The Association of Canadian Women Composers (ACWC),
L'association des femmes compositeurs canadiennes (AFCC)

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*All writers in this Journal are ACWC members, unless otherwise indicated*
Notes from the Chair: “Our Debts of Gratitude”

Carol Ann Weaver

In the previous, May 2017, Notes from the Chair, I lauded people who helped produce and participate in three Canadian concerts featuring women’s music this year. Today I would like to highlight and celebrate the most recent concert of ACWC composers – the “Climate Change and Endangered Species” concert at Heliconian Hall, Toronto, October 27, 2017. This marked the first of four concerts in the 2017-2018 Heliconian Series, and the most recent one in a long series of collaborative concerts between Heliconian Club and ACWC since 1981. The Toronto Heliconian Club, a non-profit organization, is “the oldest association of its kind in Canada, founded in 1909 to give women in the arts and letters an opportunity to meet socially and intellectually.”

ACWC founding members Ann Southam and Mary Gardner were both Heliconian members, so it was through their efforts that the first such collaborative concerts were started in the 1980s. Once more, we at ACWC owe a debt of gratitude to the Heliconians!

That the Heliconian Club offered us their historic hall for our ACWC concert was just the start of their generosity. The hall, built in 1875 at 35 Hazelton Avenue (Toronto), was designated a National Historic Site in 2011, and carries the charm of an earlier era, along with a beautiful stage, vibrant Steinway grand piano, and up-to-date sound equipment. Because several ACWC members (Kye Marshall, Jana Skarecky and Joanna Estelle) are also currently Heliconian members, we were graciously granted free access to this hall.

Further generosity comes from the Heliconian performers themselves, who represent some of the highest-ranking professional performers in Canada, and who performed gratis for us on this ACWC concert! Space in this short essay is too limited to include write-ups and raves about individual performers, but their work deserves our highest lauds! To vocalists Paula Arciniega and Maria Soulis, flautist Jay Marsh, clarinetist Rita Greer, violinist Velma Ko, cellist Kye Marshall, and pianists Jane
Blackstone, Evelina Soulis, Nataliya Lepeshkina and Louise Morley, we say “thank you, from the bottom of our hearts!” And we also thank the excellent non-Heliconian performers whom we hired for this concert: vocalists Katerina Utochkina and Rebecca Campbell and cellist Dobrochna Zubek.

A further dose of generosity from Heliconian Club was the reception itself, with food provided by individual Heliconian members, free to the audience. We women have come a long way out of the kitchen, so do we still do these things? At Heliconian, the answer is still, yes! The concert itself featured music by 12 ACWC composers on themes relating to the natural world, including climate change and/or endangered species. Composers (in order of appearance on the program) included Joanna Estelle, Sylvia Rickard, Colleen Muriel, Emily Doolittle, Diane Berry, Carol Ann Weaver, Hope Lee, Jana Skarecky, Kye Marshall, Tawnie Olson, Emily Hiemstra, and Alice P.Y. Ho. All texts were by Canadian women writers as well: Lindsay Selwood, Judith Miller, P.K. Page, and Marjorie Chan. While many pieces alluded to the exquisite natural beauty we cannot afford to lose, such as Sylvia Rickard’s “Buttercup Fields,” Diane Berry’s “Calling” (with recorded loon sounds), Emily Hiemstra’s “L’etang” (the pond) and Jana Skarecky’s “Planet Earth, other pieces represented devastations already occurring, such as Kye Marshall’s “Parched,” Colleen Muriel’s “The Sun Has Turned,” and Alice Ho’s “Tale Of
M’Whell.” From Joanna Estelle’s mystical “Faraway Star” to Emily Doolittle’s hommage/lament, “Vocalise (for Bees), to Tawnie Olson’s grief-filled “Abba” for that which is being destroyed, to Hope Lee’s “Prelude to ‘and the end is the beginning’” about light before eternal darkness, to my lauds to the Raven and wild birds in “I Have Been a Traveller,” an array of celebration and passion for our earth was sounded out.

Women may not hear the earth differently from men, but it is essential that we hear how we hear the earth! So once more, we composers, who so often work in solitude, give huge thanks to all performers, who allowed our silent notes to become sounded. A vitally important part of this (and virtually every) concert in which our music is played, is for us composers to converse with the performers, letting them know how we “heard” their playing of our music. Thank you, Heliconian Club, for allowing us to listen to the earth from our own perspectives, as interpreted by your performers!
Listening ahead: please stay tuned for the next ACWC concert March 24, 2018 in Toronto, TBA. Produced by Caution Tape Collective directed by ACWC member Bekah Simms, with support from ACWC, this concert includes some very new and also some blended media works of six ACWC composers: Amy Brandon – a piece for flute, cello, piano, electronics; Hope Lee – “I, Laika” for lute, cello, piano; Julia Mermelstein – “Wonted” (acousmatic); Sarah Reid – a piece for cello, piano, amplified objects; Ivana Jokic – a piece for violin, cello, flute, piano, percussion; and Lesley Hinger – “From Within” for violin solo.

And listening beyond: Maria Eduarda Mendes Martins, an ACWC member now living in Victoria, BC, is directing an ACWC Regional Planning Committee, which will help promote events and performance opportunities for ACWC members nationally. This group will work on organizing an annual season of ACWC concerts, workshops, and music festivals in various regions of the country. All interested ACWC members are invited to join. Feel free to contact Maria at: madudamartins@yahoo.com

These musical moments alluded to here, represent but a fraction of all the music our members are making around the world. From singing lullabies for infants, to composing symphonies and operas for the public, women’s work is never done!! Keep singing, keep composing, keep playing. It’s what we do best! And keep listening to and thanking those who perform our music. Without them, where would we be?!
This issue’s guest performer article is by Liselyn Adams, a flutist based in Montréal and founding member of Blue Rider Ensemble.

I want to thank Julia Mermelstein for inviting me to contribute to the issue of the journal. A performer writing for composers – I hope to make this an exploration of our intimate and fascinating relationship. I promise you will not have to perform this article in front of an audience, though!

We probably started the same way. Playing, listening, learning and picking a direction. I come from a family of musicians, and making music was part of family life. We played and sang, made fun of my parents’ vocal warm up exercises, practiced. But we were all performers, not composers. We knew that one of the biggest challenges ever set is the translation of sound into notation, and then back into sound. Discussions of how to understand what the composer was looking for were intense.

New music was all around, and I was lucky to play music by many Boston composers, and much of the 20th century canon for flute or chamber ensemble. George Edwards’s Sonda for flute and piano was my first experience of working on a new piece that my teacher had never played. It was one of those incredibly exact, almost mathematical kind of scores, where sometimes it might have been easier just to write ritardando instead of increasing note values by minuscule amounts over several measures. We certainly re-worked some of those sections without telling the composer, and it all came out just fine. I was amazed at the complex patterns we could discern and learn, and continue to be awed by this human ability. I found pieces requiring improvisation or aleatoric elements much more daunting.

I was also becoming interested in early music. This came through dance. Julia Sutton, a musicologist and dance historian, ran the New England
Conservatory Terpsichore where hapless music students learned Renaissance and Baroque dances, so that they would understand how to play the music better. We performed extensively (not so hapless after a while!), and this awakened my interest in historical performance practice. I started to learn the Baroque flute (traverso), and kept playing modern and contemporary music. I was still terrified of improvisation, but gradually learned the detachment needed to perform music with vocabularies that were uncomfortable.

I first came to Canada in 1977. I met a lot of musicians and started playing around town, but I was still not sure if a permanent move was possible. I got more and more caught up in the early music revival, and ended up in Den Haag at the Koninklijk Conservatorium to study traverso with Barthold Kuijken. I thought I was just going to learn to be a better interpreter of composers of that time, but I was pushed to learn how to play basso continuo (improvise), ornamentation (improvise), preludes (improvise), and got large lessons on tiny details.

I returned to Montréal in 1979 with some useful baggage. From old music: a wide range of tone colours, an ability to enjoy music free of metre, more secrets of motivic development, affect, ingenuity, and a crazy variety of articulation. And improvisation. From new music: great precision, a wide spectrum of systems and expressions, and a willingness to try anything. I ended up with a full-time faculty position at Concordia University that I at first saw as a way to support my chamber music habit. I got to know some of the composers of my new home. Québec was an exciting place to be, and the chaotic bilingual energy suited me well.

I felt that I had gotten to the point where I was useful to you, the composers. Our meeting place is the same as ever: notation – the terrible, the amazing, the inadequate. Music from your mind onto a page – how can you possibly instruct someone to reproduce what you hear inside? Some choose precision and detail. Some whimsically proffer a sketch. Whatever you do, you rely on the performer to translate those marks into muscles, vibrations, sounds, articulations, resonances that fill up space. The motions and emotions you imagine live through this process. And each performer brings something unique to the table as well – your music will not be the same when played by someone else.
There is a book that upset many people in the historical performance practice movement when it was published, but it is one that discusses the balance between composer and performer, composition and performance. In *Authenticities* (1995), Peter Kivy argues that every performance is itself a new creation. The performance itself cannot be collapsed into text. The composition and the performance are two different works of art. The 19th century made of the composer a “cult of genius” – this was irritating to me as a performer for all the right reasons, but I did not know it until I stopped believing that my job was to disappear in the faithful rendering of the composer’s will, that I could somehow divine through a combination of knowledge, experience, and the teachings handed down to me. It was good to see the validation of the performance as its own creation in this book by a respected thinker.

I co-founded the Blue Rider Ensemble in 1989 after meeting Paul Pulford (‘cellist). It was one of those addictive musical connections, so we recruited others: Beverley Jonston (percussion), Paul Bendzsa (clarinets), Pamela Reimer (piano), and Anne-Marie Donovan (voice and stage direction). We began, as have many ensembles, with Schoenberg’s *Pierrot lunaire*, along
with lashings of Canadian composers. The ensemble had a terrible geographical problem. Members lived in St. John’s, Montréal, and Kitchener-Waterloo. For a while the pianist was in New York. Then Los Angeles. Then we added a percussionist from Toronto. Then finally we found a permanent pianist in Montreal. But distance did not matter – we did not ever want to stop working together. In the first few years, we premiered pieces by Carol Ann Weaver, Linda Catlin Smith, Peter Hatch, Donald Crockett (USA), Helen Hall, Beth Custer (USA), Bruce Nichol, Paul Bendzsa, William Peltier, and Isabelle Panneton. We worked with theatre directors to expand chamber music performance beyond black clothes and fixed seating arrangements. We improvised together, with words, exercise balls, and music.

In 1993, we performed our first major piece of instrumental theatre: *Mounting Picasso* by Peter Hatch. The texts were by Gertrude Stein, and the staging moved the musicians through various scenes reproducing paintings of Picasso and situations from Stein’s life. As with *Pierrot lunaire*, the text was as much the heart of the piece as the music. This gave us an idea.

We commissioned Michel Garneau to compose for us. Michel is one of Québec’s greatest living poets and playwrights. During workshop sessions we improvised (sometimes with Michel playing along), we wrote together, and we talked a lot. Michel went home and wrote 13 texts we were to use as scores in any way we wanted. The resulting *Blue Rider Marmalade* is an anthology of structured improvisations where the text is sometimes present, sometimes not. Two of the movements were made into videos by Freida Abtan. This was our first use of collaborative composition in performance – we had long used it as a warm-up and exploratory tool.
The largest collaboration the ensemble has produced was *Frankenstein’s Ghosts*, a staged multi-media work with sound artist Navid Navab, videographer Jérôme Delapierre, choreographer Michael Montanaro, writer Ann Scowcroft, ethicist Christine Jamieson, and a small cast of actors and dancers. From the question of what resonates today from Mary Shelley’s 1818 novel, this experience of group creation was thoroughly collaborative. Some sections were generated by a musical idea, some by an academic paper, a video image, a sound-altering tool, or something missing from the original story.

We have always continued to perform concert music as well. Last year, we commissioned Julia Mermelstein, Colin Labadie, Tram Cohen, and Dylan Langan for new compositions, and animator, Sunny Stanila for a simultaneous visual and musical improvisation. It was wonderful to work with these young artists.

We are now working on a new project using text and storytelling. *Heart’s Content* will play words that cannot be spoken, and present stories that need to be heard. The music will “translate” texts using Morse code. The words will remain hidden, and even someone who knows code will not be able to understand, unless they examine the score and figure out the method. These
words cannot be spoken for many reasons – perhaps they are too personal, unnecessarily hurtful, politically dangerous, or would create danger for some other reason. In addition to these unspoken words, there will be stories that need to be heard. One will be the life and disappearance of David Diamond, a Cree elder who survived much, learned to live in the bush, taught many young Cree how to live off the land, and then disappeared mysteriously almost ten years ago. The other story will be video from the Tasht Collective’s performance *Come Wash With Us*, where women from the Middle East tell stories of hardship, repression, war, and family while doing laundry in traditional vessels on stage. During both storytelling sections of the piece, elements they feel cannot be told will be made into music by the ensemble. This piece will premiere in July 2018 at the crazy and wonderful ShazamFest in the Eastern Townships of Québec, and then will be performed in Montréal and elsewhere.

Women as composers, performers, storytellers, and educators are part of the huge changes I have seen since my childhood living room musical performances. I wish my grandmother had been able to see how much more is possible for women now. I look forward to more fantastic compositions to play – keep me working hard. Nothing is more satisfying.
An artist, an architect and a composer walk into a conservatory...

Veronika Krausas

The Chicago Architecture Biennial this year featured a project that really was at the intersection of music, art and architecture. Four musicians from the Chicago Sinfonietta, each in their own surrounding enclosure, performed a walking meditation around the Conservatory (plants and such ... not the musical studio type) at Garfield Park.

Sharing a serious concern for air pollution, artist Ana Prvački and Florian Idenburg, co-founder of the New York architecture firm SO-IL, constructed 'wearable enclosures' made of an air filter fabric that purifies air. They wanted to offer a lyrical gesture for the Biennial concerning the issue of air pollution. And thus, L’air pour L’air began.

Each enclosure houses a musician, performing a walking meditation.

The original quartet is for voice, flute, tenor saxophone and tenor trombone, all wind instruments. I chose to use text by the 12th Century composer, abbess, visionary, and botanist Hildegard of Bingen. The words are extracted from the AIR section from the second book of Elements from Physica, her treatise on health and healing. Both English and Latin are used during the performance.
Aer spiramen est quod in rore humorum germinantibus insudat,
ita quod omnia virescunt,
et quod per flatum flores educit,
et quod per calorem omnia ad maturitatem confirmat.
Aer autem qui proximus dispositioni lunae et stellarum est,
sidera humectat,
velut terrenus aer terram et animalia ...
vivificat et movet...

by Hildegard von Bingen LIBER SECUNDUS – DE ELEMENTIS - Physica

Air is the breath that saturates seedlings with dew-drops
so that they grow green and strong,
and with its breeze brings flowers,
and with its warmth leads all to ripeness.
The air, nearby the moon and stars,
waters the celestial body,
just as the terrestrial air
vivifies and animates the earth and its creatures.

Translated by Tom Sapsford © 2017 (used with permission of translator)

The composition presented a few obstacles. The first constraint was that each musician is in their own tent/construction (although somewhat translucent), isolated physically and visually from their fellow musicians. Each musician is walking around the conservatory so the notion of music stands and conductors of course was not possible. How to coordinate the musicians if they potentially can’t even see each other very well? After 3 different versions I finally took inspiration from Renaissance mensuration (or prolation) canons (the same melodic line in canon but at different tempos) and Terry Riley’s landmark 20th Century work In C.

L’air pour l’air

A walking meditation for quartet

Text by Hildegard von Bingen (English translation by Tom Sapsford)

There are 5 sections in L’air pour L’air that may be ordered in any manner and repeated as necessary. Within each section cells maybe played in any order or repeated ad lib. The move to the next section is signaled by a bell played by the soprano. Each musician starts the same melodic line or chant and performs at a different tempo and con molto rubato. The result is an overlapping of the chant—an aural tapestry.
I’ve been very fortunate to be involved in all sorts of wonderful collaborative and interdisciplinary projects from operas performed in limousines driving around Los Angeles (The Industry’s Hopscotch Opera in 2015) to five bass players performing inside a tent (Porcupine). Each comes about in unexpected ways. I was initially introduced to Ana Prvački by Patrick Scott, the director of Jacaranda Music in Los Angeles. He had seen a work by Prvački titled Elbows and Bows with a string quartet performing in a tent, where you hear the musicians and only see their movements poking through the fabric of the tent. He thought we might be like-minded and, indeed we were.

Then it’s all about serendipitous timing. I mentioned playing in a tent to my colleague David Moore at the Thornton School of Music at USC, who is also a bass player in the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The next thing to happen was the LA Phil called to commission a work for five bass players in a tent. Porcupine premiered at the first Noon to Midnight, A Day of New Music at Walt Disney Concert Hall in 2016. Since the basses are only heard with the movements of their bows and bodies disrupting the tent, another of the compositional challenges was to consider the choreography of their movements through the music.
The performance was a success and we started talking about other possible projects.

Ana showed me a video of a goat lung expanding and contracting exactly like bellows. It was super cool and she suggested we do something dealing with AIR. Of course, I agreed. This initial notion of air then transformed when Ana talked with Florian Idenburg of SO-IL architects in New York. The resulting individual pods presented an entirely different sort of choreography, a walking or floating individual entity playing a meditation both separated from their fellow musicians yet aurally constantly intertwining.

The first and only rehearsal at the conservatory was a typical first rehearsal trying to figure out the music with the added complication of constructions! All fit perfectly except for the trombonist. The original musician was a foot shorter than our final performer. Because of the hurricanes in Florida, she was stuck and John McAllister volunteered at the last minute. Slight adjustments and modifications were made and he even suggested performing on a sackbut that fit a little easier into the pod’s space yet was in keeping with the chant-like (early music) feel of the piece.
Before the first performance we anticipated the worst-case scenario of 200+ architects at the convention being quite chatty and the musicians having to compete with conversation. We were astounded...the moment the pods started to walk through the conservatory there was dead silence. It was amazing. The stillness and quiet floated along with the pods as they entered the main performing area.

The musicians were such heroes working within slightly uncomfortable circumstances and promenading with these enclosures around the conservatory. It’s always such a joy when musicians are not only brilliant performers but also game to try the unusual.

Now onto the next unusual artistic and musical venture.
CODA: Since it was a goat lung expanding and contracting that was our initial inspiration, my unofficial and private title is The Goat Lung Promenade. There were no goats in the conservatory but there were several birds, some bees and a fearless squirrel.

l’air pour l’air - a walking meditation
New Member Profiles

Amy Brandon

Guitarist Amy Brandon's compositions and performances have been described as '...mesmerizing' (Musicworks Magazine), '[a] clashing of bleakness with beauty' (Minor 7th) and 'an intricate dance of ancient and futuristic sounds' (Miles Okazaki). Holding degrees in jazz guitar performance and composition, Amy is currently completing a PhD at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where she researches motor control and cognitive aspects of guitar performance. She has performed in Canada, the USA, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, the UK and at several festivals including the Ottawa International Jazz Festival, the Guitar Now Festival, Halifax Jazz Festival Spring Series, the ISIM, BeAST FeAST, Open Waters, Simpósio Acadêmico de Violão da Embap and NYCEMF. Her recent solo guitar album 'Scavenger' was nominated for regional awards including Music Nova Scotia 'Classical Recording of the Year 2016' and ECMA 'Classical Composition of the Year 2017'.

Although she has primarily written solo guitar and electroacoustic music, she has recently been commissioned (or won calls) to write chamber works for vocal, chamber and improvising ensembles including SNIM (Austria), Black Sheep Contemporary Ensemble (USA), Caution Tape Sound Collective (Canada), Videodanse Bourgogne (France) and Vox London Collective (UK). She has been a resident at the Banff Centre and the Atlantic Centre for the Arts, and a composer participant in Interplay with the Vancouver Chamber Choir, Soundstreams, and GroundSwell. She has received several grants from ArtsNS and Canada Council to develop work, and in 2017 she received the Roberta Stephen Award from the Association of Canadian Women Composers. New directions in her compositions include researching and creating electroacoustic installations and experimental notation in virtual reality in collaboration with Copernicus.
Labs in Halifax. In December 2017 she will present a workshop on virtual reality graphic scores at Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA.

Rebekah Cummings

Rebekah Cummings, a Hamiltonian composer and visual artist, is a Master’s student at the University of Toronto, studying composition with Christos Hatzis. After graduating from Wilfrid Laurier University in 2012, she took a four year break from her studies to establish and direct Zamar Hamilton, a unique initiative focused on mentoring young Hamilton-area composers through private lessons and group courses. Through Zamar, Rebekah was able to curate and record seven concerts featuring nearly 200 world premiers by children and teen composers in Hamilton (www.soundcloud.com/zamar-hamilton).

Rebekah has recently put Zamar Hamilton on hold in order to pursue her graduate studies, but cultivating creativity in people of all skill levels and walks of life remains her passion.

Due to a fascination with her Bulgarian roots, much of Rebekah’s music to date has a Balkan-infused flair. She enjoys working with irregular and changing meter in settings evocative of lively Balkan dance forms, and loves to compose works for female a cappella ensembles inspired by the Bulgarian tradition. Emotive intensity and quirky humour often interplay in her work, and themes of life, growth and transformation tend to be at the heart of her creative expression in both music and art. A singer-songwriter as well as composer, Rebekah likes these worlds to cross-pollinate, especially in the realm of electroacoustic music. She intends to record an album of these hybrid electroacoustic songs in 2018.

www.soundcloud.com/rebekah-cummings
www.rebekahcummingsartist.com
Susan Griesdale

As I sit down to write my new member profile I am in awe of the names and the talent of the composers in this organization. I look forward to having my eyes (and ears) opened and welcome the learning opportunities and education that this group will undoubtedly offer.

I am mostly involved in writing pedagogical works for students. I have a violin collection, a flute collection but I write mostly for piano.

One of my goals is to produce a body of work where you can find humour and sense of whimsy. Recently I was commissioned and wrote a two piano work for 12 hands. Titled ‘Sixty Fingers’, it is an upbeat percussive romp with a surprise ending that closes the keyboard. The overall feeling of fun is evident and greatly satisfies my sense of purpose. Similarly, ‘En garde’ was born when asked to write for JunctQin Keyboard Collective using their toy pianos and a cymbal monkey. I was in my element!! A whimsical portrayal of the high energy romp of children pretending to be ‘Musketeers’!

Another fun project – a choral piece using spoken word about the elements of choral music – Words, Rhythm and Melody. This piece is called ‘Elements’ and was performed by She Sings under the direction of Martha Hill Duncan. A piano collection, called ‘Out of the Box’, has some cheery and quirky numbers like Bounce, Rattle’n Squeak and Spunk. Humour is a common thread and very important for me and can be found in many of my junior piano works as well. Currently I’m writing dance pieces to be out early next year. Uniquely quirky, sprinklings of dissonance and very percussive. I will admit that I love dance. It’s a normal state of being for me is to have a little dancer in my ‘mind’s eye’ always dancing to whatever sound I hear. Wild, totally immersed, involved. It’s a way of seeing the world and in these turbulent times I find wry humour and whimsy more essential than ever. A way of survival. There is not enough repertoire out there with these sentiments.
I am a founding member of the Red Leaf Pianoworks Collective of self-published composers all writing music for students. It all started initially with members Martha Hill Duncan, Beverly Porter and myself but since then has grown and we are eleven members strong at this point, including ACWC member Joanne Bender.

I am also a visual artist and have been asked to create images for music book covers for other composers. Working with colour brings an elevated excitement that is not easily explained but is totally immersive. In my view colour is as essential as dance.

Lesley Hinger

Lesley Hinger is a composer of acoustic and electroacoustic music, currently residing in Calgary, Alberta. She likes writing music that shimmers and glows, and floats and oscillates, and crunches and spins out, and does other things too. She is currently working on new pieces for the Land’s End Ensemble, and for Véronique Mathieu and Stephanie Chua via New Works Calgary, both of which will be performed in 2018.

Lesley’s music has been performed across North America and Europe by a number of ensembles including the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), Arditti String Quartet, Sound Icon, Land’s End Ensemble, Ensemble Resonance, l’Orchestre de la Francophonie, Ensemble l’Arsenale, Strata Ensemble, Violet Collective, and the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. Her works have also been showcased in numerous festivals including Third Practice (Richmond, Virginia), the National Arts Centre Summer Music Institute (Ottawa), the Composit New Music Festival (Rieti, Italy), the Strata Festival (formerly Sask New Music in Saskatoon), the Toronto Creative Music Lab, New Music Edmonton’s ‘Now Hear This’ Festival, and at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity.

Lesley received her Doctorate in Composition at Boston University in 2014, studying under Joshua Fineberg. She also earned her Bachelor of Music in Composition at the University of Calgary, and Masters of Music at
the University of British Columbia. From 2011-2014 Lesley co-founded and ran the Boston-based concert series Acoustic Uproar, which promoted emerging composers and performers in the programming of contemporary music outside of both academia and the concert hall.

Christie Morrison

Hello everyone,

I started singing as a child in both elementary school and church choirs. During my childhood years, the music superintendent for the Kitchener/Waterloo Ontario region (Garfield Bender) would formulate a 1,000 voice Christmas children’s choir.

The choir rehearsed in preparation for performances to be held at the Kitchener-Waterloo Memorial Arena. The concert was entitled: “A Children’s Christmas Fantasy.” In addition to the 1,000 voice choir, I was chosen as an 11 yr old soloist to make my singing debut in front of 8,000 people.

Mr. Harry Urstadt was my first teacher and was well known in the twin cities for his outstanding vocal methods and techniques. Throughout my teens and early twenties I won many festival awards, competitions, scholarships, and always received first class honours in my RCM voice exams.

I continued my musical studies over 6 decades which included piano, voice and violin. Degrees and awards in these various areas of discipline were received through RCM, Wilfred Laurier University, Western Washington University, and the Victoria Conservatory of Music. I’m also a member of N.A.T.S (National Association of Teachers of Singing) and I’ve acted as an adjudicator for music theatre in Victoria B.C., Boston, and Arizona.

Credited teachers include: Mr Harry Urstadt (children’s voice), Mr. Victor Martin (W.L.U.), Dr. Marvin Regier (W.W.U.), Trudi Conrad (violin -
Victoria Symphony/Victoria conservatory of music), and Diane Berry (composition).

“Tooth or Consequences,” a four piece children’s song cycle for voice and piano, was submitted into an open category for our most recent BCRMTA composer’s competition in 2017. My work placed first in provincials and I received honourable mention in Nationals. I continue to write children’s vocal music as well as new works for piano/flute and piano/violin.

I’m both excited and enthusiastic in becoming a member of ACWC. I thank everyone for their warm welcome into ACWC and I anticipate many years of collegial collaboration with you all.

**Noelle Sinclair**

Noelle Sinclair is a Canadian composer, writer, and photographer living in Dubai, UAE. Her musical influence and style is rooted in the Baroque and classical periods. As an autistic adult, she has re-discovered the power of music to communicate a range of emotions that are often difficult to express with words. Her music is published with Perpetual Music Group specifically for sync licensing.

Noelle is currently working on a MBA and will begin studies for a MS in Psychology & Neuroscience starting Jan 2018 at King’s College in the UK. Her focus at King’s will be autism and music and music cognition.

Website: [www.noellesinclairmusic.com](http://www.noellesinclairmusic.com)
ACWC: Becoming Bilingual in Small Steps

Carol Ann Weaver

Since its beginning in 1981, ACWC has worked extensively to gain Francophone composers within its membership. Significant progress was made in the late 1980s, culminating in a two-day ACWC conference at Université de Montréal in 1986, complete with a concert, discussion sessions, social events, tour of electronic studios at U of M, and a memorable sonic meditation, which crossed language divides! Sessions and gatherings were as bilingual as possible, with various Francophone composers contributing generously to this and other ACWC gatherings and networking. And in 1990, I travelled to Quebec to continue our liaison with Francophone composers, meeting with Ginette Bertrand and others. However, in recent years, the ACWC membership has been largely Anglophone.
So, in the interest of regaining connection with Francophone composers, and thus becoming yet more “pan-Canadian,” our ACWC Board agreed that we will make our website bilingual. For this, we are working with French scholar and translator Claire Pencole, a graduate student at University of Waterloo, who is in the process of translating our website. Rather than have two parallel websites, English and French, we are allowing our current site to contain both languages. Our website manager, Katerina Gimon, is formatting and placing all translations onto our site as we receive them from Claire. We owe huge thanks to Claire Pencole for her prompt, careful work, to ACWC composer Sylvia Rickard for initial translation of our mission statement, to Katerina Gimon for placing these materials on our site, and to Dr. Guy Poirier, Chair of University of Waterloo French Department, and Kathleen St Laurant, administrative assistant in the UW French Department, for circulating our request for a proficient, professional translator. If any ACWC members are sufficiently bilingual and would like to be part of this ongoing translation process that will continue well after our immediate website translation work, please contact me at caweaver@uwaterloo.ca. We will appreciate any/all continued help! Thank you.

**About Claire Pencole**

**Which part of France are you from?**
Paris

**What universities have you gone to and what degree(s) have you earned?**
University of Nantes and currently at University of Waterloo. I have received a degree in English (first Foreign Language) and Spanish (second Foreign Language).

**What are you currently studying?**
I currently study History in foreign languages, but I also love studying foreign languages. That’s why I also attended many translation courses in my french university. I have completed my 1st year’s Master’s research in British Civilization and currently in my 2nd year’s Master’s research in Canadian Civilization.
Could you tell us about your research and why you chose this focus?
My research is on the treatment of the English emigrants in Canada during the Victorian era. I chose this focus because one of my favourite classes in my French university was a class on the Victorian era in Britain. I also loved the fact that I could take advantage of my exchange program in Canada to make my investigations on the spot, and therefore chose a topic which included Canada too.

What interested you to study in this field?
I want to further study that field to acquire a more solid knowledge of the English language and also of the culture and History of the English-speaking “sphere.” Thus I’ll be more likely to pass the competitive exams to become an English teacher in my country of origin.

Any Canadian History fact you want to share from your research?
Your country has indeed always had a very welcoming attitude towards emigration, given the number of emigration schemes with the UK I’ve found out during my researches. They were also quite successful, given what I’ve read in the British Emigration Reports written a few years later, with the benefit of hindsight.

How do you find studying at UW?
I love studying at UW, I’ve had the pleasure to attend graduate seminars which enabled me to further my knowledge of literature for my future career as an English teacher in France.

How do you like living in Canada? And is this your first time here?
Awesome. I’m fond of your huge shopping malls and the diverse arrays of stores, restaurants and coffee shops (Tim Hortons, Williams’ café) we are terribly lacking in France. You also have some impressive fitness centres, such as GoodLife.
CrossWaves: As we listen to waves breaking along a shoreline, we might imagine underwater sounds that we cannot hear.

Gayle Young

In August 2017 the first Bonavista Biennale opened, featuring art works installed within communities around the Bonavista Peninsula, Newfoundland - about a three-hour drive from the St. John’s airport. This was the beginning of a planned series of visual art festivals that will take place in odd-numbered years, the next one in 2019. The main city, Bonavista, is a site of early European settlement in North America and remained prosperous until the twentieth century. The area preserves a strong architectural heritage, though many of the buildings were neglected as employment opportunities declined in recent decades. The Biennale provided a new context for these sites, placing visual art in many intriguing buildings, ranging from an abandoned fishery warehouse to an historic root cellar. The Biennale created a strong local and international response to contemporary arts in alternative venues.

CrossWaves was my site-specific sound installation in the community centre of a small village, Duntara. The Biennale is a project of 2 Rooms Contemporary Art Projects – an art gallery, artifact museum, and artist residency housed in a traditional saltbox in Duntara. In 2016 I attended the artist residency to record the slow underwater rhythms of the ocean as they create eddies and currents among different shapes and profiles of shoreline rocks. The slow swells, six to nine seconds in duration, are unique to the ocean, related to effects such as tidal flow rather than to wind on the water’s surface.
The underwater sound world is distinctly different from the one we experience in the air. Sound moves five times faster in water, and much further as well. A sound that would fade to silence over a few metres in the air would be clearly audible underwater at five times the distance. One result of this is that the noise level in the underwater world is much higher. Another is that two hydrophones have to be placed around three feet apart to achieve a stereo field. For practical reasons, as well as for safety, two people were needed: many thanks to my patient and loyal collaborator, Reinhard Reitzenstein.

I used hydrophones built by Paul Scriver with my assistance, based on a circuit from the web site of the Bioacoustic Research Program at Cornell. The circuits were encased in resin of the same density as water to avoid refraction. Finding good recording sites was more of a challenge than I had expected. We searched for rocks where two people could sit safely, each holding one of the suspended hydrophones, where the water was not too shallow or too deep, where there was wave action without surface wind. For maybe half an hour we would sit in silence, recording at each site, all the while gently avoiding collisions with rocks by moving the cords slowly, as any change of finger position while holding the cords was audible on the recordings. Though we imagine ourselves to be observant listeners we both admit that making these recordings had an unexpected benefit: we spent much longer periods of quiet observation in these wonderful places than we otherwise would have.
In preparation for the installation this summer I calculated the wavelengths that correspond to the dimensions of the Duntara community hall, and found a repeating pattern of overtones shared by both the width and the length of the room. I then used band-pass filtering to highlight the shared frequency bands. It was a fortunate co-incidence that such strong acoustical connections existed; I found no matches with the height of the room. The filtering treatment also reduced some of background noise inherent in the underwater sound. In another location the original recordings can be filtered according to a different set of pitch bands, determined by the dimensions of future installation sites.

Sound was projected from three directions, using three sets of speakers playing in high, medium and low registers. Together they created slow cross-rhythms of waves, the total effect seldom repeated because each recording was a different length. As listeners moved through the space they were able to modify their own experiences, essentially changing their own mix among the different sound sources as they approached one or anther of the speaker pairs.

CrossWaves brings the rhythms of the ocean into the foreground of our awareness, providing an audio experience of the shoreline visible from the exhibition space, and bringing attention to inaudible underwater sounds. We can sometimes see below the surface of the water, we cannot hear below the surface.

For further information, check these on-line references:
http://www.2roomscontemporaryartprojects.com
https://bonavistabiennale.com
Autistic Composer: My late-in-life diagnosis

Noelle Sinclair

I have always been different, but I wouldn’t describe my flavour of different as always being beneficial. My different got me in trouble, made me the black sheep of the family, cost me friends, made my dating life non-existent, and literally made me a social bomb—I once accidentally lit my eyebrows on fire at a college party.

Yet, my different also got me into college several years before my peers, made me a favourite amongst my professors, and allowed me to use my strange way of thinking to solve business problems, which helped me to succeed in business.

Still, my different has always had costs. People are difficult for me to be around and my senses are always firing. I’m constantly in a state of overload. After a lifetime of pain, depression, and misdiagnosis, I went on a mission to find out why I was so different. At 43 years old, I finally found out.

It turns out that my different is autism.

Autism is a strange beast. It’s a spectrum consisting of geniuses at one end and non-verbals unable to care for themselves at the other. There are both positive and negative aspects to it. For example, the likes of Einstein and Newton may have been autistic according to expert Simon Baron-Cohen.¹

There is even speculation that Mozart may have been autistic. We often think negatively of autism, yet humanity may also be benefiting from it in some respects.

What is it like being autistic and a composer? In my case, I began life being fascinated with pianos. As a small child, I started writing short pieces around the age of five, but I could not read music and I did not play solely by ear.

The overall structure of a song was simply a pattern of white and black keys. The sounds the keys made were important, but coincidental to the pattern of keys. Many autistics are pattern thinkers.

While I was obsessed with pianos as a child, we never had one of our own. Eventually, my grandmother, growing tired of my pleas, dug up her old, two-foot wide, miniature 1960’s organ and piano books and let me have a go at them. The organ was tiny, honky, and often shorted out, but I loved it. I spent hours teaching myself how to read music at age six with the accompanying books and how to play simple songs. Hyper-focus on a beloved subject is also an autistic trait.

However, I never had the opportunity or ability to learn to play piano properly. It turns out that one of my disabilities related to autism makes reading and playing music on two staves incredibly difficult beyond elementary level pieces. However, not all autistics have the same set of learning disabilities (or any at all) and many can play piano wonderfully.

While I studied music in university for two years, I ended up obtaining several degrees in other areas and using my strong analytical abilities working in IT, risk management, governance, and corporate strategy. After much consideration, I recently decided to return to music composition. But, autism continues to cause daily struggles.

My social and verbal deficiencies mean that I have great difficulty with simple networking, basic socializing, and promoting my work. Attending a social function is extremely distressing.

These days I compose directly within Finale (skipping an instrument altogether). The result is that I can’t play (on any instrument) what I compose as all of my compositions are beyond my playing ability. Most composers can play their compositions at a drop of hat. I can’t and that makes me feel out of place amongst other musicians and composers. The
very basic act of playing any instrument well eludes me, but I love the analytical side of things such as music theory, harmony, counterpoint and orchestration.

My composition process is driven by my autistic tendencies for detail and my preferences for symmetry and patterns. While I have a number of approaches to composing, I typically start by deciding if I will be composing in minor or major and then I select a key (oftentimes at random). Next, I use Finale to notate the pattern of notes I have visualized in my head, which comprise the motifs, phrases, etc. Then I use counterpoint and harmonic analysis to determine the accompaniment and overall harmonies, cadences, etc. I rarely use the piano to work out anything—I compose from an analytical perspective based upon patterns that I visualize and musical rules and theories that I have learned over the years. I see music more than hear it—likely a result of autism.

Once the composition is complete, I export the Finale files into Logic Pro X and create key switches for the samples that I will be using (I predominately use Vienna Software Library). Once in Logic, I spend a significant amount of time adjusting each instrument’s dynamics, modulation, and expression. Lastly, I mix and then master. A short example of this process is a piece called Heart of Darkness, where I began with a simple basso ostinato and built a string quintet around it using the steps described above (never using an instrument to compose with). Despite the analytical nature of my process, the result is still emotional and compelling. However, if you were to ask me to play a version of it on the piano, I could not.

Despite the downsides of autism, I would not take a cure for it if one were offered. This strange disorder has given me the ability to see, think about, and experience the world differently. I also believe that my ability for music also arises from the same place.

If you would like to learn more about high functioning autism, then you may like the movie: Temple Grandin² a true story about an autistic woman who nearly ended up in sanatorium, but instead has accomplished remarkable things with her life. This movie is a wonderful way of seeing the world though our eyes. As Temple’s mother would say, we (autistics) are different, but not less.

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Carol Ann Weaver: Her life & music

Clarisse Tonigussi — Guest Performer

"Music has always been within me. It’s the magic, the breath, the liquid in life. It’s why I’m here, and it’s always been that way." - Carol Ann Weaver

I met Carol Ann for the first time on a frigid morning in December 2016 at her house in Waterloo. We had agreed to meet to look over a few of her songs written for voice and piano that I had planned to sing on my graduating Master’s recital at the University of Toronto. It took us no time at all to delve into the music. For the next hour and a half we worked through three pieces: Orbit, which is extremely melodic and folk-like; Coming Home, also quite folk inspired; and Song of the Lost, which has a typical “classical art song” feel. After about two minutes I felt completely comfortable with Carol Ann, as she was more interested in the music itself than the technical aspect of singing. I don’t know if we ever once touched on anything technical. It was refreshing to remain focused on the music rather than my voice and body, and since our meeting I’ve made an effort to put the score, music, and text, above all else.

After working through all three pieces we went upstairs to Carol Ann’s extensive musical library where she generously gave me a stack of CD’s and a few scores of her music. One score that particularly interested me was Timbrel in her Hand with music by Carol Ann and text by Judith Miller. Not only did the score look riveting, but the text felt like something I could incorporate into the recital tour of Canadian women’s compositions (The CWC Project) I had arranged for the next year. Timbrel in her Hand is, in short, a set from the perspective of the women in the Bible. I did in the end, perform pieces from Timbrel on my graduating recital and have since taken the pieces on The CWC Project tour. Every time the audience hears Carol Ann’s music, something shifts in the room. Suddenly I see heads bopping, hands tapping, smiles from ear to ear, and there are often giggles somewhere in the crowd. Carol Ann has said to me in the past, “I don’t like music that doesn’t dance,” and you can undoubtedly hear that in Timbrel in her Hand, I mean, one of the pieces is even called “Dancing!”
A few months later on April 20th 2017, and then again on September 6th, I had truly inspiring Skype and phone conversations with Carol Ann regarding various aspects of her life, her music, and what has made her into the composer she is today.

During one of those conversations she told me that when she was 2-years-old, her mother took her and her sisters to live with her grandparents after her father was tragically killed in a plane accident. Her grandfather, it turns out, was an avid music enthusiast and Carol Ann remembers being introduced to composers such as Haydn and Beethoven at a very young age. She would sit with her grandfather and listen to the symphonic greats with him on the living room sofa. As she listened, she would picture writing symphonies herself, and this really excited her.

A turning point in Carol Ann’s early musical life was the realization that women could be composers. After that realization, she concocted a musical event for her friends at school and was completely invigorated by the experience.

At age 7, she began reading music on the piano, and was able to put her composing skills to work. She wrote pieces for solo piano and songs for her sisters to sing. She used to compose music in her head at school, and then race to be the first one home so she could have the piano all to herself. Composing was a sacred time for her and being alone with her piano was when she felt most comfortable and free.

At the end of high school, Carol Ann was chosen to write the ‘class song’, a piece for SATB, for her graduation. This was another moment when Carol Ann felt inspired to dedicate her life to music and composing.

After high school, Carol Ann went on to study at the Indiana University (Bloomington) where she received a Bachelors and Masters in Piano Performance and a Doctorate in Composition. She says that there, she learned many things she already knew. She learned the proper terms for things that she had instinctively known how to do in the past: that is how deeply Carol Ann was able to understand music.

After her first two university degrees, Carol Ann got her first job teaching at the Eastern Mennonite University. In 1977 she moved to Winnipeg,
Manitoba for her second job at, what is now called, the Canadian Mennonite University. She never moved back to the U.S., and is now a Canadian citizen. After completing her doctorate, which she had been working towards throughout her previous positions, Carol Ann took over the post of theory, and composition professor at the Wilfred Laurier University. Four years later in 1985, she began teaching at the University of Waterloo. There, in addition to teaching theory and composition, Carol Ann had the opportunity to teach: “Women in Music,” “African Music and Peace,” a course on Jazz music, and created three festivals dedicated to different aspects of Mennonite music. She even took a group of students to South Africa to study the music there!

Besides teaching, Carol Ann has dedicated an enormous amount of time to composing. Each composition goes through a unique process before it is complete. For Carol Ann, finding the underlying theme of a work is where she begins her composing process and this theme is what she uses to ground her music. A theme can approach her at any time in any which way, whether it be a “poem or just an idea that (she) has, something that happens in the world, like an event, or perhaps a person that has triggered a strong reaction in (her).” She then usually takes a long walk on the Iron Horse Trail in Kitchener-Waterloo to give herself more time to ponder what the idea means to her. To give me an example of what she meant by a theme, Carol Ann spoke about her work Piece of a Rock that she had written for voice, piano, and drums. The piece, an outcry against the American-instigated war in Iraq, incorporated names of innocent civilians who died there as part of the war’s collateral damage.

When Carol Ann writes for voice, she often combs through poems, searching for the ones that speak to her the most. When she finds the perfect poem, Carol Ann says it’s like she’s been given a big Christmas present. She thinks about it constantly, with joy in her heart. With the perfect poem she goes to her back porch or sits in a lawn chair in the sun and makes notes in the margins. When she wrote Timbrel in her Hand, Carol Ann did just that.

After a theme, idea or poem, is decided, Carol Ann moves to the piano to improvise/compose. She says that the process of composing is a metaphysical kind of thing, like her way of praying, and she simply has to wait for the song to speak out to her. She says, “Each process is it’s own wonderful miracle.”
Sometimes, and this is very rarely, Carol Ann composes without the piano at her side. One example is her work Earth Peace with choral and instrumental movements, which she wrote while she was in Africa and did not have access to a piano. She was “extremely pleased that (she) could write without it.” Earth Peace was commissioned by Conrad Grebel University College at UW for a performance in 2016. The work features stories she came across during her travels in Africa. Some movements are about animals she saw and some about people she met. One particular piece was written about a newly-born Springbok (antelope) lamb, that had been abandoned by its mother due to a deformity. Carol Ann and her husband stayed with the Springbok lamb as long as they could, but when they visited the next day it was gone. Carol Ann remembers crying over the poor soul and subsequently decided to write a piece for it.

During the time Carol Ann was at the Indiana University, the majority of what she wrote was what she called “abstract, Schoenberg-type music” or “austere classical stuff,” which she admits that she likes, but it forced her to erase her background of the tonal, melodic “do-re-mi” type of music she had been used to from singing in her a cappella Mennonite. Since her university days, Carol Ann has opened up into an acceptance of more accessible music: “I opened up my heart and musical taste to include the music that I love. Music that can dip into other more accessible styles.”
One accessible style or genre that Carol Ann has been drawn to is Jazz – both American and South African. “I’ve listened to (jazz) tons, taught it, and played with South African jazz musicians. You can’t be the same after doing that.” One can hear the jazz influence in her song cycle Timbrel in her Hand especially in the piece “Names Tangled Names” where in the score the singer and pianist are instructed to “swing.” Other genres that Carol Ann enjoys “dipping” into are folk, Mennonite-rooted, and African music, specifically music from South Africa, Congo, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and West Africa – Mali, Senegal and Cameroon.

When I asked Carol Ann what elements of composition she most favoured, she took a minute to think and then answered that she liked sound masses, tone colours, soundscapes, and “music that changes,” for which she had an explanation. She likes to write a slight shift in her music when the ear expects to hear a mere repetition, and she compares it to the type of flexibility one finds in nature: unpredictable.

From the conversations I’ve had with Carol Ann over the past year, I have come to understand the profound bond she has always had with her music and the life about her, all of which has contributed to her ability to bridge musical gaps and combine the many styles of music that she has. For her, music truly transcends genres.
The biggest news from the International Alliance for Women in Music at this point is the reconfiguring of their website, with the new version being launched in November.

It is now brighter, with more pictures and is easier to navigate. As with all of these things, there is still some updating to be done, particularly with the members pages.

With the change in the website, members need to activate their pages and the organization is hoping members will also update their profiles and upload their photos. There are photos of various members on the home page, which change daily. For those of our members who are also members of the IAWM, there is a link on the website announcement page that enables you to activate your page and upload your picture.

The organization is also looking at increasing the number of board members and nominations were being taken in late November, with voting to take place on-line from December 8th to 18th. The decision will be announced on December 22nd.

In my last report, I promised to give more information on the IAWM's "Search for New Music". Many of you will be familiar with the yearly call for scores. It is divided into categories (currently seven) with the requirements differing from category to category. Some of these parameters encompass different instrumentation, styles and help encourage composers who are often under represented in the world of new music. It is part of the IAWM's mandate to be inclusive and to support diversity in the organization and its' board. I believe they are looking at changes to some of the categories and an expansion, though those details are currently unavailable. I will include here a synopsis of the categories as they were last year.

The Ruth Anderson award is a commission for a sound installation and is in the form of a proposal. The Christine Clark/ Theodore Front award is for a chamber or orchestral work by a composer who is at least twenty-two
years old. The Miriam Gideon award is for a work for solo voice and one to five instruments from a composer who is at least fifty years old, while the Libby Larsen award is for a student who is currently in school. The Pauline Oliveros New Genre awards is for an electro-acoustic piece, the PatsyLu prize is for a black and/or lesbian composer and the Judith Lang Zaimont award is for an extended composition by a composer who is at least thirty years old and has not been recorded or published.

Composers who wish to submit must be members, or become members at the time of submitting. The deadline is usually in May and at the moment there is no information on the website about the 2018 call. ACWC members who are interested in submitting should check on the website in the new year, and I'm sure, as an organization we'll get a notification that can be put in the soundbox.

So sometime when you're doing a little surfing, check out the IAWM's new website and find out more about what they're up to.
Member News

Composer **Dr. MAYA BADIAN** was the speaker at The Ottawa New Music Creators Inaugural “Forum Series” of 2017-2018, which took place at the University of Ottawa in Ottawa, on October 22, 2017. “Composing A Life, Composing My Music” was the title of her 1-hour presentation. Chris Goddard, the Artistic Director of ONMC, wrote: “Our first composers’ forum was a huge success. Many thanks to our inaugural speaker, Dr. Maya Badian, for her wonderful presentation, and for her part in a very successful first event!”

“Maya Badian: Music Is My Message” is a 23-minute docuMovie recently released on YouTube about the insights and messages generated by Dr. Maya Badian’s compositions. For more info, please visit Dr. Maya Badian’s website:

http://www3.sympatico.ca/badian/

**Carmen Braden** recently had her work for chamber orchestra premiered by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at Roy Thompson Hall on October 7 2017 as part of the TSO’s Sesquie series. A subsequent performance happened in Yellowknife on November 3rd by Yellowknife’s Table for Five and guests.

Carmen will have a new work premiered in Whitehorse by the Problematic Orchestra on December 21st. This piece, titled *Every Freeze is Different* is her first piece for open scoring / flexible instrumentation.

Members of the National Arts Centre Orchestra will perform her string quartet *The Raven Conspiracy* as part of their North 150 tour in Yellowknife on December 9 - [https://nac-cna.ca/en/canada150tour/northern](https://nac-cna.ca/en/canada150tour/northern)

She will appear in an upcoming performance of her solo songwriting material will be included as part of the Bentway Conservancy’s grand opening of an outdoor skating trail under the Gardiner Expressway in Toronto on January 6 2018. Will be cool! [http://www.thebentway.ca](http://www.thebentway.ca)

The **Jean Ethridge** Celebration concert, Vancouver, BC on October 27, 2017, featured her works for piano trio and soprano, beautifully performed by professional musicians. The programme, including Jean’s thoughts on music, extensive programme notes, and the photos taken after the concert are at this link:


**Hope Lee**’s flute solo piece *forever after* was performed by Mark McGregor on his solo flute tour across Canada in September. Imaginary Garden IV for violin and cello was premiered by Trio Fibonacci (Julie-Anne Derome, violin, Gabriel Prynne, cello) at Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal. *o som do desassossege... reflection on recollection* for piano was performed by Luciane Cardassi at the Calgary New Music Festival 2017 in October and at the CMC Vancouver. In the Beginning was the End for accordion and harpsichord was performed by the Austrian Duo Ovocutter in Vienna and in Taipei. Prelude to ‘and the End is the Beginning’ for violin, clarinet and piano received its Ontario premiere at the ACWC Canada 150th Concert at the Heliconian Club. Presently Hope is composing Imaginary Garden VII for flute, violin, cello, piano, commissioned by Robert Aitken and the Land’s End Ensemble.
Cecilia Livingston has a new website at: cecilialivingston.com. Please do take a moment to stop by and to sign up for her newsletter, through the form at the bottom of the main page. Thank you!

Tapestry opera will perform operatic scenes composed by Afarin Mansouri in 2016 in their upcoming concert called opera briefs winter shorts. https://tapestryopera.com/opera-briefs/. She is also currently working on composing an experimental opera commissioned by Tapestry TAPX program for February 2018. For more information you can go to https://tapestryopera.com/tapex-forbidden/

Julia Mermelstein is one of three chosen composers for the Winds of the SPO reading session where she will compose a short piece for chamber wind ensemble. Julia was also a finalist in this year’s Symphony One’s International Call for Scores.

Julia is currently working on a new piece for flute, piano, and electronics commissioned by Amanda Lowry to be performed in April in Waterloo as well as composing an interdisciplinary work for four musicians and two dancers for Din of Shadows second show in early May 2018 in Toronto.

In June Tawnie Olson attended a life-changing field recording workshop at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, thanks to a Professional Development Grant from the Canada Council for the Arts. In July The Blackbird at Evening and Meadowlark were performed by members of the Heartland Marimba Quartet at their eponymous festival; the first movement of Meadowlark was also performed by Mike Compitello at the IAWM Annual Concert in Lawrence, Kansas in October.

Olson’s Magnificat for SATB and Bulgarian Girls Choir was premièred by the Elm City Girls Choir and Yale Schola Cantorum, conducted by David Hill, on September 22. Shawn Mativetsky performed the Australian première of her Something to Say the following day; he then gave its Cypriot première on October 8 before performing it at the Calgary New Music Festival on October 22. Also in October, soprano Magali Simard-Galdès and pianist Olivier Godin gave the Mexican première of Tawnie Olson’s Three Songs on Poems by Lorri Neilsen Glenn at the Mexico Liederfest, and “Abba” from Paraclete was performed at the ACWC-sponsored Climate Change and Endangered Species concert at the Heliconian Club in Toronto.

In December, a recording of Olson’s Thorns, performed by Bass-baritone Dashon Burton (Roomful of Teeth) and the Parthenia Viol Consort will be released on Parthenia’s latest album, Nothing Proved (MSR Classics).

Katya Pine just completed the music soundtrack for a short Sci-Fi independent film entitled, “The Forerunner”. It is slated for film festivals in Europe beginning with the Berlin Film Festival.

Turning 80 in May has proven very exciting for Sylvia Rickard. To date, this year she has had 13 performances of her works and the release of 1 CD with her Rarescale for flute and piano, on Celebrating Canadian Women by Laurel Swinden, flute, and Stephanie Mara, piano.

On May 19, Rickard’s birthday, the Canadian Music Centre, Vancouver, honoured her with a concert of 7 of her chamber works of her choosing, on their Celebration series.
On January 5 in Silverton Oregon, Andrew R. White, baritone and Christopher Wicks, piano, gave the world premiere of Rickard’s 2016 *Three Late Period Yeats Songs*; On April 7, on the Indomitable Spirit concert about the history of women’s suffragettes in Victoria, included Rickard’s *Human Time Zones*, by the Emily Carr String quartet.

On October 27, the ACWC and Heliconian Club concert included Rickard’s song *Buttercup Fields* sung by Katerina Utochkina, mezzo soprano (poem, Lindsay Selwood) and Evelina Soulis, piano.

The Victoria Composers Collective gave at the St. Mary’s Anglican Church, Victoria, a concert honouring Canada’s 150 years, called Generations of Canadian Music, wherein Maria Eduarda Mendes Martins, soprano, and Josh Layne, harpist, presented the first of Rickard’s three *Love Flowers of Chinese Courtesans: On the Slope of Mount Hua*.

Sylvia Rickard has just completed her first art song in the Brazilian Portuguese language, for Maria Eduarda Mendes Martins. Rio poet, Olavo Bilac, wrote the poem: *Ouvir Estrelas*, (*To Hear Stars*), which Rickard has set for soprano, ‘cello and celesta.

**Bekah Simms** is the recipient of both Canada Council and Ontario Arts Council grants for her upcoming Centrediscs album, impurity chains. The CD features 5 works that each deal with distortion, quotation, and obfuscation through electronic or acoustic means. Featured ensembles include Continuum Contemporary Music, the Madawaska Quartet, and Caution Tape Sound Collective.

**Carol Ann Weaver’s** *Songs for My Mother*, for mezzo soprano and piano, is currently on tour in Canada and USA. Composed in 2017, this is a song cycle with texts by her mother, Miriam L. Weaver, derived from her mother’s early journals, ranging from early days in the 1940s in Appalachian Kentucky, to moments before her untimely death. The sense of her working in primitive physical settings and creating home, friendships, and community are, themselves, a saga. Her accounts of Hard Shell Baptist practices are as vivid and cogent as those of any ethnomusicologist! The songs, “Feedsack Curtains,” “Flat Iron,” and “Hard Shell Baptists” recount these early years. “Lately Sprung” rejoices at the birth of her granddaughter. “Crossing Over” and “To the End,” words spoken right before she died, present chillingly honest looks into her death about to occur, but with a hue of hope. It was premiered on June 24, 2017 at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA, as part of the Crossing the Lines Conference with Marge Maust, mezzo soprano.

[https://www.emu.edu/cms-links/academic-conferences/docs/CrossingTheLine-program.pdf](https://www.emu.edu/cms-links/academic-conferences/docs/CrossingTheLine-program.pdf)

Subsequent performances have been at Canadian Mennonite University (Winnipeg) Oct. 19, University of Manitoba Oct. 20, and at Mennonite’s Writing Conference on Oct. 20 with Marni Enns, soprano; at Conrad Grebel Chapel, University of Waterloo, Oct. 25, 2017 with Stephanie Kramer, soprano; and at Wilfrid Laurier University, Nov. 30, with Mary-Catherine Pazzano, soprano. CAWeaver is pianist in each venue.

ACWC Opportunities

Regional Planning Committee - Call for Interest

The Association of Canadian Women Composers is creating a Regional Planning Committee, with the goal of promoting more events and performance opportunities for ACWC members. This committee would be responsible for organizing an ACWC annual season of concerts, workshops, and music festivals, organized in various regions of the country.

We invite any member, who would have plans or ideas about possible concerts, to contact us in order to discuss how these ideas would be developed as we plan to start our first season. If you are interested, please contact Maria Eduarda Mendes Martins madudamartins@yahoo.com.br

Composer Opportunities

Compass New Music + N/A Ensemble Call for Scores

Deadline: December 19, 2017

Composers of any age, nationality, or stage of their careers who identify as women, nonbinary, or genderfluid are invited to submit scores for a concert in Toledo, Ohio which will take place on February 18, 2018. The program will showcase approximately three to four pieces. Pieces should be at least five minutes long, with no strict cap on maximum length. Pieces need to include all or a subset of two or three (no solo works) of the following instrumentation: soprano, flute, clarinet, percussion. Pieces with electronics cannot be considered.

More information available here

Soundstreams Emerging Composer Workshop: Call for Applications

Deadline: January 8, 2018

Soundstreams’ annual Emerging Composer Workshop (ECW) is a 10-day intensive mentorship program that supports talented young composers in launching their careers. Each year the Workshop hosts both an international and Canadian mentor composer, as well as a professional resident ensemble. The Workshop features rehearsals, seminars, networking, professional development activities, and a public showcase of new works created during the Workshop. The 2018 ECW will host David Lang as international mentor composer alongside James Rolfe as the local mentor. The workshop takes place from May 30 to June 8, 2018.

More information available here

Toronto Symphony Orchestra Reading Session Call-for-Scores

Deadline: February 16, 2018

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra, in collaboration with the Canadian Music Centre, is pleased to offer a reading session for Canadian composers. The purpose of the session is to offer composers an opportunity to hear their works rehearsed in a professional orchestral setting, while gaining experience working alongside a professional organization. Participants will receive
feedback from Composer Advisor Gary Kulesha, and will have an opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue with members of the orchestra, the Principal Librarian, and the RBC Affiliate Composer. The call is open to all Canadian composers. Works must not have been commissioned by a professional orchestra. Previously performed works are eligible. Unperformed (or underperformed) works are encouraged. There is no duration limit, though shorter works (under eight minutes) are encouraged. An excerpt or movement from a longer work may also be considered.

More information available here

**The Molinari Quartet's 7th International Composition Competition**

**Deadline:** April 1st, 2018

The Molinari Quartet is pleased to announce its Seventh International Competition for Composition for string quartet. The winning compositions will be performed by the Molinari Quartet during a special concert during the 2018-2019 season. The First Prize winner shall receive a $3000 CAD grant as well as a silkscreen by renowned Canadian artist Guido Molinari. The second prize winner will receive a $2000 CAD grant and the third prize winner a $1000 CAD grant.

More information available here

**2018 Martirano Composition Award**

**Deadline:** April 16, 2018

The University of Illinois School of Music and Global Crossroads Living-Learning Community announced the 22st annual Salvatore Martirano Memorial Composition Award Competition. They are looking for full scores of any style or aesthetic for 1-15 performers (including vocalists). Works with electronics, mixed media, with/without instruments and voices, are also eligible. Pieces must be under 20 minutes. There is a $20 USD entry fee. First prize is a cash award of $1000, second prize is $500, and selected pieces will be performed in the fall of 2016 by the Illinois Modern Ensemble.

More information available here
Contacts

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Reminder

Membership dues ($40 - Active Members, $35 - Associates/Affiliates, $25 - Student Members) are payable annually on July 1. They can be paid on our website using PayPal, or mail a cheque directly to:

ACWC
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Do you have composer news for the ACWC Journal? Would you like to contribute an article? Contact our editor, Julia Mermelstein: acwcbulletin@gmail.com. Submissions for the Spring/Summer edition must be received by May 30, 2018.