

## **Roundtable: Improvisation and Outreach: The Ethics of Improvising with At-Risk or Aggrieved Communities**

**Moderator: Julie Smith (Associate Researcher, Department of English, University of British Columbia / Coastal Jazz and Blues Society, Vancouver)**

### **Richard Newirth**

#### **Biography**

**Richard Newirth** is the acting managing director for the Cultural Services Department in Vancouver, BC. Previously, he served as director of Cultural Affairs at the San Francisco Arts Commission from 1995-2007. He holds a BA from Brown University and an MBA from the Haas School of Business at U.C. Berkeley. He has been awarded the Public Managerial Efficiency Award from the San Francisco Planning and Research Association and received the Director's Award from the California Arts Council for exemplary local arts agency leadership. He has frequently spoken throughout North America on arts and cultural topics including Cultural Tourism, Public Art, and Artists in Community. In 2002, he was invited to be a guest of the U.S. consulate in St. Petersburg and lecture on arts management. He is a graduate of Leadership San Francisco, the Stanford University Executive Program for Non-Profit Leadership and the Royal Roads University Leadership Development Program.

### **Brad Muirhead**

#### **Biography**

**Brad Muirhead** (Bass Trombone) is well known to audiences across Canada and Europe for his powerful sound and inventive improvising and has been actively contributing to the Vancouver music scene since 1980. He has recorded and toured extensively with his own groups Primal Orbit and Brass Roots as well as Vancouver's three most important large jazz ensembles: the NOW Orchestra, Hugh Fraser's VEJI, and the Hard Rubber Orchestra. He has been heavily involved with the Vancouver improvised music scene, composing for, recording and performing with numerous small and large ensembles, both as a leader and sideman. As a leader he is currently focusing on two new projects – a group called Koan, that mixes elements of jazz and traditional Chinese music, and the East Van Jazz Orchestra which he co-leads with Jared Burrows. He is an active music educator teaching individual and class brass lessons, and in capacities ranging from school band teacher, clinician & adjudicator to coordinating, producing or directing a variety of programs such as the Banff Jazz Workshop, the Vancouver & Victoria International Jazz Orchestra Workshops and more recently, the Renfrew Community Performance Project.

## **John Philip (JP) Melville**

### **Biography**

Since 2003, **JP Melville** has been supporting The Woochoppers Association and diverse artists in Canada, with a focus on new immigrant professional artists. This work has included logistics for the documentary film, *The Road to Baleya*, the international exchange of musicians between Mali and Canada. He organized the details for Jah Youssouf's first tour in Canada in 2007 and again in 2009, with guest artist Abdoulaye Koné. He has also supported Mansa Sissoko who has gone on to successfully tour across Canada and in the US with Jayme Stone. Most recently, he has co-founded a non-profit organization that promotes new immigrant artists and arts professionals, the Coalition of New Canadians for Arts and Culture ([www.cncac.ca](http://www.cncac.ca)). With the CNCAC, JP makes every possible effort to bring together new immigrant artists and young people in rural and remote areas across Canada. He has cooperated extensively with Stellula Music in Schools ([www.stellulamusic.com](http://www.stellulamusic.com)) in developing an institutional and sustainable framework for achieving this vision.

JP Melville has thirty years of extensive program and project management experience. This includes ten years of work in developing countries around the world. His expertise includes developing and presenting new projects, networking in coalitions, and cooperating with partner organizations both in Canada and internationally. He works in both English and French.

JP currently coordinates a unique community development program in Ottawa with the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization ([www.ociso.org](http://www.ociso.org)). His work engages him with organizations like the Portrait Gallery of Canada and the City of Ottawa Arts Program. His employment background in Canada includes fifteen years of mixed farming and construction. He currently resides in Ottawa with his family, where he gardens and avidly bakes bread.

Websites: [www.cncac.ca](http://www.cncac.ca)

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

## **Denise Watson**

### **Biography**

**Denise Watson** is program manager at KidsAbility, responsible for the services at the KidsAbility Guelph-Wellington Program. She has completed a BAsC at the University of Guelph and a Master of Health Sciences at the University of Toronto. She has worked in pediatric rehabilitation since 1987 in a variety of settings, including hospital, home, school and community, supporting children and youth with physical, developmental and/or communication disabilities to reach their full potential. She strives to develop services that are connected with the community, inclusive, functional and fun! She has worked at KidsAbility for twenty years, lives in Guelph with her husband, two teenagers and a dog. In her spare time she likes to run, swim and bike (but not in triathlons).

**Website:** [www.kidsability.ca](http://www.kidsability.ca)

## **Lorna Schwartzenruber**

### **Biography**

**Lorna Schwartzenruber** is the program director of Onward Willow Better Beginnings, Better Futures, a primary prevention program funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth, working to enhance the lives of families living in the Onward Willow neighbourhood in Guelph. Programs include Peer Parent Home Visitation, a range of Children and Youth programs, and Community Development initiatives. The Onward Willow neighbourhood has the highest proportion of low-income residents, single-parent led families, and new immigrant families in Guelph. Onward Willow Better Beginnings and the Shelldale Centre are a dynamic model of community engagement and effective partnerships among a variety of services and opportunities, working together to strengthen the possibilities for children and families growing up in the neighbourhood.

**Website:** [www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca/](http://www.onwardwillowbetterbeginnings.ca/)

## **Neil Guilding aka Zibz (Zibbs) Black Current**

### **Biography**

Poet, dub chanter, percussionist, and photographer, **Zibz's** spoken word uses the philosophy of word, sound and power throughout the heights of Rastafari with his own organic style he calls "rig-up" which translate reggae with funk attitude which taps into hip-hop, soul, blues, Afro-beat, punk and jazz. The different ancestors of black music, the focus is liberation and upliftment in truths, rights and justice, he is a member of Kalmunity Vibes Collective, an improv collective that just played The Montreal International Jazz Festival and has been performing weekly for the past six years at Kafe Sablo (Tuesday nights) and now a second night at Diese Onze Jazz Restaurant (Sunday nights), in Montreal. A community worker and presently the coordinator for Jeunesse 2000, a youth drop-in center for Head & Hands in Montreal, which has been working for social change in the society for nearly forty years in very creative and engaging ways.

**Website:** [www.headandhands.ca](http://www.headandhands.ca)