



Presents

NOW.HERE.THIS.



In association with Kinomancer Films and Gorgeous Mistake Productions
Directed by Christopher Spencer-Lowe (CSL)

****LIVE LAUNCH**** Open Waters Festival, Halifax NS | January 8, 2024

Release Date: January 8, 2024; online stream

Run Time: variable, 4 - 90 minutes

Rating: Unrated

Language: English

LINK TO TRAILER: <https://youtu.be/IDI4vY01NEc?si=CdmAALZQ4YfSgjcP>

LINK TO FILM: Coming January 8, 2024, 9:30 PM, see <https://upstreammusic.org/>

PUBLICITY CONTACT

Chris Spencer-Lowe
chrisspencerlowe@gmail.com
902 495 1072

NOW.HERE.THIS.

LOGLINE

A unique and ever changing streaming experience that celebrates improvisational music and the spirit of being in the moment through the music and words of six gifted composers.

SYNOPSIS

NOW.HERE.THIS., presented by **UPSTREAM MUSIC ASSOCIATION** and produced and directed by award-winning filmmaker Christopher Spencer-Lowe, is a streaming music performance documentary that uses chance and randomizing algorithms to create a new and unique experience every time it's seen. In the spirit of aleatoric (created with random elements) music pioneer John Cage, **NOW.HERE.THIS** celebrates the improvisational form and philosophy of being in the moment while featuring the diverse music and ideas of six talented Nova Scotia/Mi'kma'ki based composers; Alan Syliboy, Amy Brandon, Geordie Haley, India Gailey, Mohammad Sahraei and Samantha Wilson.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I had been trying out randomizing techniques in my filmmaking process for quite a while; rolling dice to choose shots, mining content ideas from social media prompts, spinning cameras and shooting where they stopped, flipping coins, that kind of thing. I had long since known about this kind of aleatoric (randomizing) practice in music, being a fan of Brian Eno, John Cage and others, and was looking for different ways to experiment further with 'chance operators' in film. Naturally, I was incredibly excited when Lukas Pearse, media artist, musician and artistic director of Upstream Music, suggested we think about an online project that would change randomly each time it was seen. I had come to his studio one night to catch up with my friend after a long and isolating pandemic and to talk about the possibility of applying for a Canada Council Grant to make a film that would also help musicians and filmmakers get back on their feet coming out of Covid. The concept of a live improvisational music documentary presented inside of a changing yet loosely structured film was a perfect opportunity to use web based algorithms to employ aleatoric approaches more directly. We also saw the potential to put the viewer into the flow state of mind that comes with improvising at the same time as taking a snapshot of the improv music scene in Halifax as it was starting to re-emerge.

When Lukas and I came up with the idea for NOW.HERE.THIS. I knew it was going to require an exciting re-think in my approach to its making. As I got deeper and deeper into N.H.T., it became pretty clear that the 're-think' actually needed to be a complete and scary re-working of the filmmaking process itself. Cinema is literally built around the idea that you have an unchanging thing you can show at the end of all the work. You control every frame the viewer sees and when and how they see it. For N.H.T, I had to both imagine and plan for what image and sound could end up together and yet surrender control over that to a greater degree than I was comfortable with. But that was the whole idea wasn't it; surrendering, listening and approaching the work from an improvisational perspective.

-CSL-

THE FILMMAKERS

DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY
Christopher Spencer-Lowe (CSL)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR UPSTREAM MUSIC ASSOCIATION
Lukas Pearse

MUSIC RECORDING, MIXING and CODE DEVELOPER
John Janigan-Mills

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Jeff Wheaton

EDITORS
Sarah Byrne
Yifan Liu
CSL

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER GORGEOUS MISTAKES PRODUCTIONS
Walter Forsyth

FUNDING
Canada Council For The Arts
Arts NS
NS Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage

THE COMPOSERS

Alan Syliboy & The Thundermakers

Amy Brandon

Geordie Haley

India Gailey (with New Hermitage)

Mohammad Sahraei

Samantha Wilson

*See webpage for complete list of credits and collaborators

FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHIES

CHRISTOPHER SPENCER-LOWE (CSL) | Director, Producer, Editor



Christopher Spencer-Lowe (CSL) is an award-winning filmmaker, media artist, performer and educator. He has projected film loops at raves, played in various bands, performed in media, movement and art performances, recorded and designed sound for films, created media installations, advocated for arts locally and nationally and taught filmmaking to over two thousand people while drawing awards and recognition for his short films. **NOW.HERE.THIS.** is CSL's debut long-form streaming project.

LUKAS PEARSE | Producer N.H.T and Artistic Director of Upstream Music Association



Lukas is Artistic Director of the Upstream Music Association – bassist, composer, sound designer, video designer- and has worked with many of Halifax's most creative musicians and artists across varied facets of the cultural scene for over 30 years, with award-winning work for film, dance, installation art, projection design, and radio art. His love of original music spans many genres, especially improvised music of all sorts, and ensures that his ears are kept open wide. Additionally to his role as Producer, he can be found in **NOW.HERE.THIS.** playing bass with Alan Syliboy & The Thundermakers and as part of Geordie Haley's BEAMS.

JEFF WHEATON | Director of Photography



Jeff Wheaton is an award winning cinematographer from Halifax, Nova Scotia. His collaborations include *Black Cop* with Cory Bowles, *Murmur* with Heather Young, *8:37 Rebirth* with Juanita Peters, *Sex and Violence Season* with Thom Fitzgerald and *A Small Fortune* with Adam Perry. He is currently Director of Photography for *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* and completing post-production on the new Rob Wells series, *The Trades*.



FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHIES CONT'D

JOHN JANIGAN-MILLS | Music Recording, Mixing And Code Developer



John Janigan-Mills is a multi-faceted human engaging in sound, art, technology, and infinite permutations thereof. A student of minds diverse as Barry Harris to Alan Turing, he is dedicated to the unmasking and generation of creativity through the discovery and bridging of hidden worlds between man and machine.

SARAH BYRNE | Editor



Sarah Byrne is a versatile and creative picture editor who enjoys the collaborative environment of filmmaking. Recent editing work includes the new half-hour comedy series *The Trades* for Crave and *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* for CBC. In 2022, she received the Best Atlantic Editor award at the Atlantic International Film Festival for her work on the feature length documentary *Bernie Langille Wants To Know What Happened To Bernie Langille*.

YIFAN LUI | Editor



Yifan Liu, a media artist and film editor based in Kijiktuk/Halifax, holds a BA in Cinematography from LAFA (Luxun Academy of Fine Arts, 2016) and an MFA in media art from NSCAD University (2022). Initially rooted in documentaries, Yifan brings a unique perspective to storytelling, exploring the intricate balance between the virtual and the tangible. Their film editing expertise centres on documentaries, music videos and trailers. Their artistic endeavours blend cutting-edge technologies with art, encompassing projects in video art, augmented reality, interactive programming, and installations.

WALTER FORSYTH | Executive Producer, Gorgeous Mistake Productions



Walter Forsyth produced the dramatic feature, *The Disappeared* and two seasons of the digital series, *Everyone's Famous*, both nominated for two Canadian Screen Awards. He produced the feature documentaries *Bread in the Bones* by Darrell Varga, *Cubers* by Richard LeBlanc and *Elizabeth Bishop and the Art of Losing* by John Scott as well as the short films *There's a Flower in My Pedal* (TIFF Honourable Mention) and *How to Be Alone* (viewed over nine million times on YouTube).

COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES

ALAN SYLIBOY



Alan Syliboy was born and raised on the Millbrook First Nation near Truro Nova Scotia. He has built an ever-growing list of accomplishments throughout his lifetime. Although many people are most familiar with his unique works of art, he is also an author, film animator and musician with his band “Alan Syliboy & the Thundermakers”. Their unique live performance consists of Indigenous-flavoured music and spoken word, which is accompanied by multimedia art films.

AMY BRANDON



Composer Amy Brandon's pieces have been described as “...gut wrenching and horrific” (Critipeg), and "otherworldly, a clashing of bleakness with beauty" (Minor Seventh). She has received Canadian and international composition awards and honourable mentions including the Leo Brouwer Guitar Composition Competition (Grand Prize 2019), an East Coast Music Award 2022 for Composer of the Year, and was a 2020 JACK Quartet Studio Artist. She teaches composition at Dalhousie University at the Fountain School of Performing Arts in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

GEORDIE HALEY



Guitarist, educator, improviser and composer Geordie Haley has been contributing to Canada's creative music scene for the last 40 years. Experimenting with jazz forms, modern classical themes and electronic sounds Geordie Haley has discovered new ways of connecting all of these influences into his own unique style.



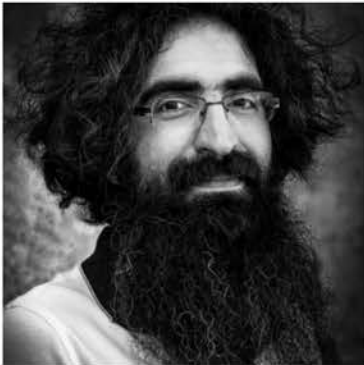
COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES CONT'D

INDIA GAILEY



Based in Kijipuktuk (Halifax, NS), India Gailey is an award-winning cellist, composer, improviser, and interdisciplinary collaborator. She performs in many artistic realms as a soloist, chamber musician, studio artist, and member of the environmental quartet New Hermitage. In 2022, she released her second solo album to you through (Redshift Records), wrote music for Symphony Nova Scotia, and was named one of “30 hot Canadian classical musicians under 30” by CBC. Her latest solo album, *Problematica*, will be released February 2024.

MOHAMMAD SAHRAEI



Mohammad Sahraei has traveled to many Asian countries doing musical fieldwork and has published several essays in the topic of musicology. He teaches music and holds a Masters of Ethnomusicology and a Bachelor of Music degrees. Mohammad has played in many musical and cultural events internationally and has created live music for projected films and varied orchestral and large and small band performances. He has released albums of Iranian music and is the head of the World Music Museum Society in Halifax, Nova Scotia where he moved in 2017.

SAMANTHA WILSON



Sam Wilson is an award-winning artist whose practice as a performer-composer focuses on instrumental music written for improvisers. Her albums ‘Into a Heart Pt. II’ and ‘New Doors’ both won Music Nova Scotia’s ‘Jazz Recording of the year’ in 2022 and 2023. In 2021 Sam won the Paul Cram Creation award and composed her first piece for orchestra, ‘Recover-we’, which was performed by Symphony Nova Scotia at the 2023 Open Waters Festival.



BEHIND THE SCENES



The venue for 4 of the 6 shoots was the Breaking Circus Studio in Halifax. A different direction and area of the main space was chosen each time to make the four performances appear as unique spaces. Dawn Shepherd and Ryan Gray, the co-founders of the Breaking Circus collective, chipped in and even became crew members for the shoots!

Photo Credits: Ryan Gray

During the ALAYA performance, director CSL, who started the day setting up the projections, had to climb down from the projection tower in order to direct the shoot. Thankfully, Producer Lukas Pearse and Sound assistant McKenzie Cornfield are accomplished projection artists and took over the projections.



Photo Credits: Tanya Preyde



Geordie Haley's BEAMS was the second shoot of NHT and the most ambitious in terms of camera placement, utilizing 3 moving cameras, two static cameras and an array of on-camera lighting tubes.

Photo Credits: Ryan Gray



UPSTREAM MUSIC ASSOCIATION

Upstream is a professional producer of new music concerts and outreach with a vision for a culture that appreciates and is transformed by contemporary creative music. Over the past 34 years, Upstream has staged over 200 concerts featuring newly composed music, with ensembles of local performers and others from Canada, Holland, Denmark, Japan, France, UK, USA, Japan and Germany.

With thanks to the guidance of

Gorgeous Mistake
PRODUCTIONS

We acknowledge the support of Arts Nova Scotia, the Canada Council for The Arts, and the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

