

# CAML REVIEW REVUE DE L'ACBM

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**The editors invite submissions in the form of articles, reviews, reports, and news items. Deadline for the next issue: July 15, 2011. / La Revue vous invite à lui soumettre des articles, des comptes rendus et des informations. Date limite pour le prochain numéro : le 15 juillet 2011.**

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[www.sqacbm.org/](http://www.sqacbm.org/)

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT / MESSAGE DE LA PRÉSIDENTE

Winter has flown by, and spring is upon us. The CAML Board met twice by teleconference, on October 31st and March 20th. We welcomed Cathy Martin, who joined the Board in January 2011 as Communications Officer. Cathy replaces Stacy Allison-Cassin, who is busy being a new mother.

Welcome to this first online-only edition of the *CAML Review*. It marks the beginning of a new era for our journal, and publishing in this format will enable considerable financial savings for CAML.

Plans are proceeding for our annual conference on June 2-5, 2011. We will meet conjointly with CUMS, the Canadian University Music Society, on the beautiful campus of Mount Allison University in Sackville, NB. Suzanne Meyers-Sawa has planned a stimulating programme with sessions covering a range of topics and two plenary sessions with CUMS. We can look forward to hearing our Keynote Speaker, Robin Elliott, who will speak about the music and career of the Canadian composer Istvan Anhalt. Peter Higham is charge of the local arrangements, and has worked with Mount Allison's Conference Services to organize registration and accommodations on campus. Full details can be found on our website at <http://www.yorku.ca/caml/drupal/>. Our meetings are always a great opportunity to learn from each other, catch up on our activities, share ideas, and meet

L'hiver a passé vite et le printemps est à nos portes. Le conseil d'administration de l'ACBM s'est réuni deux fois par téléconférence, soit le 31 octobre et le 20 mars. Ses membres ont souhaité la bienvenue à Cathy Martin, qui s'est jointe au conseil d'administration en janvier 2011 à titre de directrice des communications. Cathy remplace Stacy Allison-Cassin, très occupée à jouer son nouveau rôle de mère.

Voici le tout premier numéro de la version uniquement électronique de la *Revue de l'ACBM*. Ce numéro marque le début d'une nouvelle ère de notre revue et ce format permettra des économies financières considérables pour l'ACBM.

Les plans se poursuivent pour notre congrès annuel qui se déroulera du 2 au 5 juin 2011. Nous tiendrons un congrès conjoint avec la Société de musique des universités canadiennes (SMUC) sur le magnifique campus de l'Université Mount Allison, à Sackville, au Nouveau-Brunswick. Suzanne Meyers-Sawa a planifié un programme captivant comprenant des présentations couvrant une gamme de sujets et deux plénières avec la SMUC. Nous avons hâte d'écouter notre conférencier principal, Robin Elliott, qui parlera de la musique et la carrière du compositeur canadien Istvan Anhalt. Peter Higham est responsable de la logistique et a travaillé avec les Services des congrès de l'Université Mount Allison pour organiser l'inscription et l'hébergement sur le campus. Pour obtenir de plus amples renseignements, consultez notre site Web à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.yorku.ca/caml/drupal/?q=fr/>. Nos rencontres sont

new colleagues. I hope you will attend. If you haven't already done so, please renew your association membership.

Following on the meeting last summer in Regina of the Presidents of CUMS, CAML, and the Canadian Music Educators' Association (CMEA), the CMEA has spearheaded an initiative to discuss how we might collaborate for the betterment of music education across the country. CMEA is hosting a National Leadership Summit on Music Education in Toronto on May 14th, to which twenty-one organizations with an interest in music education have been invited. Janneka Guise, our Vice-President/President-Elect, will represent CAML, and I look forward to Jan's report at our Annual General Meeting in Sackville. Your suggestions for collaboration are most welcome. Please send them to either Jan or me.

Although Library & Archives Canada (LAC) has been CAML's organizational mailing address for many years, this has never been formally recognized by LAC. I have been working to get formal acknowledgement from LAC, and hope it will be forthcoming in the spring. Thanks must go to Richard Green for assisting with this.

Also at LAC, Gilles Leclerc has received training from Lisa Emberson on the co-ordination of RILM contributions for Canada. CAML is thankful to Gilles and to LAC for continuing the essential work of sharing information about

toujours une excellente occasion d'apprendre l'un de l'autre, de se mettre au courant de nos activités, d'échanger des idées et de rencontrer de nouveaux collègues. J'espère que je vous y retrouverai. Et si ce n'est déjà fait, veuillez renouveler votre cotisation annuelle de l'ACBM.

Suite à la rencontre de l'été dernier, à Regina, des présidents de la SMUC, l'ACBM et l'Association canadienne des éducateurs de musique (AECM), l'AECM a soutenu une initiative de discussion sur la façon de collaborer au perfectionnement de l'enseignement de la musique dans l'ensemble du pays. L'ACEM est l'hôte d'un Sommet sur le leadership national portant sur l'enseignement de la musique à Toronto le 14 mai. Vingt-et-un organismes ayant un intérêt pour l'enseignement de la musique y ont été invités. Janneka Guise, présidente désignée, représentera l'ACBM et j'ai hâte d'écouter son message lors de notre assemblée générale annuelle à Sackville. Vos suggestions de collaboration sont les bienvenues. Veuillez les faire parvenir à Jan ou à moi.

Bien que Bibliothèque et Archives Canada (BAC) ait été l'adresse postale de l'ACBM depuis plusieurs années, cela n'a jamais fait l'objet d'une reconnaissance formelle par BAC. Je travaille à l'obtention d'une reconnaissance formelle de BAC et espère l'obtenir au printemps. Des remerciements s'adressent à Richard Green pour m'avoir épaulée dans ce dossier.

De plus, à BAC, Gilles Leclerc a reçu une formation de Lisa Emberson sur la coordination des communications de la section canadienne du Répertoire international de littérature musicale

Canadian scholarly writing on music with the world through RILM.

The IAML 2012 Montreal planning group has continued to work on arrangements for the IAML 2012 conference. A number of CAML members will attend this year's IAML conference in Dublin, and it would be wonderful to have a strong showing of Canadians there to help support them and to encourage IAML members to come to Montreal next year. Do consider going, if you haven't already made plans to go! Details can be found at [http://www.iaml.info/iaml-uk-irl/dublin\\_2011/index.html](http://www.iaml.info/iaml-uk-irl/dublin_2011/index.html).

It's hard to believe that this is already my last report. It has been an honour to serve as your President, and I have greatly enjoyed working with the CAML Board for the past two years. I am most grateful to them for their enthusiasm and hard work, and look forward to serving as your Past President after passing the baton to Jan Guise this summer in Sackville.

**KIRSTEN WALSH**  
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(RILM). L'ACBM remercie Gilles et BAC pour la poursuite du travail essentiel du partage d'information sur les chercheurs canadiens écrivant sur la musique avec le monde au moyen du RILM.

Le groupe organisateur de Montréal du congrès 2012 de l'Association internationale des bibliothèques, archives et centres de documentation musicaux (AIBM) travaille de façon soutenue à la logistique. Quelques membres de l'ACBM assisteront au congrès de l'AIBM cette année à Dublin et ce serait formidable d'avoir une bonne participation de canadiens à ce congrès pour les appuyer et encourager les membres de l'AIBM à venir à Montréal l'an prochain. Pensez y aller si ce n'était pas dans vos plans. Vous trouverez les renseignements à l'adresse suivante : [http://www.iaml.info/iaml-uk-irl/dublin\\_2011/fr/index.html](http://www.iaml.info/iaml-uk-irl/dublin_2011/fr/index.html).

Difficile à croire qu'il s'agit déjà de mon dernier message. Ce fut un honneur de vous servir à titre de présidente et j'ai vraiment aimé travailler avec les membres du conseil d'administration au cours des deux dernières années. Je leur suis très reconnaissante pour leur enthousiasme et leur travail. J'ai hâte de vous servir à titre d'ancienne présidente, une fois que j'aurai passé le flambeau à Jan Guise cet été, à Sackville.

TRADUCTION FRANÇAISE : PAULINE PRINCE,  
TERM. A.

# COLLECTING HEAVY METAL MUSIC

BY KARSON JONES  
THE ROYAL CONSERVATORY

## WHY COLLECT HEAVY METAL?

Heavy Metal, more than most forms of popular music, has endured scathing criticism from all sides. Music critics, politicians, and parent groups have all decried the musical degeneracy<sup>1</sup> and moral decrepitude<sup>2</sup> of the genre. In the face of this, however, metal has simply become more popular and more extreme in its sound, imagery, and values. Heavy metal music and culture has, for most of its existence, fallen very much outside the mainstream and in many ways defines itself as anti-establishment. Many might ask whether this music, being so frequently derided, is worthy of academic study and whether libraries should be adding it to their collections.

The fact is that, regardless of how one feels about the music and culture of heavy metal, an increasing amount of social scientific and musicological research is being done on the subject. There is also evidence that heavy metal is increasingly being included in post-secondary curricula.<sup>3</sup> Research collections and archives are needed to support this study and teaching. These collections need to contain not only the academic literature and the seminal sound recordings, but also the visual art, fashion, and other ephemera that are inseparable from the metal experience. At various institutions, one will find substantial collections dedicated to other marginal genres and subgenres of music, national musics, and even individual bands or performers, yet metal has been, for the most part, ignored so far.<sup>4</sup>

There is a dearth of library literature on this topic. In 2002, Robert Freeborn performed a search in *Library Literature* for the keywords *heavy metal* and retrieved four results, only one of which was in English. He also cites a 1990 German article in which the author found that of eight universities, six had less than 1% of heavy metal content in relation to their entire music collections.<sup>5</sup> Brian Hickman and Thomas Atwood repeated Freeborn's search in 2008 and found things only slightly improved: a total of 28 entries were uncovered in *Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts*, without counting book reviews.<sup>6</sup> To this day, aside from some

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<sup>1</sup> See Robert Walser, *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1993), 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> See "Highway to Hell," *The Guardian*, June 2, 2003, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/jun/02/worlddispatch.brianwhitaker> (accessed April 2, 2011)

<sup>3</sup> Brian Hickman and Thomas Atwood, "Filling the Void: The Heavy Metal and Hardcore Punk Archiving Project," in *The Metal Void: First Gatherings*, ed. Nial W. R. Scott and Imke Von Helden (Oxford, United Kingdom: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2010), 381-396, accessed March 30, 2011, <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/mmp1ever3150410.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 386.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Freeborn, "Confronting the Dark Side of the Beat: A Guide to Creating a Heavy Metal Collection," *Music Reference Services Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (2002): 26.

<sup>6</sup> Hickman and Atwood, 385.

very limited and superficial surveys in magazines like *Library Journal*,<sup>7</sup> Freeborn's article is the only substantial study of collection development in the area of heavy metal.

Yet, one can easily see that an increasing amount of academic work is being done on the genre. The following is a list of WorldCat records for books with the subject heading *Heavy Metal (Music)*, indicating the number of titles published in each year, from 1980 to 2009. One can see a similar trend in the publication of academic articles on the subject. This, of course, is only a fraction of the large body of print, video, and online materials being created on the subject of heavy metal in various disciplines, as much of it is not collected and catalogued by OCLC participating libraries. However, it certainly indicates an upward trend:

- 2009 (60)
- 2008 (48)
- 2007 (43)
- 2006 (34)
- 2005 (38)
- 2004 (33)
- 2003 (28)
- 2002 (38)
- 2001 (23)
- 2000 (19)
- 1999 (12)
- 1998 (11)
- 1997 (10)
- 1996 (12)
- 1995 (10)
- 1994 (8)
- 1993 (24)
- 1992 (8)
- 1991 (16)
- 1990 (8)
- 1989 (6)
- 1988 (6)
- 1987 (4)
- 1986 (4)
- 1985 (12)
- 1984 (3)
- 1983 (1)
- 1982 (3)
- 1980 (2)

This is not to suggest that all music libraries should be collecting heavy metal, but those with substantial programs in popular music studies, cultural studies, and the like would do well to consider creating a basic collection. Hickam and Atwood also believe that there is a need to create an archive, either centralized or distributed, of heavy metal music covering “all formats, mediums, languages, geographic locations, and eras.”<sup>8</sup> In 2008, they began a cooperative project between Bowling Green State University's Sound Recordings Archive and the University of Toledo to create such a repository, and are currently looking for other institutions in North America and around the world to work with on their mission.

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Matthew Moyer, “Metal: Headbang for Your Buck,” *Library Journal* (2008).

<sup>8</sup> Hickman and Atwood, 384.

Until recently, no such repository existed in Canada. In 2008, York University began taking steps toward creating a metal collection. Martin Popoff, the Toronto-based heavy metal collector and author of a number of books on the subject began selling curated portions of his collection to York's Sound and Moving Images Library. After several hundred metal CDs were added to the collection, Rob van der Bliet, the Music Librarian, and I, the music cataloguer at the time, began to take a more intentional and planned approach to building this special collection. Ultimately, holdings grew to over 700 CDs, including most of the seminal sound recordings in each major subgenre, as well as a large number of books and periodicals on the subject. This project is ongoing and, as far as I know, has resulted in the largest body of heavy metal recordings, books, and periodicals to be held at any Canadian university.

The project has also led to an examination into the nature of heavy metal subgenres, the important recordings from each, and some of the difficulties in effectively collecting and cataloguing this material. The remainder of this paper is concerned with these issues, in the hopes of inspiring other Canadian music libraries to build similar collections.

## **UNDERSTANDING HEAVY METAL GENRES**

My intent in the following section is to introduce some of the principal subgenres of heavy metal, in order to increase music librarians' understanding of the broad range of styles that need to be covered in a collection development strategy. Heavy metal is the object of a great deal of bias and lack of respect; I hope that a better understanding of the music will help to overcome some of this.

There is a constant concern among fans, critics, and performers of metal music with drawing fine distinctions between who is and who is not metal, and with determining where in the dizzying collection of metal subgenres a particular band belongs. With the possible exception of electronic dance music, there is no other form of popular music that has fragmented into so many distinct styles. This proliferation and the fine distinctions that are made can be somewhat daunting to the uninitiated.

Many attempts have been made to create visual guides to this generic diffusion, with varying results. Often these charts and tables only serve to confuse the matter—drawing thick borders where there should be broad smudges, defining precedents without historical justification, and using nomenclature that runs contrary to common usage. Such diagrams can, however, be useful for displaying the broad categories and well-documented relationships, helping newcomers to the music grasp these basic categories and relationships. For an example of one such visual guide, see figure 1.

For the most part, heavy metal genres have been created and perpetuated by performers and fans, rather than by critics, record labels, and the media. Most metal subgenres are more than marketing categories; they follow a distinct and well-defined code, or set of rules. These rules are initially exemplified by a band or collection of bands and then picked up and codified by other bands and fans until a unique designation gets applied to the style. Each subgenre is often more than simply a variation in instrumentation, compositional, and performance techniques, but includes other dimensions related to visual style, lyrical themes, and other

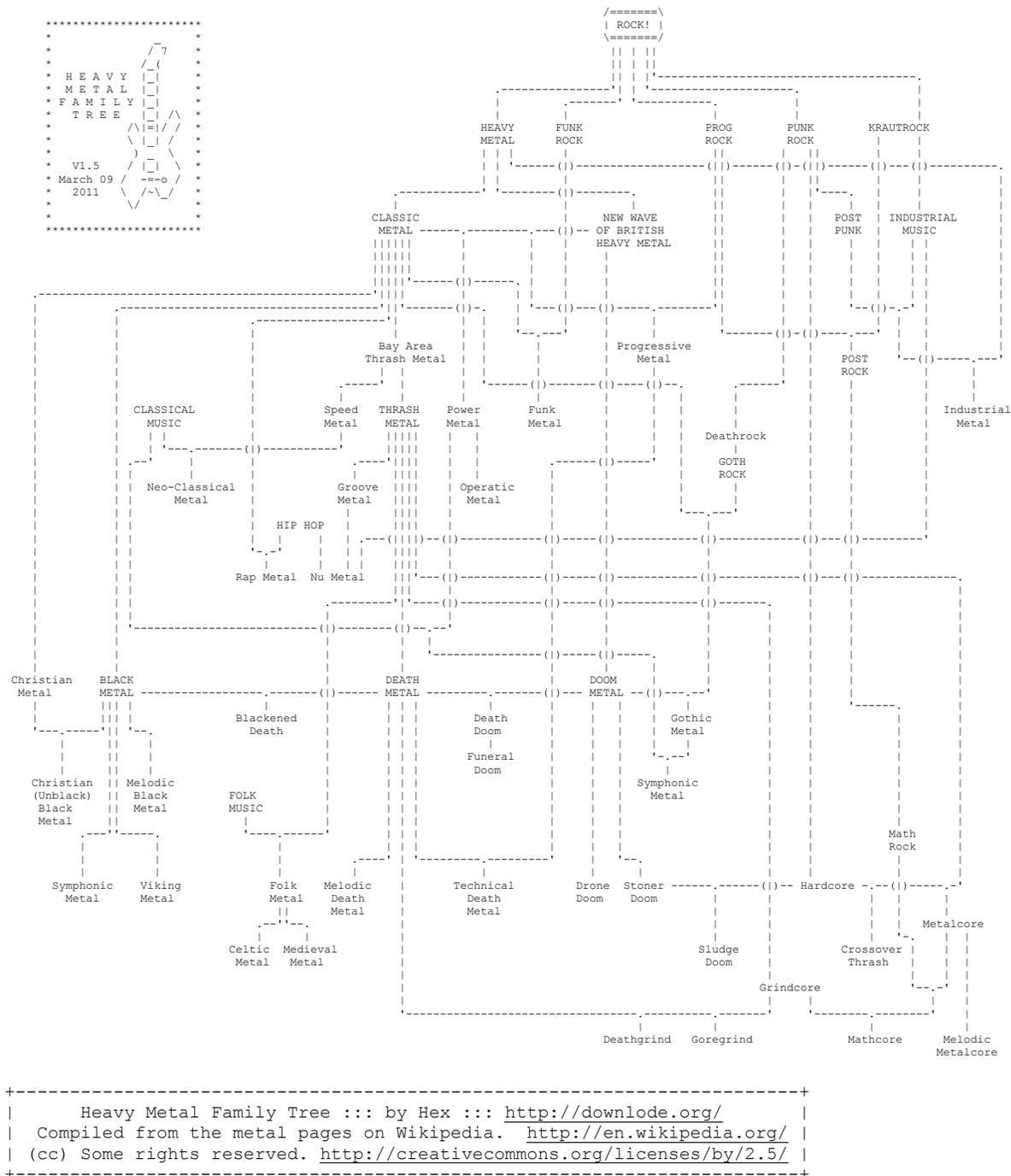


Figure 1

subcultural elements shared by both the artists and their fans. Going to a Death Metal show and a Black Metal show, for example, can be very different experiences, along not only sonic, but visual and textual dimensions as well.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Deena Weinstein, *Heavy Metal: The Music and Its Culture*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Da Capo Press, 2000): 6-8.

How do the subgenres originate? It often begins with bands creating specialized niches, taking elements of the heavy metal “code” and emphasizing certain features to the exclusion of others.<sup>10</sup> It could start with an emphasis on rhythm over melody, a new vocal technique, a new guitar sound, an avoidance of the traditional guitar solo, a slip towards atonality, and so forth. As other bands and fans close ranks around this new style, it can come to be seen as distinct from other styles and worthy of having a new label assigned to it. These subgenres stand at the peripheries of metal or at the intersection of metal and other genres of music, but retain enough of the traditional heavy metal code to remain within the family—to be considered an off-shoot rather than an entirely new genre.

A more difficult question, perhaps, is why these subgenres develop and why metal has so many compared to other types of popular music. A complete answer to this question is beyond the scope of this article, but briefly, here are a few ideas to consider. First, metal has always been about being the most “extreme” form of rock music: the loudest, most dangerous, most powerful, most frightening. Often, when new genres emerge, we’re seeing a new generation of performers attempting to outdo the previous, by being faster, louder, “heavier,” more technical and virtuosic.<sup>11</sup> This is the reactionary development. We also see new genres created at the intersection of metal and other forms of music. Rap-metal or nu-metal, for instance, combines metal with rap, funk, and hip-hop musics. Industrial metal brings industrial music into the mix, hardcore brings punk rock, and ambient metal brings in ambient and electronic music. We also see mixing at the borders of metal genres themselves, creating fusions such as gothic metal, death-doom, ambient black metal and so forth.

Ronald Byrnside has noted that many styles of popular music go through a series of stages in their construction and eventual dissolution: formation, crystallization, and decay.<sup>12</sup> This model is useful for looking at musical genres. In the formative stage, a new style detaches itself from its predecessor; in the crystallization phase, the new style establishes itself and the audience begins to recognize its boundaries; finally, the style becomes so predictable that both the composer/performer and the audience begin to lose interest, and so the style enters a state of decay.

Deena Weinstein, in her classic study on heavy metal, applies Byrnside’s model but argues that rather than decaying, heavy metal has gone through a process of fragmentation, during which it has split into a great number of distinctive subgenres. While some of these may have fallen into a state of decay or been abandoned entirely, others are thriving to this day. Furthermore, the fragmentation continues, with new subgenres being created as metal develops and fuses with other styles of music.<sup>13</sup>

I would like to look closely at a few of these subgenres in order to give a sense of what distinguishes them and how they can be identified. There tends to be a continuum from well-established and accepted subgenres to more controversial ones. This aspect has become particularly interesting in the internet age, where information is created and propagated so

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<sup>10</sup> For more discussion of this “code,” see the first chapter of Weinstein’s book.

<sup>11</sup> Albert Mudrian’s book *Death: The Improbable History of Death Metal and Grindcore* has some convincing quotes to support this. For example, from Joseph Mascis of the band Deep Wound: “We wanted to play as fast as possible ... All we were concerned with, really, was playing faster and faster.” (p. 47).

<sup>12</sup> Ronald Byrnside, “The Formation of a Musical Style: Early Rock,” in *Contemporary Music and Cultures*, ed. Charles Hamm, Bruno Nettl, and Ronald Byrnside (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

<sup>13</sup> Weinstein, 7.

quickly. It is fascinating, for example, to read the "talk" pages for Wikipedia articles on metal genres. Since anyone can create a page on Wikipedia, there is no need for any kind of consensus before a new term is added. Debate can quickly form in the talk pages, however, around the legitimacy and quality of an article. Discussion surrounding metal subgenres tends to concern the names and essential attributes of the style in question. As well, any subgenre term that appears on Wikipedia and survives the initial debate can quickly spread around the Web. This is the case even for highly controversial genres. In this way, influential web sites such as Wikipedia or Encyclopedia Metallum may have a hand in "creating" or defining genres themselves.<sup>14</sup>

Following is an examination of the four principle "extreme" subgenres of metal: thrash metal, doom metal, death metal, and black metal. These are the main subgenres to emerge since the fragmentation of metal in the late 1970s and are, arguably, the most accepted and well-defined in the literature today. The history and principle characteristics of each of these four subgenres will be briefly described, with a list of representative recordings a library might want in its collection included as an appendix.

## **THRASH METAL**

We can start with thrash metal because it was the first of the distinctive "extreme" metal genres—metal that was abrasive and difficult, and, at least initially, fell outside the popular metal sphere.

Thrash emerged on the US West Coast, principally in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area. It was in large part a reaction against the prevailing metal genre in Los Angeles at the time—the glam metal or hair metal scene—and its perceived commercialization, effeminacy, and lack of toughness. These flashy, theatrical acts with big hair, makeup, spandex, and headbands, epitomized by bands such as Motley Crue, WASP, and Twisted Sister, were vilified by a new generation of players listening to raunchier sounds coming out of England and continental Europe in the late 1970s.<sup>15</sup> In a way, glam brought thrash into being, as without it, the thrashers would not have had a target to unite against. Many metal subgenres have been born in opposition like this.

Thrash took its cues from the so-called New Wave of British Heavy Metal, a movement in the late-70s English clubs that "toughened up" the sound of the 70s megabands like Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin, and Judas Priest, increasing the tempo and incorporating elements from punk rock music. Thrash was about speed, power, trademark "crunchy" guitar riffs, and technical proficiency.

Three of the "Big Four" of thrash metal, Metallica, Megadeth, and Slayer, all came out of the west coast scene, starting out in either Los Angeles or the Bay area. The other, Anthrax, originated in New York City. A third scene in Germany developed slightly later and produced bands such as Sodom, Kreator and Destruction. All of the scenes, as with most nascent metal genres, were built around small, independent record stores that were importing the latest, most "hardcore" music from around North America and Europe. Also important in giving a sense of identity and organization to these scenes were tape-trading networks, underground magazines and, eventually, college radio play. While, at the beginning, getting signed to a label and

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<sup>14</sup> See, for example, the Talk Page on "Symphonic Metal": [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Symphonic\\_metal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Symphonic_metal) (accessed March 30, 2011).

<sup>15</sup> Rick Ernst, *Get Thrashed: The Story of Thrash Metal*, DVD, (New York: Lightyear Entertainment, 2008).

releasing commercial LPs was a distant dream to these bands, they could all easily and cheaply make cassette tape demos. These were then distributed among fans locally and even nationally and helped create rabid and ready fans for many bands.<sup>16</sup>

As some of the thrash bands began to play more concerts, gaining visibility and a solid fan base, record labels sprang up to release their music. The two major early thrash labels in the US were Metalblade Records on the West Coast and Megaforce Records in New York. These two labels released many of the early thrash albums by the “Big Four,” as well as other influential thrash bands such as Testament, Vio-lence, Overkill, Anvil, and Exciter. There were several other young labels releasing thrash metal in the early 80s, including Combat Records and Noise Records.

The principal characteristics of thrash metal include fast tempos, “shredding” guitar solos, and complex, often palm-muted rhythm guitar riffs. An earlier prototype genre that preceded thrash, exemplified by the band Motorhead, is sometimes called “speed metal” due to its increased tempo. Thrash picked things up another notch and rarely relented—it was not until the 90s that thrash bands such as Metallica began incorporating anything that could be termed a “power ballad”. There is a physicality and endurance required to keep up such tempos throughout the course of a concert, particularly for drummers, who are often equipped with double kick drums to maintain the fast, pounding pace of thrash songs.

A “riff” in blues, rock, and metal is a repeated chord progression on the guitar—usually doubled by the bass—lasting a few bars and sometimes transposed up or down through the course of a song. These chords usually consist of only the root and the fifth and/or octave played on the lower strings of the guitar, omitting the third and any upper extensions, which makes the tonality vague and allows for a greater amount of chromaticism. In hard rock and metal music, these are called “power chords”. Heavy metal songwriters became fond of power chord riffs built on minor seconds, minor thirds, and diminished fifths in particular—intervals that are often seen as having a tense or “evil” sound.

The riffs of early metal bands such as Black Sabbath were relatively simple and often consisted of only a few chords. Thrash bands were building longer, more varied, and more complex riffs and playing them at blistering speeds and extreme volume. Guitarists often used a technique called palm-muting, in which the player uses a part of their picking hand on the bridge of the instrument to mute, or dampen, the sound of distorted power chords. Alternating muted and unmuted chords allowed guitarists to create a kind of “chugging” sound that is characteristic of thrash metal and, later, death metal.

Although the rhythm guitar/bass riffs give thrash its distinctive sound to a large degree, lead guitar solos are another important feature, more so than in any of the other extreme metal subgenres. “Shredding” involves a collection of guitar techniques that are generally performed at a high speed and volume. These include sweep and tremolo picking, finger-tapping and trills, and liberal use of the whammy bar for “dive bombs” and other such effects.<sup>17</sup> All serve to increase the speed and energy of the guitar solos that are essential to most thrash metal songs. Excellent examples of this style can be heard in the dueling guitar solos of Slayer’s Kerry King and Jeff Hanneman.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> See the Wikipedia article on “Shred Guitar” for descriptions of these and other techniques: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shred\\_guitar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shred_guitar) (accessed March 30, 2011).

The vocal style and lyrical content of thrash metal are fairly diverse and are not defining elements. Vocals can range from high, soaring falsettos to low, aggressive shouting and topics run from violence to politics to Armageddon to Satanism. Unlike death, black and doom, thrash does not have as consistent a set of themes or method of vocal delivery.

As thrash developed through the later 80s, the 90s, and into the twenty-first century, the “Big Four” came to be its most lasting, dedicated, and popular practitioners. Metallica in particular built an enormous following and has been one of the most successful rock bands of any genre. Many of the other thrash bands—along with all forms of metal—suffered in the 90s with the rise of grunge and the Seattle alternative rock scene. Further decline was caused by the emergence of so-called nu-metal in the late 90s. Bands playing this style; such as Limp Bizkit, Korn, System of a Down, and Slipknot; were incorporating grunge, hip hop, electronics, and DJs/turntablists into their fundamentally metal music.<sup>18</sup>

After a decade of marginalization, there has been something of a resurgence of thrash in recent years.<sup>19</sup> Many bands in Europe and America have been looking back to early albums from the likes of Slayer and Metallica and creating a throwback style that looks and sounds similar to 80s thrash. These include young bands such as The Haunted, Carnal Forge, Dew-Scented, Municipal Waste, Bonded by Blood, and Merciless Death. Elements of thrash also live on in death metal, the extreme metal subgenre that followed it and incorporated many of its devices.

## **DOOM METAL**

While all metal owes a heavy debt to Black Sabbath, its true progeny—the subgenre that has most carefully extracted and refined that band's distinctive characteristics—is doom metal. Guitarist Tony Iommi's thick, heavy riffs, the band's medium-slow tempos, and Ozzy Osbourne's lyrics of despair and paranoia on albums such as *Black Sabbath* and *Paranoid* are the essence of doom.

A glacial style of metal, doom is characterized primarily by these relatively slow, plodding tempos—which contrast strongly with those of speed/thrash metal, the other metal subgenre developing in the late 70s and early 80s—and dense textures. These thick, heavy textures are often achieved with a combination of heavy distortion and down-tuned guitars—guitars with their strings dropped below standard tuning to achieve lower frequencies than would normally be available. Doom can be seen as a somewhat “neoclassical” metal genre and its development a reaction against prevailing trends towards speed and technical prowess. Indeed, some of the later subgenres of doom return to the very roots of Sabbath itself, as sludge metal and stoner metal take some cues from the psychedelic and blues rock of the sixties. In the other direction, doom is also one of the more experimental and pioneering areas of metal, with drone doom bands experimenting with minimalism, noise, electronics, and more ambient textures.

Lyricaly, doom metal tends to be more introspective than other major metal subgenres. It lacks the aggression and violence of thrash, death, or black metal and focuses on more existential concerns—anxiety, despair, suffering, fear, death. Some doom bands display an interest in the fantastic and mythological as well, with songs about wizards, warriors and fantastical creatures. Perhaps, again, they are taking their cue from the more psychedelic hard rock and metal bands of the early 70s, such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, or from the nascent genre of Viking metal. Other themes include ancient civilizations; paganism, witchcraft, and the occult (another

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<sup>18</sup> See Jeff Kitts and Brad Tolinski, *Guitar World Presents Nu-Metal* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2002).

<sup>19</sup> Ernst.

obsession of metal precursors such as Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin); or drugs and psychedelia, as in the case of sludge/stoner metal.

Doom's early development can be traced through the late 70s and early 80s with Sabbath-influenced bands such as Pentagram, St. Vitus, Trouble, Pagan Altar, Candlemass, and Witchfinder General.<sup>20</sup> These bands remained outside of the popular metal/hard rock scene of the time, which was focused on glam, power metal, and, later, speed/thrash metal, and developed their own underground following. Some of these bands, such as Pentagram, which formed in the early 70s but did not release a commercial full-length recording until 1985, toiled in obscurity for many years. Nonetheless, these early doom bands forged a distinct and recognizable style of metal. Though the precise origin of the term is debated, "doom metal" was in common use by the mid-80s and was popularized with the 1986 release of Candlemass' *Epicus Doomicus Metallicus*.<sup>21</sup>

After a period of decline, due to the dominance of other subgenres, there was a resurgence of doom metal in the 90s when many bands attempted to merge the prevailing metal subgenre, death metal, with doom characteristics. By slowing death metal down and moving away somewhat from its morbid obsessions with violence and gore, these bands pioneered a distinct hybrid genre often referred to as death/doom,<sup>22</sup> which further developed into gothic metal. This latter subgenre, though it can be seen as distinct or as a fusion genre of heavy metal and Goth rock, has its roots in doom metal. The subgenre's three most influential bands, My Dying Bride, Anathema, and Paradise Lost, all began in a doom or death/doom style and gradually developed, taking on exterior influences.<sup>23</sup> Gothic metal tends to have a colder, more romantic character, is more complex and eclectic compositionally, and often features tighter arrangements and higher production values than other metal subgenres. The frequent use of keyboards and operatic female vocals brings gothic music much of its distinctive character.

## DEATH METAL

*My main goal was to bash out the most brutal riffs ever, with the most brutal guitar sound ever.*  
– Chuck Schuldiner of Death<sup>24</sup>

*We were trying to be the heaviest thing on the face of the planet. We wanted to piss people off and send everybody home.* – Jeff Becerra of Possessed<sup>25</sup>

Death metal has a history that is somewhat more complex than that of thrash or doom. Once again, however, it emerged among a new generation of metalheads wanting to play faster, louder, and more menacingly than anyone else. Death metal arose out of a confluence of three primary influences: thrash metal, developing on the US West Coast; the darkest and heaviest of European bands, particularly Venom and Celtic Frost; and "hardcore" punk rock and "grindcore" coming out of New York and the UK.<sup>26</sup> The genre emerged principally in Florida, with another

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<sup>20</sup> "Doom Metal," *Allmusic*, accessed April 1, 2011, <http://www.allmusic.com/explore/style/doom-metal-d11956>.

<sup>21</sup> Garry Sharpe-Young, *A-Z of Doom & Gothic Metal* (London: Cherry Red, 2003).

<sup>22</sup> "Death/doom," *Wikipedia*, accessed April 1, 2011, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death/doom>.

<sup>23</sup> Sharpe-Young.

<sup>24</sup> Quoted in Albert Mudrian, *Choosing Death: The Improbable History of Death Metal & Grindcore* (Port Townsend, WA: Feral House, 2004), 67.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 25-65.

major scene developing almost simultaneously in Sweden.<sup>27</sup>

The early Florida bands, mostly based in and around Tampa, included several that defined the genre in the 80s: Possessed, Death, Amon, Executioner, and Morbid Angel. Possessed and Death (originally called Mantas) both formed in 1983 out of groups of high school friends. Possessed's vocalist, Jeff Becerra, is most often credited with first using the distinctive, guttural "death growl" vocal style that came to be a defining characteristic of the genre. His band may also have been responsible for the term "death metal" itself, this being the title of the last track on their debut album, *Seven Churches* (1984).<sup>28</sup>

Chuck Schuldiner of Death is considered to be one of the early architects of death metal, defining the sound and bringing together some of the best early players in the genre from both the east and west coasts. After producing several influential demos, Death released their first full-length album, *Scream Bloody Gore*, in 1987. Released on Combat Records, this debut was called "death metal at its utter most extreme, brutal, raw and offensive—the kind that separates true death metallers from countless trend-following wimps."<sup>29</sup> Death, with various line-up changes, would continue playing and releasing well-regarded albums until Schuldiner's death in 2001.

Morbid Angel, led by guitarist Trey Azagthoth, would develop into the first truly virtuosic death metal group. They formed in the early 80s, and while they recorded their first demo, *Abominations of Desolation*, in 1987, they really honed their sound practicing around the clock in a rented house in Charlotte, North Carolina, the following year. The crucial component of the band was drummer Pete Sandoval, who joined in '88 and perfected the high-speed blast beats essential to the death metal sound.<sup>30</sup> Morbid Angel released their first albums, both classics of the genre, in 1989 (*Altars of Madness*) and 1991 (*Blessed are the Sick*) and have continued to record into the twenty-first century.

Death metal pushed many of the characteristics of thrash metal a step further: faster, darker, more complex, more distortion, more unconventional vocal styles. The last is the most easily distinguishable element of death metal. Vocalists sing in a deep, guttural growl—often referred to as the "death growl" or as "Cookie Monster"<sup>31</sup> vocals—which is largely unintelligible. The death growl blends well with the down-tuned, heavily distorted sound used by death metal guitarists.

In terms of their composition, death metal songs tend to be extremely fast and complex, with frequent changes in meter and tempo. One technique used to create a punishing wall of sound in sections is the "blast beat", which has been described as follows: "The blast-beat generally comprises a repeated, sixteenth-note figure played at a very fast tempo, and divided uniformly among the kick drum, snare and ride, crash, or hi-hat cymbal."<sup>32</sup> Death metal drummers often utilize a double kick drum set-up, so as to be able to maintain the speed necessary to keep up with the guitars and create more punishing blast beats.

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<sup>27</sup> For a detailed history of this scene see Daniel Ekeroth, *Swedish Death Metal* (Brooklyn, NY: Bazillion Points Books, 2008).

<sup>28</sup> Mudrian, p. 70.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Mudrain, p. 75.

<sup>30</sup> Mudrian, p. 82-86.

<sup>31</sup> "Death Growl," *Wikipedia*, accessed April 1, 2011, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death\\_growl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_growl).

<sup>32</sup> "Blast Beat," *Wikipedia*, accessed April 2, 2011, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blast\\_beat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blast_beat).

While the imagery and lyrical content of heavy metal has been on the dark side from the beginning, it certainly took its most gruesome turn with the emergence of death metal. The band names themselves can give a good sense of this: Severe Torture, Massacre, Napalm Death, Atrocity, etc. These names are representative of the preoccupations of the subgenre: gore; misanthropy; extremely violent acts such as torture, rape, cannibalism, mutilation; and wanton destruction or Armageddon. The album art and band logos often have a slasher-film or apocalyptic aesthetic. Unfortunately—or fortunately, depending on one's perspective—death metal lyrics are often incomprehensible, due to the vocal style. One must often turn to the liner notes to make sense of them. Here is a representative example from the band Severe Torture:

*Spiritual obscenity  
Creates my desire to kill  
Victims lay down screaming  
Ready to be butchered*

*I open their eyes  
For them to see  
How I start eating  
Of their flesh  
Mental sickness  
Overrules my sympathy*

*Misanthropic carnage  
Molesting each and every part  
Mutilating their souls  
Until they'll fear the light  
Misanthropic carnage  
Slaughtering humanity  
With their useless, fucked up minds  
They'll crawl for me and die!!!*

*Fucking the wounds  
Of the half rotten cadavers  
With sickened disgust  
Of what they believe  
Sexual fulfillment  
As I cum in their lying mouths<sup>33</sup>*

As death metal developed into the twenty-first century, it began—like the metal genre as a whole—to fragment into specialized styles and fuse with other types of music. A few of the more prominent styles to emerge are Melodic Death Metal, Brutal Death Metal, and Technical Death Metal. The former, also referred to as the "Gothenburg sound" due to its birthplace, incorporated a more melodic vocal style and a more traditional harmonic base into the death metal sound. The "brutal" and "technical" styles represent opposing perspectives on how to approach writing and playing death metal. Brutal death metal is somewhat rougher, with more basic riffs and song structures, while technical death metal focuses on more complex, progressive arrangements, with many virtuosic changes in riffs, tempos, time signatures, and dynamics.

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<sup>33</sup> Severe Torture, "Misanthropic Carnage," in *Misanthropic Carnage* (Netherlands: Hammerheart Records, 2002).

## BLACK METAL

Black metal is one of the more difficult metal subgenres to define. The principal reason for this is that it is often connected as much with a particular ideology or movement than with specific musical characteristics. Associated with Satanism almost from the start, black metal is sometimes understood as being any type of metal that is overtly Satanist, thus the “black” label and long-time association with the black arts. However, when one examines this association more closely, away from the hyperbole of the media,<sup>34</sup> there are few supposedly black metal bands that are practicing Satanists to any significant degree. More often, their use of Satanism is a kind of theater, designed to provoke the establishment, gain notoriety, and with that notoriety more popularity with disenfranchised youths and metal fans in Christian nations. This can be seen with early black metal bands such as Venom and Mercyful Fate, whose elaborate stage shows, costumes, and album covers often included enactments of ritual sacrifice and other practices associated with the dark arts, but who now readily admit that their flirtation with Satanism was shallow at best.<sup>35</sup>

The other problem with the Satanist label is that many bands that did have a strong ideology behind their music were not Satanists but rather endorsed some form of paganism/heathenism or romantic nationalism. This was especially the case with Scandinavian black metal, with bands like Bathory and Burzum espousing pre-Christian ideologies connected to their Nordic roots. For this reason, it is useful to categorize the ideology of black metal more broadly as anti-Christian, rather than labeling it Satanist, pagan, or with any other category. This is not to say that there are no overtly Satanist black metal groups; the band Ulver, for example, and Ishan, the vocalist for the influential band Emperor, do proclaim themselves practicing Satanists—though their fairly mature ideologies do not fit popular conceptions.<sup>36</sup> Such groups, however, are very much in the minority.

While being anti-Christian might be a necessary condition for music to be called black metal, it is clearly not sufficient. The history of metal has been rife with anti-Christian sentiment almost from the beginning,<sup>37</sup> and this attitude pervades all subgenres to some extent. The anti-Christian outlook must be combined with specific musical characteristics to give the genre identity and definition. While black metal cannot be as easily defined by a few distinctive techniques, as can other subgenres such as doom, thrash, or death metal, there are some broad stylistic trends.

Black metal is one of the latest in a series of increasingly “extreme” genres of metal, extremity here usually defined by increasing levels of speed, volume, and general abrasiveness. Thus, black metal tends to be faster, louder, rougher, and more menacing than other forms of metal. These are all ambiguous and relative terms, of course, but there are some more specific stylistic conventions we can identify: black metal tends more towards the higher frequencies than the lower, in terms of both vocal and guitar styles. Rather than the thundering, palm-muted, and bass-heavy power chords that characterize thrash and death metal, black metal often features sheets of thin, trebly guitar and single-note lines. As well, rather than gravelly, deep-throated or clean, soaring vocals, black metal singers grunt, scream, wail, and are generally menacing and

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<sup>34</sup> See Michael Moynihan and Didrick Soderlind, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, New ed. (Port Townsend, WA: Feral House, 1998): 99-102.

<sup>35</sup> *Det Svarte Alvor*, video aired on Norwegian television NRK TV2 in 1994.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, Black Sabbath’s self-title debut, released in 1970.

unintelligible in their shrill cries. In classic Norwegian black metal, the guitarists usually employ tremolo picking, where each single note is repeated rapidly to create long, sustained, and piercing guitar lines.

Low production values are another characteristic of black metal. While at the beginning, with the early recordings of bands like Venom and Bathory and again in the early development of the Norwegian scene, this was out of necessity—run-down demo studios or home recording was all that was available to them—it was also intentional at times. By way of example, some of the recordings of Mayhem, Burzum, and Darkthrone were made with equipment completely inappropriate to the task; for instance, use of a pair of headphones as a microphone to record vocal tracks.<sup>38</sup> This thin, lo-fi sound helped maintain black metal's status as a raw, underground scene. Always averse to commercialism of any kind, black metal groups—particularly those from the Norwegian scene—have been careful to maintain their integrity and credibility, avoiding any accusations of selling out or pandering to an audience. This is part of black metal's reaction to the codification and commercialization of the previously most extreme metal genre, death metal, in the late 80s and early 90s.<sup>39</sup>

Not surprisingly, black metal lyrics are often concerned with Satan, satanic ritual, and the occult. These themes can be found in everything from the earliest recording of Venom, *Welcome to Hell*, to contemporary superstar black metal bands like Cradle of Filth, leaving little question as to why this genre of music came to be associated with devil worship. But beyond this, there are several other important themes to be found in the lyrics and song titles of black metal: misanthropy, Norse mythology, nature worship, folklore, fantasy, Nietzschean will to power, and, occasionally, racism. Because black metal vocals are often indecipherable (not to mention that much influential black metal is sung in Norwegian), the content of the lyrics often has less impact than the nature of their delivery. While black metal does often have an ideology behind it—a worldview more sophisticated than the sex, drugs, and rock & roll anti-establishment position of most other forms of rock and metal—it is not overtly political, as are punk rock and hardcore to a degree. Some black metal bands claim they are not trying to incite the listeners to any kind of political action; instead, their music is often intended to communicate on more of a spiritual level.<sup>40</sup>

The history of black metal can best be told as a sequence of three waves: the precursors, the Norwegian scene, and the later popularization and commercialization of the genre. But prior to the real musical precursors of the genre, there are a few bands that deserve mention for the earliest use of satanic ritual, face paint, and other characteristics that have become associated with black metal. Two rock bands in the late 60s and early 70s, Coven and Black Widow, under the influence of Anton LaVey and his Church of Satan, created elaborate stage shows featuring black masses and other occult rituals.<sup>41</sup> Though these bands were playing a kind of progressive rock and any musical influence on black metal would be extremely tangential, the satanic and occult lyrics and imagery they employed would be influential on bands that would develop the genre, such as King Diamond of Mercyful Fate. Other performers, such as Alice Cooper and Kiss would pioneer the use of face paint in heavy metal. Though their use was somewhat more colorful, garish and theatrical, it was a precedent for the black and white "corpse paint" that

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<sup>38</sup> "The Count Speaks ...," *Terrorizer* 28, March 1996.

<sup>39</sup> Moynihan and Soderlind, 31-32.

<sup>40</sup> *Det Svarte Alvor*.

<sup>41</sup> Rockworld TV, *Murder Music: A History of Black Metal*, originally aired April 13, 2007, available at <http://www.rockworld.tv/MurderMusicPlayer.html> (accessed April 2, 2011).

many Norwegian black metal bands and their fans would employ in the 90s.<sup>42</sup> Thus there are continua along several lines that lead from some of these early rock and metal bands through to the black metal pioneers, and much of the ideology, imagery, and performance techniques were there to be appropriated by black metal artists in the later 80s and 90s.

The musical precursors to black metal are a collection of relatively unconnected and geographically dispersed groups that laid some of the foundations and broke some of the boundaries that allowed the genre to develop. These developments are most often traced to Venom in England, Celtic Frost in Switzerland, and Bathory in Sweden, as these are the groups frequently cited as an influence by those who would establish the genre.<sup>43</sup> With their 1982 album *Black Metal*, Venom gave the genre its name. Though they were playing a more raw and extreme type of speed or thrash metal at this time, it was noticeably distinct from many contemporary thrash bands, and when asked in interviews what this music should be called, they allowed that "black metal" was an appropriate enough label.<sup>44</sup> Though Venom had no particular ideology behind their music and, at heart, they were really a sex, drugs, and rock & roll type of band, like many other metal acts of the 80s, with songs about drinking, partying, women, and rock & roll, there is an increasing amount of blasphemous and satanic lyrical content and imagery in their work. In their early albums *Welcome To Hell* and *Black Metal*, Venom set another black metal tradition by choosing a distinctive stage name for each band member. This is a tradition that was followed by many black metal bands well into the 90s, and many of the major figures in black metal are principally known by these *noms de guerre*: Euronymous, Count Grishnakh, Nocturno Culto, Abbath, Ihsahn, Faust, etc. Venom's influence extends beyond just black metal, as many players in the thrash, death metal, grindcore and other developing styles of extreme metal have pointed back to Venom as a turning point in the development of many of the most brutal styles of heavy metal.

Like Venom, Celtic Frost produced music of an increased level of rawness and "extremity" and was influential to a variety of upstart bands that would help develop not only black metal, but death metal and grindcore as well. But the band that would be most influential and is the earliest embodiment of many of the distinctive characteristics of black metal is the Swedish band Bathory, which was essentially a one-man studio project of the enigmatic guitarist Quorthorn. The satanic lyrics, Viking imagery, low-fi production values and raw, guttural vocal style of Bathory would be an inspiration to many in the 80s metal underground. Many Norwegian bands, including Mayhem and Burzum, have cited Bathory as a primary influence. This is in large part due to Bathory's glorification of Norse mythology in their lyrics and album art; these themes are most clearly stated in the so-called "Viking Trilogy", beginning with the 1988 album *Blood, Fire, Death* and followed by *Hammerheart* and *Twilight of the Gods*.

The origin of black metal as we know it today was in Norway in the late 80s and early 90s. Here, a number of bands influenced by Venom, Bathory, Celtic Frost, as well as by punk and progressive rock music, and reacting to what they saw as the increasing commercialism and decadence in Swedish death metal music, built a scene sympathetic to the most extreme music and codified the conventions of the black metal genre. Led by Mayhem in the late 80s, and soon followed by bands such as Darkthrone, Burzum, Emperor, Ulver, and Immortal, a youthful extreme metal scene, built on word of mouth, tape trading, underground fanzines, chance

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<sup>42</sup> For an excellent photographic display of "corpse paint", see Peter Beste and Johan Kugelberg, *True Norwegian Black Metal: We Turn in the Night Consumed by Fire* (Brooklyn, New York: Vice Books, 2008).

<sup>43</sup> Pal Asadal and Martin Ledang, *Once Upon a Time in Norway*, DVD ([UK]: Plastic Head, 2008).

<sup>44</sup> See interview with Venom's Cronos in Bill Zebub, *Black Metal: A Documentary*, DVD ([USA]: Bill Zebub Productions, 2007).

meetings at metal shows, and other pre-internet forms of communication, began to form, primarily in and around the city of Oslo. With ideological and musical leaders Oystein "Euronymous" Aarseth and Varg "Count Grishnakh" Vikernes and an inner circle of initiates formed at the record store Helvete ("Hell"), the bands in this scene strove to create the most extreme metal possible.<sup>45</sup>

Along with the unprecedentedly vicious music itself, there were a number of controversial events in the early 90s that put black metal in the media spotlight and likely led, to some degree, to its rise in popularity. These included church burnings, grave desecration, suicide, and murder, and while perpetrated by only a small minority of the black metal community, they have helped to shape the genre and give it its individual identity, for both the public and the members of the scene itself. These events form a distinct and powerful origin story for the genre and are to some degree the reason why the Norwegian scene is such an essential part of the narrative of black metal history.<sup>46</sup>

In the later 90s and early 2000s, some bands playing in the black metal style raised the quality of production and marketing and achieved a level of success and popularity that was likely never anticipated (or desired) by the subgenre's originators. Dimmu Borgir, from Norway, and particularly Cradle of Filth, from England, created a somewhat more accessible and marketable form of black metal that their labels and promoters were able to capitalize on for substantial record sales and concert tours. Not surprisingly, as this is a form of music that prides itself on an outsider and underground approach, many black metal fans have accused bands such as these as being "sell-outs" or not "True Norwegian Black Metal."<sup>47</sup>

As with other types of metal, black metal has splintered into a number of subgenres and styles, including fusions with other genres and types of music. Some bands, in searching for their roots, have returned to what is often called Viking metal, a type of black metal that uses Norse mythology as its inspiration and lyrical subject matter. Others have incorporated old folk songs and created the unlikely genre of folk black metal. The influential black metal band Ulver, for example, frequently includes acoustic interludes in their songs and with their second full-length, *Kveldssanger*,<sup>48</sup> they created an entire album of acoustic string music based on Norwegian folklore. Bands such as Emperor have created a much more complex, lyrical, and orchestral type of black metal that is often described as symphonic black metal.<sup>49</sup> On their second album, *Anthems to the Welkin at Dusk* (1997), Emperor created elaborate, highly orchestrated compositions using layered guitars, keyboards, and dynamic, evolving compositions. Emperor initiated a type of black metal that cast off the low production values of early bands such as Mayhem and Darkthrone and embraced advanced studio techniques. On the fringes of the genre we can find black metal fusing with other styles of metal, such as doom metal (black doom) and death metal (blackened death metal), as well with musical genres outside of metal, including dark ambient music (ambient black metal). Burzum can be seen as a pioneer in the creation of the latter genre, as aspects of dark-tinged electronica can be found on early recordings, especially the 1996 album *Filosofem*. Varg Vikernes, the man behind Burzum, turned entirely to electronic music after his incarceration for murder in the mid-90s, releasing

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<sup>45</sup> Moynihan and Soderlind, p. 71-75.

<sup>46</sup> See Moynihan and Soderlind for a detailed history of these events.

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, message board topics such as "Black Metal 'Sellouts': Dimmu Borgir vs. Cradle of Filth," [http://www.metalstorm.net/forum/topic.php?topic\\_id=1562](http://www.metalstorm.net/forum/topic.php?topic_id=1562) (accessed April 2, 2011).

<sup>48</sup> Ulver, *Kveldssanger* ([Norway]: Head Not Found, 1996).

<sup>49</sup> "Symphonic Black Metal," *Allmusic*, accessed April 2, 2011, <http://www.allmusic.com/explore/style/symphonic-black-metal-d11957>.

several albums in this style under the Burzum name—though this may have been due more to necessity than choice, with his musical options in prison being somewhat limited.

It is unfortunate that black metal music has often been overshadowed by the violence and criminal exploits of some of its high-profile practitioners. Within the genre can be found some of the purest, rawest, and most powerful metal made in the last two decades, as well as the most beautiful, if one opens their ear to the music.

## CATALOGUING METAL

Unfortunately, as librarians—and especially as cataloguers—we are often forced to jam things into generic boxes. Traditional subject cataloguing and classification do not allow for the refined categories that we might like to utilize with a complex musical genre like heavy metal. So, within the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), what do we have to work with?

- Heavy metal (Music)
- Alternative metal (Music)
- Black metal (Music)
- Death metal (Music)
- Extreme metal (Music)
- Hardcore (Music)
- Gothic rock music
- Glam rock music
- Industrial music

Though not terrible, this leaves a lot to be desired. To capture certain genres, a combination of headings is required. For example, for gothic metal one could use “Heavy metal (Music)” and “Gothic rock music”; similar combinations could be used for industrial metal or glam metal. But using multiple headings to capture one concept is not ideal. These subject headings are incapable of capturing many of the finer and well-established genres, however, and something more is needed.

Form/genre headings for music, which capture what an item is, rather than what it is about, are currently being prepared by the Music Genre/Form/Medium Group, a collaboration between the Library of Congress and the Music Library Association.<sup>50</sup> These headings would be applied separately from topical subject headings and would go in the MARC 655 field. There was a call for genre submissions from interested parties, and at York we contributed many of the most established metal subgenres. Whether or not these will be accepted is not clear at this point, as this is a work in progress and a finalized list has not yet been prepared. Form/genre headings would allow a greater amount of granularity and would also better represent sound recordings, which are manifestations of a particular genre, not commentaries on them.

Until form/genre headings for music are made available, there are a couple of options for adding more specificity to heavy metal materials. Individual institutions could create a set of genre terms to use in a locally defined field (MARC 59X or 69X). This would allow a lot more freedom in adding multiple and highly specific subgenre terms than LCSH does, though at the possible sacrifice of control, cross-references, and compatibility with other institutions’ records.

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<sup>50</sup> See “Genre/Form Headings for Musical Works,” <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsoc/genremusic.html> (accessed April 3, 2011).

The other option, which results in the same benefits and drawbacks, is to use a general MARC 500 field note. When dealing with sound recordings, AACR2 allows for a note detailing the “Nature or artistic form and medium of performance” (6.7B1) when this is not apparent from the rest of the description. This is the option we chose to use at York, which saved us from having to formally designate a local field dedicated to genre terms.

Both options require a cataloguer who has some experience with metal subgenres or, lacking that, one who is willing to spend additional time doing research into individual groups and performers. Hopefully, the preceding article will inspire such an interest in open-minded librarians, or at least help the closet metalheads around us to come out into the open and engage in such projects.

## APPENDIX: RECOMMENDED RECORDINGS

### THRASH METAL

Annihilator	<i>Alice in Hell</i>	1989	Roadrunner
Anthrax	<i>Among the Living</i>	1987	Megaforce
Artillery	<i>By Inheritance</i>	1990	Roadracer
D.R.I.	<i>Crossover</i>	1987	Metal Blade
Death Angel	<i>Act III</i>	1990	Geffen
Destruction	<i>Eternal Devastation</i>	1986	Metal Blade
Exodus	<i>Bonded By Blood</i>	1985	Combat
Kreator	<i>Pleasure to Kill</i>	1986	Noise
Megadeth	<i>Rust In Peace</i>	1990	Capitol
Metallica	<i>Kill 'Em All</i>	1983	Elektra
Nuclear Assault	<i>Game Over</i>	1987	Combat
Overkill	<i>The Years of Decay</i>	1989	Megaforce
Pantera	<i>Cowboys From Hell</i>	1990	Atlantic
Sepultura	<i>Beneath the Remains</i>	1989	Roadrunner
Slayer	<i>Reign in Blood</i>	1986	American
Sodom	<i>Agent Orange</i>	1989	Roadracer
Testament	<i>The Legacy</i>	1987	Atlantic
Vio-lence	<i>Eternal Nightmare</i>	1988	Mechanic
Voivod	<i>Nothingface</i>	1989	Mechanic

### DOOM METAL

Anethema	<i>Serenades</i>	1994	Peaceville
Burning Witch	<i>Crippled Lucifer</i>	1998	Southern Lord
Candlemass	<i>Epicus Doomicus Metallicus</i>	1986	Leviathan
Cathedral	<i>Forest of Equilibrium</i>	1991	Combat
Earth	<i>Earth 2</i>	1993	Sub Pop
Electric Wizard	<i>Come My Fanatics ...</i>	1996	Music Cartel
Eyehategod	<i>Take as Needed For Pain</i>	1993	Century Media
Khanate	<i>Khanate</i>	2001	Southern Lord
Melvins, The	<i>Gluey Porch Treatments</i>	1987	Boner
Obsessed, The	<i>The Church Within</i>	1994	Columbia
Paradise Lost	<i>Gothic</i>	1991	Peaceville
Pentagram	<i>Day of Reckoning</i>	1987	Peaceville
Sleep	<i>Jerusalem</i>	1999	Music Cartel
St. Vitus	<i>Born Too Late</i>	1986	SST
Sunn O)))	<i>Black One</i>	2005	Southern Lord
Thergothon	<i>Stream From the Heavens</i>	1994	Avantgarde Music
Thorr's Hammer	<i>Dommedagsnatt</i>	1996	Southern Lord
Trouble	<i>Psalm 9</i>	1984	Metal Blade
Witchfinder General	<i>Death Penalty</i>	1982	Heavy Metal

## DEATH METAL

At the Gates	<i>Slaughter of the Soul</i>	1995	Earache
Autopsy	<i>Severed Survival</i>	1989	Peaceville
Cryptopsy	<i>None So Vile</i>	1996	Wrong Again
Cynic	<i>Focus</i>	1993	Roadrunner
Dark Tranquility	<i>The Gallery</i>	1995	Osmose
Death	<i>Scream Bloody Gore</i>	1987	Combat
Deicide	<i>Deicide</i>	1990	Roadrunner
Dismember	<i>Like An Ever Flowing Stream</i>	1991	Nuclear Blast
Entombed	<i>Left Hand Path</i>	1990	Earache
Grave	<i>Into the Grave</i>	1991	Century Media
In Flames	<i>The Jester Race</i>	1995	Nuclear Blast
Morbid Angel	<i>Blessed are the Sick</i>	1991	Combat
Napalm Death	<i>Scum</i>	1987	Earache
Possessed	<i>Seven Churches</i>	1985	Relativity
Repulsion	<i>Horrorified</i>	1989	Necrosis
Unleashed	<i>Where No Life Dwells</i>	1991	Century Media

## BLACK METAL

Bathory	<i>Blood, Fire, Death</i>	1988	Kraze
Burzum	<i>Hvis Lyset Tar Oss</i>	1994	Misanthropy
Celtic Frost	<i>Into the Pandemonium</i>	1987	Noise
Darkthrone	<i>Under a Funeral Moon</i>	1993	Peaceville
Dimmu Borgir	<i>Enthroned Darkness Triumphant</i>	1997	Nuclear Blast
Emperor	<i>Anthems to the Welkin at Dusk</i>	1997	Century Media
Hellhammer	<i>Apocalyptic Raids 1990 A.D.</i>	1984	Noise
Immortal	<i>Pure Holocaust</i>	1993	Osmose
Mayhem	<i>De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas</i>	1994	Century Media
Mercyful Fate	<i>Don't Break the Oath</i>	1984	Roadrunner
Ved Buens Ende	<i>Written in Waters</i>	1995	Misanthropy
Venom	<i>Black Metal</i>	1982	Combat
Ulver	<i>Nattens Madrigal</i>	1996	Century Media
Wolves in the Throne Room	<i>Two Hunters</i>	2007	Southern Lord

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# MLA 2011: FIRST-TIMER IMPRESSIONS FROM A NEW MUSIC LIBRARIAN

BY ROBERT ZYLSTRA  
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This past February I had the privilege of attending the 80th Annual Meeting of the Music Library Association in Philadelphia, PA. As I am new to music librarianship, this event was an opportunity for me to ask questions and discuss the challenges of the field with experienced colleagues. What follows is a short account of my experiences at the conference in this beautiful and historically rich city.

Upon my arrival in Philadelphia I settled into my room at the Loews Hotel and headed to the opening reception. The number of attendees immediately surprised me: just under 480 people had registered for the conference. Prior to the conference, I had not put much thought into just how many music librarians were employed across North America, but it soon became clear that I was far from alone in this field! During the reception, the 'first-timer' ribbon on my nametag caught the eye of some enthusiastic and seasoned music librarians who welcomed me and then took opportunities throughout the conference to introduce me to others, which I appreciated greatly.

The next morning I arrived early for the plenary, which was preceded by a welcoming performance by a group of the Philadelphia Mummers. The opening panel presentation, entitled *Thinking Beyond the Disc: Disseminating Recordings in the Digital Era*, was an excellent precursor to the concurrent sessions that followed. First, Stephen Millen from the Philadelphia Orchestra explained how recordings that were originally a source of revenue for the organization have evolved into a marketing tool requiring investment. These recordings have become a method of brand recognition that ensures the Orchestra is known outside of the Philadelphia area. David Ludwig from the Curtis Institute of Music then spoke about how the Institute is using the InstantEncore platform to engage faculty, students and the public with concerts, videos and archival material. At the Curtis Institute, new technologies have been utilized to reduce a previously cumbersome recording process in order to deliver content in a time frame that meets current expectations. George Blood from Safe Sound Archives then closed the session with a thought-provoking presentation about the history of the recording industry and its continued importance.

My remaining time at the conference was packed with interesting concurrent sessions, impressive vendor showcases, and informal discussions with my new colleagues about current issues. In one notable presentation, Paul Engle, Director of Library Services at

Berklee College of Music in Boston, highlighted recent developments in the College's online course reserves system. I was impressed by this initiative, which is part of a larger resource management system that the College designed and built using open-source software. In addition to perusing the extensive vendor displays, I also managed to arrange meetings with some of the vendors that I have been working with for the past few months. This was time well spent as I had come prepared with several key questions related to building MacEwan's new music collection.

It would be a shame not to mention the unscheduled aspects of the conference milieu. Local attractions such as Independence Hall, noon-hour organ concerts at Macy's Department Store, and City Hall tours were just a few of the ways to take in the great city of Philadelphia. My favorite attraction was listening to the Wannamaker Organ at Macy's. After hearing the organ and meeting the organist, I couldn't help but give up a second noon hour to do it all over again. Unscheduled time was also spent in the hotel lobby where the only free wireless access could be found. This was at first somewhat frustrating, but joining other conference attendees in the lobby who were also seeking a connection to the outside world proved to be interesting and even entertaining at times. A number of informative discussions and connections developed as a result, including the first of several introductions to my Canadian colleagues. The Local Arrangements Committee Reception at Solmssen Court, University of the Arts, on Friday evening (a scheduled event with an unscheduled feel) was another excellent opportunity to share experiences and meet new people. I particularly enjoyed the search for a pub and the good conversation that followed this event. All of these activities helped make the conference memorable and were in many ways as useful as the program itself.

As a new music librarian eager to meet colleagues and discuss the issues, I felt that the MLA conference could not come soon enough. Attending after having had only six months on the job, I was introduced to new ideas, received confirmation of others and was forced to rethink my approach to some issues. Now that the conference is over I find myself looking forward to the next MLA annual meeting in Dallas, as well as Canadian and international conferences in Sackville (CAML 2011) and Montreal (IAML 2012). At this early stage in my career, opportunities that facilitate learning, discovery and discussion -- such as those I experienced at MLA 2011-- are invaluable. And on a final note, should you find yourself in Philadelphia, the noon-hour organ concerts at Macy's Department Store are not to be missed!

# CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS AND NEW INITIATIVES OF MLA 2011

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA  
FEBRUARY 9-12, 2011

BY CAROLYN DOI AND CATHY MARTIN  
MCGILL UNIVERSITY

The Music Library Association's 80th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, marked the first time a conference theme was employed for the annual event. "Born Digital: A New Frontier for Music Libraries" was the chosen theme and therefore the focus of many of the sessions. These included plenary, individual, panel-run, and poster sessions; as well as the "Hot Topics in Music Librarianship" discussion. The conference featured a range of topics, such as digital recordings and copyright, provision of online access to audio course reserves, approaches to collection development, new music resources, and preservation of recordings.

For those new to the organization, there were opportunities to learn more about the structure of MLA through committee business meetings and the "Get Involved with MLA" sessions. The latter represented another new initiative at this year's conference and offered participants an informal occasion to meet with committee chairs and round table coordinators, learn about the activities of these bodies, and explore opportunities for becoming involved. First-time attendees had the chance to attend the "first-timers" banquet and participate in the mentoring program, which successfully matched over seventy newcomers with more experienced MLA members.

The following are highlights and observations from selected conference sessions.

## **BORN AND REINCARNATED DIGITAL: ONE COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM-BASED SOLUTION TO PROVIDING COPYRIGHT COMPLIANT STREAMING AUDIO RESERVES**

This session, presented by Lisa Lazar and Carla Myers from the University of Akron, featured an introduction to the Streaming Media Reserves system implemented at the University of Akron Library. The system provides online streaming access to audio files on reserve for music courses at the University and the files are made accessible using the course management system, *SpringBoard!*.

The Streaming Media Reserves system provides password protected, streaming access for only those students enrolled in the courses for which the files are made available. The digital copies of the audio files are made only for works that are being taught as an integral part of the course, and the Library makes a good faith effort to purchase a commercially available copy of all requested items. The Library will only make copies available if they are not already offered through another online service such as Naxos Music Library or Classical Music Library. If the file is available through one of these vendors, a link is provided in the course management system. At the completion of the course, the files are removed from the system, but they can be stored for future use, by way of a searchable digitized file archive.

The concept-to-pilot time frame for this project was two years. It received the support of both the Library Administration and the Information Technology Services Department, and overall the feedback from students and faculty has been positive. In the future, the Library hopes to implement a streaming film component to the Streaming Media Reserve System, and to supplement the audio files with additional files or links.

### **ASK THE MLA/MPA/MOLA JOINT COMMITTEE**

The panel for this session included representatives from MLA (Music Library Association), MPA (Music Publishers' Association), and MOLA (Major Orchestra Librarians' Association). Panelists offered their perspectives regarding some of the complications involved in the publishing of music. The following issues were among those discussed: the differences in the needs of music libraries and performance libraries; the fact that because library sales are a very small percentage of the market, certain accommodations to make scores shelf-ready would not allow publishers to recoup costs; and the problem of ongoing composer revisions, leading to differences among various editions. Some of these issues have been addressed by "on demand" services, such as the digital options available through Boosey & Hawkes, and "Schirmer on Demand," which offers printable score perusal copies. The session also included information about the role of the music engraver in the score publishing process.

### **EDUCATING MUSIC LIBRARIANS IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

As part of this session, Beth Fleming (Oklahoma City University) presented "Music Information Literacy Training with a Digital Twist," which focused on incorporating digital and interactive opportunities in the classroom. Examples included creating and demonstrating online helping aids such as the "Guide to Musical Examples" in *Grove Online*, linking to resources such as manuscripts in digital repositories, and increasing the use of video in instruction. Reference was also made to an interactive online music information literacy tutorial from the Cleveland Institute of Music, which functions as a training module for undergraduate students (<http://www.cim.edu/library/milt/libMilt.php>). At her own institution, Fleming has developed similar modules which have been embedded within the course management system and graded as part of a first-year survey course.

Fleming also mentioned Jing—as did Sam Cook in a later session, “Music Librarians in La-La land: Where Do Technologies Go When They Finally Emerge?” Jing is a free screen capture and screencasting tool that has the potential to record internet navigations. A number of applications were suggested, such as incorporating the recordings into classroom presentations, or using the recordings to provide instructions or answers to reference questions in a more visually oriented format.

## **TOWARD ELECTRONIC MUSIC EDITIONS: THE MUSIC ENCODING INITIATIVE**

Erin Mayhood (University of Virginia) presented this session on the Music Encoding Initiative (MEI) schema (<http://music-encoding.org/home>), a set of rules for recording the characteristics of music notation documents using XML so that the information contained in them may be searched, retrieved, displayed, and exchanged in a predictable and platform-independent manner. The schema accommodates the encoding of common Western music, and though it is designed primarily for scholarly purposes, it does not exclude other uses. The markup allows for tagging of the internal structure. It shows potential for addressing the functions of traditional facsimile, critical, and performance editions of musical scores. The MEI schema is useful because it has the potential to provide access to, and archives of, digital scores that are both transient and renewable. This is an open-source and community-driven initiative that is based on the Text Encoding Initiative (<http://www.tei-c.org/index.xml>).

## **PLENARY II: LICENSING AND DIGITAL MEDIA: OUR MUSICAL HERITAGE AT A CROSSROADS**

Plenary II featured the following panel of speakers: Corynne McSherry (Electronic Frontier Foundation), John T. Robertson (Robertson Law Group), and Kevin L. Smith (Duke University). They spoke about the barriers resulting from recordings being made available as downloadable files only, and with restrictive licenses—a model that conflicts with the traditional library uses associated with lending and preservation. This related to another session during which the history of the Lala service was given as an example of the unpredictability of maintaining access to licensed digital content.

Corynne McSherry presented several examples of lawsuits dealing with the issue of licensing. These examples highlighted the complexities and legal implications of attaching licenses to digital objects such as software or music files. In particular, she cited the example of a software company restricting sale of its products on the second-hand market. In this case, the software company claimed that users do not purchase a copy of the software, but rather are licensees of the software and therefore cannot share or sell their copy. McSherry argued that the presence of a secondary market is better both for the economy and the environment as well.

Kevin Smith suggested several approaches for dealing with the issues under discussion. One approach put forward was that of relationship development: working with vendors to set up a digital preservation system for audio files (currently there is no

digital audio equivalent to LOCKSS); communicating with researchers, performers, and composers regarding the preservation issues related to releasing performances in a download-only format; and pressuring record companies to consider special library licenses.

### **COLLECTING RECENTLY COMPOSED MUSIC IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

Matt Ertz (Indiana University) presented a compilation of online sources useful for identifying and finding information about emerging composers (available through <http://mla2011.musiclibraryassoc.org/files>). As well, he discussed various criteria for determining which composers are becoming “significant” and should therefore be considered for the purposes of collection development.

Greg MacAyeal (Northwestern University) spoke about the challenges—stemming from new and varied distribution models—of acquiring recently composed music. For example, some composers are now providing their works through a print-on-demand system; as such, these scores will not automatically arrive through vendors and must be sought out or obtained through special arrangements. At times it is necessary to track down even well-established contemporary composers—John Luther Adams, for example—who continue to self-publish.

James Wintle (Library of Congress) made the point that many new artists deal solely with the internet and have no interest in working with distributors and publishers in the traditional manner. He believes that in order to address this issue, librarians should be a part of the conversation with composition students and faculty.

### **OVERDRIVE AND FREEGAL MUSIC PRODUCTS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

This session, sponsored by the Public Libraries Committee, featured a panel of speakers who discussed Overdrive and Freegal products and their application to music audio collections. The session addressed the quality of the services from both the library and consumer perspectives.

#### *Overdrive*

The Overdrive product provides digital access to ebooks, audio books, and music files. Users are able to download an item to their computer and transfer it to mobile devices, and then after a certain period of time the item will expire. The library uses traditional collection development methods to select items for their online collection. The LibTunes service, to be introduced in 2011, will expand OverDrive’s music purchasing options to over 500 music labels and nine million tracks. LibTunes offers libraries the option to purchase music files on a track-by-track basis, in a similar fashion to the iTunes store. There is currently a trial available for LibTunes, but no pricing options were available at the time of the conference.

## *Freegal*

Freegal provides the user with a limited number of weekly downloads of audio files from the Sony catalogue, including popular, classical and jazz materials. The panel reported that this product, already in use in a number of North American libraries, has been received favourably by many users and has also resulted in positive press coverage for certain libraries. On the other hand, some of the session attendees expressed reservations about libraries putting their collection budgets into access-only products, as opposed to a model where the library retains an archival copy.

## **VARIATIONS ... NOT JUST INDIANA'S DIGITAL MUSIC LIBRARY ANYMORE**

John Anderies (Haverford College) and Jon Haupt (Southern Methodist University) discussed their institutions' local implementations of the Variations software. Tools unique to the Variations system, such as the "Bookmark" tool and the "Timeliner" audio annotation and analysis tool, were mentioned. Information was also provided about new features, such as a web player, and those in development, such as iPod/iPad versions and "Variations in Video." Both institutions have used the system for high circulation recordings or for digitizing audio to be used for reserves. Haupt has created a guide related to using the system: <http://guides.smu.edu/variations>.

## **POSTER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS**

### *Discovery: Undergraduates and Primary Source in Musicology*

Harvard University librarian Kerry Carwile Masteller described the work she and colleagues have carried out to embed digital primary source materials in a course research guide (<http://guides.hcl.harvard.edu/music97b>). The project was developed in response to faculty calls for assistance in introducing primary sources to students.

### *Preserving Virginia's Recorded Concerts*

Winston Barham of the University of Virginia Music Library presented this institution's efforts to preserve and archive their collection of concert recordings. Up until this time, it has been preserved on various media including open-reel tapes, DATs, videotapes and audio cassettes. The project aimed to convert these media into archival (WAV in archive), reference (WAV on local hard drive), preservation (CD, stored offsite) and circulation (CD onsite) copies of the concert recordings, and to provide corresponding bibliographic records in the University of Virginia Library Catalogue.

### *'Digital Love': The Description of 'Pop Muzik' in Online Resources*

This poster was presented by Deb Kulczak and Lora Lennerta Jetton from the University of Arkansas Libraries. The poster described the process of determining genre tags for a large gift collection of popular music made up of 3,434 CDs and 1,861 vinyl recordings. The project was focused on collecting and comparing genre tags for the

received collection as determined by allmusic.com, *The Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, and Wikipedia. Results indicated that allmusic.com contained the most bands with genres, and the least number of bands with no entries. Wikipedia contained some inconsistencies in uniformity within the genres that were applied. *The Encyclopedia of Popular Music* was missing entries for many of the artists in the collection, or did not always assign a genre. Based on their findings, the Library was able to determine the genres used in all three sources and apply them to the pop music collection.

## **HOT TOPICS IN MUSIC LIBRARIANSHIP**

This lively session, moderated by Tom Caw (University of Wisconsin – Madison), offered an opportunity for conference attendees to raise and address timely issues and questions facing music libraries and the music industry. The following were among the topics that were touched on during the discussion:

- Download-only audio files: There was a call for an institution such as the Library of Congress to take on the task of initiating a digital repository for audio that is being distributed in download-only format. Other comments echoed concerns on issues of copyright, preservation, and access as discussed earlier in the Plenary II session.
- Web-scale discovery tools: The discussion focused on the problems all such tools still pose with regard to searching for music in various formats.
- Bibliographic utilities: There was mention that some libraries are switching from OCLC to SkyRiver for their cataloguing needs.
- Integrated Library Systems: One topic broached in this area was the use of open source library systems and their feasibility in academic settings. As well, it was mentioned that changes are in store for Aleph and Voyager users with the introduction of the new Ex Libris Alma service.
- Streaming audio: Some participants indicated that usage statistics of certain streaming audio services have revealed low use and have led them to cancel their subscriptions. It was suggested—here and at other times during the conference—that users now predominantly want downloads and are less interested in streaming as a mode of access.

Files from many of the conference presentations are available at <http://mla2011.musiclibraryassoc.org/files>.

## REPORT ON THE “DIGITAL ARCHIVING AND DELIVERY OF WORLD MUSIC SOUND AND VIDEO” SESSION (MLA 2011)

SUZANNE MEYERS SAWA  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

The session opened with Atesh Sonneborn of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. He stated that they survived by selling recordings, and that they received no federal or trust money. Their primary way to acquire rights is to acquire labels, with a contract confirming digital rights, including current technology and any technology to come. They also partner with other institutions in digitization projects. He discussed the problem with new material, using the example of people from tribes feeling that they cannot give rights to performances away, because they are not the composers themselves but merely the mouthpiece for the voices of ancestors. Sonneborn expressed concern for artists and their need for proper compensation when their material is streamed, but he also made it clear that some performers were also highly interested in having their names known, compensation or not.

Tim Lloyd of Alexander Street Press discussed the company's *Dance on Video* (286 titles) and *Ethnographic Video Online* (750 hours) series. He said they definitely take risks with regard to rights and permissions from the performers/culture groups represented, stating that the company does not employ in-house lawyers, and would not be in business if they did. Sonneborn interjected with a short description of the UNESCO convention on the intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

Scott Landvatter, the moderator of the session, closed with a description of the Digital Media Archives at the University of Chicago, which dates from the 1920's. Their mission is two-fold: to digitize all of their archival materials and to stream them to the University of Chicago community. The question the legal office always has to consider is whether or not the person making the recording (as opposed to the one being recorded) actually has the legal right to give those rights away.

**At This Point.** Alex Dean Quintet, featuring Lorne Lofsky. Toronto, Ont.: Cornerstone Records, CRST CD 134, 2010. 1 compact disc (52:28). Performers: Alex Dean, tenor saxophone; Brian Dickinson, piano, Fender Rhodes; Kieran Overs, bass; Ted Warren, drums; Lorne Lofsky, guitar (tracks 1, 2, 7). All compositions by Alex Dean. Contents: *Rick and Ed* (7:05) – *Note to Self* (6:47) – *At This Point* (8:10) – *Nice Guys* (8:12) – Mr. B.C. (7:51) – *Pat and Pat* (5:53) – *Something about Farming* (8:14). \$20.00

For those who are unfamiliar with Alex Dean, he has been a long-standing fixture in the Canadian jazz scene as both a performer and educator. Aside from playing in his own groups, he was a member of Rob McConnell's Boss Brass and made up one-third of the Toronto jazz trio, D.E.W. (Alex Dean, Barry Elmes, Steve Wallace). In addition to being a first-call woodwind player, Dean holds appointments with the University of Toronto and Humber College in their jazz programs, and is in high demand as an adjudicator at regional and national music festivals in Canada.

*At This Point* is Dean's first album under his own name in a number of years and it begins with a beautifully understated and contemplative tune called "Rick and Ed." This track demonstrates a complete lack of pretension, giving instead a glimpse into the interrelationships of this group. We are given leave to eavesdrop while the players languidly explore this standard thirty-two bar song form. Dean, Lofsky, and Overs all take solos which are short and to the point. The song showcases the ease and comfort with which these musicians converse with each other, and serves to get the listener excited for what is to come.

A more up-tempo offering comes in the form of "Note to Self," with Dean and Lofsky taking up the melody in unison over a straight-eighth groove. Dean takes the first solo and we hear that his sound is firmly rooted in the modern tradition with its bright tone and immaculate articulation. On this song he takes an intervallic approach to the improvisation, jumping from register to register on his tenor with impressive control and harmonic ingenuity. Next comes Lofsky, opening with a widely intervallic statement that lends continuity between the soloists. We finally hear Brian Dickinson with a brief solo on the Rhodes where he acquits himself well. One of the gems of this track is Ted Warren. Not only does he take a solo that is coherent and inventive, his playing all the way through lifts the music with his use of the drum set's palate of sounds, including altering the contact point of the sticks on the cymbals to create a different texture and using unorthodox parts of the drum set such as the cymbal stands. Warren is without question one of Canada's most interesting jazz musicians.

One of the trends in modern tenor sax albums is to have a solo introduction to a song. Contemporary examples of this can be heard in the later part of Michael Brecker's discography as well as the albums of Chris Potter. "At This Point" opens with an aggressive solo by Dean that again displays his intervallic approach to improvisation. This solo is like listening to a master class of modern jazz saxophone playing, with its

jumps into the altissimo register and its use of split notes and multiphonics. All of this leads into the song itself, which is a fairly simple theme set against a straight-eighth feel, with the solos stretching in and out of a swing feel. This is a perfect vehicle for the solos starting with Dickinson, this time on piano. He gets a chance to stretch out more on this tune and he takes advantage with a solo that is meatier than his previous outings. It demonstrates why he is one of Toronto's most in-demand sidemen, with a blend of stunning lines and block chord passages used to great effect here.

"Nice Guys" is a wonderfully constructed song that, instead of a melody with an accompanying backdrop, resembles more a full arrangement for quartet. It begins with a piano ostinato that is clearly an homage to Herbie Hancock's "Maiden Voyage." The simple melody is set off by rhythmic accents in the piano, bass and drums that outline the 7/4 (grouped as 4+3) time signature in the A sections. The melody presents itself as an A-A-B-A<sup>2</sup> where A<sup>2</sup> is a slightly altered version of A. The harmony played in the solos is A-A-B-A which is a common practice in jazz used to simplify the form of the song for soloing on. I give this detail to emphasize the fact that this album is not a string of puerile platforms for improvisation. Dean demonstrates a real knack for composition and has constructed some thoughtful, sublime vignettes. Warren takes another inventive solo after Dean and Dickinson. The cymbal timbres are especially beautiful and it is also worth noting how seamlessly the rhythm section navigates the 7/4 time signature.

Both "Mr. B.C." and "Pat and Pat" provide more room for the core quartet to shine, but when we get to "Something about Farming" the group shifts gears a bit. It starts out in a Latin feel with the tenor and guitar stating the melody in unison again as we heard in Lofsky's other appearances on this album. Dean takes the first solo and right away there is a departure stylistically. At the beginning of his solo the phrases are more linear, which is not to say less interesting, and he gets out of the way rather quickly. Dickinson enters next with another short solo and then leaves to make room for Lofsky. Admittedly, I had not heard much of his playing before this album, but the first thing that struck me was that gorgeous sound. It has a warmth and lushness that nicely contrasts with the crisp articulation and phrasing.

All in all, this album does a wonderful job of providing a snapshot of what Dean describes as a happy and productive period of his life. Supported by great sidemen, Dean is free to stretch out and have some fun playing his own music. Between the superb solos and appealing arrangements, this album is an excellent example of the kind of jazz being played in the clubs of this country. Any music library looking to bolster its collection of Canadian jazz should purchase *At This Point*. Not only is it a beautiful album, but from a pedagogical standpoint it also serves up some solos that jazz students can transcribe for further examination and study. I would think that it is of particular interest to saxophonists, pianists and guitarists.

*Michael McArthur*  
*Northern Ontario School of Medicine*

**From Berliner to RCA Victor: The Birth and Rise of the Recording Industry in Canada = *Naissance et essor de l'industrie du disque au Canada***. Brossard, Qué.: Gala Records, Gal 112, 2009. 1 compact disc + 1 booklet (79 p.). Various performers. See the [Gala Records](#) website for pricing and availability at various stores.

This production is a commemoration of *Montréal, berceau de l'industrie du disque (Montreal, the Cradle of the Recording Industry)*, an exhibit presented in 2008 by the Musée des ondes Émile Berliner, a museum established in 1996 in the former RCA Victor factory in the St. Henri neighbourhood of southwest Montreal. It is the twelfth in a series of remastered historic Canadian recordings from veteran producer Jean-Pierre Sévigny on his Gala Records label, and one of the final projects supported by the Audio-Visual Preservation Trust of Canada (1996-2010), a federally funded advocacy group for the protection of and access to Canada's heritage films and sound recordings.

The booklet, in French with English translation, is devoted to the tangled history of financial, legal, and ownership details, technical developments, and clashing personalities in the business, from Émile Berliner's early inventions and productions in the 1880s, through format and company changes, as far as the SONY-BMG merger in 2004. Images of early studios, equipment, labels, and advertisements are scattered through the text. There are also photographs and brief biographies of the performers on the CD. Berliner's elder son Herbert emerges as the first champion of Canadian content, creating a series of recordings of local artists. His colleague, Hugh A. Joseph, in his thirty-five-year career in charge of artists and repertoire, continued to contract and record both French and English talent. A final chapter, "From Tanneries to Technologies: The History of Saint-Henri," positions the RCA Victor factory in the context of the 350-year life of this community.

Sévigny, with authoritative researcher and writer Robert Thérien, has reworked this story for a general audience, and illustrated it with some of the most appealing recordings from the Berliner/Victor/RCA Victor catalogues from 1903 to 1959, reflecting the period of the careers of Hubert Berliner and Hugh A. Joseph. The listings are brief, just a title, performers' names, and year of recording. If this piques the public curiosity, librarians can direct them to further discographical information in AMICUS, and the original discs held in the collections of Library and Archives Canada.

The English translation is smooth and idiomatic, with just one curious lapse: the French word *supports* is carried over into English, rather than translated into "formats" (for 78s, LPs, etc.). In a probably unintended pun, George Wade, leader of the Cornhuskers, is described as "a caller by vocation" (*métier*).

The CD includes twenty-seven examples from the Montreal studios – spoken word, popular, national, and comic songs, two classical excerpts, and a performance by Oscar Peterson, plus a newly recorded spoken "Introduction" by Émile Berliner's American

grandson, Oliver. The popularity of country music is reflected in the presence of hits by both anglophone (Wilf Carter and Hank Snow) and francophone (Paul Brunelle and Willie Lamothe) cowboy singers.

Of the five earliest vocal tracks, three, featuring tenors E. Loiseau, Robert Price, and Henry Burr, were (and are) already available on the [Virtual Gramophone](#) site. And of the later repertoire, there is much that can be found on the four-CD set, *La variété québécoise: Histoire de la chanson à succès* or the ten CDs of *Une simple mélodie*, both issued in 2007. Searches in AMICUS and in WorldCat show very few holdings of these anthologies, however, so this disc of expertly chosen highlights represents an easy way for any library to offer an introduction to Canadian musical heritage. The sound quality accurately represents the changes over the era, from decent to excellent.

The Cornhuskers mentioned above include the brilliant violinist Jean Carignan, and track nine features him in a thrilling version of “The Devil’s Dream” which my Scottish-country-dancing feet know as “De’il among the Tailors.” Another highlight is Lucille Dumont’s seductive, authentically bilingual version of “Darling, je vous aime beaucoup.” The disc ends with a cover by Les Jérolas of “Yakety Yak,” the biggest hit of the Coasters. This rock’n’roll hymn to teenage angst, by Lieber and Stoller, is at least as funny in French as in the original American English.

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*University of Toronto*

**Growing with Canada: The Émigré Tradition in Canadian Music.** By Paul Helmer. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009. xii, 388 pp. ISBN 978-0773535817. \$49.95

Paul Helmer's book, *Growing with Canada: The Émigré Tradition in Canadian Music*, documents the emergence and rapid expansion of post-secondary music education in what was then an obscure corner of a decaying empire. In it, the author explains how a smattering of mainly German-speaking émigrés transformed institutions previously run by an equally small group of 'Great Britons,' whose mission it was to elevate local musical practice to meet imperial standards. As we know, by mid-century those standards had become shabby and tattered, if they had ever been anything but mediocre in the first place. Barbara Pentland famously complained that before 1950 the art music establishment outside of Francophone Québec was run by a few "imported English organists," whose creative contribution had been negligible at best.<sup>1</sup> Thirty years later, John Beckwith, in a moment of nostalgic generosity, noted that among his former teachers he had found "good craft and ideas."<sup>2</sup> Alas, even this must be questioned. Looking back on his studies at the University of Toronto that he began soon after his arrival in 1940, Oskar Morawetz admitted that the teaching was "terribly primitive at the time...terribly bad."<sup>3</sup>

*Growing with Canada* is unfortunately a disappointment. Whereas it attempts to tell too much, it ends up telling too little. In preparing his book, Helmer conducted seventy-nine interviews over a ten-year period (1997-2007) with the émigrés, members of their families and their students. This allows the author to dwell at length on fine biographical detail, giving the book a lively, personal character. Thus the body of the text, together with the thumb-nail biographies of the 121 émigrés in an appendix, constitutes a fascinating pool of information that will make the book a significant source for scholars. However, a consequence of this strong focus on biography is that large and significant portions of the context within which these individual stories unfold go unmentioned.

First, the book's title is misleading: it should be *Growing with English Canada*. At its core (chapters 4, 5 and 6), the book explains how Arnold Walter and Helmut Blume

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Pentland, "Canadian Music, 1950," *Northern Review* 3, no. 3 (February-March 1950): 43.

<sup>2</sup> John Beckwith, *Music Papers: Articles and Talks by a Canadian Composer, 1961-1994* (Ottawa: Golden Dog Press, 1997), 101.

<sup>3</sup> Oskar Morawetz cited in, Friedemann Sallis, "Deconstructing the Local: The Aesthetic Space and Geographic Place of Oskar Morawetz's String Quartet No. 5 'A Tribute to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart' (1991)," *Canadian University Music Review/Revue de musique des universités canadiennes* 24, no. 1 (2003): 10. Morawetz obtained his BMus and DMus degrees from the University of Toronto in 1944 and 1953, respectively. However, as Helmer correctly points out, he was "largely self-taught" (160).

were able to transform the faculties of music at the University of Toronto and McGill, respectively. Helmer also addresses some collateral development in smaller urban centres (primarily Halifax and Vancouver). Missing is an examination of the crucially important development of art music in Quebec, outside of its English enclaves. Given the central importance of Toronto and Montreal for the development of art music in Canada, the author should have focused his attention on one or the other. This would have allowed him to expand his rather narrow time frame beyond the arbitrary cut-off date of 1948 that he used to decide who would be discussed and who would be left out. Restructuring the project in this way would have permitted the inclusion of such prominent émigrés as John P.L. Roberts and Maryvonne Kendergi (both mentioned in passing, on pages 165 and 201 respectively). This is a travesty because their enormous contributions are completely ignored in favour of such luminaries as Carl Bamberger, who spent one season (1947-48) in Montreal as conductor of the Little Symphony before moving back to the United States (205-6). As it is, Helmer, lost in the solitude of another age, has left us with a one-sided, distorted version of the story he is trying to tell.

Second, Helmer glosses over the difficult and darker sides of this country's history that pertain directly to his topic. At the outset, he baldly states that "once the émigrés had decided to immigrate to Canada they faced no real impediments because of race, religion, or nationality" (8). This is a curious statement. Others have noted that during the first half of the twentieth century, Canada was a country "permeated with racism and anti-Semitism [and] arguably had the worst record of any Western nation in accepting Jews attempting to escape the Nazis."<sup>4</sup> To be fair, three pages (10-12) are devoted to a discussion of this issue.<sup>5</sup> Surely the topic warrants a more detailed examination. Is Helmer suggesting that, once in the country, émigré Jewish musicians were somehow spared bigotry, hatred and intolerance? Though levels of anti-Semitism may not have been as severe as they were in their homelands, for Jewish immigrants arriving here before the Second World War, "Canada was not the 'Golden Land' for which they had hoped."<sup>6</sup> The reader of Helmer's book is left with the impression that discrimination based on race and religion somehow miraculously vanished following the war. The anti-Communist hysteria of the post-war era also goes almost unreported. For example, the book touches briefly on Sir Ernest MacMillan's career as director of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, noting that "MacMillan's TSO weathered the storms of the Second World War and the subsequent postwar period" (90). However, MacMillan's role in the notorious case of the six musicians, who lost their jobs with the orchestra in 1951 because they were restricted from travelling to the United States, is completely

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<sup>4</sup> Irving Abella, "Confronting Our Dark Past," *Globe and Mail*, January 18, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> In these pages, Helmer focuses primarily on numbers of refugees and whether their Jewish identity was recognised or not.

<sup>6</sup> Benita Wolters-Fredlund, "'We Shall Be Better Canadians by Being Conscious Jews': Multiculturalism and the Construction of Canadian Identity in the Toronto Jewish Folk Choir," *Intersections: Canadian Journal of Music/Revue canadienne de musique* 25, no. 1-2 (2005): 188.

ignored.<sup>7</sup> Helmer does mention an anecdote concerning Mariss Vetra, a Latvian tenor working in Halifax, who spent some of his spare time prowling the docks on the lookout for Stalinist sympathisers among arriving immigrants. The brief account leaves the reader wondering whether these activities were merely those of an amateur bungler playing private investigator or if Vetra's actions had more serious consequences.

Outside of the three chapters that focus on the faculties of music of the University of Toronto and McGill, Helmer has delivered a kind of scrapbook containing snapshots of émigré musicians who played a crucially important role in transforming Canada's art music scene from a colonial backwater to the place it now occupies on the world stage. The snapshots do provide a wealth of information that is fascinating, but also anecdotal. The book (inadvertently?) conceals as much as it attempts to reveal. In terms of history this is a distortion. Canada and the protagonists of Helmer's book deserve better.

*Friedemann Sallis*  
*University of Calgary*

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<sup>7</sup> Beckwith suggests that MacMillan's refusal to comment and to stand up for the musicians seriously damaged his relations with the orchestra. Beckwith, *Music Papers*, 156-57. For more on this sorry episode, see Len Scher, *The Un-Canadians: True Stories of the Blacklist Era* (Toronto: Lester, 1992), 29-38.

**Music Traditions, Cultures & Contexts.** Edited by Robin Elliott and Gordon E. Smith. Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2010. xx, 340 pp. ISBN 978-1-55458-177-1. \$42.95

This book honours Beverley Diamond, Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, Director of the Research Centre for the Study of Music, Media and Place (MMaP), and Canada Research Chair in Traditional Music and Ethnomusicology at Memorial University. As remarked often in its contents, Diamond's generosity has been felt by many including myself. To underline her extensive influence, the editors have chosen to represent her multifaceted career in fourteen chapters. The opening chapter, prepared by the editors, consists of an autobiography produced appropriately by the dialogic method. The editors follow the format established in her *Visions of Sound* (1994), assisted by endnotes to expand on persons and situations covered in the dialogue.

The second, thought-provoking chapter is Diamond's presentation on her husband, Clifford Crawley, an influential teacher and composer. She provides varied biographical materials from several family members, and then analyzes his teaching methods at Queen's University. The final half, which deals with his compositions, traces stylistic aspects in selected works and concludes with a full listing, plus discography. His output of original operas, musicals, orchestral works, pieces for band, chamber ensembles, choirs, voice, organ and piano numbers well over 500. This assessment of his contributions to Canada's musical life is long overdue.

The next three chapters deal with various aspects of ethnomusicology, the discipline of which Diamond was the first doctoral recipient in Canada. Bruno Nettl, today's dean of the discipline, analyzes how its leading participants have a history of critiquing its assumptions. He also shows how Diamond herself has participated. Those issues include exploring the specialness of Canadian musical cultures, pursuing an emic approach to organology, and critiquing gender-oriented ethnomusicology. Ellen Koskoff presents three case studies in her fieldwork experience to try to understand difference. This provides an excellent counterpoint when read in conjunction with one of Diamond's latest proposals, that of "alliances" in understanding modes of cultural identity

Next, Kay Shelemay explores whether there is "a common Canadian-US Americanist music agenda." She mainly concentrates on how ethnomusicologists shifted from studying exotic musics abroad to turning their attention to music cultures closer to home. In my opinion, this overview would have benefitted with the inclusion of some attention to the field of folklore. I see Diamond's production in many ways as an expansion of Canadian folklore studies. She is building bridges by using folklore's change from an item-based (tale, song) to a performance-centred approach, and cultivating musical communities through the activities of MMAP.

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L'auteur et l'Association canadienne des bibliothèques, archives et centres de documentation musicaux

Musical performance predominates in the following essays. Regula Qureshi with Videographs and Videocharts enlightens us about performance receptions of Qawwali upon different individuals. She expands her argument with evidence from Slavey drum dance and Albanian weddings. Unfortunately, the Asch description of Slavey drum dance does not apply to all Dene drum dances. Unlike what is indicated in the endnote (p. 142), Dene only refers to Peoples located within the Northwest Territories, known as Akaitcho, Deh Cho, Gwich'in, Sahtu, and Tlicho. The third performance essay, authored by Charlotte J. Frisbie, opens up a new research area, that of being a church organist, and in so doing directly relates to Diamond's performance activities as a musician.

Identity issues form the theme of chapters eight through ten. The folklorist, Neil V. Rosenberg, provides a fascinating examination of the use of the banjo in Nova Scotia. I was sorry to see that Rosenberg did not indicate the Canadian origin of "The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise." Did the player(s) know of that background or just accepted it as a current tune? Pirkko Moisala writes on the challenges involved to include musics of the Sámi and Finland-Swedes within the established educational music programs of Finland. Her thoughtful considerations could be applied to similar circumstances within Canada.

The third identity essay concerns two Canadian lyric theatre works by the Montreal-based composer, Eugène Lapierre (1899-1970). Each is based on the life of a Canadian composer. *Le Père des amours* (1941) features Joseph Quesnel (1746-1809), while *Le Vagabond de la gloire* (1947) revolves around Calixa Lavallée (1842-1891). John Beckwith, noted Canadian composer/researcher, provides a thorough analysis of the libretti and an assessment of what music still survives. The musical examples give the reader a good overview of Lapierre's approach. Although Beckwith concludes that neither work merits revival, he does rightly urge the reissue on CD of Quesnel's *Colas et Colinette* and of Lavallée's *The Widow*.

To relate to Diamond's research in popular music, Rob Bowman, Diamond's colleague at York University, deals with the development of funk. He identifies the re-Africanization to establish the genre by James Brown, and then examines various performance choices made by George Clinton's funk ensembles. In Diamond's terms these are studies of "alliances" which continue to be explored in Jocelyne Guilbault's essay on the role of soca in Trinidad as a social and political identity.

The last chapter, authored by two former students of Diamond's, Virginia Caputo and Kip Pegley, summarizes the issues surrounding the use of the Internet for academic purposes. In this case a community was brought together, comprised of those who studied under Diamond's guidance. Eventually, out of various electronic discussions, four areas—music and identity, music and gender, First Peoples music, and fieldwork—were organized. Unfortunately, the results were placed on a webpage that is no longer accessible. The appendix of Diamond's publications and lectures does provide ample

evidence of her research, some of which is now available on the Internet. However, Diamond's recording (1972) of Poulenc and Lutoslawski with James Campbell (CBC SM-184) did not get listed.

A few other errors also slipped by. The name "Rosaldo" appears without reference on page 2, and presumably refers to Renato Rosaldo's *Cultural Citizenship in Island Southeast Asia* (2003). The upscale Ottawa neighbourhood mentioned on page 65 is Rockcliffe, not Rockwood. A complete sentence on page 139 is exactly repeated on the following page. There are minor typographical errors on pages 45, 96, 116, 171, 218 and the word "Music" is missing on page 302.

Nevertheless, overall, the editors have done an excellent job drawing together significant essays to honour Diamond. This Festschrift is a valuable compilation that belongs in all music collections.

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*Carleton University*

**Neue Bilder: Music of James Harley.** Toronto: Centrediscs, CMCCD 16010, 2010. 1 compact disc (61:37). Performers: New Music Concerts, Robert Aitken, artistic director. Contents: *Neue Bilder* (8:36) – *Portrait* (11:23) – *Épanoui* (12:19) – *Tyee* (16:20) – *aXis* (12:52). \$13.98

New Music Concerts (NMC) has been championing new music for over forty years, throughout the world, but most regularly in Toronto. Ten of its eleven recordings are compilations of the works of a single composer. This most recent one features the work of James Harley, who holds a position in digital music at the University of Guelph. Harley has been associated with Robert Aitken and the NMC for over twenty-five years, the span of the works on this recording. Thus a variety of compositional approaches and different instrumental combinations is evident. In the notes accompanying the disc, Harley explains the background of each piece, as well as its prevailing compositional aspects.

*Neue Bilder* (1991), a work for eight instruments, takes its inspiration from Mozart and an art exhibition in Salzburg. Harley describes his compositional technique as “iterative nonlinear mathematical (chaos) functions.” Since Harley uses other techniques (the use of the Queen of the Night aria as “a kind of *cantus firmus*”) to hold the work together, the soundscape of the work does not emerge as entirely chaotic. Superimposed on this structural framework is also a variety of colour manipulation, where instruments perform in atypical registers. Whether intended or not, there are notable tonal aspects to the harmony, although the randomness of successive, unrelated “statements” in the rhythm achieves the chaos that Harley intends.

*Portrait* (1984) is a three-movement work for solo flute, “framed” as Prelude, Portrait and Postlude. In contrast to the tonal flavor of *Neue Bilder*, the sound effect of *Portrait*, while not strictly serial, has that sense to it. By design the two outer movements are less lyrical than the central Portrait itself; this is achieved primarily by increasing the tempo, more frenetic rhythmic “patter,” and a shrill tone quality. Here again, a nonlinear rhythmic approach pervades the work. Aitken’s outstanding performance of the work emphasizes its angularity, yet helps to unify the multiplicity of thematic ideas.

*Épanoui* (1995), a trio for flute, cello, and piano, builds (“blooms”) from a starting single note (actually from several successive central notes that assume prominence as the work progresses). This composition has some lovely colour effects, and the stylized bird songs near the conclusion (which also frequently bloom from a single note) are charmingly effective. Although this work also is built upon a series of statements, the slower tempos and sustained sound provide a more connected sense to the rhythmic structure.

The conceit of the duet, *Tyee* (1995), is that it highlights the different kinds of colour offered by the bass flute and a variety of percussion instruments. These sound experiments range from multiphonics in the flute writing to a mix of regular and home-made percussion instruments. Owing to the extended length of this work, this creates a significant challenge for the performers, since it is difficult to sustain colour experimentation and nonlinear rhythm at the same time. However, in some ways this is the most thoughtful performance on the disc, primarily because of the speech-like performance skills of the performers, and their ability to sustain a sense of architecture during the silences.

From the pseudo-chorale chords of the opening, through the array of layered and overlapping textures that follow, *aXis* (2006), a work for thirteen instruments, is the most voluminous and dissonant work on the disc. Harley intends it to be “celebratory,” in homage to his teacher, Xenakis. The more noticeable use of motive and repetition in the thematic material helps to unify this work.

Even though these recordings cover a quarter century, the quality of the sound is strong throughout the disc; the centrality of colour experimentation which is essential to Harley’s music is served well by this consistency of technological excellence. The notes written by the composer are essential to an informed appreciation. He states quite rightly, for example, that the elements of structural design of *Neue Bilder* remain inaudible unless they are pointed out. Most commendable about this disc is that the various performers of the NMC, heard in many ensemble combinations, are consistently outstanding. Harley’s association with the NMC has been fortunate, as they bring a sensitivity to his music that is always apparent. On the whole, the works that use smaller ensembles appear to be more effective, in that they seem to be able to hold the rhythm together more coherently.

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*School of Performing Arts*  
*SUNY Geneseo*

**Wild Bird.** Toronto: Centrediscs, CMCCD 16110, 2010. 1 compact disc (66:50). Performers: Duo Concertante (Nancy Dahn, violin; Timothy Steeves, piano), with Barbara Budd, narrator. Contents: *Duo for Violin and Piano* / R. Murray Schafer (17:22) – *Late in a Slow Time* / Chan Ka Nin (29:56) – *Supernatural Love* / Kati Agócs (11:14) – *Wild Bird* / R. Murray Schafer (8:40). \$13.98.

This is the fifth recording by the Duo Concertante ensemble, and the second that features all-Canadian composers. Although widely different in style, the works on this disc are all admirable additions to the contemporary violin and piano literature that warrant repeated listening, and the performances are first-rate; this disc is a rare find, and deserves widespread attention.

The disc opens with Schafer's *Duo*, a work in three movements. The tonally rooted harmony and warm lyricism make this piece immediately accessible, as do the allusions to Brahms and to Romanian folk music. Arch shapes in the structure are clearly audible, and they provide a unity that is satisfying.

*Late in a Slow Time*, by Chan Ka Nin, is a fascinating seven-movement work, interwoven with the poetry of Carole Glasser Langille and narrated by the renowned broadcaster, Barbara Budd. There are striking contrasts in style that reflect the mood and imagery of the poems, with percussive sounds, vocal interjections by the musicians, and other colouristic effects. At times the music is in dialogue with the narration (as in "The Quiet in Vermeer") and at times is in unison with it (as in "Not in the Warm Earth"). One particular poem, "Phone Survey," is a tour-de-force of colouristic effects, with electronic voice modification, dissonant interjections by the violin and piano, and nonsense syllables in the text. Much of the poetry is dark in mood, and the musical writing always leaves the text in the forefront. Budd not only recites the poetry, but she provides characterization that gives the story-telling nature of these poems a vibrant and entrancing quality.

*Supernatural Love* by Agócs is a three-movement work, played without breaks; its more dissonant harmony stands out in contrast to the other compositions on the disc. The opening *Spectral* paints a bleak mood which, despite what the title might suggest, is extended into the middle *Open and Warm* movement. The finale, "With a Spirit of Emancipation," is reminiscent of some of the colouristic writing of Messiaen.

The disc comes around full circle to close with Schafer's *Wild Bird*, a work originally for harp and violin, masterfully transcribed for piano by the pianist Steeves. Written as a tribute to violinist Jacques Israelievitch, it is intended as a showpiece for the violin and, as such, makes virtuosic technical demands throughout. The writing is more dissonant and strident than in *Duo*, but much of the same sense of structural tightness holds the work firmly together.

The performances on this disc are immensely praiseworthy. Both Dahn and Steeves have outstanding command technically and musically, and the tight quality of the ensemble playing speaks to years of successful collaboration. Throughout there is an intense energy to the playing, coupled with a remarkable ability to project a spacious quality in open-textured passages. Even in dark passages, the playing is never overbearing. This duo has an exceptional ability to hold every note in suspense and captivate the listener, no matter how disparate the compositional styles that are present on this disc. The outstanding sound engineering and interesting liner notes, largely written by the composers and performers themselves, nicely complement these fine performances.

*Jon Gonder*  
*School of Performing Arts*  
*SUNY Geneseo*

## BOOKS AND RECORDINGS RECEIVED

*Alban Berg and His World*. Edited by Christopher Hailey. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010. xvi, 361 pp. ISBN-13: 9780691148554. Paper. \$29.95 USD.

*Glass Houses Revisited: Music of Ann Southam*. Toronto, ON: Centrediscs, 2011. 1 compact disc (58:10). Christina Petrowska Quilico, piano. Contents: Selection of nine pieces from Southam's *Glass Houses*, revised and edited by Quilico. CMCCD 16511. \$13.98.

*Letters from Helen: A Canadian Student in Germany on the Eve of the Great War*. By Helen VanWart. Sackville, NB: Sybertooth, 2010. 187 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0981024493. \$20.00.

*Sound, Society and the Geography of Popular Music*. Edited by Ola Johansson and Thomas L. Bell. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009. xiv, 305 pp. ISBN-13: 9780754675778. \$99.95 USD.