

James B. Maxwell, PhD

Email: composer@jamesbmaxwell.com

Homepage: jamesbmaxwell.com

Curriculum Vitae & Selected Works List

Education

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 2008–2014 | PhD Under Special Arrangements Music Cognition and Computer-Assisted Composition Faculty of Communication, Art, and Technology (SCA+SIAT) Simon Fraser University |
| 1999–2001 | MFA in Interdisciplinary Studies School for the Contemporary Arts Simon Fraser University |

Employment & Professional Experience

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 2022–2024 | Chief Science Officer, SOMMS AI Inc. (now Musical AI) |
| 2016–2022 | Chief Technology Officer, Spliqs Intelligent Media Inc. |
| 2017–2018 | Postdoctoral Researcher, PI: Dr. Arne Eigenfeldt, SFU |
| 2011–present | Composer & Co-Artistic Director, Restless Productions Society |
| 2001–present | Freelance Composer: concert music, music for dance, film, theatre, media |
| 2015–2016 | Postdoctoral Researcher, PI: Dr. Philippe Pasquier, SFU |
| Fall 2014 | Sessional Instructor, <i>Music After 1900</i> , SFU |
| 2012–2013 | Research Assistant, PI: Dr. Philippe Pasquier (MAMAS Lab), SFU |
| July 2013 | Canada Council for the Arts, Peer Assessment Jury Member: Inter-Arts |
| May 2010 | Canada Council for the Arts, Peer Assessment Jury Member: New Music Projects |
| 2007–2009 | Research Assistant, PI: Dr. Arne Eigenfeldt, SFU |
| January 2007 | Co-Instructor, dance & music workshop, Fontys University, Tilburg, Netherlands |
| 2004, 2005 | Teaching Assistant, <i>Intro to Music Composition</i> , SFU |
| 2000–2001 | Teaching Assistant, <i>Music Fundamentals</i> , SFU |

Discography

- Maxwell, Muhly & Couloir** (*serere*), Ariel Barnes (cello), Heidi Krutzen (harp). Ravello Records, 2016.
- Sins and Fantasies** (*invidere*), Mark McGregor (flute solo). Redshift Records, 2013.
- Different Stones** (*diffusus*), Mark McGregor (10 flutes). Redshift Records, 2008.

Publications

Thesis Dissertation

- Maxwell, J. (2014). *Generative Music, Cognitive Modelling, and Computer-Assisted Composition in MusiCog and ManuScore*. PhD Dissertation, Simon Fraser University.

Proceedings

Pasquier, P., Burnett, A., Gonzalez Thomas, N., Maxwell, J., Eigenfeldt, A., Loughin, L. (2016). *Investigating Listener Bias Against Musical Metacreativity*. Proceedings of the International Conference on Computational Creativity (ICCC 2016). 2016. Long Paper.

Maxwell, J., Eigenfeldt, A., and Pasquier, P. (2012). *ManuScore: Music Notation-Based Computer Assisted Composition*. Proceedings of the International Computer Music Conference (ICMC 2012). 2012. Long Paper.

Maxwell, J. B., Eigenfeldt, A., Pasquier, P., and Thomas, N. G. (2012). *MusiCOG: A cognitive architecture for music learning and generation*. In Proceedings of the 9th Sound and Music Computing Conference (SMC 2012). SMC Network. Long Paper.

Maxwell, J. B., Pasquier, P., and Eigenfeldt, A. (2011). *The Closure-based Cueing Model: Cognitively-Inspired Learning and Generation of Musical Sequences*. In Proceedings of the 8th Sound and Music Computing Conference (SMC 2011). SMC Network. Long Paper.

Maxwell, J. B., Pasquier, P., and Eigenfeldt, A. (2010). *The Hierarchical Sequential Memory For Music: A Cognitively-Inspired Model for Music Learning and Composition*. In Proceedings of the eleventh International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition (ICMPC 11) (pp. 429-434) (revised model).

Maxwell, J., Pasquier, P., and Eigenfeldt, A. (2009). *Hierarchical Sequential Memory for Music: A Cognitive Model*. In Proceedings of the tenth International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference (ISMIR 2009) (pp. 429-434). Short Paper.

Maxwell, J.B., and Eigenfeldt, A. (2008). *A music database and query system for recombinant composition*. Proceedings of the ninth International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference (ISMIR 2008) (pp. 75-80). Short Paper.

Maxwell, J., and Eigenfeldt, A. (2008). *The MusicDB: a music database query system for recombination-based composition in Max/MSP*. Proceedings of the International Computer Music Conference (ICMC 2008). Short Paper.

Presentations

ICMC 2012, Ljubljana, Slovenia. ManuScore: Music Notation-Based Computer-Assisted Composition.

ICMC 2008, Belfast, Ireland. The MusicDB: A Music Database Query System for Recombinance-based Composition in MaxMSP

Reviewer/Subreviewer

MUME 2017, ICCX 2017, ICCX 2016, ISEA 2015, ICCX 2014, NIME 2014, MUME 2014, MUME 2013, NIME 2013, MUME 2012, ICMC 2012, ICCX 2012, NIME 2011, ACE 2009

Honours, Fellowships, and Commissions

2002–2022: Music Commissions and Project Awards (Canada Council, BC Arts Council): Ballet Kelowna, Fight With a Stick, Instruments of Change, Music On Main, Redshift Music, Standing Wave, Tiresias Duo, Turning Point Ensemble, Vancouver New Music, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

2012: Presidents Research Stipend, SFU

2009–2012: SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) (\$60,000)

2011: Graduate Fellowship, SFU

2008: Graduate Fellowship, SFU

| | |
|-------|---|
| 2008: | PCGS+SGES Entrance Award Package (Doctoral), SFU (\$19,000) (Pacific Century Graduate Scholarship & Special Graduate Entrance Scholarship) |
| 2009: | Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Olympic Commissions |
| 2000: | ArtsFACT Award (Scholarship) |
| 2000: | Colin McPhee Graduate Fellowship, SFU |
| 2000: | Audience Prize: Vancouver New Music, BC Emerging Composers Competition |
| 1999: | ArtsFACT Award (in collaboration with Standing Wave Ensemble) |
| 1999: | CD Nelson Memorial Entrance Scholarship (Masters), SFU (\$18,000) |

Professional Associations

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 2007–present: | Associate Composer, Canadian Music Centre |
| 2010–2015: | Metacreations Lab, Simon Fraser University |

Research Focus and Associated Skills

As a composer and researcher working at the crossroads of computational creativity and music psychology, I'm interested in the nature of human creativity, and how it can be fostered through human-machine "collaboration." My research in this area has led to the development of software systems for notation-based computer-assisted composition (*ManuScore*, 2009-12), cognitively-grounded autonomous music generation (*MusiCog*, 2011-13), and interactive music creation, transformation, and collaboration (*Spliqs*, 2014-present).

My work as both composer and researcher has allowed me to develop expertise with music software packages including: Sibelius, Dorico, Logic Pro, Ableton Live, Melodyne, and Spear, as well as fluency in programming languages: Max, Java, Objective-C (macOS), Swift (iOS and macOS), and Python.

Concert Music

| | |
|---------|--|
| 2024 | <i>kwelfaeld</i> - for 3 flutes (2 alto, 1 bass) and electronics (8:00) Commissioned by Tempest Flute Ensemble and the Canada Council for the Arts |
| 2022-23 | <i>bombitire</i> - for piano solo (5:30) |
| 2020 | <i>perpetua</i> - for marimba solo, Commissioned by Katie Rife (3:30) |
| 2019 | <i>Finding itself [it] deviates</i> - for flute, clarinet, piano, percussion, violin, and cello Commissioned by Standing Wave (5:00) |
| 2017-19 | <i>The Razor Hiss of a Whisper</i> - for cello, harp, and large ensemble, with soundscape (~20:00) Commissioned by Turning Point Ensemble and the Canada Council for the Arts |
| 2017 | <i>That thing, over there (pointing)</i> - for 18 electric guitars (5:40) Commissioned by Redshift Music |
| 2016-17 | <i>Eight or Nine, Six or Seven</i> - for 2 percussion, trumpet, 6 trombones, tuba, and community performers playing found object instruments, with soundscape (18:00) Commissioned by Instruments of Change |
| 2014 | <i>nihtscada</i> - for cello and bass (7:30) |
| 2014 | <i>ruduo</i> - for flute and piano (12:00) Commissioned by Tiresias Duo and the British Columbia Arts Council |

- 2014 *emancipare* - for piccolo, bass flute, viola, harpsichord, and video (7:00)
Commissioned by Music On Main and the Canada Council for the Arts
- 2014 *recurrere* - for flute, alto flute, and video (7:00)
Commissioned by Music On Main and the Canada Council for the Arts
- 2013 *skhema* - for harp solo (8:00)
- 2012 *serere* - for cello and harp (with/without electroacoustics) (25:00)
Commissioned by Ballet Kelowna and the Canada Council for the Arts
- 2012 *factura* - for percussion solo (created in ManuScore+MusiCog) (7:00)
- 2012 *fyra* - for flute, viola, bass, and dancer (10:00)
- 2011 *fundatio & experiri* - for string quartet (created in ManuScore+MusiCog) (11:00)
- 2010 *vovere* - for flute and ensemble (20:00) (Revised 2012)
Commissioned by Avent Ensemble for Mark McGregor (flute)
- 2010 *invidere* - for flute solo (7:00)
Commissioned by Redshift Music Society and the Canada Council for the Arts
- 2009 *...a scrambling decade ends* - for orchestra (4:30)
Commissioned by the Vancouver Symphony Society and the BC Arts Council
- 2008 *limina* - for flute, piano, and percussion (16:00)
Commissioned by Mark McGregor and Tiresias Ensemble
- 2008 *diffusus* - for flute choir (4:30)
Available on McGregor's CD *Different Stones* (Redshift Music)
- 2007–2008 *co existere* - for large brass ensemble
Commissioned by Redshift Music Society for *Vertical Orchestra 2008*
- 2005–2006 *pensare* - for wind quintet (13:00)
Commissioned by Redshift Music Society and the Ad Mare Wind Quintet
- 2005 *in between* - for soprano, mezzo soprano, and CD (text: Alex Ferguson) (3:10)
Commissioned by *Song Rooms 2005*
- 2005 *leven* for large ensemble (5:30)
- 2004 *reflectere* - for clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion (14:30)
Commissioned by Standing Wave and the BC Arts Council
- 2002–2003 *tenere* - for orchestra (11:30)
- 2001–2002 *intueri* - for 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, and piano solo (14:30) (Revised 2009)
Commissioned by Vancouver New Music and the Canada Council for the Arts
- 2001 *antara* - for string quartet (23:00) (Revised 2009)
- 2000–2001 *sleepyhead* - a chamber opera in one act, after Chekhov (40:00)
MFA in Interdisciplinary Studies thesis project, SFU
- 1998–2000 *cambiare* - for harp and orchestra (20:00)
- 1999–2000 *bodig-menen* - for clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion (40:00)
- 1999 *forberen* - for clarinet, violin, cello, and piano (18:00)
Audience Prize: Vancouver New Music, BC Emerging Composers Competition
- 1998 *medius* - for piano 4-hands with live electronics (15:00)
- 1998 *interus* - for wind quintet with piano (8:00)
- 1998 *du(lied)* - for violin and piano (9:00)
- 1998 *charis* - for flute, clarinet in A, and cello (7:40)

Dance & Media

- 2024 *Magicalcada* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Rachel Meyer
- 2024 *blocking* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Helen Walkley
- 2023 *in progress* (Perf. Installation: violin, viola, 8-ch audio), Restless Productions
- 2022-2024 *The Refrain: Getting in sync with the world.*
Sound work/Podcast series, 3 episodes: binaural audio),
Fight With a Stick Performance: Alex Ferguson
- 2023 *Many Worlds* (string quartet, 6-ch audio), Choreographer: Rachel Meyer
- 2021-2022 *Migration* (7-ch audio), Fight With a Stick Performance: Alex Ferguson
- 2020-21 *Mama, do we die when we sleep* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Rachel Meyer
- 2019 *Oh, What a Beautiful Morning!* (7-ch audio),
Fight With a Stick Performance: Alex Ferguson
- 2017-19 *John* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Helen Walkley, SFU
- 2014-15 *Based on a True Story* (cello, 2-ch audio),
Choreographer: Claire French, EDAM
- 2014-15 *The Moment of Forgetting* (revised: flute, violin, cello, bass, 2-ch audio),
Choreographer: Claire French, ArtSpring
- 2013-14 *air filled with promise* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Helen Walkley, EDAM
- 2012 *Double Variations* (harp, cello, 2-ch audio),
Choreographers: Simone Orlando, Joe Laughlin
Commissioned by Ballet Kelowna and the Canada Council for the Arts
- 2012 *The Moment of Forgetting* (flute, violin, viola, bass, 2-ch audio),
Choreographer: Claire French, Restless Productions
- 2012 *The Willful Child* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Claire French, Restless Productions
- 2012 *Call to Order* (alto sax, cello, piano, 2-ch audio), Visual Artist: Kathleen Ritter
Commissioned by the Institutions by Artists Conference 2012
- 2010 *Standing Wave Seance* (MaxMSP Programming), Visual Artists: Hadley+Maxwell
Seattle Art Museum, "Kurt" Exhibit
- 2009 *How is Sleep Beautiful* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Helen Walkley
Commissioned by Helen Walkley, The Canada Council, BC Arts, Link Dance
- 2009 *A Storied Sea* (trombone, 2-ch audio), Writer: Caleb Johnston
Commissioned by Western Front New Music
- 2007 *Outside Out/Inside Outside In* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Claire French
Created in collaboration with composer Teresa Connors
- 2006-2007 *Just a Minute* (Dance Film: 2-ch audio),
Choreographer: Claire French, Director: Alison Beda
- 2006 *Trio X* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Claire French
- 2005 *No Leg to Stand On* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Helen Walkley
Commissioned by the Society for Disability Arts and Culture
- 2005 *Where Fools Tread* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Claire French
- 2004 *"And what hearing is, and seeing..."* (2-ch audio), Choreographer: Helen Walkley
Commissioned by Helen Walkley, The Dance Centre, Canada Council, BC Arts
- 2003 *ab ovo* (Film: 2-ch audio), Director: Alex Williams

References

Dr. Arne Eigenfeldt: Associate Professor, Simon Fraser University
School for the Contemporary Arts
arne_e@sfu.ca, (+1) 604 318-3574

Dr. Philippe Pasquier, Associate Professor, Simon Fraser University
School of Interactive Art + Technology
pasquier@sfu.ca, (+1) 778 782-8546

Nicolas Gonzalez Thomas, Chief Technology Officer, Musical AI
nicolas@wearemusical.ai

Last updated: December 7, 2025