

Blair Mackay

Repertoire

Accomplished performer, Juno Award recipient and inductee in the Canadian Music Hall of Fame. Performer and artistic director, who has collaborated with renowned composers and performers to deliver highly revered festivals, performances, and audio recordings to local, regional, national, and international audiences. Consummate music educator with expertise in teaching music history, concepts, and skills worldwide to students of distinct skill levels. Award-winning fundraiser and grant writer who has championed the progress of musical arts and cultural activities in communities. Broadly skilled and versatile musician with extensive experience producing and performing musical arrangements representing diverse genres and instruments for an array of distinguished, classical, and contemporary audiences. Organized manager effective at coordinating complex production logistics across venues.

Education and Credentials

Doctoral Degree in Music, University of Montreal, Canada

Master of Music in Performance, University of Toronto, Canada

Bachelor of Education, University of Toronto, Canada

Bachelor of Music in Performance with Honors, University of Toronto, Canada

Teaching Certificate, Ontario, Canada

Notable Studies

Jazz studies — McGill University, Montreal, Canada

Music, Percussion — Marionapolis, College, Westmount, Quebec, Canada

Artistic Director Experience

HUDSON MUSIC FESTIVAL, Hudson, Quebec, Canada

Artistic Director, 2007 to present

Design, promote, and produce annual 8-day event offering public performances in multiple venues. Coordinate artist outreach initiatives and youth competitions.

- Co-founded and expanded this festival into a summer feature of the Hudson region.

EVERGREEN CLUB CONTEMPORARY GAMELAN (ECCG), Toronto, Canada

Artistic Director and General Manager, 1992 to 2025

Direct an 8-member music ensemble and secure an international repertoire of performances. Conduct fundraising and outreach initiatives.

- Acquired approximately 100 new commissions for contemporary music including theatre, opera, dance, world music, jazz and popular music.
- Produced 10 critically acclaimed CDs.
- Led performances included in multiple motion pictures and documentaries.

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PRIVATE COMMISSIONS, Worldwide

Music Teacher,

1975 to Present

Facilitate private lessons in percussion, drums, piano, and general musicianship. Teach master classes internationally to music students in partnership with the Esprit Orchestra and Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan.

Other Teaching -- North Albion Collegiate Institute (Toronto), Sherbrooke Academy Senior, Montreal

Courses taught include Band with Strings, Keyboard, Computers in Music, General Musicianship, Steel Pan Ensemble, African Drum and Dance Ensemble. Teach grades 3-6 fundamentals of music performance and theory.

Awards

Hall of Fame Juno Award

Inductee, Canadian Music Hall of Fame (2009)

Canada Council for the Arts Study Grant awards (1987, 2010)

Selected Performances

- Percussionist for Clowns (Opera de Montreal, Place des Arts), new contemporary opera by Ana Sokolovic Jan/feb 2026.
- 2015-2026, performances with Aretha Franklin, The Who, Breen LeBoeuf, Jeff Smallwood, Didier Chasteau, Roger Mann, Kim Richardson, Francine Raymond and more...
- 40th anniversary concert Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan (ECCG), October 2024.
- Evergreen Club Contemporary gamelan and Sixtrum Ensemble, Montreal and Toronto, new works 2022.
- ECCG/Société de Musique Contemporaine (SMCQ) du Québec, The Festivale du Monde Arabe at Place des Arts, 2019.
- ECCG 35th Anniversary Concert, The Music Gallery, Toronto, 2019.
- Canadian Opera Company production of Turandot, 2019.
- Origins, The Toronto Jazz Festival, 2019.
- ECCG, The Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, 2018.
- China Tour with the Esprit orchestra, 2017.
- SMCQ performance, Oeuvres de Antheil, Bernstein, Rea, Stravinski, Montreal, 2016
- The opera How it Storms with ECCG, Toronto, 2015.
- British Columbia Tour with Red Sky Theatre Productions, 2014.
- New solo works, University of Montreal, 2014.
- Broadway's Anything Goes, Princess of Wales Theatre, Toronto, 2013.
- Sacre du Printemps with Esprit Orchestra, Montreal New Music Festival, 2013.
- L'histoire du Soldat with Arraymusic, Enwave centre, Toronto, 2013.
- Drumset Master Class, University of Toronto for the Percussive Arts Society, Ontario, 2013.
- Academy Award winning soundtrack for The Life of Pi, 2013.

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- With ECCG, the Ottawa Chamber and Hudson music festivals, 2013.
- 2009-2012, recorded and toured with April Wine.
- Additional performances: Dangerous Kitchen- the music of Frank Zappa, Copernicus Opera - Claude Vivier (Strasbourg, Huddersfield, Banff Centre for the Arts, Toronto).
- From 1990 to 2019, principal percussion and drums Musical Theatre productions: Les Miserables, Miss Saigon, Beauty and the Beast, Phantom of the Opera, Ragtime, Showboat, Mamma Mia, Sound of Music, Anything Goes and others...
- Member of Array Music Ensemble, percussion, Toronto, 1996-2009.
- Toured and recorded with jazz ensemble Randon Access, Toronto, 1996-2000.
- Principal Percussionist, Esprit Orchestra, Toronto, 1996-2009, member since 1986.
- Toured and recorded with April Wine, Montreal, 2007-2012.

Additional career performances and tours encompassed Nova Scotia, France, England, Portugal, United States, Germany, Japan, and Indonesia

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Selected Audio and Soundtrack Contributions

- *Origins*, The Joni Book, 2018
- *Legacy*, 2007
- *For there and then*, ECCG 2005
- *Bridge*, ECCG, 2016
- *Silk*, 2007
- *The works of Ana Sokolovic with Ensemble Contemporaine de Montreal*, CBC records, 2004
- *Higgs Ocean*, 2012
- *Vocal works of Murray Schafer*, Esprit Orchestra, 2006
- *Sunda Song*, Naxos Records, 2004
- *Life of Pi*, 2012
- *Accidental Beef*, 2006
- *The Antwone Fisher Story*, 2002
- *Mes Amours*, Kim Richardson, 2011
- *Translations*, 2006
- *The Last Night*, 1999
- *Grace*, ECCG 2008
- *Roxanna*, 2006
- *The Ice Storm*, 1998
- *Pachendale*, 2008
- *To the Moon*, Pirate Jenny, 2005
- *When Night is Falling*, 1997
- *Blues recordings with Myles Goodwyn*, 2007
- *ARRAYMUSIC Live at Glenn Gould Studio*, CBC, 2005
- *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, 1997
- *The Arrow*, 1997
- *Toronto Symphony recording, Murray Schafer Flute Concerto and harp Concerto* 1989.