

FROM DURBAN TO ST. JOHN'S

Perched on a hilltop overlooking the port city of Durban, South Africa, the University of KwaZulu-Natal was the locale of the 40th World Conference for the International Council for Traditional Music. A more fitting place for this conference would be difficult to imagine. Local organizers provided a week-long feast for our eyes, ears, and minds.

Nearly three hundred delegates from forty-one countries participated in the academic conference with presentations on the conference themes: reapproaching the 'popular' and the 'traditional' in the contemporary world; festivals, contests and competitions; emotion, spirituality and experience; postcolonialisms and the future for our disciplines; and performing masculinity through world music and dance.



Beverley Diamond, Tom Gordon, Eleanor Dawson and Kati Szego invite delegates to ICTM 2011 in St. John's.
 Photo by Kristin Harris Walsh.

MUN scholars contributed with papers on "Singing Policeman, Dancing Firemen: Expressive Behaviour as 'Soft Power' in Hawai'i" by Kati Szego, "From Running the Goat to Riverdance: Shifting Context and Gender Roles in Step Dance in Newfoundland and Labrador" by Kristin Harris Walsh, and "Traditional Indigenous Knowledge and New Processes of Musical Transmission" by Beverley Diamond.

In addition to stimulating presentations and discussions during the day, we were treated to music and dance performances every evening. Among these were spectacular Zulu *ngoma*, gumboot dances, marimba ensembles and a hybrid of Indian and Zulu dance by a group who had performed at Nelson Mandela's inauguration. For many of us, the highlight was the men's choral tradition, *isacathamiya*, an all-night competition involving over 140 groups and five hundred singers.

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ST. JOHN'S MANY VOICES

Wondering where to find the best that the city's ethnocultural communities have to offer? MMAP has hired a team of graduate students to begin research and fieldwork this summer for a new project. In its final form, *St. John's Many Voices* will be both a book and web resource for tourists, immigrants and locals who want to learn more about ethnocultural communities in the city.

So far our researchers have unearthed some fascinating information about the people who live in our port city. From Albanian-Roma lamb roasts in Pippy Park to a refugee group named LOOB (Lay Off Our Bulgarians) to a Portuguese painter who painted the ceiling of Government House, we are documenting a fascinating and distinctive array of culturally diverse activities, organizations, celebrations and individuals.

St. John's Many Voices will provide a basic yet comprehensive guide for selected ethnocultural communities. We will compile information in the following categories: Historical Highlights (including first arrival); Festivals and Events; Community Organizations; Media (print, internet, other media); Places of Worship; Businesses, Landmarks and Monuments; Foodways; Expressive Culture and Notable Community Members.

We hope to release *St. John's Many Voices* in 2011.



FROM DURBAN TO ST. JOHN'S

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These performances provided a privileged view of the local culture and a reminder that music and dance are to be lived and practiced as well as discussed and analyzed.

ICTM traditionally schedules a day off in the middle of the week to provide an opportunity to see the host city and surrounding areas. Some chose the trips organized by ICTM while others ventured out on their own to explore the area. We all came back with stories of breathtaking mountainscapes, golden beaches, busy street markets, and deeper knowledge of the tragic history of apartheid, the struggles to eradicate HIV/AIDS in Africa, and the hopefulness of the post-apartheid era.

The week ended with an invitation to the ICTM members, presented by the delegation from Newfoundland and Labrador that included representatives from both Memorial University and the provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador. We will be proudly hosting ICTM in 2011 and look forward to an equally stimulating conference then.



Southern Moves performance by Flatfoot Dance Company and Woodpecker Percussionists. Photo by Kristin Harris Walsh.

MUSIC IN THE AIRS

BY KATI SZEGO

Advanced Interdisciplinary Research in Singing (AIRS) is a seven-year project that has just been funded to the tune of \$2.5 million by a SSHRC-MCRI grant. Each year the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) supports a small number of Major Collaborative Research Initiatives (MCRIs). MCRI funds cross-disciplinary and cross-national collaborations on the leading edge of research.

Spearheaded by Annabel Cohen at the University of Prince Edward Island, AIRS brings together a collective of more than seventy researchers representing over twenty postsecondary institutions in a dozen countries. Two of MMAP's Executive Board members, Kati Szego and Andrea Rose, will be active in bringing AIRS to fruition. Mostly working in teams, AIRS researchers will bring their expertise in psychology, acoustics, music, education, linguistics, sociology, ethnomusicology, computer science and audio engineering to bear on questions related to singing. The research coalesces around three broad themes: Acquisition, Education, and Well-Being.

Investigators are interested in better understanding how children learn to sing and how those processes might be similar to, different from or linked to the acquisition of speech. The question recognizes, of course, that speech and song are culturally-defined and, on the continuum of human vocal behaviour, are not always clearly distinguishable.

The over-arching goal of the education component is to identify effective means of song transmission in different contexts and cultures. Investigators are also interested in learning the extent to which singing benefits

other cognitive and social abilities, and how it can be used to teach a broad range of curricula. An international and cross-cultural effort coupled with the application of new teaching technologies will uncover best practices and their underlying theories.

Finally, the researchers want to know how singing contributes to happier, healthier individuals and societies. Specifically, they will be looking at the ways in which singing might be used to promote cross-cultural and inter-generational understanding. A separate research focus on singing and health specifically examines the medical benefits of singing. Here researchers will concentrate on singing's contribution to the recovery or amelioration of cognitive function associated with aphasia and Alzheimer's disease.

An interactive web-based virtual research environment (<http://vre.upei.ca/airs>) will support the research network, enabling discussion and collaborative document development, as well as access to the AIRS digital archive. All AIRS participants plan to meet once a year by teleconference, with smaller working groups meeting in person at regional workshops and national/international conferences. More than half of the funds have been allocated to support graduate and undergraduate students as well as postdoctoral fellowships.



DANCE HERITAGE THINK TANK

The Dance Heritage Think Tank took place in St. John's, NL, on February 21, 2009. The goal was to assemble as wide a variety as possible of dance performers, teachers, scholars and preservationists from a number of dance genres and representing different ages and genders.

Nearly thirty people participated, with others unable to attend but sending ideas and support. The afternoon was divided into two parts. The first part of the discussion focused on "big issues" to determine the concerns of group members. After a break, we turned our attention to the four approaches for safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: positioning, transmission, celebration and documentation. This turned the larger visioning exercise into a means of identifying specific needs and goals related to dance preservation in Newfoundland and Labrador. After these discussions were completed, we finished the session with a prioritizing exercise to determine, after all our talks, precisely what the Think Tankers felt were the most important recommendations.

The event generated much discussion with priorities identified as follows:

- NL Dance Association should be formed to represent and connect all dance genres in the province.
- Website should be created to link dance forms in NL, provide information on dance professionals, events, and resources.
- Educational systems should contain more dance; would like to see a university dance program and dance further integrated into the K-12 system.

The Dance Heritage Think Tank was an ideal opportunity for members of the province's many dance communities to meet, network, share ideas and identify common goals. The event was a way for dance enthusiasts to meet and discuss the future of the traditions of dance in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Think Tank organizers are now in the process of facilitating the creation of a provincial dance association. A meeting will be held in September to get the ball rolling and sow the seeds of DANL, the Dance Association of Newfoundland and Labrador. The full report can be found at: www.mun.ca/mmap

dance heritage THINK TANK



On Saturday, Feb 21st, an open session is being held for dance enthusiasts to meet and discuss the future of the tradition of dance in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The event will be an introductory platform for members of the dance community to consider our various dance heritages and identify what that means. The main objective is to serve as an information sharing and gathering process.

The event will be held at the MMaP Gallery, on the second level of the Arts and Culture Centre, on February 21 from 1-4pm.

Saturday, Feb. 21, 2009
Arts and Culture Centre
2nd floor MMaP Gallery, 1-4pm



memorial university
dance works



MUSIC DOCS

Music Docs was a first screening of documentaries made by students in the Music 6807 Video Documentary Production course taught at Memorial by Derek Norman of the university's Digital Research Centre for Qualitative Fieldwork.

We asked the students in the course for a short synopsis of their documentaries.

HAPPINESS IS HOMEMADE: THE RPM CHALLENGE

A FILM BY PATRICK BRENNAN, MARC FINCH AND MARION MACLEOD

It has been described (by its modest creators) as "mind-blowing" and "a heart-breaking work of staggering genius." It is the work of MMAP studios, and its title will reverberate from the White Hills to Cape Spear – *Happiness is Homemade: The RPM Challenge*.

This short documentary follows three St. John's artists as they accepted and undertook a challenge issued by the *Scope* arts newspaper; namely, to write, record and package an album of original music in the month of February. The filmmakers' challenge was to reveal the trials and triumphs of this month of intensity and the result is *Happiness is Homemade* -- the story of local group Mopey Mumble-Mouse, and solo acts Errand Boy and Black Molly as these musicians fought with deadlines, colds and creative frustration to complete their task. The film is soundtracked by their newly-created works and works-in-progress.

Happiness is Homemade is the magnum opus of Marc Finch, Marion MacLeod and Pat Brennan, all graduate students at various points on the ethnomusicological highway. The project was a union of sensibilities that amounted, easily, to ten films' worth of footage, weeks of experimentation with

fleeting details, technological moments of incredible defeat, defiance and delight and several tangential (educational?) discussions regarding other, better, films. You can see a moment that belongs to each of the filmmakers, but the dominant sense in *Happiness is Homemade* is ultimately that of uncompromised agreement and unbridled enthusiasm.

KILAUTIUP SONUNINGA

A FILM BY TOM ARTISS, TIFFANY POLLOCK, AND LEILA QASHU

This film explores the creation and continuation of St. John's first Inuit drum-dancing group, *Kilautiup Songuninga (The Strength of the Drum)*. Formed in 2006, a small, but dedicated group of individuals set out to learn many of the Inuit singing and drumming traditions that had long been dormant in Labrador. Using a variety of sources including CDs, the Internet, and Inuit knowledge-bearers, the group has developed a diverse repertoire that allows members to get together weekly for enjoyment as well as to perform within and outside the province. Today, the members of *Kilautiup Songuninga* not only perform this aspect of Inuit culture, but also contribute to the cultural knowledge sharing that helped establish the group by giving workshops, teaching, and uploading videos to the Internet.

Kilautiup Songuninga is composed of the following individuals: Solomon Semigak, Sophie Angnatok, Nick Zarpa, Brenda Blake, Tabitha Blake, Sherri Blake, Josephine Obed, Stanley Nochasak and Tom Artiss. With an aim of creating a collaborative filming experience, members of the group have provided input on such things as on-camera presentation, setting, and themes for which the filmmakers are very grateful.

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THE JOY OF STEP

A FILM BY IAN HAYES, AMANDA IRONSIDE AND
LEILA QUASHU

Traditional musics of all genres are often caught between the tensions of preservation and innovation. One such example can be seen in Scottish step dancing. It is a tradition that has a dialogue between the past and present, as well as between Scotland and its emigrant communities across North America.

The Joy of Step is a documentary about the Scottish step dancer, Joy Fraser. A young, innovative dancer from Edinburgh, Joy is an active performer and an enthusiastic teacher. Now situated in St. John's, NL, Joy is a Ph.D. candidate in Folklore at MUN. She also runs classes and workshops through her dance organization, Scotch Legs (www.scotchlegs.com). In this documentary, Joy explains her personal influences in dance, demonstrating both traditional and self-composed steps that are integral to her style. She also explains her own views on the negotiation of continuity and innovation.



CONGRATULATIONS

MMaP Director Dr. Beverley Diamond has been named a Trudeau Fellow (2009-2012) by the Trudeau Foundation.

MUSIC, MEDIA AND CULTURE LECTURE SERIES - FALL 2009

The Canada Research Chair in Ethnomusicology, in conjunction with the School of Music and the Department of Folklore, inaugurated this interdisciplinary lecture series in 2002-2003. Distinguished scholars from the academic community are featured in a series of presentations regarding historical and contemporary musical practices.

Lectures for the Fall 2009 semester:

Wednesday, September 30. Clary Croft (Helen Creighton Foundation). "Carrying the tune: the personal reflections of a traditional music popularizer."

Thursday, October 15. Dr. Elizabeth Mackinlay (University of Queensland). "Reflecting on *Big Women from Borroloola*: Approaching, applying and decolonising ethnomusicology in the context of Indigenous Australia."

Thursday, November 12. Dr. Martin Lussier (Memorial University of Newfoundland). "Montréal's "Musiques émergentes": a community without identity."

All lectures are held at 7:30 pm on the date indicated in the MMAP Gallery, second floor, Arts and Culture Centre. Admission is free and all are welcome.



Liz Mackinlay (centre) and research collaborators Amy Friday (left), Jemima Wuwarlu Miller (right).
Photo by Alieta Belle.

DISPATCHES FROM THE FIELD: A DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH ETHICS

BY MARC FINCH

MMaP continued its Music, Media, and Culture Lecture Series on January 20, 2009 with *Fieldwork Ethics in Ethnomusicology and Folklore*. While past evenings in this series offered the public a chance to see distinguished scholars present current research, this instalment consisted of a panel of graduate students from MUN's ethnomusicology and folklore programs. Panelists Graham Blair, Carol Diamond, Andrea Kitta and Contessa Small exposed some of the subtle complexities of carrying out ethically responsible fieldwork by sharing their fieldwork experiences.

Discussing his time spent at a bluegrass workshop in British Columbia, Graham Blair touched on the value of rapport building and being transparent about conducting research in a field (literally!) where informants have come in search of entertainment. Carol Diamond, Blair's colleague in the Ethnomusicology program, revealed some of the legal and governmental requirements she had to fulfill in order to pursue her research with the Gwich'in in the Yukon. Folklorist Andrea Kitta shared her experience of being expected to "take sides" when researching the contentious debate over administering vaccinations. Finally, working with children swept up in the Harry Potter phenomenon, Contessa Small talked about researcher/subject power relations, a significant matter with any research project, but particularly sensitive in research with children. This thought-provoking discussion of ethics was applicable to all students designing research projects. The evening was especially insightful for first-year graduate students like myself who are preparing to step into the field.

FANTASY AND REALITY IN THE BALLAD

BY AMANDA IRONSIDE



Photo by Duncan de Young

On March 12, 2009, Memorial University's own Dr. Martin Lovelace from the Department of Folklore presented "The Ballad and the Folktale: The Reality of Fantasy" in the MMaP Gallery. Lovelace has been teaching at MUN since the fall of 1980 after receiving his M.A. and Ph.D. in Folklore under the tutelage of renowned folklorist Herbert Halpert. Lovelace commenced teaching courses on folk literature, folklife, and Newfoundland folklore but specialises in folk literature. His teaching and research interests span four areas: narrative, speech play, folksong, and drama.

The MMaP lecture was representative of Lovelace's interests and academic strengths, as he brought to light the possibility of inherent social meanings embedded within *märchen* and ballad. Exploring the social contexts of the performers and analysing the narratives themselves elucidates these social meanings. Scholarly work mentioned to illustrate the discussion included David Buchan's application of Vladimir Propp's tale roles to ballad structure, and Bengt Holbek's work on Nordic folk literature.

Lovelace touched upon themes of gender in ballad, depictions of class through the concepts of the "outdoor man versus indoor man," and the importance of the performers' and audiences' perceptions of the narratives. Lovelace's lecture illustrated the many layers of meaning present in the oral narrative traditions.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

NOW AVAILABLE

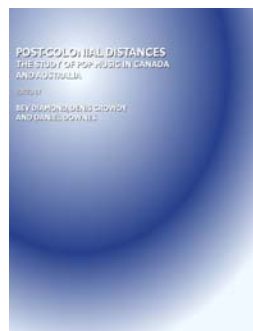
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Post-Colonial Distances: The Study of Pop Music in Canada and Australia. Edited by Beverley Diamond, Denis Crowley and Daniel Downes. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008.

SPRING 2009 CONVOCATION

Congratulations are extended to the following individuals:

Anita Best, who received a Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*) for her work as a folk singer, preserver and disseminator.

Judith Klassen, who received the 2009 Governor General's medal, the highest academic honour a graduate student can receive.

Evelyne Lavoie, Jordan Mitchell, Jeremy Strachan, and Heather Wright, all of whom graduated with an M.A. in Ethnomusicology.

DISTINGUISHED MOHAWK COMPOSER/PERFORMER TO VISIT MUN IN WINTER 2010

"Rarely are performers as at home at Lincoln Center as they are in a sweat lodge. Composer, cellist, vocalist, educator and Grammy-nominated performer Dawn Avery is equally comfortable with either," writes Virginia Prescott, NPR producer and journalist. We are preparing to welcome this distinguished Mohawk artist who has performed with musical luminaries ranging from Pavarotti to Sting, from John Cage to R. Carlos Nakai. Professor of Music at Montgomery College, Dawn Avery will spend six weeks at Memorial University in Winter 2010. Look for further information about teaching, workshops, lectures, and a solo performance in our next newsletter.

MMAP IS:

www.mun.ca/mmap

Director: Beverley Diamond,
bdiamond@mun.ca, 709.737.3701

Office Administrator: Maureen Houston
mhouston@mun.ca, 709.737.2058

Digital Audio Studio Coordinator:
Spencer Crewe, spencerc@mun.ca,
709.737.2057

Project Coordinator and Newsletter Editor:
Kristin Harris Walsh, kharriswalsh@mun.ca,
709.737.2051

Executive Board: Anita Best, Tom Gordon,
Martin Lovelace, Peter Narváez, Andrea Rose,
Neil Rosenberg, Christina Smith, Kati Szego

Community Advisory Board: Tim Borlase,
Anna Kearney Guigne, Jean Hewson, Ruth
Matthews, Doreen Klassen, Jim Payne, Stan
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