

McGill Colloquium 2015
Improvisation and Community Health
Montreal, Quebec, June 5-6 2015
An IICSI-IHSP-SALA-IPLAI Conference
Presenter Bios

Melvin Backstrom

Melvin Backstrom is a PhD candidate in Musicology at McGill University, teaching courses there in the history of popular and classical music while working on a dissertation on the relations between musical modernism, the avant-garde and popular music in the San Francisco Bay Area from 1965-1975. He holds diplomas in Jazz Guitar Performance and Recording Arts, a BA (Combined Honors) in Music and Philosophy, an MA in Musicology, and was a graduate research assistant with the *Improvisation, Community and Social Practice* (ICASP) research project for its entire seven-year existence. He has presented papers at a number of conferences in both North America and Europe and is particularly interested in the intersection of aesthetics and politics, the Frankfurt School, Pragmatism and improvised musical traditions.

Carolyn Barr

Carolyn Barr is currently completing a Master's degree in saxophone performance from Schulich School of Music at McGill University. She is involved in music and theatre productions in the Montreal community, and works as a musician in the Canadian Armed Forces. Carolyn enjoys improvising in a variety of musical and non-musical settings. Most recently, she played saxophone with the McGill Contemporary Music Ensemble and the McGill Free Improvisation Ensemble. She enjoyed performing at Le Vivier's Journée portes ouvertes this January. Previously, she completed an Honours Bachelor of Music degree at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. During her time in Kingston, she worked as a teaching assistant with Musicmates Inc., a not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating social opportunities for children, youth and adults through the use of music. She is interested in implementing improvisation in her music and theatre endeavours, and excited to broaden her knowledge and understanding of improvisation through her participation in this conference.

Keynote Speaker: Susan Bickford

Susan Bickford is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is the author of *The Dissonance of Democracy: Listening, Conflict, and Citizenship* (Cornell University Press) as well as articles on feminist theory, democratic theory, and, more recently, on Plato. Her research focuses on feminist political theory, the impact of conflict and inequality on the practice of citizenship, and ancient Greek political thought.

Keynote Speaker: Phillip Bimstein (www.bimstein.com)

"Phillip Bimstein uses the voices, natural sounds and culture of his adopted home in his compositions, and he practices politics with music in mind."

—*National Public Radio's "All Things Considered"*

Described by *Outside Magazine* as "America's only all-natural politician-composer," Phillip Bimstein is an Emmy Award-winning composer, former Chicago punk rocker and a retired mayor of Springdale, Utah.

During his two terms, Springdale earned praise and awards for preserving its small-town character in the face of enormous growth pressures, and for creating a continuing partnership with Zion National Park to enhance the visitor experience while protecting area resources. In a feature titled "The Man Who Brought Civility Back to Town," *Parade Magazine* portrayed Mayor Bimstein's successful efforts to create harmony in his previously discordant community.

Creating harmony is a way of life for this former mayor, for he is also a composer of modern folk and classical music which often includes sampled and orchestrated natural sounds from his environment, such as frogs, crickets and coyotes. Bimstein's compositions have been performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, the Spoleto and Aspen Music Festivals, London's Royal Opera House, and on National Public Radio and MTV. He also composes history-based community-celebrating song cycles for his chamber folk ensemble, Red Rock Rondo.

Bimstein's alternative classical CDs (Starkland) have garnered rave reviews internationally in *Stereo Review*, *Wired*, *Fanfare*, *Stereophile*, *Schwann Opus*, and this from *The New York Times*: "the irresistible charm of Mr. Bimstein's music has less to do with technology than with his uncanny knack for finding the music of everyday life." The Pulitzer Prize-winning composer John Adams wrote, "Like their composer, the pieces on this album communicate a generous and good-natured spirit that is tempered with wry wit and a special sense of the western landscape and culture that he so loves."

Bimstein has served as chair of the Utah Humanities Council and vice-president of the American Music Center in New York. He is an Associate Instructor in the University of Utah's Honors College where he explores relationships between music, dialogue and community in "Composing a Community." He is a frequent keynote speaker on creativity, community and collaboration. Information about Bimstein's music and speaking can be found at: www.bimstein.com.

Elizabeth Boresow

Elizabeth Boresow is a Board Certified Music Therapist. She has a Bachelor's of Music Education degree in Music Therapy from the University of Kansas. Boresow runs a private practice called High Five. She enjoys playing piano, trombone, and basketball.

Jonas Braasch

Jonas Braasch is a psychoacoustician, aural architect, and experimental musician. His research work focuses on functional models of the auditory system, large-scale immersive and interactive virtual reality systems, and intelligent music systems. Currently, he is interested in binaural models that can handle room reflections and simulate head movements. He is also working on an intelligent music agent, Caira, to understand and simulate human creativity in the context of Free Music improvisation. Together with Pauline Oliveros and Doug Van Nort, he regularly performs and records with the trio Triple Point, which also serves as a research platform for the Caira development.

Dr. Braasch received a Master's Degree in Physics from the Technical University of Dortmund in 1998, and two doctoral degrees from the University of Bochum in Electrical Engineering and Information Technology in 2001 and Musicology in 2004. Afterwards, he worked as Assistant Professor in McGill University's Sound Recording Program before joining Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 2006, where he is now Associate Professor in the School of Architecture and Director of the Center for Cognition, Communication, and Culture.

Joan Butterworth

Joan Butterworth has an abundant amount of experience as an empowering educator, trainer, speaker, curriculum developer and leader for many different audiences and participants. She adapts play and improvisation activities into active learning opportunities that fully engage and stimulate social and emotional intelligences, allowing everyone to flourish individually while building an inclusive, fun and spirited team dynamic. Having completed a Master's degree in Educational Technology, Joan has been using her studies to adapt play and improv to corporate training needs and educational environments. She has a comprehensive background in leadership development and facilitation skills as she runs a Leadership program at McGill University in Student Services. She has worked in the health and dental sector to promote opportunity to develop skills in leadership and communication as well as social and emotional intelligence for medical residents, researchers and caretakers. She is also a McGill alumni (B.A., Dip. Ed, Certificate in E.S.L). She is an active member of the Applied Improvisation Network (AIN), will be giving a workshop at the annual AIN conference in Montreal in September 2015.

Thomas Ciufu

Thomas Ciufu is a sound artist, improviser, teacher and researcher working primarily in the areas of electroacoustic improvisational performance and hybrid instrument / interactive systems design. Additional research interests include acoustic ecology, field recording, and sound studies. Thomas holds a Ph.D. in Computer Music and New Media from Brown University and currently serves as Assistant Professor of Music Technology and Recording Arts in the Department of Music at Towson University. International festival presentations or performances include Visiones Sonoras in Mexico City, the Enaction in Arts Conference in France, the New Interfaces for Musical Expression conference (Vancouver, Genoa, Montreal and Ann Arbor) the Deep Listening: Art / Science International Conference, the NYC Electronic Music Festival, as well

as numerous conference presentations for the International Computer Music Society and International Society for Improvised Music.

Isabelle Cossette

Director of the Music Performance and Body lab (MPBL) and professor in music education at the Schulich School of Music (McGill University), Isabelle Cossette conducts research on the performer-instrument interaction, the physiological and biomechanical phenomena used during music performance and the ways these are integrated in instrumental pedagogies. Her multidisciplinary training (flute performance and respiratory mechanics), her role as a co-leader for the research axis on Cognition, Perception and Movement at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Music Media and Technology, the scientific approach she uses and her international collaborations led her to publish mainly in scientific journals (*Respiratory Physiology and Neurobiology*, *Acta Acustica United with Acustica*, *Perceptual and Motor Skills* and *Journal of New Music Research*). She is currently co-organising the conference *Learning and Teaching Music in the 21st Century: The Contribution of Science and Technology* which aims to break boundaries between disciplines and bridge communication between practitioners and researchers. Improvisation is one of the means she is exploring to develop trust, empowerment and creativity both in research, academia and educational environments.

Abbey Dvorak

Abbey Dvorak, PhD, MT-BC is a Board Certified Music Therapist and Assistant Professor of Music Education and Music Therapy at the University of Kansas. She received her PhD in Music Education/Music Therapy from the University of Iowa, her MA and Equivalency in Music Therapy from the University of Iowa, and her BA in Music Education from Briar Cliff University. Dvorak worked as a music therapist in Behavioral Health through the Department of Rehabilitation Therapies at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics from 2004-2011, and served as an Assistant Professor of Music Therapy at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA from 2011-2013. She currently teaches psychology of music, music therapy in mental health, qualitative research in music therapy, and music therapy clinical techniques for adults at the University of Kansas. In addition, she conducts research and facilitates music therapy services for adults with severe and persistent mental illness at Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center in Lawrence, KS. Dvorak also serves on the Editorial Board for *Music Therapy Perspectives* and received the Arthur Flagler Fultz Research Grant Award from the American Music Therapy Association for her work with cancer patients and caregivers.

Michelle Heffner Hayes

Michelle Heffner Hayes holds a Ph.D. in Critical Dance Studies from UC-Riverside. She is a Professor and Chair in the department of dance at the University of Kansas, where she teaches arts administration, modern dance, improvisation, choreography, dance history and flamenco. In addition to her work as a choreographer and dance scholar, Hayes spent a decade as a

performing arts presenter of contemporary and culturally specific work. Her book *Flamenco: Conflicting Histories of the Dance* was published by McFarland & Company in 2009. Other publications by Hayes include discussions of contemporary flamenco on film (*Dancing Bodies, Living Histories: New Writings on Dance and Culture*, 2000), parallels in postmodern dance improvisation and flamenco (*Taken By Surprise: An Improvisational Reader*, 2003) and understanding flamenco performance (*The Living Dance. An Anthology of Essays on Movement & Culture*, 2012). Hayes is the co-editor and contributor to *Flamenco on the Global Stage: Historical, Critical and Theoretical Perspectives*, forthcoming 2015, McFarland & Company.

lone (<http://deeplisting.org/site/content/about>)

lone is an author/playwright/director and an improvising word/sound artist. Her works include the critically acclaimed memoir, *Pride of Family; Four Generations of American Women of Color, Nile Night, Remembered Texts from The Deep, Listening in Dreams & This is a Dream!* She is playwright and director of *Njinga the Queen King*, (BAM's Next Wave Festival) the dance opera *lo and Her and the Trouble with Him* (Union Theater, Wisconsin), *The Lunar Opera; Deep Listening For_Tunes*, (Lincoln Center Out of Doors) and the experimental narrative film *Dreams of the Jungfrau*, shot high in the Swiss Alps. All feature music and sound design by Pauline Oliveros. She and Oliveros are currently collaborating with Egyptian artists on *The Nubian Word for Flowers, A Phantom Opera*. Inspired by the Nubian Diaspora and the life of Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener of Khartoum, the opera is "a deep dream exploration of the Colonial Mind". A specialist in dreams and the creative process, lone conducts retreats throughout the world. She is Artistic Director of Deep Listening Institute, Ltd. and Director of the Ministry of Maât, Inc. Both organizations act to foster harmonious world community.

Tristan Khaner

Tristan Khaner's current home is Montréal, though he grew up in Edmonton and has travelled extensively within Europe and Asia. He pulls from his yoga teaching, acro-yoga practice, Commerce degree (University of Alberta), and leadership roles in the private sector to bring a dynamic perspective to his current professional work helping employees at Concordia University move through large scale change. Tristan is a Master's degree candidate in Human Systems Intervention at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Rick Kotowich

Rick Kotowich is a Health Educator for the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region with Native Health Services. He is of Cree/Metis and Canadian Polish descent. His work involves providing culturally-appropriate services and consultation to First Nation and Métis patients and families, and to physicians and staff in hospitals, where he focuses on enhancing healthcare communication, service coordination, cultural support and spiritual care. He has thirty plus years of experience in developing aboriginal community events, programs and policy initiatives in community education, public health and institutional healthcare settings. Rick has served as a leader on community arts boards and the National Aboriginal Council on HIV/AIDS. He

participates as a community collaborator and peer reviewer for community-based research projects. He has a B. Admin. And also trained with several principals of the East Side Institute in New York City, both online and in-person, learning about the foundational philosophies and methods of *social therapeutics* from its proponents: Fred Newman and Lois Holzman, who draw upon the works of Vygotsky and Wittgenstein and advocate group improvisation, conversation, play and theatre approaches to revolutionary action for social change. For the past decade, Rick has actively explored improvisation-inspired group organizing amongst Aboriginal peoples and improvised practices for personal growth and community development.

Warren Linds

Warren Linds is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Human Sciences at Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. His area of expertise is applying Forum Theatre techniques to address issues of social justice. He is a member of the research team in the Canadian Institutes for Health Research funded project Applied Arts with Health, which works on developing health decision-making with Aboriginal youth in southern Saskatchewan, Canada. He is the co-editor of *Emancipatory practices: Adult/youth engagement for social and environmental justice* (Sense Publishers, 2010) and *Unfolding bodymind: Exploring possibility through education* (Holistic Education Publishers, 2004).

Henry Lowengard (<http://deeplisting.org/site/content/adaptiveusepeople>)

New Paltz-based composer and programmer Henry Lowengard has been creating experimental computer music and the programs to create it since the early 70s. For these purposes, has worked with computer platforms from the pdp/8 to the iPhone and iPad. He's performed with his wife Nancy O. Graham in some of Lone's Dream Festivals, and is currently in the band Mamalama, playing hammered dulcimer, pianica, tenor recorder, and magyar citera.

Kit Malo

Kit Malo is a consultant and facilitator who works with community groups, educational institutions and learning organizations in Québec, Canada and abroad. She is dedicated to collaboratively designing group learning experiences that give room for our minds, bodies and spirits to come to life and interact. She specializes in group learning processes and working with conflict and areas of safe uncertainty. Her background is in the visual arts, and after working as Operations Director for Drawn & Quarterly, she finished a Masters in Human Systems Intervention in 2013 at Concordia University.

Leaf Miller

Leaf Miller is a professional musician, teacher, and instrument builder, playing drums and percussion in the World Music Tradition for over 40 years. She has been working in collaboration with Pauline Oliveros and the Deep Listening Institute on the AUMI (Adaptive Use

Musical Instrument) Project since its inception and is one of the principal contributors of ideas for the AUMI designers and programmers. Leaf has been an occupational therapist since 1988. In her work with children with special needs, she incorporates musical improvisation and drumming with her clinical training in human movement and development.

Pauline Oliveros (<http://deeplisting.org/site/content/pauline-oliveros>)

Pauline Oliveros (1932) has influenced American music extensively in her career spanning more than 60 years as a composer, performer, author and philosopher. She pioneered the concept of Deep Listening, her practice based upon principles of improvisation, electronic music, ritual, teaching and meditation, designed to inspire both trained and untrained musicians to practice the art of listening and responding to environmental conditions in solo and ensemble situations. During the mid-'60s she served as the first director of the Tape Music Center at Mills College, aka Center for Contemporary Music followed by 14-years as Professor of Music and 3 years as Director of the Center for Music Experiment at the University of California at San Diego. Since 2001 she has served as Distinguished Research Professor of Music in the Arts department at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) where she is engaged in research on a National Science Foundation CreativeIT project. Her research interests include improvisation, special needs interfaces and telepresence teaching and performing. She also serves as Darius Milhaud Composer in Residence at Mills College doing telepresence teaching and she is executive director of Deep Listening Institute, Ltd. where she leads projects in Deep Listening, Adaptive Use Interface. She is the recipient of the 2009 William Schuman Award from Columbia University for lifetime achievement. A retrospective from 1960 to 2010 was performed at Miller Theater, Columbia University in New York March 27, 2010 in conjunction with the Schuman award. She received a third honorary degree from DeMontort University, Leicester, UK July 23, 2010. Recent recordings include Pauline Oliveros & Miya Masoka and Pauline Oliveros & Chris Brown on Deep Listening.

Matana Roberts (<http://www.matanaroberts.com>)

Internationally documented, Chicago-born. Matana (m(a)-ta-Nah\)) Roberts, a musician, main instrument: alto saxophone; works in many performance/sound mediums including improvisation, dance, poetry, and theater. She aims to expose the mystical roots and the intuitive spirit raising traditions of American creative expression in her music. Her innovative work has forged new conceptual approaches to considering narrativity, history, and political expression within improvisatory structures. past member of the BRC: Black Rock Coalition and the AACM: Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians. holds two degrees in music performance. based in new york city.

Deborah Seabrook (<http://www.deborahseabrook.com>)

Deborah Seabrook is a music-centered psychotherapist, music therapy educator and pianist who explores links between music improvisation and health. Currently based in Ottawa, Canada, Deborah's work focuses on enhancing creativity and wellness for musicians, artists and women

through person-centered clinical improvisation.

An advocate for the transformative power of music, Deborah is joining the Creative Arts Therapies department at Concordia University for the 2015-2016 academic year. Previously, Deborah was also Part-Time Faculty in the Music Therapy Program at Wilfrid Laurier University, and she recently completed a residency at The Banff Centre exploring improvisation and wellness.

A Music Therapist Accredited and Approved Supervisor with the Canadian Association for Music Therapy, Deborah is a Registered Psychotherapist and holds Master of Music Therapy and Honours Bachelor of Music Therapy degrees from Wilfrid Laurier University. She is grateful for her experiences continually learning and evolving through music.

Jesse Stewart (<http://www.jessestewart.ca>)

Jesse Stewart is a Juno award-winning percussionist, composer, improviser, artist, instrument builder, educator, and writer. A dynamic and inventive performer, Stewart has a remarkable ability to coax music from virtually any resonating object or material. He has performed and/or recorded with many internationally acclaimed musicians including George Lewis, Hamid Drake, Roswell Rudd, Bill Dixon, William Parker, Evan Parker, Pauline Oliveros, and many others. In a 2002 review, Frank Rubolino described him as “one of the finest young drummers and percussionists on the scene today” (One Final Note Summer/Fall 2002). He is a professor of music at Carleton University in Ottawa.

Sherrie Tucker

Sherrie Tucker (Professor, American Studies, University of Kansas) is the author of *Dance Floor Democracy: the Social Geography of Memory at the Hollywood Canteen* (Duke, 2014), *Swing Shift: “All-Girl” Bands of the 1940s* (Duke, 2000) and co-editor, with Nichole T. Rustin, of *Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies* (Duke, 2008). She is a member of two major collaborative research initiatives: International Institute of Critical Improvisation Studies and Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice (for which she served as facilitator for the Improvisation, Gender, and the Body research area) both funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. She is a founding member of the Melba Liston Research Collective, a member of the AUMI (Adaptive Use Musical Instrument) research team of the Deep Listening Institute, and founding member of AUMI-KU InterArts, one of six member institutions of the AUMI Research Consortium. She was the Louis Armstrong Visiting Professor at the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University in 2004-2005, where she was a member of the Columbia Jazz Study Group. With Randal M. Jelks, she co-edits the journal *American Studies*. In April 2013, she joined Deborah Wong and Jeremy Wallach as Series Editors for the Music/Culture at Wesleyan University Press.

Ellen Waterman

Ellen Waterman is a flutist and scholar interested in improvisation and experimental performance. She is Professor of Ethnomusicology at Memorial University of Newfoundland,

and Memorial Site Coordinator for the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation. Her books include *The Art of Immersive Soundscapes* (Regina, 2013) and *Improvisation, Sound and Subjectivity* (Duke, 2016).