2022-2023
PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

June 13, 2022
The IMAGINE Arts Incubator at the Isabel: 2022/23 SUMMARY

We are in a brave new world for the arts. At the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts (“the Isabel”) at Queen’s University, we embrace the essential need for human creativity.

The Isabel’s IMAGINE Arts Incubator has been developed to foster creativity and innovation and to enable Kingston and national professional artists, creators, and educators to explore, invent, collaborate, and produce.

The Isabel initiated the IMAGINE Arts Incubator program to support creation-based residencies, filming/recording/streaming initiatives for original works, socially engaged arts projects tackling the vexing issues of our time, and creative placemaking for community engagement in the arts.

Embracing equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigenization, the IMAGINE Arts Incubator program encourages cross-disciplinary and intercultural collaborations and supports the work of artists of many genres and cultural backgrounds including Indigenous artists and artists of equity-seeking groups.

Marion Newman and the Gryphon Trio
IMAGINE Arts Incubation Funding Priorities

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- **High artistic quality** and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that **embrace collaboration** and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Works by **Indigenous** artists
- Works that support the practice of **artists of equity-seeking groups**
- **Socially engaged works** that deal with the most pressing, wicked issues of our time such as climate change and racism, and that inspire understanding, dialogue, and action
- **Creative placemaking initiatives** that intentionally leverage the power of arts, culture, and creativity to drive a community’s agenda for change, growth, and transformation or promote community wellness and cohesion.

Number of Projects Supported: 20

Genres: baroque, classical, indie, electronica, opera, R&B, circus arts, Celtic, folk, funk, contemporary classical, a variety of Indigenous and international genres

Cultures: First Nations, Inuit, Métis, Western including Canadian, Chinese, Japanese, Sri Lankan, Middle Eastern, Sami, Norwegian, Malian, South Korean, Ukrainian

Types of Projects: Recordings, films, streaming, new creation workshops, roundtables, socially engaged arts dealing with vexing issues facing humanity, international collaborations, and creative placemaking.
Thank you to the IMAGINE artists

- Ricky Brant (AKA Kakaow)
- Yolanda Bruno and performers
  - Katya Poplyansky - violin
  - Isaac Chalk - violin
  - Julia Wedman – violin
  - Benoît Loïselle - cello
  - Christina Mahler – cello
  - Pouya Hamidi – audio engineer
  - Michael Bridge - video producer
- Dean Burry and Krisztina Szabo
  - Darrell Christie – music director
  - Clelia Scala – puppeteer
  - Sarah Moon – flute
  - Kornel Wolnak – clarinet
  - Younggun Kim – piano
  - Gisèle Dalbec – violin
  - Wolf Tormann - cello
  - Mike Cassells – audio engineer
- Cheng
  - Bryan Cheng
  - Silvie Cheng
- Gryphon Trio
  - Renelitta Arluk (Banff Centre’s Director of Indigenous Arts) – co-creator, dramaturge, director
  - Eliot Britton (Métis/Canadian composer) – co-creator, music
  - Roman Borys (cellist of the Gryphon Trio) - co-creator, producer
  - Alison MacKay (program creators, former member of Tafelmusik) – co-creator dramaturge, concept developer
  - Ry Moran (Red River Métis, Archivist of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and associate university librarian – reconciliation at University of Victoria) - co-creator, Knowledge Keeper, library and archives consultant
  - Andrew Balfour (Cree/Canadian composer) – composer
  - Performers
    - Rawdna Carita Eira (Norwegian and Sámi playwright and author) – poetry
    - Gryphon Trio (Annalee Patipatanakoon, Roman Borys, Jamie Parker) - performers
    - Nordic Voices (six-voice a cappella ensemble) - performers
    - Marion Newman (Kwagiulth and Stó:lo First Nations, English, Irish and Scottish mezzo-soprano) – performer
  - Dylan Toombs - videographer
- Jane Kirkby
- Kris + Dee
  - Kris Abbott
  - Dee McNeil
- Lute Legends Collective
  - Lucas Harris - lute & co-director
  - Wen Zhao - pipa & co-director
  - Oud, kora, sitar, and percussion tbc
- Michael Lukaszuk
  - Michael Lukaszuk - composer and computer musician
  - Haerim Seok - composer, pianist

- Megumi Masaki
  - John Burge – composer
  - Gary Kibbins - videographer
  - Carmen Braden with Elders and Tiffany Ayalik - piano, electronics, film, lighting design, and text
  - Caroline Cox filmmaker
  - Benjamin McGregor – filmmaker
  - Ian Cusson – composer
  - Kotoka Suzuki – composer
  - Antonia Contro- visual artist

- Palenai Duo
  - Joy Innis
  - Adrienne Shannon

- David Parker – singer, songwriter, composer

- Rocket Surgery
  - Reuben deGroot - Lead singer and songwriter
  - Dan Curtis - guitarist
  - Elijah Abrams - bassist
  - Josh Lyon – keyboard and film
  - Christina Foster - vocalist
  - Jon Stewart - saxophonist
  - Rob Radford, Daniel Chalmers, and Mark Fraser - drummers

- Dylan Robinson and collaborators

- Armand Ruffo + animation specialist

- Savannah Shea
  - Savannah Shea - songwriter/arranger/project lead
  - Michael Mckitrick - pianist
  - Kay Kenney - artistic producer/choreographer

- Japhy Sullivan
  - Japhy Sullivan performing lead vocals, acoustic guitar, and violin/fiddle
  - Olisín Hannigan providing percussion
  - Peter Klassan on upright bass
  - Joseph Martel on acoustic and electric guitars

- Rita Ueda
  - Rita Ueda - composer
  - Rodney Robertson - librettist
  - Idan Cohen – stage director
  - Jennifer Tham - conductor
  - Musicians:
    - Barbara Ebbeson - mezzo soprano
    - Teiya Kassahara - soprano
    - Naomi Sato - sho
    - Miyama McQueen -Tokita, koto
    - Reison Kuroda - shakuhachi
    - Megumi Masaki - piano
    - Marc Destrube - violin
THANK YOU!

Bader Philanthropies, Inc. and Ballytobin Foundation

for the vision to bring artists’ dreams to fruition and

for the generous support to do so.

Project Descriptions below…
Ricky Brant: AKA KaKaow

Ricky Brant (AKA Kakaow) is a psychedelic and funk-infused Indigenous multi-instrumentalist with over a decade of professional music experience. His work has been showcased in venues across Canada.

The Project

The project includes a high-fidelity, live-stream, capturing the dynamic performance of Indigenous-created electronic music from Kingston based creator, Ricky Brant. This performance will compose of electronic and organically created music captured by multiple camera angles of the performance, along with dynamic lighting. The outcome will be a one-time, online event capturing a 30–40-minute performance. This will be by computer-generated electronic music productions accompanied by live instrumentation, multi-camera set up and capture along with lighting.

Ricky Brant’s objectives include his hope to achieve and foster a sense of inclusion, appreciation, discovery and wonder for the world of Indigenous and multi-culturally based electronic music. He wishes to display the power of diversity and inclusion within the Kingston community through thoughtful lyrics, dance, organic and electronically synthesized music.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- Works by Indigenous artists
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
- Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing, wicked issues of our time such as climate change and racism, and that inspire understanding, dialogue, and action

Date: Monday, September 12, 2022
Yolanda Bruno Music for Mother Earth

Yolanda Bruno is a gifted young Canadian violinist with an intense devotion to communicating with audiences. She has been praised for her “total control of her instrument with infinite variety in the sound palette” (La Presse). Yolanda is the winner of the Isabel Overton Bader Canadian Violin Competition and now a member of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. She previously served as concertmaster of the Kingston Symphony Orchestra. She performs on a 1737 Domenico Montagnana Violin on generous loan from Groupe Canimex Inc. in Drummondville, Quebec.

Other musicians include violinist Katya Poplyansky (second prize winner of the Isabel Overton Bader Canadian Violin Competition, violinist Isaac Chalk (winner of the McGill University Golden Violin Award), cellist Benoît Loiselle (Principal Cellist of Les Violons du Roy), Pouya Hamidi – JUNO nominated audio engineer, and musical maverick Michael Bridge - video producer.

Repetoire:
Carmen Braden (a versatile, genre-jumping musician from the Canadian sub-Arctic): The Raven Conspiracy, Sticks and Bones
Philip Glass (American composer and pianist): Truman Sleeps
Philip Glass (American composer and pianist): String Quartet No. 3 “Mishima”, VI.
Caroline Shaw (youngest recipient of the Pulitzer Prize in Music): Plan and Elevation: IV. The Orangery
Frederik Sjölin (Norwegian composer): Intermezzo for String Quartet
Rune Tonsgaard Sorensen (Danish composer and violinist in the Danish String Quartet): Shine You No More for String Quartet

Project: Recording of Music for Mother Earth
Music for Mother Earth unites Yolanda’s passion for environmentalism with her musical practice. This project affords her the licence and time to explore how artistic works (musical, literary, visual, etc.) that involve themes of nature can mobilize and engage audiences in conversation about climate change and key environmental issues in Canada and around the globe. Music for Mother Earth builds upon her existing passion for incorporating storytelling into her performances. The project will include pre-recorded stories of (5) individuals of different generations, cultures, and geographical locations to tell her a memory/experience in nature they can recall from their childhood. At the heart of Music for Mother Earth is a desire to connect audiences to nature, to help bring awareness to environmental issues and to provide hope for the future.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?
- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing, wicked issues of our time such as climate change

Dates: Mon June 13 – Thurs June 16, 2022
Yolanda Bruno, Christina Mahler, et al:
The Legacy of Jeanne Lamon: The Santo Serafin Violin

Project/recording: The Legacy of Jeanne Lamon: The Santo Serafin Violin

Jeanne Lamon (1949-2021) was the Music Director of Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra from 1981-2014. There have been tributes to this great musician across the country, and this will be the first recording to do so. Musicians include Yolanda Bruno, Christina Mahler, and other Tafelmusik musicians past and present. This album will include the premiere recording of Jeanne Lamon’s breath-taking string trio arrangement of the Bach Chaconne. It is an honour to record her arrangement on her violin, the Santo Serafin. Violinist Yolanda Bruno has Jeanne’s instrument for a limited time before it joins the Canada Council for the Arts Musical Instrument Bank collection (the first baroque instrument to join the collection). Having access to Jeanne Lamon’s Santo Serafin violin makes it possible for Yolanda Bruno to record on an authentic baroque violin with gut strings for the first time. Recording contemporary music (including a premiere) on a baroque instrument is a rare and exciting undertaking. Yolanda Bruno will break ground by recording a new work on baroque violin using a looping pedal.

Repetoire:

J.S. Bach’s Chaconne for string trio, arrangement by Jeanne Lamon

Jean-Marie Leclair Sonata for Two Violins in D Major, Op. 3, No. 6

J.S. Bach (1685-1750), Violin Sonata in G major, BWV 1021 and Sonata No. 2 in A minor for Solo Violin, BWV 1003

Isabella Leonarda Duo Decima, Op. 16, No. 12

New Canadian work written for Yolanda Bruno for Solo Baroque Violin with looping pedal (details TBC)

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice

Dates: Wed Nov 16 – Fri Nov 18, 2022
The Highwayman by Dean Burry

Composer and librettist Dean Burry has become one of the world’s leading composers of children’s opera, his works receiving performances across Canada, the United States, Europe, China, and Brazil. Burry was the 2011 recipient of the Ontario Arts Foundation’s Louis Applebaum Composers Award for excellence in the field of music for young people. He is currently working on the opera Il Giudizio di Pigmalione and Tracing Colville, a new work for the Kingston Symphony Orchestra.

The Project

The performance and recording will feature Canadian mezzo-soprano Krisztina Szabó. The project will also include five professional instrumentalists who are also on faculty with the DAN School. Mike Cassells will serve as recording engineer and co-producer. Recording will take place over the two days following the rehearsal period and public performance. The Highwayman will be released on the Centrediscs/NAXOS label with an anticipated launch date of fall 2023. Support from this program will enable this team to create a first-rate video realization of The Highwayman as well, incorporating both the live performers and the shadow play. Support from the IMAGINE Arts Incubator Program enables a much deeper exploration of this innovative approach to presenting chamber music.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines

Dates: Thurs Feb 16 – Sat Feb 18, 2023 with a public performance on Thurs Feb 16, 2023
Captivating audiences and critics alike, the “brilliant” (The Times, UK) and “truly exhilarating” (The WholeNote, Canada) Cheng² Duo (pronounced Cheng Squared Duo) distinguishes itself with its uncompromising musical integrity, undeniable chemistry, and unparalleled communication with its listeners. The Chinese Canadian brother-and-sister duo is formed by cellist Bryan Cheng, First Prize winner of the 2022 UNISA International Music Competition and the 2020 Bader and Overton Canadian Cello Competition and playing the Canada Council for the Arts’ prized ca. 1696 ‘Bonjour’ Stradivari; and pianist Silvie Cheng, recipient of the Roy M. Rubinstein Award for exceptional promise in piano performance. Named one of CBC Music’s “30 hot Canadian classical musicians under 30”, the dynamic Cheng² Duo tours extensively to present engaging recitals in illustrious concert halls and international festivals throughout the world.

The Recording Project:

Having already released three albums on the German label audite in the past few years (which focused on European classical music), Cheng² (Bryan Cheng, cello and Silvie Cheng, piano) have decided that their next album will go in a completely different direction to be the most socially relevant and most personal project to date. This fourth CD will not only showcase contemporary music by Asian composers, but also works they have commissioned Canadian composers of Asian heritage.

The IMAGINE Arts Incubator Program would give Cheng² the opportunity to create an all-encompassing, innovative, and eclectic compilation of contemporary music by Asian and Asian-Canadian composers of mixed backgrounds, in addition to original arrangements of Asian folk songs and some world premiere recordings. One work is by Dinuk Wijeratne, a Sri Lankan-born Canadian JUNO Award-winning composer who has performed with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble. The other recently commissioned work is a 25-minute sonata by the Japanese American composer Paul Wiancko.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
**GRYPHON TRIO: Echo: Memories of the World — 2nd workshop**

*Echo: Memories of the World* is being created by a team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous co-creators and contributors from Canada and Norway including:

**Reneltta Arluk** (Banff Centre’s Director of Indigenous Arts) – co-creator, dramaturge, director

**Alison MacKay** (program creators, former member of Tafelmusik) – co-creator dramaturge, concept developer

**Eliot Britton** (Métis/Canadian composer) – co-creator, music

**Ry Moran** (Red River Métis, Archivist of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and associate university librarian – reconciliation at University of Victoria) - co-creator, Knowledge Keeper, library and archives consultant

**Andrew Balfour** (Cree/Canadian composer) – composer

**Rawdna Carita Eira** (Norwegian and Sámi playwright and author) – poetry

**Roman Borys** (cellist of the Gryphon Trio) - co-creator, producer

**Gryphon Trio** (Annalee Patipatanakoon, Roman Borys, Jamie Parker) - performers

**Nordic Voices** (six-voice a cappella ensemble) - performers

**Marion Newman** (Kwagiulth and Stó:lo First Nations, English, Irish and Scottish mezzo-soprano) – performer

**Dylan Toombs** - videographer

*Echo: Memories of the World* is a new multimedia presentation produced by the Gryphon Trio. Developed with the support of the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts and created in collaboration with a team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists from Canada and Norway, this work explores the flow of knowledge and culture from one generation to the next. Combining live and pre-recorded music, spoken words and film, the work draws on resilient stories from Canada, Norway, Austria, and Mali and explores how memory is born, how it is preserved, and how it is passed on. With traditional knowledge under threat from the dangers of climate, conflict, and environmental degradation, ‘Echo: Memories of the World’ examines how cultural treasures are being preserved and passed to the future by inspiring Knowledge Keepers. *Echo: Memories of the World* is being developed as a 70-minute stand-alone presentation. The work will include music by Indigenous composers Andrew Balfour and Eliot Britten, European composers Victoria, Beethoven and Mendelssohn, Norwegian composer Henrik Hellstenius, words by Alison MacKay, Reneltta Arluk and Sámi poet Rawdna Carita Eira and video by Dylan Toombs.

In this Phase 2 workshop, the artists hone the reworked presentation flow and framework which is now based on the separation of memory in four sections:

- the birth of memory
- memory stored
- memory suppressed, and
- memory as hope.

**How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?**

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Works by Indigenous artists
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
- Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing, wicked issues of our time such as climate change and racism, and that inspire understanding, dialogue, and action

**Dates:** Sun July 31 – Thurs Aug 4, 2022 with a public performance on Fri Aug 5, 2022
Jane Kirby is a circus artist based in Kingston, Ontario. She specializes in aerial arts, hand balancing, and contortion and has performed on stages across Canada and the U.S. Her most recent work has included working with the Go/No Go Collective on the creation of a feminist circus-theatre show in 2021 and creating the short film "Like a storm cloud bringing change" about the housing crisis in Kingston, which was featured as part of the 2021 Circus International Film Festival.

The Project

Jane Kirby will be melding her aerial artistic bent with contemporary dance to produce a filmed recording of a 5-minute handstand work that incorporate hand-balancing, contemporary dance, and spoken word. The piece explores themes of weather and is a continuation of an exploration that was begun in her full-length co-created duo show, "Beneath Our Feet" (Kick and Push 2016).

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
Kris + Dee: Bones

Kris + Dee are Kris Abbott (The Pursuit of Happiness) and Dee McNeil (The Strap-Ons). Browse Line (late 2019) is the 4th album of this married philos-fook duo from Kingston. “Quiet revolutionaries”, “devastation in a pretty package” and “the super folk duo of our riot grrrl dreams” are descriptions as diverse as one would expect for two women from the fiddle-rich Ottawa Valley who came of age in the 70’s and 80’s and cut their musical teeth in pop-rock and punk bands. Their 2011 debut, Still Here Inside, busted out of the gates, registering close to 1 million plays on Starbucks’ Worldwide Playlist. The follow-up, Bloom, made CBC Music’s Top Pick List for 2013.

The Project

Kris + Dee will film and record a live off-the-floor band performance of "Bones", from their album, 'Bloom', with video screen backdrop images. "Bones" is a song about remembering the beginning of our existence, not the moment of our human birth, but back to the Source itself. The song attempts to put into words, using geological-spiritual metaphor, that which is known or felt instinctively but cannot be described with words. As such, this is a song about unity, wisdom, joy, true power and peace, and an invitation to transcend the superficial, limited, disconnected and time-bound thoughts we have about the world, ourselves, and others.

This will be a live off-the-floor performance with large screen visualizations, the latter which will be achieved through a collaboration with film and graphic designer, Janice McLean. The collaborative performance will bring to life the timber and limestone origins of the Canadian shield. The Isabel Bader Centre, an architectural gem elevated on the limestone shores of Lake Ontario, is a congruent extension of this metaphor and a poetic pedestal for the delivery of the lyrics and music.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
- Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing, wicked issues of our time such as gender and LGBTQ2+ inclusivity that inspire understanding, dialogue, and action

Dates: Tues Jan 17 – Wed Jan 18, 2023
The Lute Legends Collective is a performing association of musicians who represent ancient plucked-string traditions from around the world. Each member of this collective is a committed carrier of an ancient musical tradition, whether it be the virtuosic modal improvisation of the Middle East, the intricate polyphony of the European Renaissance and Baroque, or the picturesque musical depiction of nature from China.

Musicians of this collective include Lucas Harris, lute & co-director; Wen Zhao, pipa & co-director; Ronnie Malley, oud; Diely Mori Tounkara, kora; Demetri Petsalakis, oud; Kiya Tabassian, setar; and Naghmeh Faramand, percussion.

Project Description

The “Lute Legends Ensemble” (oud-lute-pipa) has recently reformed itself into the “Lute Legends Collective.” They will leave their residency with audio/video/photographic materials that will be used to:

1) Create a new “Introduction to Lute Legends” video that replaces the videos on their site which introduce their old trio.

2) Develop a rich reservoir of photos to be used in future promotional materials.

3) Add new and more recent performance videos to their website, which they will use in contacting presenters and generally promoting their organization.

4) Create posts to their new website’s blog that introduce their new collaborators and their musical traditions/instruments.

5) Enrich their social media presence.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
Haerim Seok is a composer, pianist and conductor from Seoul, South Korea. Her music has been played in Canada, the US, South Korea, Japan, and Croatia, with commissions from organizations such as the Chicago Civic Orchestra and the Symposium on Korean Music (Sweet Briar College). Haerim’s output often draws on influences from traditional Korean literature and combines concert instruments with electronic elements. Her activities as a musician have often extended to working with children and community-music ensembles. She studied music composition at Yonsei University and the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music, where she earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Composition.

Michael Lukaszuk’s creative and scholarly work looks at digitality in culture and through the lens of generative approaches and the use of new musical instruments. His work has been featured at events across Canada, the US, and in Poland, South Korea, the Netherlands, Romania, China, and Australia, including the International Computer Music Conference, Now Hear This (New Music Edmonton), the Australasian Computer Music Conference and the Toronto International Electroacoustic Symposium. In 2015, he won first prize in the SOCAN Foundation Hugh le Caine awards for electroacoustic music. Michael holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Composition from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and has taught composition and music technology courses at the University of Cincinnati, Miami University and Queen's University, where he is also a PhD candidate in the Cultural Studies area.

Project Description
Virtuosity is an incredibly powerful idea that has shaped the way music has been written and played in different eras and cultures. This project consists of a day-long residency and concert that explores the idea of digital virtuosity by using improvisation and generative music with two pianos: one played by a piano performer, and another "live coded" in which we improvise by sending computer code to algorithmically control a MIDI-capable piano (we can provide one, but we’re also aware one exists at the Isabel). After the performance has finished, the system that we create continues to play, functioning as an audio installation. This is an opportunity to comment on existing modes of performance and consider new musical possibilities, including intercultural interpretations, through the pairing of new and traditional approaches to using the piano.

This project considers how interactions with digital media and technologies recode certain forms of presence to reveal new ideas and combine with existing ideas about musical skill and instrumentality. In exploring how performance practices can be simulated and project a sense of telepresence, we feel that this project uses musical improvisation with instruments and computers as a microcosm for digitality in culture. The explorations of algorithmic sound and digital instruments was inescapably shaped by the way in which music and skill was discussed in this environment.

This is a day-long project. The morning and afternoon are spent rehearsing, improvising, and coding together to build a system that be used in a concert performance that takes place/late afternoon/early evening. They will use 2 pianos, one that can accept certain messages (MIDI) from a computer.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?
- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups

Dates: Tues Jan 31, 2023
Megumi Masaki: Four Multi-media Projects on Climate Change

Megumi Masaki is a pianist, multimedia performing artist, educator and curator based in Manitoba. For over thirty years, she has established an international reputation as a leading interpreter of Canadian and new music, and as an innovator that reimagines the pianist, piano, and performance space. Her work explores new models of interaction and integration of sound, image, text, and movement in multimedia works through new technologies, including hand-gesture-motion tracking to generate and control live-electronics and live-video, 3D visuals, piano controlled video game, e-textile sensors, and artificial intelligence. As a Japanese Canadian artist, her work explores how human rights and environmental issues can be communicated through music and multimedia performances to speak truth to power.

The Project
This IMAGINE ARTS INCUBATOR project involves a creative residency at the Isabel to film and record four original, innovative, cross-disciplinary works for piano and multimedia that have been created especially for Megumi Masaki. Two of the works are by Indigenous artists: Métis composer Ian Cusson and Inuk filmmakers Tiffany Ayalik and Benjamin McGregor. While each work brings together different artists, scientists, and communities to explore distinctive perspectives of climate crisis, dynamic interactions throughout centres a common environment where all voices have equal weight. They are devising new ways to unify lighting, movement, and staging with sound and images to create a digital scenography for between each narrative, connecting works cohesively to engage a wide audience in impactful experiences that motivate dialogue and action.

Work 1. To film and record a performance of Pianthropomorphia for piano and video (12 minutes) by composer John Burge, Professor at Queen’s University in the Dan School of Drama and Music, and videographer Gary Kibbins, Professor at Queen’s University in the Department of Film and Media Studies. The other three new original works to be filmed and recorded are part of Megumi’s HEARING ICE project: Raising Awareness of the Impacts of Climate Change on Ice and Communities through new substantial piano+multimedia works. This process has many layers, uncovering personal stories, scientific facts and the synergy that translates into sonic and visual results.

Work 2. “See the Freeze, Hear the Thaw” for piano, electronics, film, lighting design, and text (15 minutes) by Carmen Braden, Yellowknife NWT in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, Tiffany Ayalik, Inuk from Kitikmeot region Nunavut, filmmaker Caroline Cox, who specializes in women, the arts, and the North, and Inuk filmmaker Benjamin McGregor. This piece examines the threat ice faces from climate change and how North Slave Region communities are affected.

Work 3: Ian Cusson, (Métis Composer-in-Residence, Canadian Opera Company), “Frozen Roads” for solo piano, electronics, and text (10 minutes). The work is a dramatized dialogue between pianist and the Indigenous interviewees who speak of the impact of climate change, where something of the magical, ephemeral and increasingly fragile nature of these pathways is evoked in the intersection of words and music.


How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?
• Original, inspiring, and innovative
• High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
• Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
• Works by Indigenous artists
• Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
• Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing wicked issues of our time such as climate change
• Creative placemaking initiatives that intentionally leverage the power of arts/culture to drive community transformation.
PALENAI Duo – Odessa Dialogues

A symbol of unified diversity, PALENAI describes the collaboration of Canadian pianists, Joy A. Innis and Adrienne Shannon. As soloists and collaborative pianists, they have performed across Canada, in the U.S., Israel, Korea and the Ukraine and at festivals in England, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. Appearances with major Canadian orchestras include the Toronto Symphony, National Arts Center Orchestra, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the Calgary Philharmonic, Edmonton and Victoria Symphonies, and the Canadian premier of the Czerny Concerto for Four Hands with the Mainly Mozart Orchestra in Toronto. Their public recitals and studio recordings have been broadcast on CBC, PBS, RAE Italy, RIAS Berlin, and BBC.

In 2004, this piano duo (PALENAI) participated in an international duo piano festival in Odessa, Ukraine. Five duos from 5 countries performed for full audiences in the historic Odessa Philharmonic Hall. Some of the duos including PALENAI, reconvened at subsequent festivals in Israel and Germany.

The Project

This proposal is to revive Odessa Dialogues through a virtual festival. The same duos would be approached for their participation. To date, they have contacted an Israeli and American duo and other duos may also be approached. Each duo would need to agree to perform and record a concert in their country that would become part of the virtual Festival to be shared in concert halls, or educational institutions they are associated with. Each duo would perform a work written by a composer from one of the other countries.

The first step in the project would be to create an audio and visual recording of a concert of the Palenai Duo. At the same time, they will connect with the duos, negotiate dates, and investigate the possibility of multi-streaming or simulcasting.

The purpose of the project is to connect international duos through a revival of Odessa Dialogues, in a virtual festival that will focus on Odessa, Ukraine, the Odessa State Academy of Music, and the Ukrainian piano duo (Oleyura).

PALENAI Piano Duo wishes to produce a video of a concert that would be its contribution to Odessa Dialogues 2. The concert would be streamed as part of the collection of videos from the other duos. This video steamed and posted online on the Isabel Digital Concert Hall.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing wicked issues of our time such as racism and armed conflict
- Socially engaged works that inspire understanding, dialogue, and action
David Parker: New Work Creations

David Parker is a Kingston artist and musician playing music in projects that are experimental, drone, and improvised, collaborating in ensembles and performing solo improvised work. He writes, records, and performs singer-songwriter material and was previously known as Slow Man Tofu. Parker has released two full-length albums with producer Matt Rogalsky and performed dozens of shows around Ontario and Quebec. For 4 years, he played upright bass and electronics as part of the experimental duo Fire Moss. Fire Moss released 3 albums, performed at the Tone Deaf Festival and the In The Soil Arts Festival (2016). He has collaborated with Stefan Christoff and released an EP of duets with the Howl Arts Collective. David has done sound and music design for theatrical productions by The Caravan Stage Company and Single Thread Theatre.

The Project

I am working on new compositions for voice, piano, guitar, digital-signal processing, harmonica, percussion, and synthesizers. I am interested in using a multi-channel mixing board to send various audio inputs from multiple instruments through an auxiliary channel to process them with tape echo and other effects. I would like to develop this method into a suite of musical works that can be performed live by one or multiple musicians. The residency would allow me time to develop this concept and work with the instruments, come up with ideas and test them out, making multiple simple recordings and writing out scores. I would also invite some musicians to come work with me on this project for a few sessions.

David will produce multi-track recordings myself using my mixing board that can be used as demos for a future recording session. He will also produce musical notation scores for some of these works. He will invite up to 3 other musicians to come collaborate with me during the residency, and these sessions will be recorded. These collaborations will be developed musically.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
As Kingston’s unofficial house band, Rocket Surgery has been entertaining late night audiences for more than a decade. Most of the material the Surgeons have created over the last dozen years was tested on the stages of The Toucan, the Merchant, and many other late night dance floors.

**Project: Rocket Surgery - Audio/Video Recording**

This project would see Rocket Surgery stretch out and explore some genres and arrangements that are hard to achieve within the noise and chaos of the late-night bar. Lead singer and songwriter Reuben deGroot has amassed a collection of two dozen new songs over the last two years, on top of the collection of unrecorded songs the Surgeons were sitting on before the pandemic. Those songs are ready and waiting for finalizing arrangements and rehearsal by the full band, with an eye to a potential new album release or live performance video release. A multi-track recording in the Isabel Bader Theatre, while simultaneously streaming or recording to video, would provide the band the opportunity to arrange, rehearse and record a great cache of material for promotion and artistic advancement.

The project includes rehearsals and recording of a set to be simultaneously multi-track recorded and multi-camera recorded on the stage of the Isabel. This is an opportunity for the group to use the beautiful stage and acoustic space of the theater would put the harmonies of the band on display and showcase the band’s exciting and electrifying live performance. The residency culminates in the final recording of all new unreleased material.

**How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?**

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
Dylan Robinson is a xwélmexw scholar and artist (Stó:lō/Skwah). From 2015-2022, he has been the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Arts at Queen’s University. As of July 2022, he will be returning home to lhq’a:lets / Vancouver to serve as Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia in the School of Music, and Advisor to the Dean on Indigenous Arts.

His work takes various forms including writing (from event scores to autotheory), gatherings, curatorial practice and interarts creation. This range of forms offers me a space to integrate the sonic, visual, poetic and material that are inseparable in Stó:lō culture. Across these forms, he identifies as a scholar of sound studies and visual studies, as a collaborator on interdisciplinary research-creation, and as a facilitator (curator/dramaturge) of art and gathering. Dylan Robinson was the curator of the Ka’tarohkwi Festival of Indigenous Arts at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts in 2019.

Project 1
Dylan Robinson challenges himself and his readers more deeply to consider the ethical positions they can and should take in relation to the crucial issues he raises. He sets out “to examine the degree to which Indigenous sovereignty is constituted through gestures of welcome that take place in spaces of transit and gathering.” To this end, he explores a fascinating range of public performances through a sophisticated and illuminating theoretical lens—but he also does much more. The essay is itself a powerfully performativ “act of gathering, of gathering strength and acknowledging Indigenous voices and bodies, rather than a container for Indigenous content.” Through a viscerally effective use of form, Robinson invites Indigenous and settler readers to live their very different relationships to questions of Indigenous sovereignty. By distinguishing sections of the essay intended for a general audience from those that are “sovereign space, written for Indigenous readers,” he obliges his varied audiences to acknowledge their own positionalities and responsibilities as readers and citizens. In the process, he deepens the sense of the performative and political potential of writing and reading themselves. Uncompromising, unsettling, and compulsively engaging, Dylan Robinson’s path-breaking essay richly merits the Richard Plant Award for 2016.

The focus of the keynote is decolonizing performance space, and since the last in-person gathering of CATR took place in the Isabel, Dylan refers to the concert hall as a space that they gathered in, and some of the presentations that have taken place at the Isabel.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Works by Indigenous artists
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
- Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing, wicked issues of our time such as colonialism and resulting systemic barriers

**Dates:** Thurs May 5 – Fri May 6, 2022
Dylan Robinson is a xwélmexw scholar and artist (Stó:lō/Skwah). From 2015-2022, he was the Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Arts at Queen’s University. As of July 2022, he will be returning home to lhq’a:lets / Vancouver to serve as Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia in the School of Music, and Advisor to the Dean on Indigenous Arts.

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**Project 2: Caring for Our Ancestors.**

Xóxelhmetset te Syewá:l | Caring for Our Ancestors, involves Indigenous-led processes including a roundtable for reconnecting kinship between Indigenous songs and material culture—variously understood as loved ones, ancestors, life—and the communities that they come from. The project also takes as a central objective an examination of the carceral logics of museums as spaces that confine Indigenous life.

**How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?**

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- Works by Indigenous artists
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
- Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing, wicked issues of our time such as colonialism and resulting systemic barriers
- Creative placemaking initiatives that intentionally leverage the power of arts, culture, and creativity to drive a community’s agenda for change, growth, and transformation or promote community wellness and cohesion.

**Dates:** Mon May 30, 2022
**Armand Ruffo and Tim Corlis: Sounding Thunder: The Song of Francis Pegahmagabow**

*Sounding Thunder: The Song of Francis Pegahmagabow* is a musical journey into the life of the renowned Ojibwe WWI sniper and decorated officer of the Canadian military, Francis Pegahmagabow. Composed by Tim Corlis and written by Ojibwe poet Armand Garnet Ruffo, Sounding Thunder is a complex work divided into three acts, exploring Pegahmagabow’s early years immersed in the world of the Anishinaabe spirits, his extraordinary accomplishments in the trenches of WWI, and finally his political life as Chief of the Wausauksing Ojibwe and founder of the early Indigenous political moment in Canada. Based on the book Sounding Thunder by Brian McInnes who provides new perspective on Pegahmagabow and his experience through a unique synthesis of Ojibwe oral history, historical record, and Pegahmagabow family stories.

**The Project**

To enhance this work in its next iteration, Armand Ruffo and Tim Corlis would like to replace outdated and static Powerpoint projections to animated images. They will be working with an artist-animator to design the visuals for this production that will be touring in Ontario this summer. Francis Pegahmagabow, for example, meets his deer spirit in one scene, and rather than have a static image of a deer animation would enable the deer to actually move towards him.

Not only does this enhance the live performances of this work but also the streamed performances with the replacement of static images to those that are animated.

**How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?**

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Works by Indigenous artists
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
- Socially engaged works that deal with the most pressing, wicked issues of our time such as racism, and that inspire understanding

**Dates:** Tues Aug 2, 2022 (public performance)
Kingston artist Savannah Shea plays R&B and soul music that is a delight to your ears. Savannah is very talented in both piano and acoustic guitar but has a voice range that allows her to perform songs that others simply cannot do. In 2019, Savannah and her musical collaborator, Michael Broadhead, were one of six jury-selected finalists chosen from 43 talented applicants for the YGK Emerging Musician Competition Showcase Concert at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts in Kingston.

The Project:

The goal of this project is to record a set of 3-5 songs (time dependent) written and arranged for piano and voice by Savannah Shea. Savannah will be accompanied by pianist Michael Mckitrick, and the EP will be produced by dancer and choreographer Kay Kenney.

Savannah’s songs contemplate love, heartache, nature, and the mystery of being alive. Savannah has always found Kay’s creations to have a similar tone of discovery, sorrow, fire, and wonderment. She hopes that through a combination of her own musical work and Kay’s movement work they will collectively and effectively be able to communicate complex human emotions and amplify each other’s artistic intentions. This project is an extension of a project Savannah began in 2019. She first performed Dust to Dusk (one of the songs on the proposed EP) alongside dancer Charlotte Tessier (See video submission #2). Additionally, Savannah has been working with Michael Mckitrick for several years now and has become deeply connected with his artistry and style. He will bring another layer of life to these songs. Mike can be seen playing in “Father’s Garden”, which was recorded at The Isabel in 2019 as a part of The YGK Emerging Artists Competition, as well as in video submission #1 (this is a cover of Stone and Lavender by Hiatus Kaiyote). The song list for 5 Song EP: Lover (4:15); You’ll Find a Lover (2:30); Stand in the Light (3:00); Equal Parts (4:25); and Dust to Dusk (5:00).

Artists:

**Songwriter/Arranger/Project Lead:** Savannah Shea

**Pianist:** Michael Mckitrick

**Artistic Producer/Choreographer:** Kay Kenney

**Recording Engineer:** Aaron Holmberg

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
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Japheth Sullivan: *Fiddler Jones*

Japhy Sullivan is singer-songwriter and Fiddler hailing from Lanark County in Eastern Ontario. Growing up Sullivan was immersed in the Ontario folk music community. Sullivan has performed at concerts and on festival stages with many stalwarts of the Canadian Folk Music scene including David Ross Macdonald, Irish Mythen, Scott Cook, David Newland, and Kate Weekes. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Concordia University where he specialized in Music Performance, and from 2018-2019 he studied in Ireland at University College Cork where he immersed himself in the local traditional songs and fiddle music. His work focuses on intimate folk song writing, traditional-style narrative ballad singing, traditional Irish dance tunes, and free improvisation.

The Project: *Fiddler Jones*

The aim of this project is to produce a full-length debut solo recording by Japhy Sullivan. The album will be titled *Fiddler Jones* and the content of the album will be as follows: eight original songs written by Japhy Sullivan; two Poems written by Lucy Maud Montgomery, set to music by Japhy Sullivan; a cover of O'Shaughnessy’s Lament, a traditional style ballad written by Aengus Finnan; and a medley of two to three, traditional Scots/Irish fiddle tunes. In addition, one of the eight original songs (*No Rest For The Wicked*) will also form a medley with a traditional Scots/Irish melody *The Gallowglass*. The title track *Fiddler Jones* will feature a spoken interpolation of the poem of the same name by Edgar Lee Masters.

The principal musicians to be featured on the album will be Japhy Sullivan performing lead vocals, Acoustic Guitar, and violin/fiddle, Oisín Hannigan providing percussion, Peter Klassan on upright bass, and Joseph Martel on acoustic and electric guitars. The common factor which unites each of these individuals, beyond their impeccable musicianship, is an equal ease and expertise in accompanying both contemporary folk singer-songwriter material as well as traditional Irish folk music: these two stylistic strands will be the musical backbone of the album. The recording will be engineered and produced, as well as mixed and mastered by recording artist, Noah Sullivan. The idea for this album was first conceived of in 2017 by Japhy and Noah together. The writing and arranging of the songs and tunes to be recorded has been in development since that initial conception in 2017.

Once the project has been fully recorded, mixed, and mastered, it will be released in the spring of 2023 in a digital format for online streaming services, as well as producing a physical vinyl edition with full liner notes. At the time of release, this recording will be promoted with a live concert tour.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?

- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice.
Rita Ueda is a Nikkei Canadian composer of orchestral, operatic, and choral works that reflect today’s ever-shifting interactions between cultures in flux. Her recent premieres include collaborations with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Budapest MAV Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Prague Modern, Turning Point Ensemble (Vancouver), and the SYC Ensemble Singers (Singapore). Rita is the winner of the 2022 Azrieli Commissioning Prize in Canadian Music and many other awards. Committed to the creation of a diverse and equitable new music community, Rita’s works often explores intercultural and cross-traditional music making.

The Project: New Opera Workshop: I Have My Mother’s Eyes
based on the family memoire: I Have My Mother’s Eyes by Barbara Ruth Bluman

Composer: Rita Ueda
Librettist: Rodney Robertson I Have My Mother’s Eyes
Duration: 60 minutes
Languages: English and Japanese with translated subtitles

The goals of this residency are to: 1) test the vocal writing (45 min. comprised of 6 arias/duets) for suitability for the singers’ range, style, tessitura, and diction. This is an important developmental stage that must be completed before I create the final orchestrated version; 2) test the suitability of the characterization; and 3) test the compatibility of the two singers in their intersecting roles.

I Have My Mother’s Eyes (Mother’s Eyes) is a contemporary experimental chamber opera that builds on the composer’s previous operatic works. Like many of Rita Ueda’s works, the music is intercultural, combining three musical/instrumental traditions - Japanese (composer’s cultural roots), Jewish, and European. The two singers (singing in Japanese and English) will be accompanied by both Western (piano, violin, viola, cello) and Japanese instruments - sho (mouth organ), shakuhachi (end-blown flute), and koto (zither). Rita will navigate the challenges of integrating the different musical traditions, tuning, notation, and performance practices. The work will also explore opera’s place in today’s contemporary musical landscape. Rita will not utilize the traditional 19th century operatic-narrative form. Instead, she will stitch together a story and the emotional content through memory, flexible non-linear score layout/notation, and structured improvisation.

In addition to the artistic/creative endeavor, the aim of this project is to stimulate current discussions/conversations on inter/multi-culturalism, human rights, and equity. This is particularly important in today’s climate of divisive nationalism, social inequities/conflict, and war. Through her work, she hopes to inspire a much-needed conversation about what it means to be strong in the face of racism, war, and populist hate culture.

Musicians: Barbara Ebbeson, mezzo soprano; Teiya Kassahara, soprano; Naomi Sato, sho; Miyama McQueen-Tokita, koto; Reison Kuroda, shakuhachi; Megumi Masaki, piano; Marc Destrube, violin; viola, tba; cello, tba.

How does this project fit with the IMAGINE funding priorities?
- Original, inspiring, and innovative
- High quality and pushing the boundaries of the art form and practice
- Works that embrace collaboration and exchange between artistic disciplines and cultures
- Works that support the practice of artists of equity-seeking groups
- Socially engaged works that deal with pressing wicked issues of our time such as climate change and racism
- Socially engaged works that inspire understanding, dialogue, and action