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# Unpacking A Moment: Decolonization in the Performing Arts?

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*Abstract: "The Moment" occurred during an intercultural and interdisciplinary artistic workshop, inspiring a long-term artistic collaboration and many conversations about decolonization in the performing arts. What can we learn about decolonization from the collaboration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and scholars? Our collective analysis and reflection will demonstrate two things: the benefits of and challenges to a careful consideration of respectful collaboration among musicians from different traditions in a post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission context, and new ways of engaging in music research which are collaborative and possibly decolonial.*

*Résumé : Le « moment » s'est produit au cours d'un atelier artistique interculturel et interdisciplinaire, inspirant une collaboration artistique à long terme et de nombreuses conversations au sujet de la décolonisation des arts vivants. Que pouvons-nous apprendre de la décolonisation à partir de la collaboration d'artistes et d'universitaires autochtones et non autochtones? Notre analyse collective et notre réflexion démontreront deux choses : les bénéfices et les difficultés d'un examen consciencieux de la collaboration respectueuse entre musiciens provenant de traditions différentes dans le contexte de l'après-Commission de vérité et de réconciliation, et de nouvelles façons d'aborder la recherche musicale qui soient collaboratives et si possible décoloniales.*

## "The Moment"

*A group of musicians is gathered on the stage, some performing, some listening. Hubert Francis (Mi'kmaq, singer and drummer) sings and drums the Mi'kmaw Honour Song.[1] It is ceremonial, stately, and as intensely expressive as it is beautiful. After a time, Vicki St. Pierre (settler, contralto) sings the supple melody of the Gregorian hymn "Ubi caritas." The hymn is performed without specific pulse or*

*This article has accompanying videos on our YouTube channel. You can find them on the playlist for MUSICultures volume 46-1, available here: http://bit.ly/MUSICultures-46-1. With the ephemerality of web-based media in mind, we warn you that our online content may not always be accessible, and we apologize for any inconvenience.*

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*rhythm and is truncated so as to finish before the Honour Song has finished. The disjunct performance of the hymn floats above the Honour Song and sounds as if far away — haunting yet intimate. Settler scholars (Ann Waltner and John Watkins) speak the text: "How do we find the stories? How do we tell the stories?" Observing the performance, Angela Acquin (Wolastoqew) reacts to the combined music of the Honour Song and hymn, saying, "Frig it's beautiful but f&*% I hate it!" A discussion follows about the emotional response elicited by the music, and the memories and emotions associated with Angela's family's experience at the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School.*

* * *

"The Moment" describes an event that occurred during a weekend workshop held at Mount Allison University on Mi'kmaw lands in Sackville, New Brunswick in September 2017 (see Pearse 2017a at 08:45: https://youtu.be/FjVKx-G3udg). "The Moment" is the visceral reaction of Angela (Angee) Acquin to the sound of Catholic sacred music layered over the Mi'kmaw Honour Song and accompanied by texts spoken by settler scholars about finding and telling the lost or neglected stories of Mi'kmaq and Wolastoq peoples. It raises questions about cultural collaboration, decolonization, and cultural aesthetics and appropriateness. It points to the potential for the experiences of artists and the immediateness of the collaborative environment to complement the scholarship of those observing artistic work from outside. "The Moment" led to a works-in-progress presentation at the end of the workshop weekend, and the creation of the interdisciplinary research-creation project, *How do we listen?*, which tells the story of Angee Acquin, whose grandmother, Virginia Acquin, and great-aunt, Doris, were sent to the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School in what is today known as the Province of Nova Scotia. The only Indian Residential School in Atlantic Canada, Shubenacadie was open from 1930 to 1967 and housed Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik children in an act of cultural genocide committed by the Canadian Government against Indigenous peoples (Truth and Reconciliation Canada 2015: 1).[2] Doris drowned while at Shubenacadie. Virginia suffered the long-term effects of her own experiences at the school, intensified by grief after the death of her younger sister. The effects of the school on subsequent generations of the Acquin family are profound, manifesting in alcoholism, drug abuse, psychological struggles, and a broken family.

This article takes "The Moment" as its point of inspiration for a conversation about intercultural music-making and its potential to engage

with decolonization within the context of the performing arts. We are writing as four people together in order to highlight the multiple identities/perspectives within ourselves and between participants, and to underscore the importance of relationships (Indigenous-settler, scholars-artists-educators, and musicians from different traditions) when engaging with this complex subject. The ways in which we tell our stories are as important for music research as how we conduct that research in the first place.

We begin the article by introducing each author, allowing us to highlight the different biographical motivations and experiences that inform each of our perspectives. Following, we discuss the broader context for "The Moment" and describe the workshop where it happened. This discussion sets the stage for an exploration of our own (divergent) understandings of decolonization, a consideration of the dynamics of power within the context of collaboration, and an analysis of "The Moment" in terms of its potential to be seen as decolonizing.

Our collective analysis and reflection on "The Moment" will demonstrate two things: the benefits of and challenges to a careful consideration of respectful collaboration among musicians from distinct traditions in a post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Canadian context, and new ways of conducting music research that are collaborative and possibly decolonial. This article will thus be a beneficial contribution both to performers and composers in collaborative relationships seeking new, decolonial compositional strategies, and to music researchers who wish to explore the multiple perspectives inherent in any musical performance, particularly those researchers who engage with themes of decolonization. We consider the dynamics of intercultural collaboration at work, opening up questions and exposing pathways for future consideration in the realms of aesthetics, collaboration, and meaning. We also consider the pitfalls and successes of the collaboration as a whole and "The Moment" in particular.

The project of analyzing "The Moment" collaboratively by writing this article has in its own way become important for the authors' growth and for the shaping of the ongoing project, *How Do We Listen?* We approach this work with humility and respect, acknowledging that missteps may occur despite our best intentions. We hope that it succeeds in sustaining "relationships across otherness without seeking to erase difference" (Rose 2004: 21; qtd. in Barney 2016: 104). We celebrated both the relationships and the difference as we told each other stories and played music for one another throughout the process, from workshop to rehearsals and on to recording.

## Author Introductions

*Angee Acquin*

I am a mother first. I am a proud Wolastoqew woman. I am a small part of a greater creation and I strive to make my space kinder and better understood. My family is by blood but also of the heart's choice. I try hard not to have a preconceived notion about anything I do. I understand being able to work with the present, in the here and now. I came to this project by chance and felt some apprehension because I do not have formal training in music although I am active as a singer, drummer, and educator. Yet I discovered that my presence was important in other ways. I am a teacher of Indigenous knowledge and recognize that we live in a colonial society. I know many truths and my experience of colonialism is valid. We have to educate non-Indigenous people, bringing them to understand and hopefully accept that colonial actions have paralyzed the Nations, taken so much from us, and continue to do so. The settler's responsibility is to create space and support efforts to decolonize and heal. This project speaks to those aims.

*Linda Pearse*

My interest in exploring identity and cultural encounters through research-creation in the performing arts is informed by my training as a scholar and performer of early European art music as well as by my own biography. Born and raised on the West Coast of Canada in the Coast Salish region of Vancouver Island, I have since lived as a foreigner in China, Malaysia, South Africa, Germany, Switzerland, Indiana (USA), Montréal (QC), and Sackville (NB). My identity and comprehension of difference are further informed by my experience as an LGBTQ person who has identified varying degrees of safety and support within different locations and adapted my behaviour and outward expression of identity as needed. Therefore, issues of belonging, difference, and cultural adaptation and conflict have been key to my identity and my development as an artist.

My experience with Indigenous communities began when I attended a racially mixed public school in Cedar, British Columbia. Elders from the Coast Salish Stz'uminus First Nation visited classes, communicating and sharing cultural practices in classroom settings. In these places I experienced a *limited* integration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous pupils in after-school activities. My involvement with this project has resonances with my past but also represents a new and developing understanding of my role as a settler in a colonial society.

I have directed several prior intercultural interdisciplinary collaborations which brought together disparate musics, performers, and scholars from distinct disciplines and cultural backgrounds (Pearse and Waltner 2013, 2017; see website ¡Sacabuche! 2018). In contrast to previous collaborations, this is the first time I have created space for others (Angee and Hubert) to lead and instruct the group.[3] I am grateful that they shared their gifts, knowledge, and truths, and am even more grateful to collaborate with them as artists.

*Robin Attas*

I am a settler scholar trained in music theory and analysis with research interests in higher education pedagogy, popular music, social justice, and decolonization and settler colonialism in music. I feel a deep connection to the place I was raised (known on settler maps as Pinawa, Manitoba, Canada), but I have lived in many places around Canada, the United States, and Nicaragua. My life experiences, in particular my marriage to a Nicaraguan and my connection to his family and homeland, have opened my eyes to questions of identity and privilege that, as a white woman, I was ignorant of for many years. Similarly, my relationship with the Indigenous peoples in the country I know as Canada has been something of an awakening, as I have moved over 37 years from complete settler-colonial ignorance and racist stereotyping to my current work decolonizing music theory research and pedagogy while advocating among fellow settlers for change. I recognize, however, that my own process of decolonization is ongoing and will take a lifetime to finish. During a year as a visiting assistant professor at Mount Allison University, I came to know Linda and her work. I did not participate in the workshop generally or "The Moment" specifically, but was an audience member at the works-in-progress presentation and learned more through many conversations with Linda (ironically, often over tea at a bakery in a colonial-era building) and by viewing the workshop video in which "The Moment" is depicted. As we talked about decolonization, music, and various research projects, our professional relationship grew, and Linda invited me to participate in the present article as an outside analyst.

*Ann Waltner*

I am a historian who has taught at the University of Minnesota for the last 30 years. I live in Minneapolis, the home of the American Indian Movement, and my university has had a department of American Indian Studies for 50 years. Colleagues of mine in various departments (History, American Studies, American Indian Studies), both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, have been

influential in delineating the intellectual and political importance of Indigenous histories (Child 1998, 2014; Sleeper-Smith et al. 2015; Chang 2016). But this is my first foray into research and writing about settler-Indigenous contact; it represents new departures for me.

My training is as a historian of early modern China; I also teach and write on comparative history. My relationship to my scholarly work, which belongs to the distant past and lands far away, has instilled in me an interest in identity and Otherness; the process of doing that work in libraries in Europe and Asia has reinforced that interest. I have made dozens of research and scholarly trips to greater China since 1974; my identity as a white woman in Asia has been constituted in a variety of ways, but I am always marked as an outsider. That experience is one of the resources I draw upon to understand difference.

This is my third project with Linda. In all three projects we have examined cultural contact and processes of identity formation. In my scripts, I try to use words to open up the imagination of the listener. As a historian, I put words on a page, or speak them in a classroom or academic context. As a writer on a collaborative performance project, the words I write are one of the threads of the framework of the piece, and one (but only one) of its structures of meaning.

Linda and I have a long-standing collaborative relationship. Owing to the oftentimes intimate intellectual relationship of artistic co-creators, many of our ideas are impossible to disentangle and identify as belonging to one or the other (nor would that be a useful exercise). We have thus worked my voice into sections that are composed by Linda and note the inclusive authorship when it occurs.

## The Workshop

*Linda Pearse*

"The Moment" occurred within the context of the Collaborative Communities Workshop on Creative and Scholarly Practice. This workshop brought together four different communities of creative practice and scholarly engagement: 1) Indigenous musicians Angee Acquin (Wolastoqew drummer/educator) and Hubert Francis (Mi'kmaw singer/drummer); 2) early European art-music performers Linda Pearse (artistic director, ¡Sacabuche!; Mount Allison University), Vicki St. Pierre (Mount Allison University), and other members of the early music ensemble ¡Sacabuche!; 3) Sackville-born and Juno Award-winning jazz saxophonist and composer Joel Miller; and 4) historian Ann Waltner and literary scholar John Watkins

(both University of Minnesota). In total, there were two Indigenous and eleven non-Indigenous participants, though it is perhaps important to acknowledge the plurality of cultural and language diversity among all members of the group (Indigenous and non-Indigenous). Given that the members of ¡Sacabuche! were in town for a performance of European art music taking place the evening prior to the workshop, it would have been odd to exclude certain musicians in order to achieve a more balanced group. This imbalance in numbers of Indigenous vs. non-Indigenous participants at the workshop created a particular relational dynamic which is discussed below. The workshop was supported by a SSHRC Aid to Small Universities Grant and took place September 23–25, 2017 in Sackville, New Brunswick.

Ann and I began research on Indigenous-settler relationships in Canada in 2012, three years prior to the publication of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report (TRC 2015). I was thus aware of the challenges of creating a safe co-creative space for all workshop participants, mitigating the power dynamics inherent in the collaboration of people on opposing sides of a violent past, and addressing the aesthetic and political problems of hosting this workshop in a settler university space. Before the workshop, I conferred with Angee about how it might unfold. We decided on a structure, identifying sessions that she would lead, and establishing that her main role would involve her teaching us about her history, culture, and customs, as well as the role that music plays in her culture.

Over two and a half days, all participants experimented with creative practice in an interdisciplinary context, exchanged information about our individual discipline-specific methodologies (Indigenous music and dance, early European music, historical research, and jazz composition), and identified areas of resonance and difference. The workshop allowed us space and time for experimentation, presentational exchange, artist community-building, and creative engagement — time that is seldom available in professional artistic settings. We developed connections, established relationships, built trust, and shared our connection to music with each other. As Katelyn Barney reminds us, dialogue is at the centre of collaboration (2016: 104).

Prior to the workshop, I was not aware that this work would connect to the Indian Residential School history and have resonances with the findings of the TRC or with conversations on decolonization. There were simply good political and artistic reasons for connecting with Indigenous artist colleagues. I was moved to hear of the experiences of a Mi'kmaw student of mine and felt that a project that reached out to Indigenous artists in the region would both align with Mount Allison University's desire to address

its colonial past and present, and also respond to my student's experiences. But most importantly, hosting a workshop that focuses on artistic practice in New Brunswick meant that it was essential to include Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik voices in addition to those of Acadians and English New Brunswickers. It was thus, through contacts with artists in the region, that I connected with Angee and Hubert.

The final workshop session was a works-in-progress public presentation in the Brunton Auditorium at Mount Allison University that allowed interested members of the university, music, and Sackville communities (primarily a non-Indigenous audience) to observe and engage with the team. This was not a performance. Apart from the Mi'kmaw Honour Song which Hubert performed, we did not perform complete pieces of music. Following a land acknowledgment and the performance of the Honour Song, Hubert spoke about his connection to the project. I described what had happened over the weekend and other members shared their experiences. We performed fragments of songs to serve as a basis for discussions on our collaboration and potential next steps. Angee was not available for this works-in-progress event due to a prior work commitment. Thus "The Moment," which encompasses not only the layering of the musics but more importantly, Angee's reaction to it and subsequent dialogue with the group, was captured on video but only alluded to in sound and words during the workshop presentation.

The enjoyable relationships sparked in the workshop encouraged us to continue our collaboration and have led to the creation of *How do we listen?,* a project that tells Angee's family story using sound, text, and music. We recorded the project in May 2017 but did not perform it at that time. Informed by literature on the aesthetics of intercultural collaboration, we considered the implications of such a performance (Robinson 2012; Bartleet and Carfoot 2013; Barney 2014, 2016). Where should we perform it? Who is our intended audience? How does the visual structure of a performance contribute to meaning? Dylan Robinson points to the importance of bringing performances to Indigenous communities (2012: 235-236), yet the work is also important for settler audiences to experience, perhaps opening doors to greater understanding, or at least offering a rich intercultural space for consideration of this narrative. We have thus secured funding for filming and performances in a New Brunswick high school, on Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqiyik reserves nearby, and at Mount Allison University in an effort to engage with diverse audiences.[4]

## What is Decolonization?

*Robin Attas*

My initial perspective as an audience member at the workshop's works-in-progress presentation placed me as an outsider ignorant of any particular creative intentions that Linda and the other workshop participants may have established amongst themselves, beyond what was explained in the presentation itself. At the same time, my professional identity as a music theorist has instilled in me the habit of critically examining music performances and musical sounds for meaning. Combining these two positions, when I first saw the works-in-progress presentation, the Indigenous-settler collaborators on stage and the sonic juxtaposition of the Mi'kmaw Honour Song with "Ubi caritas" suggested to me an act of decolonization.

My understanding of decolonization continues to evolve as I read more academic and non-academic sources and have more life experiences that teach me about power, privilege, and bias. For me, this intertwining of the intellectual and the personal suggests that a literature review would not sufficiently represent my knowledge about decolonization, particularly at the time of the presentation. Further, since I understand decolonization as a process, and want to encourage others to take steps on their own journeys, I believe it is important to represent my perspectives as incomplete and partial academic arguments. For these reasons, I have written from my perspective during the roughly six months between my first exposure to the artistic piece we describe and the initial submission of this article for review. Readers who have broader knowledge bases (however knowledge is defined) will find gaps in my understanding but, to me, this is the nature of the work. Although this article's peer reviewers suggested worthy and relevant additional scholarship, I resisted referencing it here as it had not played a role in formulating my understanding of decolonization as I contributed to this article. As my co-authors share their understandings, it will become clear that even among the four of us, understandings of decolonization are personal and multi-faceted.

Decolonization as I understood it at the time of "The Moment" is both physical and cultural, involving both land and human presence on that land. It includes consideration of the impact of colonialism on socio-cultural processes; ways of knowing, doing, and thinking; epistemologies, ontologies, and methodologies; and relationships among human beings. It is both removal and return: the removal of colonial elements and peoples and the return of Indigenous elements and peoples. It involves the repatriation of land and rights for Indigenous peoples, and the recognition that "land" must be understood

through Indigenous lenses rather than settler ones, what Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang call "land/water/air/subterranean earth (land, for shorthand)" (2012: 5; see also Alfred 2017: 10-13).

My understanding at the time came from a diverse collection of texts on decolonization and settler colonialism but was mainly focused on the Canadian Indigenous-settler context. I was aware that early use of the term "decolonization" is typically credited to Frantz Fanon, who in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963) connects it to the removal of colonial elements in places where the colonizers have left, whether by choice or by force. On the other hand, the settler colonial theorists I'd read at the time of my initial meetings with Linda (most of whom focus on the global north) contextualize decolonization specifically within places such as Canada where Indigenous peoples face an invasion of settlers that has not ceased (Wolfe 1999; Mackey 2002; Veracini 2010). I found it helpful at the time to consider Emma Battell Lowman and Adam Barker's summary of settler colonialism's "three main pillars": settler invasion is an ongoing and institutionalized structure rather than a single event, settlers intend to stay in the colonized lands rather than go "back home," and settler occupation has an end goal of the elimination of Indigenous peoples, either through assimilation or genocide (2015: 25).

I held in my mind and heart Tuck and Yang's admonishment to anyone who sees decolonization as akin to inclusion or diversity initiatives and their warning against tokenistic gestures. They state that "decolonization is not a metaphor" (2012: 3) and assert that decolonization "must involve the repatriation of land simultaneous to the recognition of how land and relations to land have always already been differently understood and enacted" (7). However, I also held the words of Marie Battiste, who deliberately uses a metaphor to describe what decolonization might look like in the Canadian educational context, comparing colonialism to a strong river current:

> This imperialistic system of knowledge that is considered the "mainstream" functions like a "keeper" current in a rapidly flowing river or ocean. The keeper current drags a person to the bottom and then to the top, but if one fights against the current one usually drowns. Decolonization then is a process of unpacking the keeper current in education: its powerful Eurocentric assumptions of education, its narratives of race and difference in curriculum and pedagogy, its establishing culturalism or cultural racism as a justification for the status quo, and the advocacy for Indigenous knowledge as a legitimate education topic. It is the channel for generating a postcolonial education system in Canada

> and disrupting those normalized discourses and singularities and allowing diverse voices and perspectives and objectives into "mainstream" schooling. (2013: 106-7)

In contemplating these definitions, it became clear to me that decolonization is understood differently by different people. Tuck and Yang argue for a settler departure; Battell Lowman and Barker suggest the same in their "three pillars" summary but elsewhere in their text describe ways of decolonizing without settler removal. Battiste's water metaphor suggests that decolonization is a means to shift the current in a flowing river but leaves space for both settlers and Indigenous peoples to redirect the flow. My co-authors offer additional possibilities. It is important to highlight rather than hide these differences, since our individual and scholarly definitions could lead to different interpretations of musical events such as "The Moment" and the works-in-progress presentation.

*Angee Acquin*

With decolonization, I understand the need to reclaim the importance and structure of our families, communities, culture, language, history, and traditions, most of which were erased in an attempt to assimilate us into the dominant white culture. We (Indigenous people) need to step away from the church and state and foster an understanding of how to be true to our own Nations. My desire with this project, having completed the workshop, is to encourage all people to better understand and respect Indigenous peoples and their ways of life on the land on which they live: to move forward while recognizing our inherent rights. Imagining a different future, I want to see Indigenous worldviews and ways of knowing integrated into the school systems. I want our truths to be told.

Justice would involve the indigenization of all aspects of our society, shaping what children learn in schools, what governments acknowledge and how they adapt, and allowing families to be kept together. Ideally, I would like to see churches removed from our communities, but I understand that not everyone in my community would agree with me. My dream is to have children who grow up knowing their past in a safe place with no alcohol or drugs. I want them to be surrounded by family and to know their value.

*Linda Pearse (with Ann Waltner)*

When Robin approached me and mentioned that the workshop could be an example of decolonization in the performing arts, my initial reaction and immediate reply was, "No, we are not doing that." The goal of the workshop

was not to explore decolonization in the performing arts. Nor was the goal to contribute to work on reconciliation. We came to this project with the idea of exploring potential collaborations among an interdisciplinary group of artists and scholars, and of learning more about methodologies that might have applications for research-creation in interdisciplinary and intercultural contexts.

We are uncomfortable with the word "decolonization" being applied to our work because we came to this project without that intention and without the necessary background; neither of us is an Indigenous Studies scholar, nor have we had prior engagement with Indigenous communities within an artistic co-creative context. Corey Snelgrove, Rita Kaur Dhamoon, and Jeff Corntassel, in discussing the institutionalization of settler colonial studies, note that "even when (and perhaps because) there are good intentions to decolonize" these intentions are not enough to shift "the power imbalances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples or the systems within which we operate" (2014: 9). We are not saying that as settlers we do not need to engage in practices that foster decolonization, thus displacing the burden of decolonization onto Indigenous peoples alone (see Garneau 2016: 32-33). Rather, we are wary of thinking that simply because we have good intentions, we are in fact decolonizing. We have the sense that decolonization is a much-talked-about concept that lacks physicality or an actionable context (see Tuck and Yang 2012: 2-4). We worry that the concept of decolonization is not robust enough to support the important work that needs to be done to create a North America in which Indigenous people can thrive under terms of their own making. David Garneau puts forward the concept of "conciliation" as "an ongoing process, a seeking rather than the restoration of an imagined agreement" (2016: 31). Conciliation thus serves as an alternative to words such as "reconciliation" or "decolonization." It is a means whereby the present can be negotiated and a future imagined without pandering to the foil of a colonial narrative which furthers colonial desires (2016: 30-34). "Conciliation" thus opens up a theoretical space which is not referential to colonization and which does not normalize past atrocities. Both reconciliation and decolonization suggest a going back, a reclaiming of a past before colonization occurred. Yet there is no usable past for Indigenous-settler relationships. We have to imagine new ways of going forward, and we need theories that name the problem precisely.

It is in the participatory nature of our work and our privileging of the affective as a way of knowing that intercultural collaboration might contribute new considerations for work on conciliation. "The Moment" provides a good example of this affective experience and how it can shape understanding and interactions. We endorse the suggestion made by Katelyn Barney, Margaret Kovach, and others that music-making, particularly collaborative music-

making, can move Indigenous and non-Indigenous people beyond binaries, and offers the possibility of opening up new forms of dialogue, theory, research, and action (Barney 2016: 111-112; Kovach 2010: 12).

The impacts of conciliation and a commitment by settler artists/scholars to thinking beyond binaries as we move forward with research and practice might provoke a rethinking of structures for collaboration — a rethinking of the premises upon which artistic research is conducted. What we did in this workshop, as with our other projects, was open up space, allowing people to create, talk, and perform. There is a concreteness and intentionality to what we are doing that may contribute to conversations surrounding decolonization. For example, we ensure that musicians perform their music, whether Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqiyik, jazz, or early European art music, in a form that respects individual or culturally specific training and traditions. Each partner retains authority over their music, and when joining musics or playing together, we set parameters in advance and put protocols in place to ensure that no one form or tradition is subjugated or dominated by another.

Many of these approaches resonate with work by scholars such as Beverley Diamond, Dylan Robinson (Stó:lō), Keavy Martin, Garneau, Barney, Kovach, and others. Diamond's work spans the gamut of Indigenous music studies, including song traditions, reconciliation, cultural identity, and Indigenous modernity, and has inspired a generation of scholarship (2011, 2012, 2016; Diamond and Hoefnagels 2012; Diamond, Szego, and Sparling 2012). Diamond's work is particularly useful because of the way she articulates issues of cultural identity, ownership, and best practices of communication. Robinson's work on aesthetics identifies and explains models of collaboration between First Nations/Inuit and early-music traditions (2012) and addresses how performances might create a perception of reconciliation without actually bringing about acts that are reconciliatory (2014). Spurred on by the publication of the TRC's Report (2015), artists and scholars have increasingly explored the collaboration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in many disciplines, including the arts (Robinson and Martin 2016). Scholarship and popular writings on cultural appropriation provoke a constant and important interrogation of the collaborative procedures in this work (Bamberger 2009; Bartleet and Carfoot 2013; Barney 2014, 2016). Yet there is a gap between theory and practice and a lack of scholarship written by performers about their experiences of this type of intercultural collaboration. Our experience with Angee and Hubert informed and transformed aspects of our methodology, which we will discuss further below. The participatory nature of our work complements this scholarship from beyond the artists' realm by contributing perspectives from within.

*Robin Attas*

In order to analyze "The Moment" and the works-in-progress presentation as decolonizing acts, I synthesized my reading and experiences into an (admittedly imperfect) understanding of decolonization as a process involving two things: making colonial and Eurocentric elements visible, and placing Indigenous elements on an equal footing with them. I believed that decolonization could occur without completely removing settlers from the land. A large part of what made "The Moment" and the works-in-progress presentation appear decolonizing to me was the colonial context in which it took place. The following observations are not meant as a criticism of that location, but rather as information that gives insight into my analysis.

The land upon which the collaboration occurred is presently considered to be owned by Mount Allison University. The institution, like many other post-secondary institutions, has recently crafted a territorial acknowledgement statement that is read at the start of many proceedings, including the workshop presentation I attended. Mount Allison University's territorial acknowledgement recognizes the land as the "unceded ancestral lands of the Mi'kmaq Nation and our brothers and sisters, the Wolastoquyik (Maliseet) peoples" (see https://mta.ca/indigenous/). The Mi'kmaw flag often flies alongside the Canadian flag at the official campus entrance, and an Indigenous student support office coordinates an Indigenous meeting space, various events, emotional and spiritual support for students, and appointments with a resident Elder. Further, the university sponsored two years of campus-wide dialogues, debates, and public lectures as part of its "Year of Indigenous Knowing" (2016-17) and "Year of Indigenous Action" (2017-18).

These actions, and others that have occurred since "The Moment" happened, are important steps toward decolonization. However, as with most other institutions of higher education in Canada, Mount Allison University remains a colonial and Eurocentric establishment founded, administered, and attended mainly by settlers. Its student body of approximately 2,300 features only about 60 self-identified Indigenous students, and at the time of the performance there were no full-time permanent Indigenous faculty members (the university has since hired two; see https://mta.ca/Prospective/About/Facts_and_figures/Facts_and_figures/).[5] Mount Allison University's educational and administrative structure, its curricula, and its values are still rooted in European structures, or as Battiste writes, "grounded in Eurocentric assumptions, values, and methodologies" (2013: 102). Indigenous worldviews, knowledges, and traditions have only recently been accepted within this space, and not in all spheres equally (for more on how Canadian post-secondary educational

institutions are colonial and could be decolonized, see Cote-Meek 2014).

Situated within the context of Mount Allison University since its inception, the Music Department enacts further elements of settler colonial culture and worldviews. Like many North American and European music departments, Mount Allison University places Western European art music at the centre of its curriculum and performances. Music performance, history, composition, theory, and teacher education courses focus on this repertoire and the European modes of thinking attached to it. Like most contemporary music departments there are courses and ensembles in other repertoires (jazz, popular music, world music) but these repertoires and cultures are positioned as secondary to the dominant discourse in a way that is largely unquestioned and hidden (Bradley 2012; Hess 2012). For instance, on the departmental homepage, the department discusses the value of "the study of Music" at length, and yet never acknowledges that the primary music under study is that of particular places, times, and peoples (Mount Allison University 2019a).

The physical spaces where "The Moment" and the public presentation happened can thus be taken collectively as a colonial space, representative of the Eurocentric nature of the knowledge and practices that occur within its walls. In that sense, the fact that the workshop invited Indigenous musicians into that colonial space could be viewed as a decolonizing step.[6] Furthermore, the numerous elements that Linda and Angee included in the workshop's design to mitigate Indigenous-settler power dynamics made this physical decolonization much more effective.

## Power and Balance

*Linda Pearse*

The collaboration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists on Indigenous lands in a colonial building such as the Brunton Auditorium will necessarily heighten the potential for imbalanced power dynamics. Indigenous voices can get lost on campus: speaking time is often unevenly distributed as non-Indigenous people speak longer and louder; universities encourage an adherence to structures and ways of communication that are colonial in nature; and universities employ a hierarchical approach to leadership. I was acutely aware of the complex nature of this collaboration and took steps to mitigate potential power imbalances, but I was taken by surprise at the power that the colonial location — a university auditorium with a stage — would exert. This power was apparent when Angee, Hubert, Ann, John, and I met for the first time in the foyer of the auditorium.

Angee expressed her skepticism about being at a university, making it implicit that trust would need to be built.[7]

> Upon entering the university music building, I felt immediately intimidated and acutely aware of the colonial space I was entering. That feeling of intimidation goes beyond mere unfamiliarity; it is connected with feelings of inferiority and an awareness of past atrocities and their ongoing effect on my people. (Acquin, email correspondence, July 9, 2018)

Responding to the discomfort provoked by the venue, we went for a walk to a nearby park and conversed in that more neutral environment. This instance provides a good example of the immediacy of feedback and response, and the participatory nature that this type of collaboration provokes, compared with more traditional research in which the author or scholar has time to consider multiple angles, approaches, and responses before deciding on a best path forward.

In discussing the role that non-Indigenous artists can play in projects that engage Indigenous artists, David Garneau discusses the idea of "living apology," noting that parties need to come together in full agreement of the facts in order to have a successful collaboration (2016: 37). In this case, the relevant facts have to do with acknowledging where we come from — the role non-Indigenous people played in the atrocities of the past, and the role we can play together in facilitating conciliation today. In retrospect, I see how we used this approach. During our pre-workshop walk, Angee and I agreed on the following facts: Mount Allison University is a predominantly white institution; English is the only publicly spoken language; Angee's people have been oppressed by what this institution represents; and she is here to educate me and my colleagues about her music, culture, and traditions.[8] We reiterated some of our earlier decisions about the schedule, making her role in leading the sessions conscious and explicit. This conversation, the discussion of "the facts," was not planned; the living apology occurred in response to the experience of the colonial space.

In his analysis of musical collaborations between performers of Indigenous music and early European art music, Indigenous Arts scholar Dylan Robinson identifies three categories of encounter: integrative (performing together), presentational (performing separately in an act of musical trading), and combined (extensive musical trading followed by integration) (2012: 224-29). He notes that in situations where musics are combined, "integrating Western art music and First Nations traditions involves a lengthy process of questioning, dialogue, and learning about each other's traditions, considering

protocol, developing trust, and having time to let ideas fail and be readdressed" (240). Reflecting on Robinson's theorizing one year after the workshop, I am able to better understand its inner workings and its success. My walk in the park with Angee began the process of dialogue that Robinson identifies as crucial.

The next phase of the workshop allowed the settler musicians to learn about Indigenous traditions and gave room for Indigenous protocol to guide our actions. As Barney notes, "it is clearly not enough for the [non-Indigenous] researcher to ask someone to collaborate with them in undertaking their research. The collaborative aspect requires consideration of what the collaborator wants" (2016: 11). Angee organized several ceremonies which had the function of cleansing the space and taking ownership of it. She suggested beginning the workshop in a circular room, noting that the auditorium was too formal; the stage is elevated and designed for the performance of European art chamber music. She led a sharing circle, which she guided with the passing of her feather. We discussed our backgrounds and we taught each other about our individual instruments, learning about drum making and meaning as well as the construction and timbre of an archlute. Some experiences were universal — the inner peace and joy of sound that we all shared — and others were highly individualistic. Particularly notable were the descriptions of *ceremonies*, *rituals*, and the *sacredness* of music-making by Hubert and Angee, contrasted with words such as *performances* and *concerts* used by the musicians of ¡Sacabuche!

When we finally entered the auditorium stage, Angee and Hubert directed a smudge ceremony. For most of us, this was our first such ceremony. Holding the ceremony in the auditorium — clearly a colonial space — was a moment of obvious clash between colonial and Indigenous spaces, but Angee and Hubert took ownership of it by leading the ceremony. They spoke, instructed, and directed. We followed. Both the sharing circle and smudge ceremony set the tone for our collaboration and were transformative for our communication during the workshop and beyond.

Following the ceremony, we performed for each other in what Robinson calls "presentational exchanges" (2012: 235). Angee and Hubert each performed their Honour Songs and spoke about what the music means to their people and how it connects to their spirituality. ¡Sacabuche! performed a 16th-century motet with sackbuts, violins, lute, organ, and voice, and spoke about the beauty of the musical language and how we approach the conversation of the lyrics and music. Ann and John performed a script segment from a previous project and spoke about their connection to the work as scholars. The presentational activity situated us as equal partners in a cultural exchange (see Robinson 2012: 235); it served to create a contact zone where collaboration was possible (see Barney 2016: 112).

*Angee Acquin*

I believe in this project. We took the time to get to know each other; each person who took part had a true interest in and respect for learning and a respect for the First Nation peoples of this land. I taught them a piece of history that they may not have known, and I gave a face to the atrocity. The talking circle brought us together as human beings, creating a basis of equality and a safe space with each other on which we could build. Leading the smudge ceremony allowed me to put myself in the right mind frame and share a spiritual part of my culture with the team. In our smudge ceremony we learned about taking time for yourself and for others around you. I showed how music doesn't need to be what is on the paper in front of you, that you can feel it from the earth. The talking circle opened the door and the smudge ceremony allowed us to walk through it. We pray with our music.

## A Bridge

*Linda Pearse*

The musicians of ¡Sacabuche! are *readers* and not *improvisers* of music, and my Indigenous collaborators are *aural learners* and *improvisers,* not *readers* of notated music. Though there is considerable improvisational freedom in the performance of European Baroque music, the music is notated within set formal structures. For example, there is a fixed beginning and ending point, cadences mark specific moments in the music, and there are formal divisions between sections of music. Thus, the improvisatory aspects of early European music function within a highly structured framework. The improvisatory aspects of Hubert and Angee's music-making are different. Hubert described his negotiation between respecting the Indigenous musical traditions passed down to him, composing new works, and making arrangements of pre-existing traditional music. He considers his Indigenous colleagues to be improvisers in this sense (Francis 2018). The ¡Sacabuche! musicians consider their performance of Baroque music as improvisatory (see Pearse 2015, 2017b). Yet with their attachment to fixed formal and written music, there was the very real potential for the larger number of European art musicians to reinforce a cultural arrogance by trying to make the Indigenous musicians fit into a model generated by European art music (see Robinson 2012). Improvisational play, so fundamental to First Nations and Inuit cultural practices, is rarely considered by composers and directors of intercultural projects (Robinson 2012: 237-38). Too often, only those parts of

Indigenous musical practices that fit within European art practices are scripted into new works, with the European art musicians not being required to adapt any part of their performance (237-38).

I thus invited Joel Miller, a jazz composer, to write music that, in its improvisational yet frequently notated idiom, would serve as a bridge between two very different worlds. Various features of jazz music were useful in this situation: its musical connections to European traditions; the drumming and steady pulse which is at least sonically (though not in meaning) similar to the Mi'kmaw Honour Song; and its rich tradition of supporting protest, civil unrest, and backlash against a dominant white culture. The jazz idiom also refocused the attention for ¡Sacabuche! on *listening to* instead of *reading* music, encouraging the dominance of hearing/listening over sight and increasing attention to the *sound of the group* over the *individual and technical production of sound*. Jazz, with its rhythmic focus, reinforced the leadership of the music from Hubert's hands. His drum beat directed the flow of music and required the other musicians to rely on him for direction and cues. Joel's music created a bridge and a sound pathway through which we could make music together. His compositions succeeded in putting everyone slightly out of their comfort zones and upending expectations.

Our use of jazz as the foundation for a newly created work connects our process to Robinson's combined model, which suggests that presentational exchange (an act of musical trading, in which each group performs for the other) is followed by integrated performance (both groups performing together). Robinson is concerned with the composition of a specific musical work and the dynamics that unfold within it. I am applying his model to the larger structure of the workshop. The trading of cultural ceremonies, knowledge, and performances fostered the relationship needed for performance with the mixed ensemble. It also put our focus on the affective dimensions of the collaboration — listening, experiencing, and responding to those stimuli.

## Unpacking "The Moment"

*Linda Pearse*

Following the ceremonies, presentational exchanges, and combined performance of Joel's compositions, I instigated the juxtaposition of Indigenous and European music that provoked Angee's response, which we now refer to as "The Moment" (see Pearse 2017a at 08:45: https://youtu.be/FjVKx-G3udg). Layering culturally distinct music together, particularly when there is a history

of violent oppression of one culture by the other, poses significant challenges and risks. By making the two musics sound beautiful together, an aesthetic message might convey reconciliation, peace, and a merging of cultures (see Robinson 2014). In this particular case, the layering of the Mi'kmaw Honour Song, a ceremonial song of deep cultural value, with the Gregorian hymn "Ubi caritas," a Catholic Latin-texted religious work, has the potential to render beautiful, at least in an aesthetic sense, the abuse of Mi'kmaw and Wolastoqiyik children at Shubenacadie. The joint sounding of those melodies might convey that these cultures have reconciled and all has been forgiven — an affect, not an act of reconciliation (see Robinson 2014).

This was not the purpose or intention of combining these musics during the workshop, yet the experience was instructive. Juxtaposing culturally distinct musics that expose dissonance when performed together will open up different possible meanings, ones that encompass and reflect a more nuanced consideration of conflict and difference, and that portray a cultural or musical untranslatability.[9] Our experience with "The Moment" suggests that in collaborative settings there needs to be a balance between shared experiences and difference. It is just as important to encourage shared experiences as it is to open up space for difference, allowing neither to obscure or narrow the other. In "The Moment," the consonance of the music, the shared experience of distinct musics sounding beautiful together, was balanced by Angee's reaction, the need for her truth to be told — a dissonant counterpoint to the consonance of the musical sound.

The model of layering disparate musics is one that we (Linda and Ann) have employed in prior projects. For example, in *Venetia 1500* (2013), an interdisciplinary work that takes the listener on a musical walking tour by way of the Jacopo de Barbari woodblock print map of 1500 (Minneapolis Institute of Art), the chant *Ave maris stella* is sung by Acadian soprano Suzie LeBlanc and layered over two other musics: a rowdy shawm and brass group performing music for outdoor entertainments and a band of Turkish musicians representing one of Venice's ghettos. In this instance, the layered music depicts the overlap, encounter, and conflict of secular and sacred parts of Venice in the 16th century and connects this overlap to issues of decline in the Maritime region of Canada.

The layering in the Collaborative Communities workshop was different. Prior to the workshop, I asked Hubert and Vicki for their permission to attempt the layering of songs, making clear that they could shut down the activity at any time if they felt it inappropriate or if it became uncomfortable. It was not just a question of personal comfort but more one of cultural appropriateness. Hubert and Angee indicated that each performer should decide for themselves what is culturally appropriate; each artist is in a position to give permission for their

own music.[10] This was a workshop and not a performance; we decided that we would talk about the experience afterwards. They both agreed to try it. Vicki chose a chant melody that had a light text — not heavily laden with religious doctrine. I organized the workshop schedule so that the layering of the melodies would occur *after* we had several interactions as a group — after the circle of sharing, the smudge ceremony, the presentational exchange, and the integrative work with Joel. These activities allowed us to feel more comfortable with each other and be more willing to take risks together.

The integration of culturally disparate musics poses the danger of subjugating one music to the format and structures of the other (Robinson 2012: 34-37). I thus decided to foreground the Mi'kmaw Honour Song in the realms of rhythm, duration, dynamic, and performer position on stage, here too attempting to mitigate the imbalance of power stemming from the colonial venue, music, and cultural history. Hubert drummed and sang the Honour Song, maintaining a steady pulse and singing the entire work from beginning to end. I asked Vicki to wait until he was well into his first verse before starting to sing, and to truncate the form of the hymn so that she finished before Hubert. I asked her to sing the hymn in a disjunct rhythm, giving it a slightly disembodied quality in contrast to the strict rhythm and persistence of the drum and melody of the Honour Song. Hubert sang the Mi'kmaw Honour Song with an impressive strength of voice and strong dynamic. Vicki has a strong voice as well, but I asked her to sing more softly. Hubert stood further forward on the stage, with Vicki behind and slightly to the side of him.

At one point during the performance of these layered melodies, Ann and John, both American settler scholars, spoke a few lines of text that Ann had written for the workshop: "How do we tell the stories? How do we find the stories?" As the last notes of the Honour Song sounded, Angee reacted with what we now call "The Moment": "Frig it's beautiful but f&*% I hate it!" Angee then shared her family story with us and a lengthy discussion followed, bringing us a step closer to understanding the complex and far-reaching impact of the Indian residential school system and to considering how beauty in music has a power that needs to be negotiated in this work.

*Angee Acquin*

I felt anger and sadness when I heard the church music. It made me think about injustices done to so many people. But I also heard the beauty in it, and I didn't want to! I hope the audience hears the truth and can understand the plights. I hope that they can hear the beauty of the cultures working together but also hear the oppression. I want the project to teach non-Indigenous people how to

listen and to show Indigenous people that they should not be afraid to speak their truth. I want to share my story, its power, and its strong narrative with the world in an effort to educate others about Indigenous peoples' history. That is what we are working toward in this project.

The words are so hard to find. The actions of the Church and State were horrendous, and my family and Nation suffered at the hands of these entities. It is hard for me to find beauty in any of it; however, when the music began, I heard magic and love. I saw something that I did not want to see, and with the songs being intertwined, I felt anger. However, I felt overcome with the beauty, I was torn between the beauty of the music and the atrocities put onto my people in the name of God.

This is part of the perplexity for me; I do not support the Church and State for myself, but I know that there are some people who need it and choose to integrate it into their lives. However, I want to reach a new audience in whatever way fosters their understanding. I worry that I am not being respectful of our own music by participating in a project that includes Christian sacred music, but we have used the texts in the recording project to frame this music in a way that makes past abuses clear. We do not shy away from the truth. I remind myself that we are utilizing different tools to work together and are telling a story, my family's story, in a new way.

*Robin Attas*

Angee captures the complexity and contradictions of "The Moment" in her text above, and her words make me wonder if perhaps those complexities and contradictions are part of the decolonizing process: a "perplexing" mixture of beauty and pain. Both Angee and Linda's descriptions of the workshop suggest to me that the experience was a process of decolonization for its participants, or at least, for the participants whose perspectives are included here. Sitting in the audience at the works-in-progress presentation, I sensed a quiet step toward a decolonizing rebalancing of power: the stage of Brunton Auditorium held both settler and Indigenous people, something I'd never before seen in any of the university music departments I have been a part of. When I later watched "The Moment" on video, I saw this quiet step amplified when the group decided to change the reader of the text from Ann and John to Angee: a visible replacement of settler with Indigenous in terms of corporeal presence and audible voice, and an act of ceding space.

Reflecting on the entire experience, I find it makes plain the multiplicities of decolonizing experiences possible. Not only did the workshop experience present different degrees of decolonization for different participants, audience

members at the works-in-progress presentation also likely experienced varying degrees of decolonization. Some might not have felt any challenge to their Eurocentric listening habits or may have felt a sense of decolonization without an accompanying impetus to action (an effect explored in Robinson 2014). Others, like me, may have been inspired to think deeply about the workshop's decolonizing impact and share those thoughts in a public forum. On the whole, I would argue that "The Moment" and the workshop experience were far more meaningful acts of decolonization for participants than the works-in-progress presentation was for the audience, since the performers were directly challenged to reconsider their relationships with one another, both in terms of music and in a broader sense, and to do so over a longer period of time. Perhaps a way to overcome this gap would be to include additional educational elements as part of performances or in program notes (for differing expectations of settler and Indigenous music audiences, see Dueck 2016).

## Conclusions

*Linda Pearse*

The experiential and experimental nature of this work is valuable in how it contributes to conversations on collaboration and decolonization. The workshop setting, in which risks were taken, mistakes were made, and learning happened, allowed us to experience interactions and respond to them in the moment. For example, it was immediately clear in the segment preceding "The Moment," when settlers Ann and John spoke the text "How do we find the stories?" over the layered Honour Song and Gregorian hymn that they *should not* be speaking those words in this setting. Those are words that an Indigenous person, Angee, should speak. This story is hers and her family's to tell. That "mistake" was rife with learning. It transformed the entire team's approach to the subsequent months of work.

The experience of a settler voice occupying an Indigenous artistic space was profoundly crass. However, it made other scholars' and writers' descriptions of cultural appropriation immediately more tangible (Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000; Barney 2014, 2016; Garneau 2016). Robinson's observations on collaboration between Indigenous and European art musicians were provocative, forcing a rethinking about how I had approached the workshop and ultimately influencing the continuing collaboration and eventual recording of *How do we listen?* in May 2018. Articulations of the dynamics of intercultural collaborations clarified my experience of the

workshop and explained why the venue was so problematic and my reaction to the visual side of that situation so vivid. Taken together, the observations of my Indigenous colleagues resonating with ideas on the cultural aesthetics of performance venues influenced my later decision to create an audio recording of the *How do we listen?* project instead of an audio-visual one. By not including the visual aspects of the performance, the aesthetics of venue, performance attire, stage positioning, and imbalanced numbers of Indigenous vs. non-Indigenous performers were mitigated or rendered invisible, allowing us to focus on acoustic aesthetic considerations such as balance, dynamic, and intertextual relationships and meanings. Examples of these include "How do the text, music, and soundscapes converse?" and "What aesthetic meanings might those intertextual conversations evoke?" We will perform and video-record *How do we listen?* in October 2019, which will offer an opportunity to address these aesthetic issues that encompass the venue, stage, attire, audience, live performance, and balance in the number of Indigenous vs. non-Indigenous performers — issues that we now feel ready to approach.

As I inform my best practices for intercultural collaboration by reading the work of Indigenous and intercultural arts scholars, I notice that they are considering artistic collaboration from the perspective of the outsider — they are writing about artistic collaborations and events by *observing* them, not by *participating* in them. Our work, in contrast, contributes to scholarship from within the artists' realm. We respond to dialogue, powerful musical experiences, and transformational practices during the moment of collaboration. Taking those experiences, we reflect on them and write about them, engaging in new dialogues with outsiders to the original creative process. The results of this process have the potential to make contributions that will complement existing literature on intercultural collaboration, and to foreground how musical collaboration in particular can serve to create dialogues that regard difference as productive, and not something to be erased (Barney 2016: 104).

This work considers the impact that different models of collaboration have on performers and audience members, leading to insights on decolonization, (re)conciliation, and best practices for collaboration in the performing arts. Artistic collaboration is messy and involves taking risks. It is a more visceral and immediate process of research that has the potential to transform artistic practice from within.

Our (Linda and Ann's) artistic practice was transformed by the workshop. The ceremonies underscored an emphasis on relationships and communication that counteracted the hierarchical mode and structure of

most European art music settings. Angee and Hubert encouraged us to build consensus through group discussions and to seek the advice of additional Elders. We have since expanded this consultative process to include sustained conversation with Mi'kmaw Elder Brian Francis and Wabanaki Elder J. J. Bear, and with the Mount Allison Indigenous Affairs coordinator, Patty Musgrave, who is connecting our work with local Indigenous community leaders. These relationships are ongoing and continue to develop. In previous collaborations, we would impose an artistic concept on the group, then rehearse and perform. We had been slowly moving toward a more experimental approach and decentralized mode of communication but this workshop and Angee's strong leadership moved us further along that path.

We would hesitate to perform a layering of these musics without holding pre- and post-concert talks with the audience that address our aesthetic choices and their potential meanings. Angee was not available for the full weekend of activities, but if she had been, we would have had time to interview her with the videographers and to include her voice more. The weight of the words in our video (and in this article) falls heavily to non-Indigenous voices, despite the focus on Angee, "The Moment," and our best intentions.

We are still not comfortable with the word "decolonization" being used in conjunction with our work. Nevertheless, the process of discovering and articulating *why* those words are inadequate, sparked by Robin's curiosity and commentary, has been enlightening and useful for conceptualizing intertextual meanings (those between music, texts, and soundscapes) and for developing a greater sensitivity to the implications of this work (for our use of soundscapes see Pearse, Waltner, and Godsoe 2017).

*Robin Attas*

Dismantling settler colonialism is an ongoing task that might never finish, but I believe the process of decolonization can continue without an end product of total land repatriation and settler relocation. For that reason, the steps identified in these performances can be seen as part of that journey. However, just as the collaboration between the workshop participants is not finished, so too is the decolonizing work within that collaboration also unfinished.

This emphasis on process is also helpful for recognizing that part of decolonizing for settlers is deepening our self-awareness of our changing attitudes and relationships over time. Linda has described how participants in the workshop grew and changed over the weekend. I would argue that the authors of this article have also grown and changed over the course of writing

this piece. Reading my co-authors' words and comments shaped my thinking and my understanding of decolonization. We continue to debate what it means to decolonize, question whether "decolonization" is the right word for what took place in "The Moment," and ponder the significance of these experiences for our own personal and professional lives.

*Angee Acquin*

Giving my family's truth to this project has brought out heartache. Sometimes it is hard to tell the truth without feeling judged. Mostly though, I have felt that we have honoured the experiences of the past. We have shared a family's struggles and hopefully helped people to understand the Indian Residential School system and the intergenerational trauma that followed and continues today.

One of the reasons why this collaboration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists was so powerful is because we did not have a dominant culture within the group. We were participating in an experiential activity; we did the collaboration and we experienced each other's cultures through music. We participated in each other's stories.

## Notes

1. The Mi'kmaw Honour Song was received by George Paul in the sweat lodge in the 1980s.

2. Naming and labeling groups of individuals is always problematic. In this article, we generally follow current Canadian practice and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and use the term "Indigenous" for the first peoples of the land commonly referred to as Canada. However, we use other terms when individual authors speak from their own perspectives that differ from those above, and also preserve terminology in historical and contemporary documents (e.g., Indian Residential School).

3. Although I am increasingly aware and excited by the rich history of and growing interest in intercultural collaborations with European/Western art music ensembles and with Indigenous/non-Indigenous collaborations specifically, this context was not in the front of my mind when I designed the workshop.

4. These performances have been funded by the SSHRC Indigenous Research and Reconciliation Connection Grant and will take place October 1–4, 2019.

5. Mount Allison University's registrar, Chris Parker, confirmed in an email communication on July 3, 2018, that just 57 of approximately 2,300 students self-identified as Indigenous in October 2017.

6. It could also be interpreted as an example of inclusion politics (see Robinson

2012: 238; Coulthard 2014) and with greater distance from the event, feels like a tiny gesture toward decolonization. However, at that time and in that context the presence of Indigenous musicians felt revolutionary.

7. See Smith 2012 for more on white researchers at universities exploiting Indigenous peoples.

8. The other participants' roles were not discussed to the same extent. Hubert Francis and I spoke about his role in musical terms, framing what he might want to teach us about Mi'kmaw songs and culture. The musicians of ¡Sacabuche! have engaged in several workshops together for different interdisciplinary projects; they thus arrived with non-verbalized conceptions of their roles informed by past experience. Likewise, Ann Waltner and John Watkins brought experience from past interdisciplinary projects and a variety of other workshop settings.

9. A reviewer referred us to Jeremy Dutcher (Wolastoqew) and how his work is useful in thinking about issues of untranslatability. In Dutcher's recording (2018), the moments in which the original archival recordings "clash" with the piano point to an untranslatability and highlight past and present tensions and disjunction.

10. A reviewer noted the complexity of deciding who may give permission, suggesting that consultation with the larger community is an important option. I am describing here what we did at the time and what our collaborators suggested. In the continuation of the project, we have consulted with members of the community and several elders.

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