



## UPCOMING

See [www.improvcommunity.ca](http://www.improvcommunity.ca) for details.

Tuesday, Oct. 13, Nov. 10, Dec. 8, Jan. 26,  
Feb. 9, Mar. 9, Apr. 6

Thinking Spaces: ICASP Reading Group  
1:30-3:00 p.m.

MacKinnon Building, Room 132  
University of Guelph

Thursday, Oct. 22

A Major Collaborative Research Initiative of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

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# ImprovNotes

## Lewis to participate in mixed media project

ICASP member **Eric Lewis** will participate in *Koumaria*, a collective mixed media art project that takes place between Oct. 23-Nov. 1, 2009 in Sparta, Greece. His focus is improvisation, graphic scores and philosophy.

Other participants include Thomas Bjelkeborn, a Swedish composer, musician, and video artist, **Jovana Popic**, a German visual artist and performer, **Ariadni Mikou**, a Greek performer, **Michal Larsson**, a Swedish video artist and photographer, and **Tim Ward**, an electro-acoustic composer from England and Greece.

*Koumaria* will explore the process of creation involving artists of different disciplines as a hypothesis and as an experiment in the search for an emerging work ethic. Expected outcomes include:

- A public performance on Oct. 31 in Athens, Greece.
- Material and ideas for further research and processing.
- Recorded improvisations and other emergent pieces of work to be shared and distributed in appropriate forms between the participants.
- Documentation of the process, for analysis and elaboration.
- Initiation of further collaborations.

[www.medeelectronique.com/](http://www.medeelectronique.com/)

## ICASP sponsors lecture/performance

The Improvisation and Transcultural Understanding research area is sponsoring a lecture/performance on "Poetic Visions in the Wake of Katrina" at the American Studies Association meetings in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 5, 2009 from 2-3:45 p.m. Participants will include artists **Sunni Patterson**, **Brenda Marie Osbey**, and **Kalamu ya Salaam**, activist **Shana Griffin** of the New Orleans Women's Health Clinic, Sexual and Reproductive Health Advocacy Project, and scholars **Clyde Woods** and **Jordan Thomas Camp**.

[www.theasa.net/annual\\_meeting/](http://www.theasa.net/annual_meeting/)

## Cultural Olympiad to feature ICASP researcher

An ICASP researcher has been commissioned to create a work of avant-garde music and sculptures that respond to viewers for the Vancouver 2010 Cultural Olympiad.

**George Lewis**, Improvisation and Pedagogy coordinator and ICASP co-investigator, is collaborating with Vancouver artist **Eric Metcalfe** to create *Metcalfe/Lewis: Ikons*.

*Ikons* involves an innovative piece of music, created by Lewis using specially

*The Fierce Urgency of Now: Improvisation, Human Rights, and the Politics of Hope*  
Speech by Ajay Heble at the  
University of Saskatchewan

Weeks of Oct. 26, Nov. 23, Feb. 22,  
Mar. 22

Thinking Spaces: ICASP Guelph  
Lecture Series

Dates, locations, times TBC.

Check [www.communityimprov.ca](http://www.communityimprov.ca)  
University of Guelph

Wednesday, Oct. 28

Ajay Heble will speak on the panel  
"The Postcolonial Approach - Making  
Space for Creative Cultural Expressions",  
convened by the Ontario Arts Council,  
at *The Promise of Music: Transforming  
Young Minds and Lives*, a symposium on  
music education presented by the  
SOCAN Foundation, the Glenn  
Gould Foundations, and the Toronto  
Conservatory of Music  
Toronto Conservatory of Music  
273 Bloor Street W., Toronto

created software, that is integrated with a large array of Metcalfe's sculptures. Visitors literally create the work from their presence in the space: a person moving across the room to view one of the sculptures is greeted by a sonic provocation, while a fresh sequence of sounds in another part of the sculpture beckons and invites. Ikons provides a unique composition for every audience – and a new experience from every angle.

The work will be presented Jan. 21-Feb. 28, 2010 at 556 Seymour Street, Vancouver. **Robert Kerr**, program director for the Cultural Olympiad, is a member of ICASP's Advisory Board.

Tickets and details are at [www.vancouver2010.com/culturalolympiad](http://www.vancouver2010.com/culturalolympiad)

## Team meetings leads to two projects

As a result of the *Listening Bodies: Improvisation and Interdisciplinary Collaboration* conference and research team meetings held in Montreal in February 2009, the ICASP Improvisation, Gender and the Body (IGB) team has launched two research projects, each mobilizing a smaller group within the research area.

**Pauline Oliveros, Sherrie Tucker, Gillian Siddall, Linnett Fawcett,** and **Ellen Waterman** are conducting ethnographic research on Olivero's Adaptive Use Musical Instruments for the Physically Challenged (AUMIPC).

"The AUMIPC project seeks to create new flexible interfaces, digital controls, computer programs, inputs and outputs to musical instruments for use by children with very little mobility or other varieties of impairments. The intended result is to enable the physically challenged to create and perform electronic sounds in ensembles and to improvise and compose their own music," Dr. Tucker explains.

"This project, along with other projects such as the KidsAbility workshops, is of great interest to the Improvisation, Gender and the Body Research Area. Our

explorations of current research in improvisation, gender, and the body resulted in the decision of our group to concentrate some of our efforts on the field of disability studies as a vanguard of research potential on improvising and embodiment, and to the exciting work being done by our esteemed member, Pauline Oliveros, and others who are currently working to extend the possibilities of creative improvisation among and across people with a wider range of bodies, mobilities, and sensory experience."

**Lisa Barg**, Tucker, and **Tracy McMullen** are spearheading a second project to create a mentoring website for girls to express their experiences – both positive and negative – within jazz education. This work is inspired, in part, by a presentation at the *Listening Bodies* conference by Bay Area jazz musicians **Jean Fineberg** and **Ellen Seeling**, who started an all-girls jazz and blues camp in summer 2009. The idea behind the camp is to provide jazz instruction in a completely supportive girl-centred environment, where girls can experience empowerment through music. Drs. Barg, Tucker and McMullen similarly seek to provide a supportive online environment for girls and women in jazz.

*Listening Bodies: Improvisation and Interdisciplinary Collaboration* involved researchers from the McGill Institute for Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies and ICASP and included presentations from 19 scholars, artists, and students. Held at McGill's Schulich School of Music, the day attracted about 70 additional participants for an array of papers, panels, workshops, and open discussion. By making use of Skype internet video technology, the symposium included 'remote' presentations from Mills College, The University of Kansas, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Highlights included: a listening workshop by renowned educator, composer and improviser Pauline Oliveros; an experimental improvisational 'jam' session over the internet between students from McGill Music and Mills College; panels and presentations on listening, embodiment, interdisciplinarity, and collaboration; and an open discussion hosted by Dr. Tucker.

Following the public symposium, the eight members from ICASP's Improvisation, Gender and the Body research area held an intensive set of formal and informal meetings.

The IGB group is being supported by two fabulous graduate research assistants: **Liz Groeneveld** and **Sarah Yiu**.

## Post-doctoral fellows join ICASP

**Rebecca Caines** and **Tracey Nicholls** have joined ICASP as post-doctoral fellows for 2009-2010.

Dr. Caines is a performance maker, writer, community development worker, and scholar. She has recently completed her

PhD in Performance Studies at the University of New South Wales in Sydney. While at the University of Guelph, Dr. Caines' research project will examine how space, place, and site can be developed and challenged by contemporary communities through the use of improvised music and sound.

Dr. Nicholls is based at the Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal (CRÉUM). Her fellowship project brings together her interests in aesthetics and decolonization in an exploration of the ways that improvisatory musical practices can help to liberate and empower political communities deformed by imperialism. Dr. Nicholls earned her PhD in Philosophy at McGill University.

## Staffing update

**Kim Thorne** joined the ICASP team in May as project manager. Thorne has more than 10 years experience in project management, organizational development, outreach, and communications in the charitable and non-profit sectors. Her previous position was as the executive director of the Organic Council of Ontario, a non-profit organization representing the organic sector in Ontario. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from the University of Guelph. The email address for the project remains [improv@uoguelph.ca](mailto:improv@uoguelph.ca).

**Jean Burrows**, public relations officer, is leaving the project following the completion of her contract on Nov. 6, 2009. A web content manager will be hired, as ICASP works to prepare the launch of its major research website in September 2010.

## In Action

*A roundup of the activities of project participants, postdoctoral fellows, and students.*

**Dionne Brand**, an English professor at the University of Guelph and a member of ICASP's advisory board, was named Toronto's poet laureate. As the city's literary ambassador, she will attend events as an advocate for poetry, language and the arts. She also will create a literary legacy project. She will serve for three years, receiving an annual honorarium of \$10,000.

**Ajay Heble**, project director, will be a guest speaker at several events in October. On Oct. 22, 2009, he will speak on "The Fierce Urgency of Now': Improvisation, Human Rights, and the Politics of Hope" at the University of Saskatchewan. He will also lead a workshop on applying for large-scale grants.

Dr. Heble will also speak on a panel called "The Postcolonial Approach -Making Space for Creative Cultural Expressions" at a symposium on music education, *The Promise of Music: Transforming Young Minds and Lives* on Oct. 28 at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. The symposium is presented by the SOCAN Foundation, the Glenn Gould Foundation, and the Royal Conservatory of Music, and the panel is being convened by the Ontario Arts Council.

**Ric Knowles**, ICASP research collaborator, has been elected to the Royal Society of Canada, considered Canada's senior academic honour. Dr. Knowles, a theatre professor with the School of English and Theatre Studies at the University of Guelph, writer and editor, was honoured for being "the foremost scholar of Canadian theatre of his generation," according to the Royal Society.

The Canada Research Chair in Law and Discourse, held by **Desmond Manderson**, Improvisation and Social Policy Coordinator and ICASP co-investigator, has been renewed. Dr. Manderson is a Tier 1 Chair, awarded to outstanding researchers acknowledged by their peers as world leaders in their fields. The chairs are valued at \$1,400,000 and are tenable for seven years.

**Keith Sawyer** is on sabbatical for the 2009-2010 academic year. He has received invitations for three visiting positions during this time. This past summer, he completed a one-month stay at the San Francisco Exploratorium as an Osher Fellow. This fall, he will be a visiting scholar at the University of Cambridge, England, in the Faculty of Education and in Hughes Hall College. In spring 2010, he will be a visiting professor at the Savannah College of Art and Design. These three positions will further his current research project: examining how to design learning environments to foster greater creativity in learners.

**Winfried Siemerling** will transfer to the English Department at the University of Waterloo from the Université de Sherbrooke as of Jan. 1, 2010. He also has two new books to announce. Winfried Siemerling. *Récits nord-américains d'émergence*:

*culture, écriture et politique de re/connaissance*. Trans. Patricia Godbout. French translation of *The New North American Studies* (Routledge 2005) is forthcoming from Presses de l'Université Laval, in November 2009. Winfried Siemerling and Sarah Phillips Casteel, eds. *Canada and Its Americas: Transnational Navigations*. McGill-Queen's UP, is forthcoming in Jan. 2010.

**Will Straw**, Improvisation, Text and Media Co-coordinator and ICASP co-investigator, will speak to **Frédérique Arroyas's** graduate class on Friday, Oct. 30. He will speak on subtitles in film and the notion of intermediality.

**Ellen Waterman** gave a talk on improvisation and lead an audience in Pauline Oliveros's "Sonic Meditations" at the Intermedia Performance Lab, University of Regina on Thursday, Oct. 8. On Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 26 and 27, she will discuss her "feminist erotics of improvised music" at the Centre for Theory, Culture and Politics, at Trent University. In early September, Dr. Waterman was a faculty member at the first Chicago Creative Music Workshop, organized by the Jazz Institute for Chicago. She gave workshops and concerts with fellow faculty **William Parker, David Boyko, Michael Zerang** and **Rosco Mitchell**.