reviewer's lofty expectations. With performances by Midori Koga and Lydia Wong, aka Duo 2X10, and guest performances by the indomitable Susan Hoepfner and Adam Campbell of TorQ Percussion Quartet, the realization of these compositions sounds effortless.

The record begins with the title track, which is an excellent introduction to Ho's compositional style. The harmonic language is pleasingly hard to describe, and blurs between consonant and dissonant. It is the mark of a very personal, unique style, rich and full of character. As well this piece has a very discernible and satisfying structure, with transitions between sections and the distinction between sections being crystal clear. The introduction especially succeeds by slowly building tension, and gradually adding new elements, before the masterful release.

Chain of Being follows, and captures the spiritual and ephemeral through some very well executed extended techniques, some muting, sweeping of the strings inside the piano, and, perhaps most fittingly, a light metallic chain laid across one of the piano's strings. The preparation allows for a shimmering, mysterious quality.

The track *War!* is not the most cleverly structured piece on the record, but certainly the most evocative. It is frantic, breathless and bursting with energy. Adam Campbell lends his talent for some wonderful crashes and booms, giving this aggressive track its fangs. My favourite thing about this track, though, is the righteous rage in the text. Penned by the composer's daughter, it delivers a truly venomous anti-corporate and anti-imperialist message that strongly resonates with me.

Overall, I would rank this record highly given the fantastic performances, and the variety with a small number of instruments. The piano duo format also gives great flexibility for extended techniques, with one piano being relegated to noise duty while the other plays normally. Most importantly however, Ho's music demonstrates a keen sense of structure. Ideas flow like water: a silent drop that ripples out over a calm lake, an echoing drop and a reverberant trickle from underground waterways, or the powerful surge and crash of a waterfall.



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BESPOKEN

plays NICK STORRINGTON & DANIEL BRANDES

BESPOKEN

Nick Storrington & Daniel Brandes
Heavy Fog

By: Saman Shahi

Bespoken is a newly formed ensemble based in Toronto, and they recently launched an exciting album on the cassette/digital label Heavy Fog. The group was assembled to perform the music of Associate Composers Nick Storrington and Daniel Brandes as part of the CMC's On the 13th Piano Series. The music featured on the album can be described as open-ended, which in many ways reflects the trajectory of an ensemble consisting of several highly active musicians.

Four of the performers are graduates of Wilfrid Laurier's music program: pianist Cheryl Duval, violinist Ilana Waniuk, cellist Nick Storrington, and percussionist Brandon Valdivia. Their compatible musical ethos extends to the fifth member of the ensemble, improviser and multi-instrumentalist Matthew Ramolo.

The main instrumentation featured on the album includes piano, toy piano, cello, violin, accordion, and percussion (thumb piano, vibraphone and gongs primarily). Although I listened to the digital download of the album, those of you with working cassette players can take advantage of a much maligned but technically sound

audio format, and purchase the cassette – which includes a download link! The album features two works: Nick Storrington's *Aigre Douce*, consisting of four movements, and Victoria-based Daniel Brandes' *Intimations of Melody*.

Living in Toronto myself, I have become increasingly aware of and impressed by Storrington's music. Much like his other work, *Aigre Douce* explores the subtle world of timbre, and the way various timbres interact. The four movements inspire a sense of space and contemplation, and they unfold with an interesting logic. The first and third movements have a much slower pace, with colours and timbres blending patiently, while the second movement has a more apparent rhythm (albeit dispersed); the final movement has an almost antique romantic quality to it. Storrington also uses a great deal of sounds from inside the piano and toy piano which give the piece an element of unity. Deftly arranged, *Aigre Douce* is brought to life as much by the intuition of the performers, which is alluded to in the notes for the album.

My attention was also drawn to non-musical sounds (turning pages, breaths, and mallets being rested down) that were kept in the recording. What is anathema to most recordings enhanced my listening experience in this instance, as the sounds became tied to the music.

The final piece on the album, Brandes' *Intimations of Melody*, is an ethereal and slowly paced dialogue between piano, accordion, and string instruments. The long tones from the accordion lead to sonorities in other instruments that culminate in a fantastic, tranquil atmosphere. The music moves effortlessly between moments of dissonance and consonance, and at other times juncture and disjuncture.

The composers and the ensemble play with our sense of attention in this album, in that they challenge the way we find and perceive relationships between sounds, and also how we associate with them in a way that lies beyond language. The album also succeeds in that that listener does not have to be entrenched in the world of contemporary art music to appreciate it. If the only outcome from this ensemble is this album, it will have been worth it, but I sincerely hope they find more opportunities to perform and record.

The background of the entire page is a bokeh effect consisting of numerous out-of-focus, overlapping circles of light in various colors including white, yellow, orange, red, blue, and purple, set against a dark grey or black background.

NOTEWORTHY

**UPDATES AND ACHIEVEMENTS RELATING TO ASSOCIATE
COMPOSERS OF THE CANADIAN MUSIC CENTRE**

Margaret Leng Tan (left) poses with Monica Pearce, and the toy piano outfitted with bicycle bells.



MONICA PEARCE IN NYC

CMC Associate Composer Monica Pearce had her piece, *clangor*, performed as part of the Uncaged Toy Piano Festival in New York in December. *Clangor* was performed by Margaret Leng Tan. The festival included 10 world premieres, and served as a stimulating convergence of artists utilizing all manner of unconventional keyboard instruments, toys, and home-made gadgets. Pearce's penchant for toy piano made the occasion all the more special.

DARREN COPELAND IN BELGIUM

Last May Darren Copeland performed two concerts in Belgium with Benjamin Thigpen at the Logos Foundation in Ghent, and Musiques et Recherches in Brussels. The concerts featured Copeland's work *Bats and Elephants* and were spatialized using the directional speaker the Audio Spotlight, as well as with the spatialization software designed by Thigpen. This software has been used for spatialization in performances presented by New Adventures in Sound Art (NAISA) since 2007. Darren Copeland won the Harry Freedman Award for Recording in 2012 for his piece *Bats and Elephants*.

NORBERT PALEJ IN MONTREAL

In late October, CMC Associate Composer Norbert Palej had his symphony premiered by Orchestra 21 in Montreal. The piece was conducted by Paolo Bellomia. The performance and the piece received enthusiastic reviews with one journalist titling their piece, "Palej eclipses Lutoslawski."



JULIET PALMER PROVOKES MEMORY WITH MILLIE CHEN

CMC Associate Composer Juliet Palmer has created music as part of *Tour*, an audio-video installation by Taiwanese-born, Canadian artist Millie Chen. *Tour* contemplates arguably “healed” sites of genocide, provoking the audience to consider how to sustain the memory of recent atrocities made invisible by the passage of time. *Tour* is currently being exhibited at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York until May.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION FOR THE OSCAR PETERSON SCHOLARSHIP

The legacy of CMC Associate Composer Oscar Peterson, and his contribution to music education, were celebrated recently. The Oscar Peterson Scholarship, established in 2009, is an annual \$40,000 prize given to a first-year York University student in Jazz Performance, and is supported by a major endowment from the Ontario government. The endowment also helps to fund the Oscar Peterson Chair in jazz performance. The current chair, associate professor Ron Westray, was present for the first public presentation for the scholarship this past fall. Through the endowment, Westray was also able to fund the York “Jazzmobile,” an initiative that allows York music faculty and students to visit dozens of schools to perform and discuss jazz education. Oscar Peterson, Canadian jazz pianist and composer, taught at the music department of York University through the 1990s.



BRAMWELL TOVEY RECEIVES THE 2013 FRIENDS OF CANADIAN MUSIC AWARD

Throughout his career, Vancouver-based conductor, composer, and pianist Bramwell Tovey has been an ardent supporter of Canadian composers. Apart from his visionary work as Music Director of the Vancouver Symphony, he also established the Winnipeg New Music Festival, and in countless ways has been a public voice advocating for the merits of contemporary Canadian music. The Canadian League of Composers and the Canadian Music Centre are pleased to recognize Tovey with the Friends of Canadian Music Award (FCMA) to acknowledge his extraordinary efforts. The FCMA is given out annually to individuals who demonstrate an exceptional commitment to Canadian Composers.

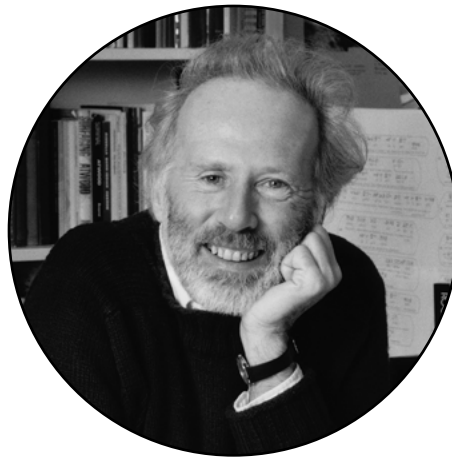
STROOBACH ON THE AIRWAVES

CMC Associate Composer Eveyln Stroobach enjoyed several radio broadcasts of her works. *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* for mixed chorus and cello aired in December on Canary Burton’s radio program *The Latest Score* at WOMR radio in Massachusetts, again on Tom Quick’s *Monday Evening Concert* at CKWR radio in Waterloo, and once more on Ellen Grolman’s radio program *Music of our Mothers: Celebrating Women*, at WCFC radio in Jacksonville, Florida. Grolman had featured three other Stroobach compositions in recent months including *The Human Abstract* for soprano, flute, viola, and cello, *Aurora Borealis* for orchestra, and *Aria for Strings* for string orchestra.



CHRIS THORNBORROW WINS THE KAREN KIESER PRIZE

CMC Associate Composer
Chris Thornborrow has received the Karen Kieser Prize for composition at the University of Toronto for his piece *Walking*. Thornborrow was recognized during a special concert as part of the University of Toronto New Music Festival, which included a performance of his winning piece, alongside works by previous winners Kevin Lau, and Catarina Curcin. In her life, Karen Kieser was a steadfast supporter of Canadian composers, and while the award serves to evoke her memory and preserve her legacy, this year's concert was also an opportunity to reflect on the legacy of CMC Associate Composer Larry Lake, Kieser's husband, who established the award.



SCHAFFER APPOINTED COMPANION OF THE ORDER OF CANADA

CMC Associate Composer R.
Murray Schafer was appointed Companion of the Order of Canada by the Governor General, and fellow associate Walter Boudreau was also honoured as a member of the Order. Schafer was recognized for his contributions to Canada as an internationally renowned composer of contemporary music, and for his groundbreaking work in acoustic ecology, and Boudreau was recognized for his contributions to contemporary music as a composer, conductor and promoter of musical creation.



JOHN BURGE AWARDED AT QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION CEREMONY

In November, 2013 at a fall convocation ceremony, Dr. John Burge, a Juno-winning composer and professor of composition and theory at Queen's University, was awarded with one of the Queen's University Prizes for Excellence in Research and Scholarship. Dr. Burge, the first recipient of this award as professor in the School of Music, has over 120 premiered compositions since he began teaching at Queen's University. His committed service to the profession was also presented through such endeavours as being President of the Canadian League of Composers from 1998-2006.



GORDON WILLIAMSON IN PARIS

Gordon Williamson was selected as a Laureate of the Récollets Artist Residency Program in Paris, France, which took place between January and March of this year. In 2014 Williamson will also be taking part in the Kunsthof Schreyahn (Germany) and the Visby International Composers Center (Sweden). Williamson's upcoming commissions will feature the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra and a new solo percussion work for Pascal Pons, both to be premiered in the fall of 2014.

Photo: Jonas Kjær

GRAHAM FLETT AT NL SOUND SYMPOSIUM

CMC Associate Composer Graham Flett has been invited as a participant in the 2014 Sound Symposium in St. John's, Newfoundland. Flett is excited to have the chance to re-visit his music for 20 instruments series, and, in particular, present a site-specific piece written for 20 accordions and percussion.

JORDAN PAL IN RESIDENCE WITH THE NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA

CMC Associate Composer Jordan Pal has recently been appointed as the 2014 RBC Foundation Emerging Composer-in-Residence with the National Youth Orchestra of Canada (NYOC). As resident composer, Pal will work closely with faculty, conductor, and musicians of the orchestra during its annual summer training institute. The residency also comes with a commission for Pal who will create a new piece for orchestra to be premiered and recorded during the NYOC's 2014 concert tour. Pal is no stranger to orchestral writing, and is keen to take up the position!

In other news, Pal has been commissioned to compose the E-Gré National Music Competition Test Piece for the 2015 Strings competition in Brandon, Manitoba.

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Kristi Allik performing *Infoweaver*, a live evening-long visual music performance as part of a New Music Concert series at the McGill Theatre in Toronto



Generations/Conversations Continued

A Conversation with Kristi Allik

by Amanda Lowry

In January I attended a concert at Queen's University in Kingston featuring the music of CMC Associate Composer Kristi Allik. Allik has been teaching at Queen's for a number of years, and will be retiring at the end of this school year. The first half of the concert featured electroacoustic music by Allik as well as two of her students, with the second half dedicated entirely to a live electroacoustic improvisation from LEARK (Live Electroacoustic Research Kitchen). Allik grew up in Toronto, and has studied music and composition in Canada and the US. Her early fascination with electronic sounds has defined her creative work, and this was on display during the concert in January. As a composer who is just beginning to explore the fascinating world of electronic music, my experience conversing with Kristi and listening to her music has been wonderfully inspiring! Here is an excerpt from our lengthy discussion.

AL: When did you know you wanted to be a composer?

KA: Probably around the age of 11 or 12. The culture I grew up in – which was Estonian – just about everybody makes music and sings, so I started singing around 4 or 5 years old in public, and then I started taking piano when I was about 6 or 7, and then when I was about 10 or 11 my mom

bought me a guitar, and as I played the guitar I started writing songs. My heroes were people like Gordon Lightfoot and Joni Mitchell.

AL: Has your Estonian background affected the way that you compose or your style in some way?

KA: Yes, I think very much so. It's a traditional culture, a very oral culture, and often it's the women that are the carriers of the musical culture, and the idea is that the oral tradition is passed on through the women, and in my case it was my grandmother who taught me the songs, so I learned a great deal from her in terms of music and other aspects of the culture. I did write an opera called *Loom Sword River* that was written on basically the traditional Estonian creation story, Kalevipoeg. I see it coming out but not consciously, in that I'm not sitting down to write an Estonian opera or an Estonian piece, but it's still there.

AL: Acoustic composers like to talk about process in terms of composing at the piano versus on paper or with the computer, but I imagine it's quite different when you're working with electronic sounds. What is your compositional process like, and how has it developed over the years?

KL: The electroacoustic one has been a struggle for me, I think, because I did come from the acoustic music background and so I had to really rethink a lot of what I was doing. Sometimes I will score my electroacoustic music if I want it to be very specific and if it is pitched. When I went through studying Max/MSP I think that software probably prescribed to some extent how I would work with the music and how the processes would be done through Max. There was often a quasi randomness built in which you could then capture and either work with that or just allow certain things to be a random process.

AL: What advice would you give to a composer who is learning to integrate technology into their music for the first time?

KA: I think some of it depends on the background. I've been using the soundscape model because I find that for many people that's something they can relate to. That's the way I would suggest to people who have very little experience in the field, not to try to transcribe your musical instrument in an electronic context but to start with sounds that are completely different, such as sounds that are around your environment, record those sounds, and see if you can make a composition from there. I would also say that maybe starting off with a really complex piece of software is not necessarily the best place to start either; the best place to start is to think about making music. So I'd say

a basic software sequencer; Garageband, Logic, Audacity (which is free), Reaper (which is very close to being free).

AL: What was it like, especially as a student, being a woman composer at a time when very few women were pursuing composition?

KA: I think I was really lucky because I had a wonderful theory teacher, Dr. Oskar Morawetz, and he really made it clear that he thought I should go into composition. I would say I felt much more comfortable with the whole concept because I knew I had support from him. I became quite used to the fact that I'd walk into a classroom and I'd be the only female in the class, and that was just the way it was. When I went on and did my graduate work at Princeton and USC that was the same thing: I'd often be the only woman in the class, or I'd find out I was the first woman to come through with a degree from that institution. After a while it became just something that was.

AL: It sounds like you've studied with a lot of very prestigious composers - is there anyone in particular that's had a very strong and continuing influence on your work?

KA: Absolutely. I mentioned Oskar Morawetz already. The other one that's very important is John Weinzweig, who I would certainly put into the mentor category. Nadia Boulanger was a wonderful teacher; she's a very exacting, very demanding but also extremely caring teacher. Two people from the west coast were very key in helping me: Richard Leseman and James Hopkins. Gustav Ciamaga and John Beckwith would be certainly people that have influenced me. Murray Schafer is another person who has shaped me a great deal and been very supportive; I'd probably put him in the mentorship category. Milton Babbitt at Princeton was certainly very supportive and also someone who was very inspiring. Another person at Princeton was Jim Randall; he helped me to look at music in a very different way than I had up to that time. Bill Buxton has been a great influence, when I came back Toronto I worked in his lab for about a year and that was a wonderful experience. At Queen's a person who's been very good to me, who unfortunately passed away very recently, is Istvan Anhalt, and I have not officially been his student but I think just having him as a colleague and in a mentoring way as supportive as he could have been.



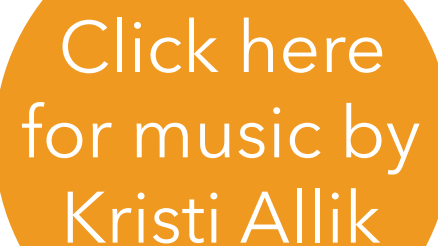
Allik singing and speaking as part of a concert of live electroacoustic music at the Agnes Etherington Centre, Queen's University.

AL: There's been a lot of discussion around the issue of performance in electronic music. What are your thoughts on the performance issue?

KA: Often people say “why should I come out on a cold snowy day to listen to music that people play from CD?” I think it's a very good question! If you're going to play music from a pre-recorded source then where the onus falls on is the diffusion of the music, which involves the mixer, the way the music is distributed; the speakers become important, and that's where, of course, the concept of acousmatic music becomes important and relevant too because you're now dealing with a mixer/distribution system which is unique to the piece that you're playing; so by diffusing the piece you're also performing the piece. The other thing is to have live performance where you have the laptop band model, which is what LEARK is involved in, and then you have the other model of which I have done a lot: a live performer plays in conjunction with either pre-recorded material or sort of a live electroacoustic music. The third model is the idea of adding visuals, and I have done a lot of that too. My key collaborator in that has always been Robert Mulder, who is also my husband and we have done an enormous number of pieces.

AL: A number of your electronic works use a lot of sounds from nature as their source material. Do you think that this makes it easier for the listener to comprehend and identify with your music?

KA: If you use identifiable sounds, it can be a help, but it can also be a hindrance because the sounds have different emotional qualities for different people; what to one person might be a very beautiful sound to another could be a very frightening or threatening sound. So what you are also adding is a whole emotional baggage to the original sounds or sound sources that you probably didn't intend to have.



Click here
for music by
Kristi Allik

A photograph of an Arctic landscape. In the background, there are snow-capped mountains under a cloudy sky. In the middle ground, a large glacier flows down a slope. In the foreground, there is a body of water with small waves. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, dot-matrix font.

Svalbard

Skriwebok

Tales from an
Arctic Sound Expedition

By Allison Cameron

It was early in 2012 I decided that I needed some time to work alone, uninterrupted. I was searching online for artist residencies and clicked onto a site called *ResArtis: Worldwide Network of Artist Residencies*. I was more than surprised; from the Artifariti residency in Tifariti Algeria to Munandi Art Studio in Lusaka Zambia, the choices were many. I spent so much time searching through the site that my eyes were tired, blurry and weeping when I happened upon The Arctic Circle – a residency in the high Arctic aboard a tall ship. “My dream come true,” I thought to myself; “Is it for real? Sailing around the Arctic – yup, that is the one for me.” The final surprise came when I noticed that the deadline to apply was the next day. I spent the next twenty-four hours getting together my best prose. Luckily the entire application could be emailed.

Weeks and weeks went by and then I got the news: I had been chosen for the 2013 Summer Solstice expedition – wow! It was a mixed blessing. I had been dreaming about glaciers, frozen sea ice and the aurora borealis, but being a resident in the summer meant a lot less ice and uninterrupted daylight. I wasn’t sure what to think, and I spent several sleepless nights imagining being on the tall ship in the Arctic. Perhaps I was already on the tall ship in the Arctic. But my reality check was that the summer of 2013 was still a long way away from the spring of 2012, and I had a lot of work to do to raise funds for my trip. The success of my fundraising thankfully came from the Ontario Arts Council International Residency programme. The OAC graciously funded two thirds of my trip while I put in the rest. I still had no idea of the cost of this adventure in real terms having never been to the Arctic before, nor had I delved seriously into field recording. I was unreserved in my conviction that this would be the trip of a lifetime.

Then I had to think about my gear. My online research took me to various film and video recording sites and I talked with a few professional engineers, but the one thing that seemed to be commonly acknowledged was the sheer unpredictability of outdoor recording. Of course, it can be *completely* unpredictable. And if you add in cold and volatile weather to the equation it’s even worse. Battery operated equipment is essential but those batteries in negative temperatures tend not to last long. So into my gear pile went tons of batteries. It’s easier to have replacement batteries than rechargeable ones, especially when there is no place during a field expedition to re-charge batteries. It would be important to keep extra batteries on inside pockets of my clothing nearer to my body for heat. And once back on the ship any electronic gear had to be carefully brought up to room temperature. Thus I also packed extra wool scarves for wrapping things, and a large supply of desiccants to go inside my camera and recorder cases. I decided to keep it simple and go with two different handheld Zoom recorders and a point and shoot camera. Heavy wind covers for the Zooms were also essential.

Listen here
Check out three
recordings from
Allison's trip
while you read

Photo: Allison Cameron



Allison Cameron on a zodiac during the arctic residency.

Next on my gear list were underwater recording mics or hydrophones. The proliferation of intriguing websites on underwater recording was amazing. I sifted through everything from elaborate fishing gear stores, to government sites documenting scientists exploding TNT at underwater depths to measure sound waves. I found one interesting DIY site that detailed how to make your own hydrophone using a condom as a mic cover – I’m guessing the non-lubricated kind. One can imagine the misunderstandings among the fellow travelers on an international art and science expedition. Finally, I found a store from Seattle that sold tested hydrophones. I bought two – one with a stereo mini jack to go directly into my recording devices and another with a stereo phono jack to go into my Honeytone mini amp. In addition to recording the undersea sounds I sought to amplify them into the great outdoors.

In the midst of all this preparation, a series of emotional and financial set-backs came my way at the end of 2012 and into 2013 that left me at odds with my departure for the Arctic summer residency. In the end I was granted a postponement from The Arctic Circle, and the OAC,

which allowed me to travel on the 2013 Winter Art and Science Expedition offered through the same residency organization. This was truly a blessing in disguise!

Longyearbyen at 78 degrees N latitude is the largest town on the largest island of the archipelago of Svalbard. Its population of 1400 is listed at the airport but apparently it can get up to 2000. There are no direct flights to Longyearbyen so it is necessary to overnight in Oslo; in fact, there are no direct flights from Toronto to Oslo so I had to go through Reykjavík on a night flight. The four-hour flight from Oslo the next day stopped in the northern town of Tromsø. One hour later we landed in Longyearbyen. The airport was tiny.

One of the first things that greeted us as we walked off of the tarmac into the airport building was a huge polar bear – one treated by a taxidermist mind you. It’s hard to imagine how big these creatures are until you’re standing next to one, even a dead one. As soon as we were outside the airport the first sign we saw was a great red triangle with a polar bear in the middle of it. There are 3500 polar bears that have been documented on Svalbard, thus no one can leave the limits of the most



Cameron monitoring her recording.
Photo: Chris Blade



A zodiac travelling near a glacier.
Photo: Allison Cameron

populated part of Svalbard without being armed with a rifle or at least being accompanied by someone with a half-loaded rifle. Consequently lots of people have guns in Longyearbyen even though there is no crime, nor any vandalism in the town.

Our sailing ship, the *Antigua*, arrived at the port one day after our arrival. From the dock we went onto the ship in single file lugging our bags in multiple trips. Having received our cabin assignments beforehand we headed down to our respective rooms at the bottom of the ship. There were two of us to a cabin and 27 participants in total. Coming along with us were three guides, six crewmen and our expedition director. The ship itself was an ice class barquentine sailing vessel with three masts and fifteen sails. It had come from Holland.

The first order of business was from the captain outlining all of the rules and regulations on the ship; for example, the need to conserve water and energy, how long we would last in the water should we fall overboard, and how to manage seasickness. We had to set our watches back two hours to maximize daylight

since we would be losing 20 minutes of light per day by the end of the voyage; thus we referred to both ship time and land time. A daily log was instituted to help the crew track our movements during the day: each person had their photo posted with a log that would be marked by a Z which meant we were on the zodiac (the small vessel that took us to and from the ship), an X meant we had returned to the ship and so on. If you had forgotten to appropriately mark the ship's log you would be hearing it from the captain or one of the crew at some point. This watchfulness extended to our time on landing sites that involved three guides creating a triangular perimeter within which we could safely explore.

I had plenty of ideas for projects but in the end the list was narrowed down to two: recording the sea ice, particularly icebergs, and putting together sound events in various locations. Sea ice and icebergs are full of energy because they are in a constant state of change. All of this energy makes sound. So my first objective was to record underwater. We had daily zodiac tours of the fjords we sailed into, and I had opportunities to use my hydrophones and

other gear. At first, there were eight people to a zodiac plus the driver, so there was limited room to move and it was sometimes difficult to hear the recordings even with headphones. I should mention that due to the cold temperatures I had brought cheap headphones because there were always possibilities for dropping them in the sea or snow. But the main issue was the wind, which made it very cold and difficult to do location recording. On windy days batteries got sapped quickly and the physical ability to work was limited. Sometimes it took ages to set up since I was trekking through snow and wind to a location and then trying to record in it. On the other hand each of us had to take advantage of every moment because the next day would be totally different. The most important thing I learned about field recording in the Arctic was to be prepared – in every sense – for the unexpected, and that meant being able to set up and take down quickly or at least as quickly as possible and to be prepared to record at all times. I was glad I had brought the hand held recorders for this reason. The other issue was that only one other participant was

working with field recordings on the voyage and getting ‘silent’ recording opportunities was challenging because of the necessity of shared ventures. In the end I did get a solo trip on a zodiac that was unfortunately also one of the coldest days we had yet. I felt sorry for my zodiac driver as I watched every part of his exposed skin go deep pink. But still it was worth it. And even though we had to avoid getting too close to the icebergs (there was always the danger of them suddenly turning) I did get close enough for some excellent sound recordings.

My improvised sound projects were also field recordings but of a totally different nature. I had brought a dozen small instruments with me and had charted out several scenarios for people to perform with them. The scenarios had to be imagined as I had no idea where precisely we were going. After talking with our expedition coordinator she was on the lookout for possible locations. The first suitable scenario was about eight days into our trip in a place called Blomstrand Halvøya – also known as New London. Years ago, a



British entrepreneur had attempted to establish a marble mine in the area leaving behind small cabins, a partial railway with cars, and coal furnaces. I had recruited ten volunteers among my colleagues to play various instruments around the old mining objects. The idea was that they would start some distance from the recorders and slowly walk towards them playing and improvising with the instruments I gave them. The musical ability of my 'band' ranged from zero to ten (on a scale of ten). The sound making and exploration of the instruments were of more importance than technical ability and this was the concept that made most of them game. However, there was also no time for rehearsal or to try anything out so it was basically one go at it.

The difficulty of recording in New London,



however, was that it was the first day of heavy winds we had encountered. The wind was so strong it made my expensive wind covers irrelevant. Barring cancelling the whole project I put the recorders inside the old coal furnaces so that they were out of the wind, and we went ahead with the project. The whole performance took about 10 minutes, during which everyone froze. I was lucky to have had such a brave and enthusiastic team. Although there were plenty of things that went wrong (inadequate recording levels for one, equipment failing for another) in the end I had more material than I thought to work with, including a video that was recorded by one of the participants.

With the exception of the improvised performances I organized and gave, I did not work on compositions during the expedition. I was so infatuated with seeing and experiencing the Arctic I couldn't settle on allocating composing time – each day was another overwhelming experience. Instead I voraciously collected sounds, pictures and videos. By the end of the trip, my collection numbered in the hundreds of items. Sorting through this collection will result in several pieces of written and improvised music and at least two sound installations.

Everything in Svalbard appears larger than life, so my ideas for new compositions ran in all directions – for this reason multi-media pieces came to mind. Since

presenting my first sound installation last summer at the Electric Eclectics 8 Festival in Meaford, Ontario, sonic geography has become an interest in my work. I am also further exploring instructional and graphic scores. Another concept I am working on is integrating video with both improvised and composed music. And recently I finished a work that incorporates my underwater recordings with chamber music. I have so much material to work with that I am certain to be working through it for the next couple of years.

Being in the Arctic was an assault on the senses. In Svalbard the unique shapes of the ice-and-wind sculpted mountains were exquisite. The glaciers and icebergs with their gorgeous blue ice formations surely were artworks in and of themselves. Although the air was dry as the desert and cold we were often surrounded by aqua blue water that reminded one of the tropics. It was all so inviting and beautiful for a harsh Arctic landscape. Indeed the place felt magical. Daylight in this part of the world becomes noticeably shorter over a period of three weeks. But while the sun appears, its light reflects off of the landscape in ways that bring out new colours at unusual intensities. I could not have known that the experience would be as life changing as it felt. And it has made me avidly want to return.



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IN FOCUS

RESITUATING SOUNDS

MURRAY ADASKIN IN THE NORTH

By Jeremy Strachan

Composers in Canada have a long history of making field recordings of environmental sounds to use as raw materials for new works. Derek Charke's *Cercle Du Nord III* for string quartet and tape and David Ogborn's *Second Nature* (both 2005) are two recent examples. Both make use of recordings made on-site (Inuvik, and Toronto's Tommy Thompson park on the Leslie Spit, respectively) to capture elements of the landscape's sonic textures. Yet even before soundscape composition in Canada made its mark on the trajectory of electroacoustic music, field recordings made by folklorists and anthropologists had provided composers with aural snapshots of rural and indigenous cultures—furnishing a different kind of source material altogether.

Murray Adaskin's *Qalala and Nilaula of the North* (1969, orchestra) remains one of the earliest instances in Canadian art music of a composer making field recordings and resituating those sounds into a modern compositional context. In the spring of 1965, Adaskin was invited by anthropologist Robert Williamson to accompany him and artist Eli Bornstein on an expedition to Rankin Inlet, Northwest Territories (Rankin Inlet is now in Nunavut). Adaskin himself had never been to the arctic, and was enticed at the prospect of being able to record Inuit songs

that Williamson urged were vanishing along with the people who sung and remembered them. The Canadian state's increased presence in the North during the postwar era effected massive changes to Inuit lifeways and culture, and wreaked havoc on the health and stability of communities.

Adaskin, Bornstein, and Williamson spent ten days in Rankin, at an arctic training centre on the west coast of Hudson Bay. There the composer met two elderly Inuit singers—Qalala and Nilaula. Initially he had a desire to write an entire opera based on “an Eskimo theme and incorporate the folk music collected during the trip,” as Adaskin's biographer Gordana Lazarevich writes. No opera ever did materialize from Adaskin's time at Rankin, although two other compositions utilize the music collected: “Rankin Inlet/Eskimo Song” from the *Three Tunes for Strings* (1976); and *Rankin Inlet* for piano four hands (1978).

Recounting his trip to the arctic on a CBC broadcast from 1971, Adaskin said:

I was fortunate enough to bring back tapes of Qalala, reputed to be 85, the oldest Eskimo woman in that part of the arctic, and of Nilaula, a man with a smiling and kindly face, looking much older than his years. He sang of how

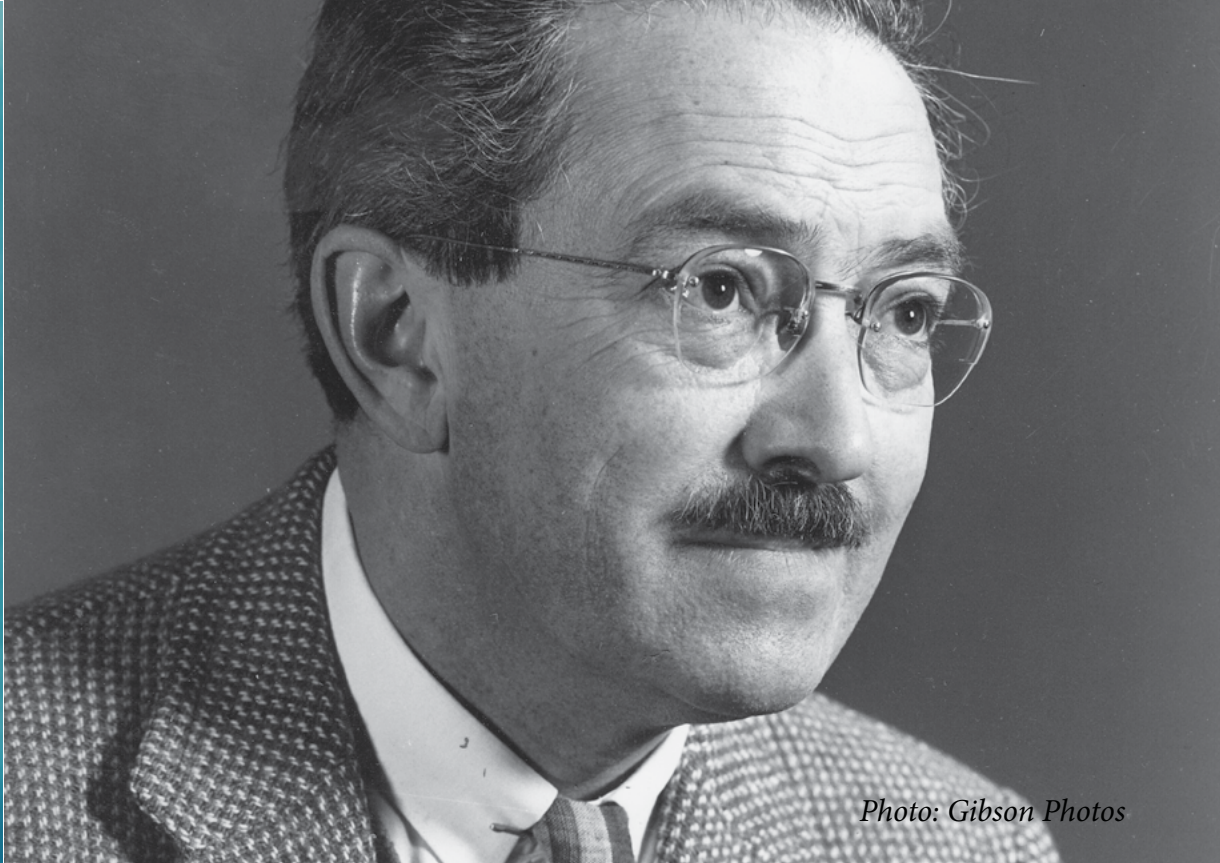


Photo: Gibson Photos

his relatives urged him to leave his home at Repulse Bay and move with them to Rankin Inlet and how as a result, it changed his life.

Things were no longer the same. Even the people and their customs were different. And his song ended with this striking line: “The truth of the past is not the truth of the present.”

Qalala and Nilaula of the North is quintessentially Adaskin—conservative, lyrical, with dutiful obeisance paid to midcentury compositional techniques. The plaintive tune of *Nilaula* is given to the bassoon in a solitary and meditative sounding of the North, grainy in timbre and pentatonic in mode. Translucent orchestral textures paint an image of the arctic in sound as fragile and serene. Later in the work Adaskin creates his own version of *katajjaq*, the complex rhythmic throat singing games of Inuit women. *Katajjaq* has featured prominently in many Canadian works since—notably Alexina Louie’s *Take the Dog Sled* (2008) and Christos Hatzis’s *Footprints in New Snow* (1996).

Adaskin’s original tapes from Rankin have been stored, amongst hundreds of other open reel masters, in the Music Archives at the National Library of Canada.

Qalala and Nilaula of the North, composed in the Canadian centenary zeitgeist of nationalism and optimism, itself remains a kind of “field recording” of a time now long-since past. Composers no longer endeavour to reconstruct the sound of North in the musical argot of modernism, nor in the service of national mythology. Collaborative methods have emerged as the *modi operandi* of a new generation of composers looking to enrich our listening with culturally informed creative work. Adaskin’s trip north came during a period of transition, instability, and tension between indigenous and settler cultures: his recordings remain valuable documents of this time, and his rendering of the sounds he captured likewise remain valuable documents of our cultural heritage and history.

[Click here to listen to Adaskin’s *Qalala and Nilaula of the North* on Centrestreams.](#)

*Further Reading: Marius Barbeau (1883-1969) is a well-known Canadian folklorist and anthropologist for having travelled to make many field recordings. On one trip to BC’s northwest coast, Barbeau travelled with CMC Associate Composer Ernest MacMillan, and one of the aboriginal songs they recorded would serve as inspiration for Harry Somers’s *Kuyas* and the main aria from *Louis Riel*. You can learn more about Barbeau by [clicking here](#).*

LARRY LAKE 1943 - 2013

CMC Associate Composer Larry Lake passed away on September 17, 2013 in Toronto surrounded by friends and family. There has been a great deal of reflection and commemoration here at the CMC, and among composers across the country, as we remember Larry as a seminal figure in contemporary Canadian music.

Photo: V. Tony Hauser



Larry Lake was born in Pennsylvania, and studied music in Miami and Illinois before arriving in Toronto in 1970 to begin his doctoral studies. By the time he came to Canada he was an active trumpeter and composer with a penchant for electronics. Lake did not complete his doctoral work, but he quickly found a ready outlet for musical collaboration and community building: in 1971 he co-founded the Canadian Electronic Ensemble (CEE), and in 1972 he joined CBC radio as a producer. Larry Lake had begun a decades-long commitment to new music, and Canadian music in particular.

Lake had a profound impact on Canadian composition through his various roles at the CBC. He served as executive producer of *MusicScope*, *Themes and Variations*, and *Music Alive* for CBC Radio. Beginning in 1978, Lake was the music consultant for the CBC's national new music series, *Two New Hours*, a program he also served as host from 1996 to 2007

when the program ended. Lake helped to bring the music of generations of Canadian composers to the airwaves, and he consistently provided thoughtfully curated and engaging programming. For this contribution, Lake along with the shows producer David Jaeger, received the Friends of Canadian Music Award, an annual award given by the Canadian Music Centre and the Canadian League of Composers to individuals who make an outstanding contribution to the advancement of Canadian composers.

The CEE, by virtue of its unique mandate and creative membership, became a pervasive example of new musical territory being defined by Canadian composers. Lake was integral to the impact wrought by the group, and he would serve the CEE as artistic director beginning in 1985 - the CEE continues to perform to this day and is the oldest continuously active live-electronic performing group in the world. Apart from programming and commissioning numerous works, the CEE was also featured prominently in concert events with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal, and other groups. Lake also remained active as a trumpeter, and was a featured soloist with numerous groups.

Lake's music has been performed, recorded, and broadcast throughout North America and internationally. He will be equally remembered for a tireless and tenacious commitment to his fellow artists as well as his own creative output.

On November 26, 2013, members of the music community gathered at Toronto's Arts and Letters Club to remember a composer, broadcaster, performer, and friend. We include excerpts from three speeches given that evening that present different aspects of Lake's personality and passion.

HOWARD DYCK:

Larry was equally at home with the grand gesture and the smallest mundane detail. For 20 years he and David Jaeger shaped and guided and reflected and cajoled Canada's composers with their stellar CBC radio program *Two New Hours*. It's impossible to think of contemporary Canadian music without being reminded of Larry's deep commitment to, and tireless and fearless championing of, new music. At the CBC, which is where I got to know him, he displayed a rare blend of courage and sheer stubbornness: ingredients essential to outwitting and outlasting certain managers who frequently, but not always, were, shall we say, skeptical of new music on the public airwaves. For his dogged tenacity, his brilliant vision, and his unfailingly generous spirit, we shall always be indebted to Larry.

I mentioned Larry's capacity for detail, because when reflecting on my relationship with this altogether

remarkable man, I was reminded of my very first encounter with him in the early 70s. This was prior to my joining the CBC as a program host. Larry was producing a CBC radio program - *Theme and Variations* was, I believe, the name of the show. The choir I was conducting at the time had done a studio recording of some arcane music for his program. Now a studio recording, as some of you broadcast dinosaurs will recall, consisted of a number of takes which then had to be culled and edited and massaged and spliced together resulting in what one fondly hoped would be a Gouldian work of contrived perfection. Larry in his typical gentlemanly fashion invited me into the studio for the editing session. There he sat, razorblade in hand, surgically removing all the blemishes splice after splice after splice.

After several hours we were done with a complete tape and a wastebasket full of outtakes to show for it. Just to be sure we hadn't missed anything we decided to

Accordion player Joseph Petric is pictured rehearsing *Sticherarion*, a piece composed by Larry Lake for accordion and electronics. Petric was among the many artists and colleagues who gathered at the Arts and Letters Club in Toronto on November 26 to celebrate Larry Lake. Lake's piece, *Israfel* for flute and electronics, was performed by Robert Cram, alongside solo piano performances by William Aide, and Walter Buczynski. The event was hosted by Lake's colleague John Caldwell, and included reflections from various members of the CEE including David Jaeger, David Grimes, and Jim Montgomery.

Photo: Matthew Fava



listen to the finished product one more time. Imagine our horror when we realized that one absolutely essential cadence had been inadvertently excised. It was there somewhere in the wastebasket - a snippet that would take up no more than 6 or 8 inches of tape. There was no way around it. Larry was going to have to painstakingly splice each of those dozens of waste basket scraps back into the tape until we had located the missing link. It took a very long time as I recall, and it was a good thing the conversation in that room wasn't recorded, because some of Larry's pungent utterances would have surely been edited into that same waste basket. Eventually we found what we were looking for and all was well.

Thank you Larry for your thorough professionalism, your encyclopedic knowledge, your dry sense of humour, your deep humanity, and most of all your friendship. I and all those who care about new music shall miss you very much indeed.

KARIN WELLS:

I knew Larry a little bit as a musician, a good deal more as a colleague at the CBC, but most of all I knew him as the man who was married to my very very good friend Karen Kieser. They were married for 23 years. Not that she ever said much about her husband; she was just not one for idle chat, although I do recall one afternoon when she was rolling her eyes because Larry would never go anywhere on vacation that didn't have air conditioning. He liked his creature comforts: he liked good food, he liked comfortable and at times somewhat eccentric cars and he liked a full bar; I think he relished the shape of the bottles.

Howard used the word a minute ago, that Larry was very much a gentleman and it just keeps coming back - that word. Indeed he was. I knew Karen long before I knew Larry. She was producing music for the radio program I hosted called *Arts National* in Ottawa. She and I were both in our late 20s; Larry was five years older. They had known each other, as Howard referred, and they had become this most unlikely couple when she was hosting and he was producing that program at the CBC Jarvis street studios. She was very serious about Canadian music and about composers, and she fought like hell for new music, for music by people who weren't dead, and she shared this with Larry of

course - that is what glommed them together, that and the fact that they were both thinkers in very different ways. Larry had a prodigious intellect, and many people have alluded to that as well. Karen was always also incredibly well organized, and I don't think that is something she really shared with Larry. He had an office when I knew him first at the CBC that kind of defied belief. It was complete chaos and in many ways he wasn't that well-suited to life at a large corporation except that he managed to succeed and outlast a lot of those other people who sort of thought they would get him. Thankfully at the time, CBC radio wasn't all that corporate.

Karen got the job in Ottawa and moved into a great big modern apartment. She would get on the Greyhound bus every Friday and go back to Toronto to see this Larry person who I had never met, and then finally one week she said Larry was coming to Ottawa. This was the unveiling of the boyfriend. We all went to dinner as we did at our regular rather unassuming downtown restaurant, and Karen sort of gently steered Larry through the evening. He wasn't much for small talk with strangers; he just didn't do that. I think he got better at it as he went along, and I came away thinking: Larry was really quite shy, he was comfortable and he was happy with his friends and his colleagues and with Karen's family at home as it were. And he had a decidedly raucous side when he was feeling good. But he was just underneath it a bit shy, I think. Karen took him in hand, figured it was her job to look after Larry. When she died, I remember she left a dozen or so packages of lasagna frozen in the freezer just for Larry - that was what she did. And then, of course, Larry, with the help of a whole bunch of friends, set up the prize for composition at the University of Toronto that we've heard about just for Karen.

He then of course went on with his life: he managed well, he married Caroline, he took great joy in having Destiny in his life, just as he had taken a big part of the life of his niece Anne.

He was a kind man and a loving man, and he in turn was loved. He had far too much bad luck and bad health. He was a widower twice, heart operation at an obscenely early age, bad knees, other achey bits, and ultimately the leukemia that got him; he got a little down in the mouth about that, but he didn't complain. Larry Lake, always the gentleman.

ABIGAIL RICHARDSON-SCHULTE:

I'm here as a composer who has benefitted greatly from what Larry has done. I work as a composer and I'm telling you that because it wasn't always in the cards for me. By the time I was in about the third year of my doctorate at the University of Toronto I really had very few prospects outside of school. I'd written a piece for the Canadian Contemporary Music Workshop, but that was it. I tried my hand at applying for competitions and nothing. I was just beginning to think, "what would I do?" I was thinking I would teach theory somewhere.

And then, really, out of the blue, I got a phone call saying that I had won the very first Karen Kieser Prize. Now I didn't know what that was but I didn't care; I was just so happy to have won something. And then I found out that it was set up by Larry

Lake, who I certainly admired from *Two New Hours*, in memory of his late wife Karen Kieser, and to honour her it was given to a U of T student because she went to U of T. And in honour of her work at the CBC, part of the prize was a broadcast. So there was a wonderful concert and ceremony at the Glenn Gould Studio, and I was just delighted. And then because the piece was broadcast, it was also eligible for another prize and CBC - David Jaeger - submitted it to the UNESCO international rostrum of composers "under 30" category where it won; so I went from having nothing to that quite quickly. Part of that prize was a broadcast in 30 countries and a commission from Radio France for a string quartet for a performance at the festival, Presence. So we may ask ourselves "do we really need another competition for young composers?" I can say I did and I am very grateful to Larry for

Larry Lake (right) pictured with winners of the Karen Kieser Prize in Canadian Music including Abigail Richardson-Schulte (just left of Larry)



setting that up, and today I am proud to be on the jury for the Karen Kieser prize.

Larry was part of many initiatives, many of them through the CMC. One of them was called the Norman Burgess Memorial Fund that Larry helped to establish, which would commission composers to write for young people. This was in memory of Norman Burgess who was a passionate educator; so again, Larry found a way to honour somebody's spirit, their life, in something practical that could contribute to the new music scene today and still does. Larry also served the CMC as a voting member beginning in 1995. He was on the national board and the Ontario regional council as vice-chair, chair, past chair: he did it all. And when he chaired annual general meetings, he started each meeting with a moment of silence to honour those composers who had passed away in the past

year. He would also allow time to listen to their music, and that respect and honour was really palpable with him; and he didn't just have that respect for the senior composers, but for composers at all stages of their careers, and we all felt that very strongly. So I think if we can all take a page out of Larry's book and really find ways in which we can contribute to the new music scene instead of taking from it, we will have a healthier scene and a stronger scene.

Larry knew that, Larry did that, and I can say that even though he is not here today many of us are still benefitting from his wonderful programs, and we are very grateful.



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