

20th-Century Choral Compositions by Québécois Composers:
An overview and analysis of selected works

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May 2020

A paper submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
D.Mus. Performance Studies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My heartfelt thanks go to my teacher Jean-Sébastien Vallée, as well as the members of my doctoral committee Jean Lesage and Patricia Abbott, and Lena Weman, for all of their guidance throughout my time at McGill, and for their openness and trust in my big ideas. I am also extremely grateful to McGill University for supporting me financially through my final year of research and writing.

The Canadian Music Centre in Montreal offered invaluable support during my research, providing scores and other historical sources for analysis. The CMC staff were incredibly helpful, kind and efficient in helping me to obtain all of the documents I needed, and providing me with space to consult scores.

A very special thanks to the 19 singers and percussionist who committed many hours of rehearsal to learning and perfecting the repertoire for my lecture-recital. Your dedication to giving new life to this music was greatly touching and inspiring. Thank you for your passion and musicianship. It was a pleasure and an honour to make music with you.

My family and friends have been a source of strength and joy during this process, offering a listening ear and constructive advice in preparation for my defence, and showing their support at my online lecture. I couldn't have achieved this goal without the tremendous support of my amazing parents, Michelle and Jean Gaudreault, and my incredible husband Christopher LaRosa. Thank you for your patience, understanding and belief in me.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines how Québécois composers' techniques and aesthetics fit in with the stylistic trends in choral composition in the second half of the 20th century. My thesis shows that though there was a delay in Québécois composers' adoption of modernist techniques, by the latter half of the century they fully demonstrated their knowledge of all the compositional schools and methods coming from Europe and the United States, and their ability to use them in innovative ways.

After presenting a brief overview of the development of choral music and composition in Québec from 1600 to 2000, I outline four main categories of stylistic influence, beginning with more conservative styles such as neo-romanticism, then looking at two major centres of influence in Europe (Paris and Darmstadt), followed by serialist techniques, and finally avant-garde and experimental techniques. My analyses draw mostly upon primary sources, the musical scores themselves, in addition to some biographical information and a few essays specific to composers' compositional aesthetics.

Through my research and analyses, I have found that, while many common aesthetic trends, influential teachers and techniques can be traced, each Québécois composer has their own very unique style and approach to composition, which makes it impossible to fit them into any specific category.

ABRÉGÉ

Dans cette thèse, j'étudie les techniques de composition des compositeurs Québécois durant la deuxième moitié du 20^{ième} siècle, en comparaison avec les méthodes développés en Europe et aux États-Unis. Mes analyses démontrent que, malgré l'arrivée un peu tardive des techniques modernistes au Québec au début du siècle, dès 1950 les compositeurs Québécois démontraient une forte compréhension du sérialisme et des méthodes plus récentes, et une capacité à les adapter dans leurs propres créations de façon innovatrice.

Après un bref sommaire des développements en musique chorale et en composition au Québec entre les années 1600 et 2000, je présente quatre grandes catégories d'influence stylistique. Je commence avec les techniques et styles plus conservateurs comme le néo-romantisme, suivi par un aperçu sur deux centres d'influences majeures en Europe (Paris et Darmstadt), puis l'écriture sérielle en troisième lieu, et enfin les techniques avant-gardistes et expérimentales. Mes analyses s'appuient principalement sur des sources primaires, les partitions elles-mêmes, en plus de quelques informations biographiques et de quelques essais plus généraux sur l'esthétique de certains compositeurs.

À travers ma recherche, j'ai découvert que, même si plusieurs points communs peuvent être identifiés chez les tendances esthétiques, techniques et professeurs influents, chaque compositeur Québécois a son propre style et son approche unique, ce qui rend impossible de les classer dans une catégorie spécifique.

Introduction

In this dissertation, I look specifically at choral works written in the latter half of the 20th century, which was the main period of Quebec's growth into a nation that composes. I have intentionally chosen to focus on composers who spent the majority of their lives and/or careers in Québec. Several other composers have immigrated to Québec later in life, either from other provinces or countries, but have had most of their training and professional development elsewhere, and therefore are not considered here. It is important to note that few of these composers would be considered choral composers *per se*, as is the case for most Québécois composers not mentioned here, because most have written only one or a select few choral compositions in their career. The pieces I have chosen for analysis are mostly *a cappella* works, as well as a few with piano or organ accompaniment, small ensemble or solo instrument.

There exists no comprehensive resource on Québécois choral music in terms of repertoire, analysis or history. A list of choral scores held at the Canadian Music Centre (CMC) can be procured upon request, and some analyses have been published on certain composers' works (mostly orchestral and instrumental) and their general stylistic characteristics, but very little has been written about choral music specifically. My analyses therefore draw mostly upon primary sources, the musical scores themselves. In a few cases, I have been able to base my analysis on some previous analyses of the composer's instrumental works, or on writings by the composers themselves. Though most Québécois composers are known for their orchestral, instrumental or electronic works, there is also a wealth of choral repertoire by these same

composers that deserves more attention. I hope this paper provides a helpful starting point for choral musicians and young composers to discover and explore this wonderful repertoire.

In this paper, I organize my analyses not by composer or piece, but by general stylistic influence, in order to demonstrate similarities and trends in choral composition during the five decades considered. The goal is not to place the composers in stylistic boxes but to observe the ways in which a multitude of nationalistic, personal, and musical aesthetic factors have played into their unique compositional languages. The first two chapters establish a background for the musical and compositional environment in Québec. I begin the analytical portion of the paper by looking at conservative styles, which include historicism, any “neo” approach, and motive-based approaches. Next, I discuss how several important European locations and teachers have had a major influence on many Québécois composers. Then we pivot to an older compositional school, but one that was adopted by Québécois composers a few decades late: serialism. Finally, I outline a few avant-garde and experimental techniques, their origins and how they have been infused into the Québécois repertoire. No one composition is analyzed at length, in an effort to highlight the wide variety of approaches and multitude of examples in each category, but some pieces appear in more than one chapter, demonstrating that many Québécois composers’ general approach was very eclectic and personal in nature.

Chapter 1: Beginnings: Choral Composition in Québec before 1950

The recorded history of music in Québec begins in the 16th century with the arrival of French explorers and missionaries to New France. The Ursuline nuns, who played an important role in sacred music and music education, arrived in 1639. Mother Marie de St-Joseph was especially instrumental in the education of girls, and in the transcription of French music from memory.¹ Missionaries and nuns, who had all been musically trained to a certain extent in France, used music to convert the native people to Christianity, often translating sacred songs into indigenous languages.

Most of the music being sung and taught in 17th-century Québec was sacred, imported from France, with a predominance of Gregorian chant and motets. Collections of French motets and masses remain that were copied by the Ursuline and Augustine nuns for use in the churches and schools. Some of the works found in these volumes of sacred music are labelled anonymous, such as the Christmas motet *Magnus Dominus*, and are speculated to have been composed by members of the Ursuline order. Though no new compositions are known from this period, one Augustinian nun, Mère Marie-Andrée Regnard Duplessis de Sainte-Hélène, who arrived in New France in 1702, wrote the first treatise on the theory and practise of music in North America, with chapters on singing in tune, chords, fugues, and the conductor's role.²

Not much is known about cultural life in general before 1800. In the early 19th century, balls and salon music became an integral part of culture and society. This brought on increased composition of popular genres such as patriotic songs and ballads, and easy piano and chamber

¹ Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, *La Création Musicale des Femmes au Québec* (1991): p.24.

² Elaine Keillor, *Music in Canada : Capturing Landscape and Diversity* (2008): p.54.

pieces that could be played by amateurs. In the 1840s, the first music journals and magazines began circulation, publishing short pieces by local composers, most of which were, again, simple instrumental works marketed for the amateur musician. By mid-century, small music societies were popping up in most major cities, many of which were choral societies. The mixed repertoire of earlier societies, combining popular, folk, sacred and classical music in the same program, was replaced by a rediscovery of masterworks by European composers of the Baroque and Classical eras.

A significant halt in compositional activity was caused by *Motu proprio*, declared by Pope Pius X in 1903. This decree sought to re-establish the supremacy of Gregorian chant and 16th-century polyphony in the Roman Catholic liturgy. Any sacred music not fitting the “new church style” was banned, as was the use of orchestral instruments in the liturgy. The role of the organ was also reduced, and women in the choirs were replaced by boys.³ This leap backwards a few centuries was seen as a reaction to the “too-worldly” liturgical works of composers such as Haydn and Mozart that were gaining a lot of attention and popularity. Since the majority of choral composition occurred for liturgical purposes during this time, these restrictions caused a significant decrease in new choral works. A few composers continued writing large-scale sacred works during this time, despite the decree. Guillaume Couture (1851-1915), for example, wrote his *Requiem Mass* in 1904, using a late-romantic French style inspired by his teacher Théodore Dubois, as well as Saint-Saëns and Franck.

In the years following Confederation (1867-1900), French Canadian composers started fighting for a conservatory system after the model already established in France, which didn't

³ Clifford Ford, Ed., *The Canadian Musical Heritage—le Patrimoine Musical Canadien*, Vol. IX: *Sacred Choral Music 2* (1988): p.x.

come to fruition until decades later. At the turn of the century, women's music clubs were a major part of musical cultural life, supporting local performers and bringing in visiting performers. Most of their programs featured predominantly European and American compositions, occasionally including a Canadian work.⁴

Choral singing became very popular at the end of the 19th century, with ensembles generally concentrating on mastering the choral-orchestral literature of the last two centuries, focusing on well-known European composers.⁵ Couture was instrumental as a choirmaster and conductor in introducing the oratorios and operas of the Classical and Romantic eras to Montreal. A few cantatas by Canadian composers, including Charles Wugt-Sabatier (1819-1862)⁶ and Calixa Lavallée (1842-1891)⁷, were performed between 1860 and 1900, and some band masters and soloists would perform their own compositions or arrangements, but otherwise little is known about the performance of new Canadian works during this time. Though there were a few male composers becoming relatively well-known within their own communities, compositional style in Québec remained fairly conservative, imitating 19th century European master-works.⁸ In general, the turn of the century saw an increase in large choral compositions like oratorios and cantatas, especially for use at special occasions. One of the most well-known Canadian oratorios was Couture's *Jean le Précurseur*, written from 1907 to 1911, though it

⁴ Elaine Keillor, *Music in Canada : Capturing Landscape and Diversity* (2008): p.120.

⁵ Helmut Kallmann and Stephen C. Willis, "Folk-music-inspired Composition" in *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (2007).

⁶ *Cantata*, premiered in 1860 for a visit from the Prince of Wales. Helmut Kallmann, "Charles Wugk Sabatier," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (2007).

⁷ 1879 Cantata, written and performed for the welcoming of Marquis de Lorne, the new governor-general of Québec. Timothy J. McGee, *The Music of Canada*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company (1985).

⁸ Paul Helmer, "Musical Life in Canada: An Overview of the Interwar Years," in *Growing with Canada: The Émigré Tradition in Canadian Music* (2009): p.93.

wasn't performed until after WWI. This period also saw composers beginning to travel to Europe to further their education, adopting the new styles and trends of leading French composers such as Debussy.

The 19th century also brought a new interest in French-Canadian folksongs. Musicians and musicologists, most notably Ernest Gagnon, began to realize the historical and cultural significance of this musical and cultural material, as well as its potential for forging a national musical language. Along with an influx of various musical influences from overseas and the increasingly multicultural environment of Canada, French-Canadian composers in the 1920s began questioning the possibility of a national compositional language. In regards to whether or not the use of folk materials would play a major role in that, Léo-Pol Morin wrote in 1928 that “a work need not quote or use folk music directly in order to be distinctively Canadian.”⁹ Murray Schafer argues that folk music is inadequate for “serious” composition, because most songs’ simple and restrictive strophic form hinders the possibility for organic growth within a work, and the simple melodies and harmonies do not lend themselves to creative instrumentation. Despite this opinion, most of the larger-scale compositions based on folk materials, whether through direct quotation or more general use of the idiom, are orchestral works. Perhaps composers found that the use of voices limited the ways in which a folksong can be manipulated or varied because of the presence of text constantly linking it back to its original form. The wide range of colours and combinations available in the orchestra, on the other hand, aid in the abstraction of the folk material, or at least provide ways to make it sound original.

⁹ George Alfred Proctor and Antje Lingner, *Canadian Music of the Twentieth Century* (1980): p.19.

Though some composers believed at the beginning of the 20th century that folk idioms had the potential to be the basis of a distinct Canadian music, this did not necessarily turn out to be the case, at least not for large-scale choral works. Many folk-influenced compositions have, however, survived to become a “permanent and valuable part of the Canadian concert repertoire.”¹⁰

After WWI, members of religious communities began introducing composition programs in their schools. Nuns themselves sought higher compositional education under prominent composers of the time at the Vincent d’Indy school. The 1920s and 30s saw the first generation of composers going to Paris to further their compositional studies, including Claude Champagne, Rodolphe Mathieu and Georges-Émile Tanguay. Though these composers brought back knowledge of modern trends in the 1930s and 40s and began passing them on to their students, programming and music critics remained very conservative through these decades. Concerts rarely featured anything newer than the likes of Holst, Debussy and Sibelius. Champagne was instrumental in the fight for the establishment of a French-style Conservatory in Québec, which he eventually achieved in 1942. Contemporary music was still largely unknown to the general public in the 1940s, though some composers were beginning to demonstrate knowledge of early 20th-century styles such as those of Debussy, Stravinsky and Bartok. Serge Garant was the only composer using dodecaphony in his own compositions at this time, passed on to him through his teacher Champagne.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Chapter 2: Developments from 1950 to 2000

The 1950s were a defining decade in the world of musical composition in Québec and Canada. Being a composer finally became a feasible option for a career in music in Canada. In the first decades of the 20th century, choral composition was limited mostly to sacred works, as the only professional music appointment you could make a living on in the field was as a church musician.

By the 1950s, very little European 20th-century music was known to Canadians. The return of a growing number of composers from studies in Paris increased the awareness and availability of European trends. Claude Champagne (1891-1965) was one of the first to travel to Paris to study composition, between the years 1921 and 1928, and subsequently encouraged the next generation to do the same. The formation of the Canadian League of Composers in 1951 and the establishment of the CMC in 1959 brought composers together to discuss their work, and allowed for dissemination of scores and recordings. They came together not to achieve a uniform style, but for a common cause.¹¹ The years 1949-54 saw the next generation of composers seeking further education overseas, including Serge Garant and Gilles Tremblay. Upon their return to Montreal in 1954, these two composers banded together with their colleague François Morel to organize the first concert of entirely contemporary music in Québec, consisting of their own works and those of prominent European composers Olivier Messiaen, Anton Webern and Pierre Boulez.

¹¹ George Alfred Proctor and Antje Lingner, *Canadian Music of the Twentieth Century*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (1980): p.

Though the 1950s brought an initial and essential step in the direction of modernizing Québec's musical culture, the majority of compositions were still in conservative styles. There was a general preference for neo-classical forms such as concertos and overtures, and romantic expression. Choral composition saw an increase in sacred music and folk-song arrangements, with very few large choral works. The most extended work of this period is Jean Papineau-Couture's *Psaume CL* (1954), a full scale cantata in a style reminiscent of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* (1930).¹²

This decade also brought new opportunities for young composers through the establishment of university programs in composition. McGill University's new dean Marvin Duchow established a BMus in composition in 1956, but it would be another thirteen years before a Master's program became available.¹³

Though the 1950s brought major innovations in vocal writing, notation and electronic music in Europe, it wasn't until the 1960s that the adoption of experimental and avant-garde techniques became more wide spread and accepted in Québec. The *Semaine Internationale de la musique actuelle* in Montreal in 1961, organized by composer Pierre Mercure, brought first-ever performances in Canada of important European and American avant-garde composers, such as Edgard Varèse, John Cage, Morton Feldman and Mauricio Kagel. In the same year, Gilles Tremblay returned from a summer in Darmstadt and presented a concert at Orford Music Academy featuring works by Luciano Berio, Pierre Schaeffer, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Iannis Xenakis. Though not all Québécois composers had fully adopted new and experimental

¹² George Alfred Proctor and Antje Lingner, *Canadian Music of the Twentieth Century*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (1980), 88-89.

¹³ Robin Elliott, "Istvan Anhalt and New Music at McGill," in *Compositional Crossroads: Music, McGill, Montreal*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press (2008).

techniques such as graphic notation, serialism, and extended instrumental and vocal techniques, neoclassicism was no longer the norm. Among those who were embracing the various trends brought over from Europe were Otto Joachim, Pierre Mercure and Clermont Pépin.

A big push in the experimental direction was caused by the establishment of electronic music studios. McGill's Electronic Music Studio (EMS), the second in Canada and first in Québec, was founded in 1964 and attracted many visiting composers from Europe and the United-States, including Karlheinz Stockhausen and Milton Babbitt. Université de Laval and Concordia University followed suit at the end of the decade.¹⁴ Expo 67, held in Montreal, was another pivotal event, bringing a stronger sense of national self-confidence, along with a number of major choral commissions and greater visibility for composers to the general public. Choral works were a major part of the Expo 67 celebrations, as singing was seen as one of the accepted venues for outward expression of nationalism.¹⁵ This encouraged the composition of more large-scale works and gave innovative choral writing an audience. Istvan Anhalt's *Cento* for choir and electronics was a pioneer in the exploration of the sound possibilities of the human voice in Canada.¹⁶

Following the exciting events of 1967, the 1970s saw a rise in commissioned works as well as increased interest in writing for unconventional ensembles. Neo-romantic characteristics such as freedom of form, evocative titles and nature themes were still quite popular. In choral music, more composers were exploring extended vocal techniques and modernist language,

¹⁴ François Guérin, "Les musiques électroacoustiques," in *À l'écoute de la musique d'ici*, Montreal: Canadian Music Centre (1976).

¹⁵ George Alfred Proctor and Antje Lingner, *Canadian Music of the Twentieth Century*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (1980), 157.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 160.

while some, like Raynald Arseneault, preferred to stick with concepts of modality and extended tonality.¹⁷

The stylistic pluralism that began in the 1970s only intensified in the following decades as the number of composers grew exponentially. Many composers of the new generation studied with Garant or Tremblay, including several Québécois-by-adoption such as José Evangelista.¹⁸ Characteristics of the post-modern era that can be observed in Québécois composers' creations are a hybrid style, historicism or "returns to" older styles, simplicity of form and accessibility.¹⁹ The 1980s were an important decade in the diffusion of Québécois music through the establishment of local editing companies such as Doberman-Yppan (est. 1976), the founding of more ensembles dedicated to new music,²⁰ an increase in composition competitions, prizes and composer-in-residence programs,²¹ and the first scholarly writings on Québécois composers and their musical aesthetics. The passing of a few important figures — Claude Vivier, Micheline Coulombe-Saint-Marcoux and Serge Garant — also created a void that younger generations were eager to fill, and a desire to honour such composers through concerts dedicated to their music.²²

¹⁷ Ibid., 199-200.

¹⁸ Sophie Galaise and Johanne Rivest, "Compositeurs québécois: chronique d'une décennie (1980-1990)," in *Circuit*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1990): 84-85.

¹⁹ Ibid., 86.

²⁰ Following the birth of the SMCQ in 1966, with founding director Serge Garant, new music ensembles such as McGill's GEMS, founded in 1983, and the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (NEM) in 1988, as well as concert series and societies dedicated to new music (Les Événements du neuf, SCAQ, Musiques itinérantes, McGill Contemporary Music Festivals in 1982-89).

²¹ In 1989, the OSM began its composer in residence program. In 1985-86, the OM had a concert series dedicated to new music.

²² Sophie Galaise and Johanne Rivest, "Compositeurs québécois: chronique d'une décennie (1980-1990)," in *Circuit*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1990): 93.

Though the introduction and adoption of new techniques generally came a decade or two late to Canadian composers, it has given them the opportunity to take what appeals to them most and use it in their own way, without the pressure of conforming to a surrounding group's current ideologies. They are not burdened with a rich musical history to uphold.

Chapter 3: Conservative Styles

It was quite common for composers born before 1934 to be more conservative in their writing style, as they had not been exposed to new ideas of the time. Important developments in Europe had not yet made their way to Canada, especially those of the Second Viennese School, led by Arnold Schoenberg and his pupils Alban Berg and Anton Webern. Though Québécois composers' exposure to European and American trends increased with each decade to come, through studies in Paris and Germany, and guest artist appearances in Canada, each generation, including today's, has still included a group of composers who reject the modern or avant-garde tendencies of their counterparts. The plurality of stylistic trends and aesthetics is a defining characteristic of the musical environment of the latter half of the 20th century. Some general characteristics of the conservative style are conventional notation, traditional use of instruments and voices, respect for a broad definition of tonality, emphasis on melodic line, and rhythmic simplicity. Three common stylistic threads that will be discussed here are neo-romanticism, motive-based composition and historicism. Within each of these categories there can be found a wide variety of approaches and very individual styles.

3.1 Neo-Romanticism

The neo-romantic aesthetic is associated with a return to the emotional expression of 19th-century romanticism, freedom of form, and an extended idea of tonality, building on the basic principle of tension and release, without necessarily conforming to traditional harmonic progressions.

Maurice Dela (1919-1978), born Albert Phaneuf, is the perfect example of a composer who had little interest in avant-garde techniques, and remained relatively conservative throughout his career. Some of his later works explore polytonality and borrow some elements of serialism, but most of his music embraces a neo-romantic style. *Le vaisseau d'or*, written in 1967, is mostly homophonic in texture, except for a brief imitative passage in the middle section. The harmonized-melody approach and chromatic inflections of a generally diatonic tune, suggest an influence from Québécois folk and *chansonnier* styles. On several occasions the choir is divided into two roles, the tune carriers, or “lead singers,” and the “background singers,” providing atmosphere on humming or neutral syllables. This makes sense, given Dela’s extensive experience harmonizing folk and popular songs, especially those of Gilles Vigneault, and his work for over a decade (1951-65) as composer and arranger for CBC programming. His experience with vocal writing is also clear in his attention to creating an idiomatic and interesting line for each voice part. His neo-romantic tendencies are displayed through lush, sometimes dissonant harmonies with unexpected resolutions, and text painting. He sets one of Québécois symbolist poet Émile Nelligan’s most famous poems, *Le vaisseau d'or*, written in 1899, and effectively depicts the dark and fantastical atmosphere set up by the text. Two examples of blatant text painting occur in the middle section of the piece, reproduced in Example 1. The singing of the sirens narrated by the tenors is then imitated by the soprano and alto high-pitched hypnotizing “ah”s. This is immediately followed by a series of descending clusters accompanying a repetitive bass line, depicting the descent of the shipwreck into the dark depths of its grave. A more subtle but equally effective example is found in the return of the A section, where a dotted rhythm cut short by a breath illustrates the “brevity” of the storm on the word

Exemple 1: Dela - *Le vaisseau d'or*, mm.22-28

an trompeur où chantait la si- rène ne OU Et le naufrage hor-

OU OU OU OU OU OU OU ri- ble inclinasa ca-rè- ne aux profondeurs dugouffre immua-ble cer cueil.

Exemple 2: Dela - *Le vaisseau d'or*, mm.40-42

lui dans la tem-pê- te brè- ve? Q'

“brève.” Example 2 depicts this moment of text painting, as well as the chromatic inflected melody mentioned above.

There are a few isolated passages which suggest a slight temptation to experiment with more modern sounds. A surprisingly dissonant chord occasionally works its way in, such as an extended dominant seventh with flat 9 and 13, or two dominant sevenths a whole step apart stacked on top of each other, as shown in Example 3. Finally, Dela makes use of unconventional vocal writing and aleatory at its most basic level in one brief instance. At the end of the middle section, as the four soloists finish their lines, the choir enters with a fortissimo spoken “dégoût, haine et névrose.” Though this may seem a little out of place or excessive, if one considers the

Example 3: Dela - *Le vaisseau d'or*, mm.4-5

The image shows a musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass) from Example 3, measures 4-5. The lyrics are "tail-lé dans l'or mas-sif ses". The music is written in a key with three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a common time signature. The Soprano part starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The Alto part starts with a half note F4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, and B4. The Tenor part starts with a half note E4, followed by quarter notes F4, G4, and A4. The Bass part starts with a half note D3, followed by quarter notes E3, F3, and G3. The lyrics are written below each staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across measures.

tendency throughout the piece of letting the emotion of the text lead the compositional decisions, this sudden outburst does accurately display the state of anger and neurosis which the text describes.

Lionel Daunais (1901-1982) is another example of a composer who combines neo-romantic language with the popular and folk styles he most frequently writes in. This can be observed in *Le Pont Mirabeau* (1977) and *Figures de danse* (1975).

Rachel Laurin's (b.1961) *Ave Maria*, from *3 Motets en l'honneur de la Sainte Famille* of 1989, is contrasting to Dela's piece in that it uses a largely chordal texture, with intricate and often difficult voice leading, indicative of the composer's training as a virtuoso organist. The soft, reverent treble-voice opening, which is later repeated by the tenors and basses, is contrasted with the more complex and dramatic sections, recalling the motet writing of Bruckner, specifically his own setting of the *Ave Maria*. The beginnings of both *Ave Maria* motets are displayed in Example 4. The harmonic language is neo-romantic, not in the use of dissonant, extended lush chords like Dela, but in relatively standard harmonic progressions with unexpected modulations to distant keys through enharmonic and modal shifts. The first example of this is in the 4th bar where an F-flat, acting as modal mixture in the home key of D-flat major, becomes an E-natural, the tonic of the new key, E major (Example 5). Another way Laurin executes key shifts in a sudden yet graceful way is through a slight alteration of the intervals of a recurring melodic line, leading the harmonic progression in an entirely different direction. In the *Ave Maria*, it is the soprano line that has the recurring melody, in this case a leap up a major 6th, making it almost impossible to miss yet surprising nonetheless. The first time the passage appears, the leap is notated as a major 6th from B to G-sharp which is filled out by a descending

Example 4: Laurin - *Ave Maria* mm.1-4, 14-17, Bruckner - *Ave Maria* mm. 1-6, 10-12

① ADAGIO E ESPRESSIVO (CIRCA 44)

S
pp JE VOUS SA-LU-E MA-Ri... E, MF PLEi... NE DE

A
JE VOUS SA-LU-E MA... Ri-E, MF PLEi... NE DE

T
8va bassa MF PLEi- NE DE

B

(15)

S

A

T
CRES... SUS..., ET JÉ-SUS LE FRUIT DE VOS EN-TRAIL-LES, LE FRUIT... DE.. VOS EN-

B
p SUS, ET JÉ-SUS LE FRUIT DE VOS EN-TRAIL-LES, LE FRUIT DE VOS EN-

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)
Komponiert 1861

Andante (Sehr langsam)

Sopran
p A-ve Ma-ri-a gra-ti-a ple-na Do-mi-nus te-cum. *

Alt
p A-ve Ma-ri-a gra-ti-a ple-na Do-mi-nus te-cum.

pp et be-ne-di-ctus fru-ctus ven-tris

pp et be-ne-di-ctus fru-ctus ven-tris

Example 5: Laurin - *Ave Maria*, mm.3-4

Example 5 shows three staves of music. The first staff has lyrics "Ri..... E , PLEi ---- NE DE". The second staff has lyrics "Ri - E , PLEi..... NE DE". The third staff has lyrics "PLEi- NE DE". Dynamics include MF and accents.

Example 6: Laurin - *Ave Maria*, mm.7-9, 20-22

Example 6 shows four staves of music (S, A, T, B). The lyrics are "VOUS. LE Sei- GNEUR EST A- VEC VOUS....". Dynamics include p, mf, and pf.

Example 6 shows four staves of music (S, A, T, B). The lyrics are "DIEU, SAIN-TE MA- RI- E, MÈ-RE DE". Dynamics include f and p.

scale leading to a cadence in D major. The second time, after the tenors and basses have sung the opening passage almost identically to the beginning of the piece, the major 6th leap is reinterpreted enharmonically as a diminished seventh, the A-flat resolving by a half and then whole step into a B-flat-minor cadence. The two passages are shown in Example 6. This tonal and modal shift essentially acts as the retransition, keeping us in the flat world, and eventually getting us back to D-flat major for the “amen” coda.

An earlier Example of similarly Bruckner-esque motet writing can be found in Georges-Émile Tanguay’s *Cor Jesu* and *Ave Maria* of 1912. Tanguay (1893-1964), like Laurin, was primarily an organist and wrote mainly sacred choral works. His motet writing is not as dense, with no divisi in the SATB parts, and more conservative harmonically and tonally. The opening of the *Cor Jesu* is shown in Example 7.

Example 7: Tanguay - *Cor Jesu*, mm.1-4

I & III Andante religioso 2e fois à Coda *

The musical score for the opening of *Cor Jesu* by Georges-Émile Tanguay, measures 1-4, is presented for Soprani, Alt, Ténors, Basses, and Orgue. The tempo is marked 'Andante religioso'. The lyrics are 'Cor Je - su sa - cra - tis - si - mum,'. The organ part features a prominent major 6th leap in the right hand, which is reinterpreted enharmonically as a diminished seventh in the left hand.

3.2 Motive-based composition

Chansons d'orient (1994) by Alain Gagnon (1938-2017) is a choral song cycle on Imperial Chinese texts about nature. The character of the music reflects the calm and delicate images of the text. In *Chansons d'orient*, Gagnon simplifies the texture through a balance of basic contrapuntal writing and homophony, never obstructing the clarity of the main melody and text. This and his use of non-diatonic triadic harmony recall the aesthetic ideals of a group of young German composers, including Wolfgang Rihm, in the 1970s and 80s called *Die neue Einfachheit* or *New Simplicity*, that emphasized simplified textures, triadic harmonies in non-tonal contexts, and directly appealing materials.

An important element of Gagnon's style is the use of motives or melodic themes as the basis for the harmonic and contrapuntal development of the whole piece. The first song, *Puits de pierre*, begins with an open fifth drone on D and A in the altos, establishing a tonal home-base. I refer here to a broad sense of tonality, where a central chord or pitch is emphasized and therefore seen and felt as tonic, but harmonic and tonal development throughout the composition do not necessarily suggest a key. The main theme is then presented over the drone by the second sopranos. An important characteristic of this opening melody, found in Example 8, is the alternation between the F-natural and F-sharp, heard here as the minor and major thirds in the implied key of D. This modal interplay is used throughout the rest of the song, in the melody of the secondary key area of E-flat, and applied to both the third and sixth scale degrees in the neutral-syllable harmonic accompaniment figures. The last song in the cycle, *À l'horizon*, is based on an ascending three-note motive which first appears as an answer to the opening tenor melody. I am calling it the "à l'horizon" motive because throughout the whole first section of the

Example 8: Gagnon - *Puits de pierre*, mm.1-4

Larghetto ♩ = 56

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto 1

Alto 2

La mous - se la mous - se co - lo - rée

A

A

Example 9: Gagnon - *À l'horizon*, mm.1-3

♩ = 80

Soprano

Alto

Ténor

À l'ho - ri - zon

À l'ho - ri - zon

Le so - leil le so - leil du prin - temps

piece it is always paired with those words. The opening melody and motive are shown in Example 9. With each repetition of this opening statement, the last note of the tenor line moves up by a 3rd, causing the answering “à l’horizon” motive and its triadic resolution to also rise by a third each time. This gradual ascent over the first 12 bars of the song suggests a depiction of the text “le soleil du printemps” as that of a rising sun. Once the highest major triad is reached, the music quickly descends as the text reveals that in fact the sun is beginning to set, not rise. Example 10 shows the fourth and last iteration of the theme and motive, and the subsequent

descent. The major triads which highlight the ends of the phrases also make an appearance in the soprano line of the final adagio section, but as a melodic gesture instead of a harmonic arrival point, as shown in Example 11. Throughout this final section, the “à l’horizon” motive is developed contrapuntally, sometimes in inversion, taking us through a web of chromatic shifts before finally landing on a D-flat major triad. Example 11 also includes an example of the motive in imitation and inversion. Gagnon’s other choral songs and cycles, such as *Quatre*

Example 10: Gagnon - *À l’horizon*, mm.10-15

Example 10: Gagnon - *À l’horizon*, mm.10-15

The musical score is for a choral setting in 4/4 time, one flat key signature. It consists of two systems of staves for Soprano (Sop.), Alto, Tenor (Ténor), and Bass (Basse).

System 1 (mm. 10-15):

- Soprano:** Measures 10-15. Lyrics: "À l'ho - ri - zon". Dynamics: *p* (measures 10-11), *f* (measures 12-15).
- Alto:** Measures 10-15. Lyrics: "À l'ho - ri - zon". Dynamics: *f* (measures 12-15).
- Tenor:** Measures 10-15. Lyrics: "Le so - leil le so - leil du prin - temps". Dynamics: *p* (measures 10-11), *f* (measures 12-15).

System 2 (mm. 13-15):

- Soprano:** Measures 13-15. Lyrics: "on pen -". Dynamics: *p* (measures 13-15).
- Alto:** Measures 13-15. Lyrics: "on le so - leil pen -". Dynamics: *p* (measures 13-15).
- Tenor:** Measures 13-15. Lyrics: "dé - jà pen -". Dynamics: *p* (measures 13-15).
- Bass:** Measures 13-15. Lyrics: "pen -". Dynamics: *p* (measures 13-15).

Example 11: Gagnon - *À l'horizon*, mm.20-21

Adagio sostenuto ♩ = 72

Sop. *mf* 19 Le lo - ri - ot chan - - - - te, et c'est comme u - ne

Alto *mf* À l'ho - ri - zon, À l'ho - ri - zon,

Ténor *mf* À l'ho - ri - zon,

Basse *mf* À l'ho - ri - zon,

églogues (1998) and *Paroles dorées* (1996-7) use similar harmonic language, contrapuntal and melodic writing, and nature-centric poetry and themes.

Jacques Hétu (1938-2010), one of the most widely known and performed Québécois composers, uses a similar textural style to Gagnon in his choral writing. His harmonic language, however, is more dissonant. In his choral cycle *Les illusions fanées* (1988), similarities to Gagnon's style include simplicity of rhythm, a balance between simple imitative material and homophony, and clarity of melodic line and text. Hétu also bases his compositions on initial melodic and harmonic ideas, passing them throughout the voices and using them to delineate structural sections and cadences.

3.3 Historicism

Historicism refers to the revival of musical styles and techniques from past eras. Neoclassicism is an example of this that was quite popular among Canadian composers in the early 20th century. The following examples demonstrate how some Québécois composers in the latter

half of the century were using elements of Renaissance and Medieval vocal style and counterpoint in their choral compositions.

Raynald Arseneault (1945-1995) approached composition from an intuitive and spiritual standpoint. Similarly to his teacher Gilles Tremblay, his aim is for his music to open the listeners to an intimate and reflective space, but unlike Tremblay's more energetic surges of spirit, Arseneault opts for a more meditative tone.²³ He was fascinated with Gregorian chant for its modal expression and fluidity of rhythm. In his piece for choir and organ *Chant de joie* (1988), he uses the phrygian mode, in E, with occasional diversions into B minor cadences, and one major-mode ascending sequence in the "Alleluia" section (Example 12). The majority of the

Example 12: Arseneault - *Chant de joie*, mm.7-14

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the piece "Chant de joie" by Raynald Arseneault, measures 7-14. The score is written on four staves. The top two staves are for the vocal line, and the bottom two are for the organ. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating the Phrygian mode in E. The tempo is marked "rall." (rallentando). The lyrics "Alleluia" are written above the vocal line. The organ part features a major-mode ascending sequence in the "Alleluia" section. The score ends with "Al Coda" and a double bar line.

²³ Sylvain Caron, "Raynald Arseneault: une musique pour l'âme," in *Circuit*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (1997): 49.

piece unfolds over an E pedal tone in the organ and choir, another element from the medieval style. The punctuation of the phrases by fermatas and the static harmony create an almost absence of rhythmic reference points. It is as if he is trying to make the listener forget the notion of time and enter into a sense of eternity.²⁴ The repetition of chords and generally static vocal parts with occasional leaps into cadences recall a chant-like atmosphere. See Example 13 for the opening of the piece, which features the static harmony in E phrygian, and the pedal tone. The sense of timelessness that this piece conveys plays well into Arseneault's desire to create a meditative experience for his audience, and reflects his association with Messiaen's aesthetic of music that comes from nowhere and goes nowhere. Aside from the brief passages of more classical diatonic progressions, the overall sound is very indicative of medieval influences.

Example 13: Arseneault - *Chant de joie*, mm.1-6

Marc Gagné (b.1939) is a composer and ethnomusicologist whose research focuses on the relationship between music and literature. Most of his compositions are folk-

²⁴ Ibid., 51.

based or sacred. He has written five choral works, of varying difficulty levels. His *Messe Brève* “*du peuple de Dieu*” (1980) for SATB choir a cappella is essentially an essay in modal writing. Each of the five movements uses a different mode in its characteristic key, except for the *Agneau de Dieu* which is in E aeolian. He assigns the modes to the various parts of the mass thoughtfully, matching the overall mood of the text to the atmosphere which each mode conveys. For example, the Sanctus, or *Saint, Saint, Saint!* (Example 14) is in F lydian which, paired with changing meters and energetic rhythms, creates an appropriately bright and jubilant sound.

Example 14: Gagné - *Saint! Saint! Saint!* in *Messe Brève* “*du peuple de Dieu*”, mm.18-21

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the Sanctus movement of the *Messe Brève* by Jean Papineau-Couture. The score is for SATB choir and piano. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are for the vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The bottom two staves are for the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "Hosanna au plus haut des cieux" repeated. The meter changes from 6/8 to 2/4 to 3/8 to 2/4. The piano accompaniment is in the bottom two staves.

Jean Papineau-Couture (1916-2000) used many different forms of historicism in his compositions. *Psaume 150* (1954) is a modern parallel to Bach’s chorale-cantatas, but using an original motive rather than a hymn tune as its basis. The antiphonal effects in this large work are

Example 15: Papineau-Couture - *Te, Mater*, mm.1-2, 8-9, 15-16

Allant (ca $\text{♩} = 72$) JEAN PAPINEAU-COUTURE

Te, Ma-ter al - ma Nu - mi -

Te, Ma-ter al - ma Nu - mi - nis O - - - ra - - - - mus

Ob per-di tum nostrum ge-nus Pri- - mi pa - - -

Ob per-di-tum nos-trum ge-

Clé-men - ter er - go pros-pi -

ce La- psis A - - - - -

especially reminiscent of the Baroque style.²⁵ In general, his style is characterized by modality, including bi-modality, motor rhythms inspired by baroque pulsation²⁶, and a Debussy-an use of

²⁵ Ian L. Bradley, *Twentieth Century Canadian Composers*, Vol. 1, Agincourt, ON: GLC Publishers Limited(1977), 103.

²⁶ Louis Bail Milot, *Jean Papineau-Couture: La vie, la carrière et l'oeuvre*, Ville de LaSalle, QC: Editions Hurtubise HMH Limitée (1986), 117-118.

tone colour and whole tone scales.²⁷ He gained a solid foundation in contrapuntal and formal practice from Nadia Boulanger during his studies in the United States, and is considered to have been one of the most technically proficient Canadian composers.²⁸ One of his later choral works, *Te, Mater* (1980) for three male voices, emulates the style of a Renaissance three-voice motet. Three distinct sections begin with a one-measure theme in the middle voice, which is imitated at a one-bar interval a 4th above and a 2nd below by the top and bottom voices respectively. The first and third sections begin with the same theme at the same pitch level, and the middle section begins a third lower with the tonal inversion of the theme. Example 15 shows the beginning of each section. The 4/2 time signature, general contour of the individual lines and use of suspension figures all clearly suggest a Renaissance style. The improper resolution of suspensions, abundance of dissonant intervals (according to Renaissance contrapuntal practice) such as 4ths and 7ths and layered quartal sonorities, especially at cadences, however, create an

Example 16: Papineau-Couture - *Te, Mater*, mm.20-22

The musical score for Example 16 consists of three staves, each representing a different voice part. The lyrics are written below the staves. The first staff (top) has the lyrics: "li-us De-po-nat i-ram vin-di-cem A-men." The second staff (middle) has the lyrics: "-po-nat i-ram vin-di-cem A-men." The third staff (bottom) has the lyrics: "-tus fi-li-us De-po-nat i-ram vin-di-cem A-men." The score includes dynamic markings: *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), and *pp* (pianissimo). There is a repeat sign (//) after the first section of each staff. The music is written in 4/2 time.

²⁷ Ian L. Bradley, *Twentieth Century Canadian Composers*, Vol. 1, Agincourt, ON: GLC Publishers Limited(1977), 100.

²⁸ Ibid.

overall much more modern sound. Each of these modern characteristics can be found in the final passage of the piece, shown in Example 16.

The next three examples involve composers whose styles are very unique and combine many different techniques, from conservative to modern and experimental. In his work for choir and percussion *L'espace du coeur* (1997), Gilles Tremblay (1932-2017) uses elements of 12-tone

Example 17: Tremblay - *L'espace du coeur*, box 3

4

3

S1
S1-2
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

S2
S3-4
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

S3
S5-6
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

A1
A1-2
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

A2
A3-4
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

A3
A5-6
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

T1
T1-2
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

T2
T3-4
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

T3
T5-6
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

B1
B1-2
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

B2
B3-4
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

B3
B5-6
mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

srs mé-moi-re, ô co - lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce Ma -

technique and indeterminacy while also referencing medieval styles. The two medieval techniques that he uses are a recurring harmonic passage involving open 5ths and 4ths (Example 17), and hocket-like figures. The hocket figures are used as small cells within the first aleatoric section (Example 18) and also expanded into two longer hocket-like sections. The use of medieval compositional techniques is surely called-on here in relation to the medieval text, by Guillaume de Machaut, being set.

Example 18: Tremblay - *L'espace du coeur*, box 5

5 ① ← 15"/20" → 7
 2 Signes ← 10" +- → modéré fluctuant douce
 chef m. g. (altos seulement) ②
 chef m. dc.
 Vif, hocquet (f) Vif dolce
 S1 solo
 co-lombe on co-lom-be dans l'es-pa-ce
 pour finir Vif (solo) (f)
 Mon cœur
 S2-3 soli individ.
 modéré fluctuant douce Vif, hocquet (f) sim. sempre
 co-lombe dans l'es-pa-ce
 (S3: commencer ici) Vif (f) Vif
 co-lombe on
 (S3: continuer à la portée supérieure)
 A 1-2-3 A 4-5-6
 modéré fluctuant douce Vif, hocquet (f) dolce dolce Vif dolce Vif
 co-lombe on

José Evangelista (b.1943) is originally from Spain, but has made his career mainly in Québec, studying with André Prévost and Bruce Mather. Since 1980, his music has been based

almost exclusively on melody. He treats the monody as a sort of *cantus firmus* (CF), applying textural variations such as heterophony, where a melodic line generates echoes of itself and creates illusions of polyphony.²⁹ Evangelista's melodies are usually very long, some lasting 3-4 minutes, and often use all 12 tones.³⁰ He has described his SATB work *O quam suavis* (1987), from a set of three motets *Cantus Sacri*, as a choral essay in heterophony.³¹ Zihua Tan describes three types of textures used by Evangelista in his monodic music: near unison, phase-shifted, and complete unison.³² *O quam suavis* begins with five measures of "near unison," where the soprano line carries the CF and the alto line sings fragments of the CF, sustaining each pitch and matching each pitch change with the simultaneous soprano note (Example 19). A similar

Example 19: Evangelista - *O quam suavis*, mm.1-3

The musical score for 'O quam suavis' by José Evangelista, measures 1-3, is presented for SATB voices. The tempo is marked '♩ = 54 Fluido' and the mood is 'dolce'. The Soprano (S.) part starts with a piano (p) dynamic and carries the main melody. The Alto (A.) part enters in measure 2 with a pianissimo (pp) dynamic, singing fragments of the Soprano's melody. The Tenor (T.) and Bass (B.) parts are silent in these measures. The lyrics are: 'O quam suavis est Do-mi-ne'.

²⁹ José Evangelista, "Pourquoi composer de la musique monodique," in *Circuit*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1990): 63.

³⁰ Ibid., 57.

³¹ José Evangelista, "'Moi': un autoportrait par José Evangelista," in *Circuit*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (2017): 65.

³² Zihua Tan, "Monody-based Compositions: José Evangelista's *Clos de vie* and *Alap & Gat*," in *Circuit*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (2017): 71.

relationship is found between the tenor and alto lines in mm.20-22. The “phase shifting” technique can take on multiple forms, and there are many varieties to be found in this short motet. In mm.42-45 (Example 20), there is a double phase-shift between the basses and altos, and tenors and sopranos. The two pairs are using different sections of the CF and the bass-alto

Example 20: Evangelista - *O quam suavis*, mm.42-45

Example 20 shows a musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in measures 42-45. The score is for the piece "O quam suavis" by Evangelista. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 and back to 3/4. The lyrics are: "O quam suavis est Do-mi-ne spi-ri-tu tu-us Do- quam su-a-vis cresc. quam su-a-vis". The score includes dynamics like *p* and *cresc.*, and fingering numbers like 5.

Example 21: Evangelista - *O quam suavis*, mm.50-54

Example 21 shows a musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in measures 50-54. The score is for the piece "O quam suavis" by Evangelista. The time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "O quam suavis est spi-ri-tu tu-us Do-mi-ne". The score includes dynamics like *pp* and *ppp*, and performance instructions like *legato* and *perdendo*.

pair has longer note values, but they both have a phase interval of an eighth within a sixteenth-note quintuplet. The last five measures of the piece (Example 21) involve a 4-voice phase-shift, started by the sopranos and continued downward, taking the form of a very close canon. The form of Evangelista's monodic compositions is often achieved through varied and contrasting textures and heterophonic techniques.

Claude Vivier (1948-1983) is another composer whose compositions rely heavily on melody. A combination of personal turmoil involving family history, religion and sexuality, as well as a deep connection to music and the creative process as part of his being contribute to Vivier's unique thematic and musical language. Childhood, death, solitude, sex, and a search for God are recurring themes in his compositions. Friends and colleagues describe him as an outwardly extravagant and direct person, but one who was tender and insecure on the inside. This duality of his personality is displayed in *Jesus erbarme dich* through slow, languid lines contrasted with eccentric outbursts and accelerandos. The long soprano monody (Example 22) that opens the work sets up the motivic material for the rest of the short piece. The simple interval of a half-step which characterizes the melody recalls the baroque sigh motif and creates a melancholic atmosphere, reflecting the composer's inner struggle with faith and identity.

Example 22: Vivier - *Jesus erbarme dich*, mm.1-6

Claude Vivier

Soprano Solo

$\text{♩} = 40 \text{ (} \text{♩} = 80 \text{)}$

pp

Je -

f *p* *mp*

Je - sus er - bar-me dich

Chapter 4: European Centres of Influence

4.1 Paris

The most influential teacher in Paris during the mid-20th century was Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992). His impact on Québécois composers was strong, through their adoption of his compositional techniques and theories, but mostly through his analysis courses. At the Paris Conservatory, Messiaen introduced all his pupils to a variety of theoretical and analytical systems and trends. In terms of composition, he emphasized pre-compositional planning and highly encouraged individuality.³³ He didn't push his own compositional style on his students, but occasionally used his works as examples for analysis.³⁴ Many elements of his personal style and approach did directly influence a few Québécois composers, however, such as his modes of limited transposition, fascination with bird songs, and free, spiritual approach to time and form. Most of the composers mentioned in the following discussion studied with Messiaen himself, except for Hébert-Tremblay and Bouliane.

Suzanne Hébert-Tremblay (b.1961) has only written one choral composition. As a professional clarinetist, most of her output is instrumental chamber music. Despite this fact, *Il fait blanc*, written in 2000, displays a strong understanding of choral writing, in terms of vocal range and voice leading. Almost all of her compositions are inspired by nature, specifically the wildlife of Québec. She has a special interest in birds and birdsong, inspired by Messiaen, whose writings she read early on in her studies. Many of her instrumental works use bird-song as

³³ Heather White Luckow, “*La Marque du maître: Messiaen’s Influence on Québécois Composers* Serge Garant, Clermont Pépin and André Prévost,” PhD diss., McGill University (2010): 6-7.

³⁴ Lyse Richer, ed., *André Prévost: La musique que je suis*, Éditions Varia, 2009.

inspiration for melodies and motives. Birdsong is not used in *Il fait blanc*, but her choice of text certainly displays an affinity for nature-themed poetry. The poem, originally *Romance blanche* by symbolist Québécois poet Albert Lozeau (1878-1924), makes reference to wintry images, with an emphasis on white things, such as snow, marble, frozen rivers, lilies and white roses, white butterflies, and swans. The prominence of the colour white and the cold but beautiful atmosphere of the winter scene are portrayed through predominantly bright and harsh sounding chords, with occasional warmer sonorities and lyrical lines to ease the tension. Hébert-Tremblay's compositions do not systematically have a tonal centre or key-confirming progressions and cadences. *Il fait blanc*, however, does. It is tonal in the sense that there are clear arrival points, voice leading that suggests cadential gestures, and two “key areas.” The closest we come to an authentic cadence is when the altos and tenors sing a melody in unison, without any harmonic background, which is diatonic in B minor and whose contour suggests a ii-V-i progression (Example 23). The main “tonic” that we hear in this piece is B. The only thing

Example 23: Hébert-Tremblay - *Il fait blanc*, mm.25-27

25 *mp*
fait blanc. __

mf
la vil - le toute é - close en mar - bre blanc.

mf
blanc, __ la vil - le toute é - close en mar - bre blanc.

There is evidence in *Il fait blanc* of a loose adherence to mode 3 from Messiaen's modes of limited transposition. Example 24 shows mode 3 on B. I say loose because Hébert-Tremblay does not use exclusively the pitches from this mode, adding chromatic inflections of C natural (flat 2) and G# (sharp 6), but the essential harmonic, motivic and tonal material is in line with the main features of this mode. Most notably, there is the presence of the minor and major third. Almost every arrival on a "tonic" chord has both the major and minor third, except for two instances in the last section. The final cadence is reproduced in Example 25. The "secondary key area," which is E-flat, is also clearly outlined in mode 3, with both its minor and major thirds are present. Hébert-Tremblay uses the A# (leading tone in B) as an enharmonic pivot note to B-flat (dominant in E-flat). One of these pivotal phrases is shown in Example 26.

55

f *3* *p*
fait blanc, — comme en un jar - din de ro - ses blan - ches.

f *3* *p*
— fait blanc, fait blanc, — comme en un jar - din de ro - ses blan - ches.

f *3* *p*
fait blanc, — comme en un jar - din de ro - ses blan - ches.

f *3* *p*
— fait blanc, il fait blanc, — comme en un jar - din de ro - ses blan - ches.

Example 26: Hébert-Tremblay - *Il fait blanc*, mm.30-33

4

30

mp *mf*

cu - ri - eu - se de ri - viè - re ge - lée en mi - rant la blan - cheur, en mi -

mp *mf*

cu - ri - eu - se de ri - viè - re ge - lée en mi - rant la blan - cheur, en mi -

mp *mf*

cu - ri - eu - se de ri - viè - re ge - lée en mi - rant la blan - cheur,

mp *mf*

de ri - viè - re ge - lé - - - e en mi - rant la blan -

Denys Bouliane (b.1955) has created his own system of modes, similarly to Messiaen, but using a different method of construction. He bases what he calls his “pseudo-syntax” on the diatonic scale, compressing and stretching it to create seven modes spanning the pitch space of seven to thirteen semitones.³⁵ Similarly to Messiaen’s modes of limited transposition, these modes allow for diatonic-sounding sonorities, while obscuring the idea of tonality. Bouliane’s a cappella choral work *Dessiner l’écoulement du temps* (1997) makes extensive use of these modes, specifically mode -IV, which compresses the scale into a span of eight semitones.³⁶ The idea of consonant, recognizable harmonies progressing and resolving in unexpected ways is strong here. The majority of the piece is based on chromatically shifting triads, usually major or minor and sometimes diminished, which create dissonance on the horizontal and vertical axes (Example 27).

³⁵ Patrick Levesque, “Illusions, Collapsing Worlds, and Magic Realism: The Music of Denys Bouliane,” in *Compositional Crossroads: Music, McGill, Montreal*, Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press (2008): 305.

³⁶ Bouliane breaks down his system in the following article: “L’image fécondante du silène. D’une incursion du doute, du rire et de l’ironie dans le musical: souvenirs, réflexions, ‘autoréflexions,’” in *Circuit*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1998): 25-60.

Example 27: Bouliane - *Dessiner l'écoulement du temps*, mm.5-8

Example 28: Pépin - *Te Deum*, reh. 10-11

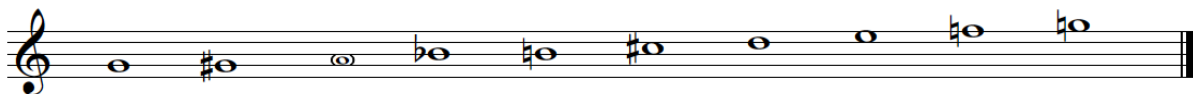
7

Clermont Pépin (1926-2006) was of the generation of composers who studied with Claude Champagne in Montreal, then with Messiaen in Paris. His peers in Messiaen's analysis class included Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen. He also studied composition with Arthur Honegger. His compositional style evolved quite a bit, from neo-romanticism to

serialism, and finally a return to neo-classicism.³⁷ In his *Te Deum* (1991) for choir, piano, percussion and strings, Pépin contrasts a more conservative, neo-classical writing style for the choir with free, chromatic instrumental flourishes. These improvisatory and ornamented gestures punctuate the choral phrases, creating pauses in the sense of overall time flow, often ending in fermatas. This sense of timelessness, paired with the ornamental bird-song-like figures shown in Example 28 are indicative of Messiaen's influence.

André Prévost (1934-2001) learned about Olivier Messiaen's compositional techniques from his first teacher Clermont Pépin before going to study in Paris. His initial interest in the French composer is clear from his experimentation with the techniques in pieces as early as his popular choral piece *Soleils couchants* (1953). On the surface, this work fits in well with the conservative styles discussed in Chapter 3; it has a tonal centre with some chromaticism, simple rhythms, and makes use of only standard notation and vocal techniques. Prévost is not generally considered a traditional or conservative composer, however. In most of his later works, after 1960, he uses an atonal and dodecaphonic language, with elements such as Messiaen's modes of limited transposition, symmetrical rows, and total serialism. The pitch content of the melodic soprano lines in the A and A' sections of this short piece suggests Messiaen's mode 2, otherwise known as the octatonic scale, with an added pitch-class A. Example 29 shows this pitch collection written out as a scale. The short imitative melodies that open the piece (Example 30)

Example 29: Prévost - *Soleils couchants*, mode 2 + A



³⁷ Gilles Potvin, "Clermont Pépin," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, (2006).

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Musique d'André Prévost

outline subsets of the mode and foreshadow his later emphasis on mirrored counterpoint and symmetrical sets. The harmonic language, however, remains more conservative, using impressionist sounds such as chord planing (Example 31) and undulating harmonic background (Example 30). Though this short piece is one of Prévost's earliest works, it remains one of the most performed, surely because of its accessibility to both performers and listeners. Despite the

Example 31: Prévost - *Soleils couchants*, mm.23-24

Très lent T1

poco cresc. *pp*

fan-tô-mes ver - meils

poco cresc. *pp*

fan-tô-mes ver - meils

poco cresc. *pp*

fan-tô-mes ver - meils

poco cresc. *pp*

fan-tô-mes ver - meils

Example 32: Hétu - *Le jardin d'antan*, mm.25-28

Andante $\text{♩} = 60$

25 *p*

S. Nos soeurs en ro - bes blan - - - ches.

A. Nos soeurs en ro - bes blan - - - ches.

T. Nos soeurs en ro - bes blan - - - ches.

B. Nos soeurs en ro - bes blan - - - ches.

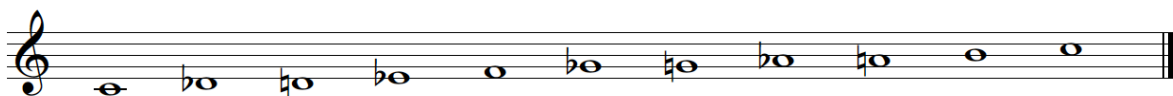
many developments in his compositional language, some essential elements of his personal style which remained throughout his entire output are already present in this work. These include a preference for ternary form, the use of *ostinato* openings, and a tendency toward themes that reflect his view of the world, often relating to the failings and sufferings of human beings.

Jacques Hétu also studied composition with Clermont Pépin and later travelled to Paris to study with Messiaen himself. He has described his compositional aesthetic as a “style composite,” which explains his incorporation of many different stylistic elements into his work. These include but are not limited to 12-tone rows, lyricism and emotional expression, neoclassical forms, and Messiaen’s modes of limited transformation. The harmonic and melodic material of his choral cycle *Les illusions fanées* (1988) is largely based on these modes. The first song, *Le jardin d’antan*, is based on mode 2, which we saw in the above analysis of Prévost’s piece. The pitches of the A major triad, which can be found within the mode, are used as a quasi-tonality, with most sections cadencing on A, as in Example 32. Though the mode is not strictly used throughout the song, the predominance of the octatonic sonority and scale is strongly

Example 33: Hétu - *Le jardin d’antan*, mm.67-69, soprano



Example 34: Messiaen’s mode 7



Example 35: Hétu - *L'idiote aux cloches*, mm.81-85, 119-122

81

S. et lon lan la et lon lan laire et lon lan la Ah! lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

A. et lon lan la et lon lan laire et lon lan la la lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

T. unis. et lon lan la et lon lan laire et lon lan la Ah! lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

B. et lon lan la la lon lan laire et lon lan la la lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

la lon lan la la lon lan laire et lon lan la la lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

DO 333

119

S. et lon lan laire et lon lan la Ah! lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

A. et lon laire et lon lan la Ah! lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

T. et lon lan laire et lon lan la Ah! lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

B. et lan laire et lon lan la Ah! lon lan laire Ah! lon lan la

la la la la lan laire Ah! la

emphasized, and blatantly highlighted in a soprano descent of the entire scale near the end of the piece (Example 33). The fourth and last song, *L'idiote aux cloches*, is loosely based on mode 7 (Example 34). Hétu emphasizes the A major/minor duality found within the mode by layering modalities at once, in playful eighth-note sections, and bell-like chords at the end of the piece, both shown in Example 35. The return to A as “home” in the last song highlights the importance of structural rigour and unity in his compositions.

Gilles Tremblay is a composer who's style is very difficult to label as it encompasses everything from serialism to aleatory and extended techniques. His eclecticism and spiritual outlook on art and creation make for a very unique and fascinating compositional style. Like his teacher Messiaen, he is driven by a search for the invisible through art and nature. His music reflects that which is not himself, that which is divine and unattainable. Messiaen's greatest influence on Tremblay in regards to compositional technique and musical material was in his conception of form. Neither are interested in long developments, in the manner of Beethoven for example, but instead prefer to divide the music into smaller, isolated sections.³⁸ At times the sections are connected with some thematic or motivic material, occasionally as coherent as a refrain-verse form, but other times they function as individual entities and thoughts. In *L'espace du coeur*, Tremblay divides the music into blocks using distinct harmonic or melodic gestures in each section. A couple of melodic themes and harmonic progressions occur periodically, like refrains, throughout the piece, but not with any regularity.

³⁸ Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, *Serge Garant et la révolution musicale au Québec*, Montréal: Louise Courteau, éditrice inc. (1986): 156-158.

4.2 Darmstadt

Aside from Paris, one of the most popular places in Europe for Québécois composers to visit in seeking further education and exposure to new trends was the Internationale Musikinstitut Darmstadt (IMD). In the 1950s, the emphasis of this institute was on integral serialism and the development of electroacoustic music. This is also the decade in which prominent Québécois composers such as Garant and Tremblay began attending the summer festival. Tremblay attended for the first time in 1957, and his teachers included Karlheinz Stockhausen, Luigi Nono and Pierre Boulez. He was not convinced by the obsession with numbers and integral serialism, but he viewed his experience there as extremely valuable in other ways. Darmstadt was a meeting place for creators and innovators in music to exchange ideas, share resources, and generally feel less alone than they might feel in their home countries. In this sense, the informal discussions were just as, if not more valuable than the formal lectures.³⁹ In the 1960s, serialism began to come under some criticism, and more experimental trends such as chance and theatrical elements made their way into the lectures and presentations being given at the institute, featuring guest speakers such as John Cage and Mauricio Kagel.⁴⁰ In addition to the general exposure Québécois composers gained from their visits to the IMD, and the wealth of repertoire they were able to bring back to Québec and share with their peers, students and the general public, Stockhausen himself had a major impact on a few composers. He not only taught several of them in Darmstadt, but also made three visits to Montreal in 1958, 1961 and 1964 to give lectures and performances of his music.

³⁹ Jean Boivin, “Pierre Mercure, Gilles Tremblay, et quelques autres compositeurs canadiens aux *Ferienkurse* à Darmstadt dans les années 1950 et 1960,” in *Circuit*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (2011): 60-61.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 62.

Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007) is known for his groundbreaking work in electronic music, aleatoric techniques and spatialization of sound. He was also innovative in the areas of graphic notation and extended vocal techniques. Upon his first visit to Montreal in 1958, a clip of *Zeitmasze*, his first composition to use the notion of sound “groups” or masses, was played on the radio.⁴¹ He visited for the third time in 1964, for a performance of *Kontakte*, a mixed work for electronics, piano and percussion. This was the first time the general public of Québec had heard music of this genre. Two Québécois composers who were especially impacted by Stockhausen’s music and teachings are Claude Vivier and Gilles Tremblay.

Vivier attended the IMD in 1972, alongside José Evangelista and Wolfgang Rihm. This was the same year that Stockhausen began developing his concept of *formule*, which involves a melodic structure being projected in time and space by a series of expansions, contractions and mutations.⁴² This emphasis on melody as the generator of form and development stuck with Vivier. He uses the expanding melody technique and adds harmonies which underly each pitch of the melody as it unfolds. These harmonies don’t appear to have been built out of a pre-conceived system of any kind, but most of the sonorities share the characteristic of being a major or minor triad with a “blurring note,” an added note a semitone away from one of the triadic pitches.⁴³ This specific type of sonority, as well as the importance of melody as a defining element in a work, are strong characteristics of Vivier’s *Jesus erbarme dich*. Example 36 shows a few examples of these sonorities in the choral piece. Vivier claimed that his introduction to

⁴¹ Karlheinz Stockhausen and Maryvonne Kendergi, “La mesure du temps: un entretien inédit avec Stockhausen (1958), in *Circuit*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2009): 68.

⁴² Jean Lesage, “Claude Vivier, *Siddhartha*, Karlheinz Stockhausen, la nouvelle simplicité et le *râga*,” in *Circuit*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (2008): 110.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 117.

Stockhausen was the “first moment of [his] existence as a composer.”⁴⁴ They share many aesthetic characteristics, other than their technical use of melody, such as a fascination with the human voice, an interest in texts with mystical content, and a deep sense of spirituality. Vivier identified with the way that Stockhausen’s spirituality was inseparable from himself.⁴⁵

Example 36: Vivier - *Jesus erbarme dich*, mm.7-10, 20, 28-29

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 7-10) features Soprano Solo, Soprano, and Alto parts. The Soprano Solo part begins with a *p* dynamic and a melodic line, while the Soprano and Alto parts enter with *ppp* dynamics. The lyrics 'Je' are written under the vocal lines. The second system (measure 20) shows the piano accompaniment with *ff* dynamics and the vocal parts with *p* dynamics. The lyrics 'Je' are written under the vocal lines. The third system (measures 28-29) features all vocal parts (Soprano Solo, Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The Soprano Solo part begins with a *p* dynamic and a melodic line, while the other vocal parts enter with *p* dynamics. The piano accompaniment features a *sus* (sustained) dynamic. The lyrics 'Je' are written under the vocal lines.

⁴⁴ Bob Gilmore, *Claude Vivier : A Composer's Life*, Eastman Studies in Music. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press (2014): 77.

⁴⁵ Claude Vivier, “Les écrits de Claude Vivier,” in *Circuit*, Vol. 2, No. 1-2 (1991): 94.

Gilles Tremblay was more influenced by Stockhausen's way of thinking about and treating sound. Tremblay uses concepts of "emerging" sound and stereophonic sound, which recall elements of an electroacoustic approach. He also developed a concept of "mobile" sound, which refers to the movement of a group of pitches, similar to Stockhausen's sound "groups." Tremblay was instrumental in bringing the music of the Darmstadt group of composers (Stockhausen, Xenakis, Berio) to Québec in the first concert of electroacoustic music in 1961.⁴⁶ Another electronic music influence on Tremblay was Edgard Varèse (1883-1965), whose attention to the roles of resonance and timbre can be seen applied to Tremblay's *L'espace du coeur*, among other compositions.

Stockhausen was also significantly influential in the innovative use of the voice, graphic notation, and in the advent of indeterminacy, as we will see in Chapter 6.

Overall, composers benefitted from their attendance at Darmstadt and European studies in general by meeting and learning from prominent thinkers and creators, bringing the acquired knowledge of technique and repertoire back to Québec, and getting a chance to have their own music performed abroad, which was an important stepping stone in being recognized as a successful composer.

⁴⁶ Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, "Les débuts du modernisme musical à Montréal," in *Célébration: Essays on Aspects of Canadian Music*, Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1984.

Chapter 5: Serialism

Twelve-tone serialism developed in Europe in the 1920s, but was not widely known or used in Canada until the 1950s and later, when the technique had already progressed to total or integral serialism. Though many Québécois composers have used various elements of serialism, very few would be considered strictly serialists. In Québec, it was more the spirit of serialism that affected composers' styles, such as the desire to consider all parameters of music as equal, and the removal of memory as a main factor in the listener's experience by the lack of motives or themes.⁴⁷ Some elements of serialism, other than 12-tone rows, that québécois composers have used with various amounts of freedom include recurring pitch-class sets and interval classes, octave permanence and symmetry.

André Villeneuve's (b.1956) style is extremely unified across his output, both intricate and simple at once. His music is imbued with a sense of time being stretched out by ever changing harmony. His harmonic language is very atonal, though not strictly serial. His studies in Paris with Claude Ballif certainly influenced this in-between language. Ballif named his own style metatonicity, as it is a mix of tonality and serialism. In *Dix-sept tracés solitaires d'humanité*, written in 1996, a predominance of slow tempi and long note values (usually quarter-note or longer), with heavily chromatic contrapuntal lines and rarely any recognizable chords or sonorities create this stretching-out feeling. Certain passages, such as the beginning of the first *tracé* appear to be dodecaphonic upon first glance. It is often the case that most of the 12-note aggregate is used in a passage, except for one or two. In the opening passage of *tracé I*

⁴⁷ Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, *Serge Garant et la révolution musicale au Québec*, Montréal: Louise Courteau, éditrice inc. (1986): 162.

Example 37: Villeneuve - *Dix-sept tracés solitaires d'humanité*, I: mm.1-3

♩ ~ 60, sans rigueur

rit. -----

pp

Sopranos

Por - ta - bam e - nim con - ci - sam

pp

Altos

e - nim con - ci - sam

pp **p**

Ténors

e - nim con - ci - sam et

pp

Basses

Por - ta - bam e - nim con - ci - sam

(Example 37), only pc0 or C is missing. Another element from the modernist/serialist aesthetic that Villeneuve uses here and in most of his works is very detailed and controlled musical parameters such as articulation, tempo and dynamics. Villeneuve does not serialize these parameters, but rarely do you find a measure that does not contain an indication relating to at least one of them, as can be observed in Example 37. The basic 4-part texture and generally simple rhythmic content gives this piece a relatively accessible look on the surface. The atonal language and detailed indications, however, make it very difficult to sing. Villeneuve has published an essay called *Ouvrier d'harmonies*, in which he dissects musical concepts and the process of creation in a very theoretical and philosophical way. He talks about his conception of harmony as a mode of passage from one state to another. This is clearly translated into his compositional language, where the vertical sonorities are just results of the movement of the individual lines toward a goal. He discusses the effect of brevity and whether it portrays

nostalgia. It is interesting that he is so concerned with the concept of brevity, as a major feature of this choral work and of a few other works is the many short movements, some only 5-bars long and lasting between 10 and 20 seconds, like *tracé XIV* (Example 38). Finally, he questions whether as artists or “ouvriers” we “create” something or just “transform” something in the

Example 38: Villeneuve - *Dix-sept tracés solitaires d'humanité*, XIV mm.1-5

XIV

♩ ~ 66 rit. T° *allargando* Plus large

Sopranos
Altos
Ténors
Basses

a - li - quid ni - si pul - chrum?
Num a - ma - mus a - li - quid ni - si pul - chrum?
Num a - ma - mus a - li - quid ni - si pul - chrum?
Num a - ma - mus a - li - quid ni - si pul - chrum?

permanence of repetition. He believes that if everything is fundamentally repetition, as in nothing is truly new, then nuance is everything. This claim helps us understand his reasoning for being so precise in his expression and articulation indications. The text of *Dix-sept tracés* is a compendium of passages from St-Augustine’s *Les Confessions*, which deals with questioning one’s own soul on its vanity and suffering, and a search for a higher truth. Villeneuve evidently appreciates this kind of philosophical musing on the most basic aspects of life, whether they be related to art or the human soul, perhaps two things not so unrelated.

Gilles Tremblay occasionally uses 12-tone rows in his compositions, but not in the same way as Schoenberg or Webern. The initial row does not serve as a device for the construction of the rest of the piece, but is simply presented as an idea of its own, in a “voici, il y a” kind of way.⁴⁸ In *L'espace du coeur*, Tremblay uses elements of serial technique in the form of recurring interval class and pitch class sets, as well as fixed registers. The most prominent pitch-class set is [0,1,3,4,6,7], made up of two diminished triads a semitone apart and featuring interval-class 3.

Example 39: Tremblay - *L'espace du coeur*, box 4

4 Lent ♩ = ca 35

p *f* *librement* *solo* 7:4

S1
S1
A. Mon cœur ô - co - lom - be dans l'es - pace

S2-3
S2-3
A. Mon cœur

A *f* *p*
Mon cœur

T *f* *p*
Mon cœur

B *f* *p* voix de tête
Mon cœur

Perc. *f sans brutalité* *pp* cymb. moyenne baguettes douces de timbales *pp* *t-tam profond* mailloche lourde

L.V.

⁴⁸ Robert Richard, *Éblouissement : Gilles Tremblay Et La Musique Contemporaine*, Montréal: Editions Nota Bene (2013): 83.

The two diminished triads have fixed registers in that certain pitches only occur in certain octaves. This pitch-class set is featured in the aleatoric sections, hocket sections, and solo passages. Example 39 shows the set sung by the sopranos of the choir, followed by the soprano solo. One of Tremblay's signature techniques is a sweeping gesture, usually upwards, described as a "surgissement.". This can be seen on two levels in *L'espace du coeur*. The first is a long melodic line sung by all voices, each part stopping on a different note to create a cluster. The passage in Example 40 is made up of a repeating pattern of minor thirds and major and minor seconds, once again featuring interval-class 3, the minor 3rd. Other versions of this musical gesture include a descent of the same interval pattern, and an ascending chromatic scale. The

Example 40: Tremblay - *L'espace du coeur*, box 2

2

mf, en dehors

S
vriil *mp* beaux yeux aux on - des de mar - tin - pé -

A 1
vriil *mp* Fais tant qu'en toi soit ma de - mou - - - - -

A 2
vriil *mp* Fais tant qu'en toi soit ma de - mou - - - - -

A 3
vriil *mp* Fais tant qu'en toi soit ma - - - - -

T 1
Fais tant qu'en toi soit ma - - - - -

T 2
Fais tant qu'en toi soit - - - - -

T 3
Fais tant qu'en - - - - -

B 1
Fais tant - - - - -

B 2
Fais - - - - -

second type of “surgissement” is a more energetic sweep of a pattern of alternating ascending tritones and perfect fourths, in the context of an *accelerando* (Example 41).

Example 41: Tremblay - *L'espace du coeur*, box 11

The musical score for Example 41 is for a vocal soloist (S) and a vocal ensemble (A 1, A 2, A 3, T 1, T 2, T 3). The tempo is marked 'più mosso' and 'accel.'. The dynamics are marked 'f', 'ff', 'mf', and 'ff'. The lyrics are 'l'es - pa - ce du coeur' and 'mour dans l'es - pa - ce du coeur'.

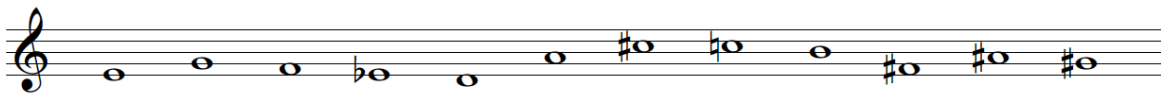
The score is written for a vocal soloist (S) and a vocal ensemble (A 1, A 2, A 3, T 1, T 2, T 3). The tempo is marked 'più mosso' and 'accel.'. The dynamics are marked 'f', 'ff', 'mf', and 'ff'. The lyrics are 'l'es - pa - ce du coeur' and 'mour dans l'es - pa - ce du coeur'.

Otto Joachim (1910-2010) was originally from Germany and spent over a decade in Asia before settling in Montreal in 1949. He was a violist in the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and taught at both McGill and the Conservatoire de Montréal. He was a major figure in Montreal as a

teacher and by establishing his own electronic studio in 1956. His compositional technique is generally serial, with occasional borrowing from tonal language, use of aleatory and theatrical elements. Though most of his compositions are based on a 12-tone row, they remain lyrical and expressive, and the rows themselves are often easily recognizable and tuneful.⁴⁹ His *Nonet* (1960) for strings, winds and piano may have been the first Canadian piece to use elements of chance. Later, he combined elements of serialism and chance in his works.

Joachim's *Psalm* (1960) for mixed choir a cappella is entirely based on the tone row written out in Example 42. The first pitch of the row, E, is used throughout the piece as a grounding force, through E-major chord arrival points and long pedal points. The predominance of the pitch E is set up from the very beginning; the piece opens with the bass 2 part holding the

Example 42: Joachim - *Psalm*, 12-tone row



Example 43: Joachim - *Psalm*, mm.1-3

Example 43: Soprano part, mm.1-3

Example 44: Alto part, mm.1-3

Example 45: Tenor and Bass parts, mm.1-3

⁴⁹ Evan Ware and Rick Macmillan, "Otto Joachim," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, April 3, 2012.

pedal, and the bass 1 and tenors stating the row quite plainly (Example 43). Meanwhile, the sopranos and altos are rhythmically speaking the text in a low voice. This opening passage clearly demonstrates the composer's free combination of strict serialist techniques with more experimental vocal effects. The tone row heavily features interval-classes 3 and 4, minor and major thirds, setting up the possibility for consonant sonorities within the use of the row.

His much later work *Dies Irae* (2001), for organ and male choir ad libitum, also exhibits this combination of contrasting styles and techniques. Here, serialism and historicism are combined. The organ part is written entirely in 12-tone technique. The opening statement of the row is shown in Example 44. The choir part is a unison quotation of the famous *dies irae* chant. Once the choir enters, the organ continues to play its row-based material, but instead of the traditional organ textures of the opening section, here Joachim slowly constructs large clusters with long sustained pitches and the gradual addition of pitches to the chord (Example 45).

Example 44: Joachim - *Dies Irae*, mm.1-6



Example 45: Joachim - *Dies Irae*, organ clusters and choir chant

Chapter 6: Avant-Garde and Experimental Techniques

In reaction to the constraints of modernism and with inspiration from the growth of electroacoustic mediums, the 1950s, 60s and 70s brought an onslaught of experimental and innovative techniques for voice, as well as advancements in graphic notation, indeterminacy and performance practice. Most of these new trends originated in Europe or the United States, but Canadian composers, in their new-found contemporary environment, were eager to try them out and incorporate them into their own unique styles.

The first work in the 50s to use voice in a truly novel way was Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge*, a hybrid piece, born in the electronic music studio. Stockhausen was also innovative in approaching musical parameters in different ways, such as thinking in terms of data instead of notes, and of duration in time instead of unit values or beats.⁵⁰ In the late-1950s, composers also began experimenting with spatial distribution and innovative choral composition in particular was attracting more attention. By the mid-1960s, new vocal and choral repertoire using avant-garde and experimental techniques was gaining momentum in Canada, with composers such as Bruce Mather, Murray Schafer, Gilles Tremblay and Claude Vivier adding to the repertoire.⁵¹ Other new trends of the 1960s were inter-musical borrowing, minimalism and process music. In general, composers and artists were opening their minds to all aspects of sound and space, and

⁵⁰ Istvan Anhalt, *Alternative Voices : Essays on Contemporary Vocal and Choral Composition*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (2014): 19.

⁵¹ Ibid., 6.

asking themselves questions like what place marginal sounds have in music, and how essential the intelligibility of text is in a vocal or choral work.⁵²

6.1 Indeterminacy

The German philosopher Theodor Adorno viewed aleatory and total serialism as two sides of the same coin, since both take away the subjectivity of the composer.⁵³ Composers have approached elements of indeterminacy in their compositions with varying levels of control, and controlling different aspects of the music while freeing up others. John Cage and Mauricio Kagel are examples of composers who took indeterminacy to an extreme level, leaving almost every aspect of a piece to chance or to the performer's liberty. Some composers have used indeterminacy as the basis for entire works, while others have used isolated aleatoric passages within works to create textural and temporal contrast. Stockhausen was interested in conceiving of time within a musical work in chronometric terms, usually seconds, instead of in beat values. Many composers have adopted this method in application to their aleatoric passages.

Gilles Tremblay's version of aleatory has less to do with randomness or indeterminacy and more to do with the movement of aggregates as a large group or crowd.⁵⁴ This technique, which he names "en mobile," is related to Stockhausen's concept of sound masses, of groups of sounds and pitches moving and functioning as a whole instead of individually. The hocket-like sections of Tremblay's *L'espace du coeur* that were discussed in Chapter 3 form the basis of the

⁵² Ibid., 20.

⁵³ Robert Richard, *Éblouissement : Gilles Tremblay Et La Musique Contemporaine*, Montréal: Editions Nota Bene (2013): 173-178.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

largest aleatoric section of the work, reproduced in Example 46. He uses boxes and triangles to indicate groups of notes or dynamic markings and the way they should be treated by the performers in terms of ordering and hierarchy. This large aleatoric section, lasting about 20 seconds, involves a series of short phrases that are to be sung as written but in an order chosen by

Example 46: Tremblay - *L'espace du coeur*, box 5

The musical score for Example 46 is divided into three main sections for different vocal groups:

- S1 solo:** Features a complex melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. The lyrics are "co - lom - be dans l'es - pa - ce".
- S2-3 soli individ.:** Features a complex melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. The lyrics are "co - lom - be dans l'es - pa - ce".
- A 1-2-3 / A 4-5-6:** Features a complex melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. The lyrics are "co - lom - be on".

The score includes a large aleatoric section with multiple endings and a final section marked "pour finir (solo)".

each individual singer, while dynamics, note duration and breath duration are given more specific parameters. The second, shorter aleatoric section, in Example 47, is slightly less controlled in that the singers and percussionists are given a series of individual pitches (not phrases), durations, dynamics and syllables to be combined and alternated ad libitum, each

Example 47: Tremblay - *L'espace du coeur*, box 24

*improvisi
fortes qu.*

24 S. ← 15"/25" →

chef: m. g. ↓

S 1-2
S 1-2

S 3 + A
S 3 à 6 + A

T

B

Perc.

3 cymb.

chanter un phonème par son

HANCHE
FRI VIR
SON Ô
NA TOI
VIENS

> segue simile, come prima

f *p* *f* *pp* ∞

parameter played out in a box or triangle. Tremblay expands on Stockhausen's concept of time by differentiating between real time and conceptual time. An Example of this in *L'espace du coeur* is the use of the percussion as a "déclencheur," where the singers must wait to hear the cymbal roll swell to then react to it and imitate it in glissandi (Example 48). The "real time" here refers to the time it takes for an event and subsequent reactions to occur and die away. The composer chooses to pass the responsibility to the percussion during this section, relinquishing all control, even if just for 15 seconds. It is also an example of how Tremblay's music requires of every performer in the group to be actively listening to the others.

Example 48: Tremblay - *L'espace du coeur*, box 23

23 19

S. gliss. en réaction à la cymbale 8"/15"

o gliss. en réaction à la cymbale 8"/15"

o gliss. en réaction à la cymbale 8"/15"

a gliss. en réaction à la cymbale 8"/15"

a gliss. en réaction à la cymbale 8"/15"

a gliss. en réaction à la cymbale 8"/15"

a

$p < mf > \infty < fff >$

improviser des fluctuations de plus en plus fortes qui font réagir les chanteurs.

The examples from Tremblay's piece are of entirely aleatoric sections, where all performers are participating. It is also common for composers to layer some aleatoric elements with notated, controlled music. A simple example of this can be found in André Prévost's *Psaume 148* (1971), where the most of the choir and instrumental ensemble are sustaining chords, while the tenors are instructed to whisper a set of words at their own pace.

Denis Dion's (b.1957) *à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau* (1993) for a cappella choir similarly layers sung and spoken lines, but in this case both are aleatorically set. The piece explores many different levels of aleatoric layering, making use of the 12-part choral ensemble to explore many textures and sound qualities. The first page, shown in Example 49, is relatively

Example 49: Dion - *à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau*, page 1

Denis Dion

① *chuchotez rapidement...*

1	c'est un oiseau, le chercher, un oiseau, avec ses yeux. s'il arrive, vers vous, le chercher	dans une tranquille élégance, ils ne parlent pas, ils sont simples, bonnement
S 2	il lui faut aller vers vous, et quand il s'arrête, s'il arrive, il n'est plus là, c'est un oiseau	calmes, ils font de l'ombre légère, pour les bêtes, je ne les ai pas entendus chanter
3	avec ses yeux, s'il arrive, vers vous, il lui faut aller, le chercher, vers vous, avec ses yeux	ils sont simples, dans une tranquille élégance, calmes, ils ne parlent pas
1	calmes, ils font de l'ombre légère, pour les bêtes, je ne les ai pas entendus chanter	avec un oiseau, on entend froisser ses ailes, l'entend, l'entend qui roucoule, avec mon âme au bec
A 2	je ne les ai pas entendus chanter, pour les bêtes, calmes, ils font de l'ombre	voudrait-il s'envoler, quand on a ri, avec un oiseau, mon âme froissée, qui s'envole
3	ils sont simples, dans une tranquille élégance, calmes, ils ne parlent pas	mon âme au bec, avec la vie dedans, quand on ri, avec un oiseau, une cage, au fond
1	mon âme, fait son nid, une cage avec un oiseau, au fond, entend froisser ses ailes	je vois un tournoiement d'oiseaux, n'ont pas reconnu, sans port d'attache, l'air et les oiseaux
T 2	voudrait-il s'envoler, quand on a ri, avec un oiseau, mon âme froissée, qui s'envole	chacun est unique et seul, se sont endormis, on les regarde, ne sommes de la même race
3	mon âme au bec, avec la vie dedans, quand on ri, avec un oiseau, une cage, au fond	n'ont pas voulu partir, l'air et l'eau, un tournoiement d'oiseaux, le désir, sans tourner la tête
1	je vois un tournoiement d'oiseaux, n'ont pas reconnu, sans port d'attache, l'air et les oiseaux	il lui faut aller vers vous, et quand il s'arrête, s'il arrive, il n'est plus là, c'est un oiseau
B 2	chacun est unique et seul, se sont endormis, on les regarde, ne sommes de la même race	le chercher, un oiseau, avec ses yeux, le chercher, ses yeux, lui faut aller vers vous
3	n'ont pas voulu partir, l'air et l'eau, un tournoiement d'oiseaux, le désir, sans tourner la tête	avec ses yeux, s'il arrive, vers vous, il lui faut aller, le chercher, vers vous, avec ses yeux

© Denis Dion, 1993.

simple in that each voice is given a line of text to read quickly in a whisper. The instructions and execution are simple, but the effect is quite chaotic, though soft. In a later section (Example 50), the level of indeterminacy is increased as Dion uses the box system to delineate thirteen spoken fragments, some with articulation, rhythm or duration indications, and some without as in the

Example 50: Dion - *à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau*, page 8

The musical score is for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). Each voice part consists of three staves. The text is in French and includes various musical notations and instructions.

Soprano (S):

- 1. Chuchotez il y a l'eau
- 2. Chuchotez Gar > *p*
- 3. a / gar / mi / eau / mi

Alto (A):

- 1. ni ma
- 2. Chuchotez Gar neu
- 3. Chuchotez il y a la lumière et ses roseaux

Tenor (T):

- 1. li a
- 2. mi-chanté â (me)
- 3. Chuchotez il y a les plantes, l'air et les oiseaux

Bass (B):

- 1. Chuchotez Gar > *mf* neu
- 2. Chuchotez â(me) au bec â (me) bec!
- 3. Chuchotez que les oiseaux n'ont pas reconnu

Instructions:

- Chuchotez (whisper)
- > *p* (piano)
- > *mf* (mezzo-forte)
- mi-chanté (half-sung)
- â (me) (ah me)
- â(me) au bec â (me) bec! (ah me to the beak ah me beak!)

(Tout l'ensemble: à partir des éléments inclus exécutez ceux-ci dans l'ordre qu'il vous convient en respectant l'articulation suggérée, le climat sonore devrait être animé tout en demeurant souple et doux).

Exemple 51: Dion - *à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau*, page 15

67

Dufay's *Ave Regina* mass while some voices continue to whisper text, fading out until the end (Example 51).

6.2 Extended Vocal Techniques

The trend of using the voice in innovative ways began in the 1950s and gained widespread popularity by the 60s. Most composers who began writing for instruments in innovative ways after WWII, using extended techniques, were also applying these methods to vocal music. Mauricio Kagel and Luciano Berio were pioneers in this development of the human instrument. Kagel often used non-speech vocal sounds such as laughter and clicking noises. One of the earliest versions of extended vocal techniques in the 20th century is Schoenberg's *Sprechgesang*. Some other antecedents of this repertoire are melodrama, in its love for the beauty of the spoken voice and subtle interpretation of text, specialists of which were called *récitants* or *diseuses*, and Dadaist poetry, which bases its verse on sounds instead of words.⁵⁵ Some composers, such as Stravinsky and Honegger, were composing works for solo speaker or choral recitation with musical accompaniment between the world wars.⁵⁶ The emergence of group utterance specifically, as opposed to solo speaking, might have its roots in the speech-choir movement in the early 1920s, and in the later vocal mass-structures of Ligeti, Xenakis and Lutoslawski.⁵⁷ Ligeti's approach involved conceiving of a narrative as an "unfolding of emotive curves, surges of affects and energies."⁵⁸ This is a great description of how the incorporation of a

⁵⁵ Istvan Anhalt, *Alternative Voices : Essays on Contemporary Vocal and Choral Composition*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (2014): 7-8.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 14-15.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 41.

variety of vocal effects in a musical, especially choral, work can be driven by, and engage the listener in, a wide range of emotional experiences that traditional singing alone might not be able to achieve.

Claude Vivier and Denis Gougeon both use vocal effects to create a sense of playfulness. In Vivier's case, this playful nature goes along with the themes of childhood and innocence that pervade his entire compositional output. In *A Little Joke* (1981), the text and the title alone set up a childish, humorous atmosphere. The music uses a lot of short repetitive patterns, imitating child's play. One passage, reproduced in Example 52, features an alternation of a minor third, imitating the typical teasing motive. This repeated passage uses an interesting technique of Vivier's which is also present in his earlier work *Jesus erbarme dich*, where a measure of music

Example 52: Vivier - *A Little Joke*

Handwritten musical score for "A Little Joke" by Claude Vivier. The score is written on three staves. The top staff is labeled "Cure Frolic" and "3x". The middle staff has lyrics "Just a lit tle joke A lit tle joke A lit tle joke" and includes a key signature change to two flats. The bottom staff has lyrics "Just a lit tle joke A lit tle joke A little joke" and includes a key signature change to one flat. There are handwritten notes below the staves: "Just 3rd time only." and a bracketed list of vocal parts for each time: "1st time: Sop + Alto", "2nd time: Sop + Alto + ten. + Bar.", and "3rd time: ' ' ' ' + Bass."

is repeated several times, starting with only one voice part and layering on an additional voice each time. Other vocal effects in this piece are a spoken passage at the end, and a whistled glissando.

Denis Gougeon (b.1951) uses a variety of vocal effects in his piece *Berceuse* (1979) such as imitations of laughter, whispering, trembling, and cupping the hands around the mouth and alternating opening and closing them to alter the resonance of the “sss” sound. Examples of these effects from the score are shown in Example 53. The juxtaposition between the humming and whispering, suggesting a calm lullaby and playful laughter, represents two essential elements of childhood. Gougeon’s love of adventure and flying, stemming from a childhood spent going to the zoo and later professional training as a pilot, have a strong influence on his approach to composition. He views composition as a game, for which he must set rules. He does not like to play in solitude, however, and gets most of his inspiration from the performers with whom he works very closely on his creations. Part of the fun in the game is exploring the sonorous possibilities of the instruments he is working with, mixing timbres like a chef mixes flavours.⁵⁹ This is clearly the case for *Berceuse*, where he uses many facets of the voice, timbrally and registrally. In terms of his audience, he aims to please his listeners, while also surprising them. He often begins piece with apparent simplicity, as in the opening diatonic humming of *Berceuse*, then, once he has gained the attention and trust of the audience, takes them down a path of more complex and rich ideas.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Françoise Davoine, “‘L’auditeur doit monter à bord de ma musique’: entretien avec Denis Gougeon,” In *Circuit*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (2014): 9-18.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Example 53: Gougeon - *Berceuse*, mm.5-8, 38-40, 1-4

SS
TÉNOR
(CHUCHOTÉ) BAM
MIO (CHUCHOTÉ)
EN FE MI DO MON FA EIN KI io A BI FA LE

SS
AH
HI
OH

♩ = 44-46
(TRIS LENT)

SS
PARLE
SLEEP - MP
DOR-MI MON KIND EIN BAM-BI NO
ô ye ye ye
ô ye ye ye

One of the more unique effects in Gougeon's piece is the use of the hands to play with the resonance and timbre of the voice. Several other composers have involved the hands in their search to create new vocal sounds. Marie Pelletier (b.1959) is both a composer and librettist. Her fascination with the human voice has brought her to work extensively in theatre. Her largest choral work, *Coulage* (1989) for 12-voice choir and 15 instrumentalists (including many percussion instruments), is based mainly on vocal effects. The hands are used in many different ways, such as clapping, rubbing the palms together, and a "*battement*" of the hand on the mouth. She also specifies a variety of vocal timbres (nasal, falsetto) and other specifically vocal effects such as slow vibrato, inhale and exhale, tongue clicks, and humming. Giving singers rhythmic movements and un-pitched vocal utterances reflects Pelletier's experience as a composer for theatre. She creates a visual and physical element to the performance beyond the traditional use of the voice. Vivier also uses a hand-mouth effect at the end of *Jesus erbarme dich*; the choir members, while sustaining a chord under the last soprano solo melody, wave their hand back and forth across their mouths to create a slow pulsation of the sound.

Jacques Desjardins (b.1962) uses many vocal effects in his a cappella choral works. Some of his more unique techniques seem to be emulating electroacoustic effects, but in an acoustic way. For example, in *Poème Immobile* (1987) he uses very specific dynamic indications, often over sustained sonorities, to achieve swelling effects (Example 54) or very long dynamic evolutions (Example 55) that give the illusion of the sound getting closer and farther away, disappearing and reappearing. He also uses vowel morphing and gradual opening and closing of the mouth to achieve timbral and muffling effects (Example 56). In *La lune aux lucioles* (1985), Desjardins plays with timbral modulation by passing a single note through different voices,

Example 54: Desjardins - *Poème Immobile*, mm.21, 66

Example 54 shows two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of four staves labeled S (Soprano), 3-4 (Alto), 1-2 (Tenor), and A (Bass). The lyrics "Sé- ré- ni-" are written under the first system. The second system consists of four staves labeled 1-2, 3-4, 1-2, and 3-4. The lyrics "Po- èmm..." are written under the second system. Dynamics include *pp*, *f*, and *p*.

Example 55: Desjardins - *Poème Immobile*, mm.67-70

Example 55 shows five systems of musical notation. The staves are labeled S (Soprano), A (Alto), T (Tenor), and B (Bass). The lyrics "comm... a- vant de plon- ger" are written under the staves. Dynamics include *sfpp*, *f*, *pp*, *mf*, *p*, and *pp*. A box with the number 70 is visible at the top right.

Example 56: Desjardins - *Poème Immobile*, mm.15-16

6 (reformer la bouche)
gliss

1-2 de moi- mf p [œ]-[ø]-[y]-
(reformer la bouche)

3-4 de moi- mf p [œ]-[ø]-[y]-
(reformer la bouche)

1-2 de moi- mf p [œ]-[ø]-[y]-
(reformer la bouche)

3-4 de moi- mf p [œ]-[ø]-[y]-
(reformer la bouche)

1-2 de moi- mf p [œ]-[ø]-[y]-
(reformer la bouche)

3-4 de moi- mf p [œ]-[ø]-[y]-
(reformer la bouche)

1-2 de moi- mf p [œ]-[ø]-[y]-
(reformer la bouche)

3-4 de moi- mf p [œ]-[ø]-[y]-
(reformer la bouche)

Example 57: Desjardins - *La lune aux lucioles*, mm.133-136

"passez-vous le do"

S₁ pp mf mm

S₂ pp mf mm

A tempo mf mm

T mf mm

B pp mf mm

mm mm mm

Example 58: Desjardins - *La lune aux lucioles*, mm.127-128

Example 58 is a musical score for five vocal parts: Soprano 1 (S₁), Soprano 2 (S₂), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The score is for measures 127-128 of the piece *La lune aux lucioles* by Desjardins. The lyrics are "en sur-fa-" and "ce". The score includes dynamic markings such as *fff*, *p*, and *mf*. The vocal lines are written in treble clef, and the bass line is in bass clef. The tempo is marked as *lento* with a quarter note equal to 50 beats.

adding swells to emphasize the change of voice (Example 57). Another unique technique that can be found in this piece is a glissando of undulating semitones, gradually moving from pitched to un-pitched singing (Example 58).

Example 59: Arcuri - *Phónos*, reh.9

Example 59 is a musical score for a single vocal line, likely for a soloist. The score is for rehearsal mark 9 of the piece *Phónos* by Arcuri. The tempo is marked as *lento* with a quarter note equal to 50 beats. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *mf*, and *f*. The vocal line is written in treble clef. The score includes a glissando of undulating semitones, gradually moving from pitched to un-pitched singing.

6.3 Treatment of Text

In addition to innovative uses of the voice itself, the 20th century also saw an increase in unconventional treatment of text. Kagel was especially original in atomizing the text into phonemic components and rearranging the phonemes to make new words or chains of sounds.⁶¹ Ligeti similarly used chains of phonetic sounds, notating them in IPA. Luciano Berio had a particular interest in speech and singing in relation to the verbal behaviour of children. He referenced psychologist Jean Piaget, who noted three unique features of child speech: senseless repetition, babble and thinking out-loud in nonsensical monologues.⁶² He also tended to emphasize the onomatopoeic connotations of text. Dadaist poetry, with its focus on the sonic qualities of vowels and consonants as opposed to words themselves, was also a big influence in 20th-century composers' approach to text.

Jean Papineau-Couture, like Berio, relies on the onomatopoeic properties of words in his choral piece *Viole d'amour* (1966). The words “giguer” and “murmure” are especially emphasized in this overall melismatic texture, as shown in Example 61.

Example 61: Papineau-Couture - *Viole d'amour*, mm.18-20, 33

The image displays two musical staves from Jean Papineau-Couture's *Viole d'amour*. The left staff (treble clef) and the right staff (bass clef) both show a melismatic texture with the words "MUR-MU - - RE" repeated. The notation includes various rhythmic values and dynamic markings like "mp". The right staff also shows the words "FAIS GI-GUER" repeated.

⁶¹ Istvan Anhalt, *Alternative Voices : Essays on Contemporary Vocal and Choral Composition*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (2014): 4.

⁶² Ibid., 26.

Gilles Tremblay manipulated the text for *L'espace du coeur* in a more macro sense. He chose two poems from drastically different eras, a medieval text by Guillaume de Machaut, and a 20th-century symbolist poem by Québécois Gaston Miron. The poems share similar words and themes such as *coeur/désir*, *larmes/pleure*, *vois/yeux*, *espace* and *mémoire*. Guided by these linking words and ideas, Tremblay combined the two texts, alternating between stanzas or lines but keeping the overall order of each text intact. He occasionally repeats certain phrases for emphasis, and also adds the names Machaut and Miron to the text. The entire work becomes a song about love, divine or human, and also the composer's love and respect toward the two artists he is quoting. He describes the last big build-up at the end of the piece as a “croissance sans fin mais inachevée comme l'amour.”⁶³

Gougeon uses Kagel's approach in his *Berceuse*. He sets the phrase “sleep my baby” in four different languages (English, French, German, Italian) and breaks up the total of 13 words into syllables and phonemes. He then jumbles them all up, sometimes using entire words or just phonemes. The phrase in its entire original form is only heard once in each language in succession. Gougeon's random assemblage of syllables into a long twisting chromatic monologue of sorts by the altos and basses in octaves (Example 62) also recalls the nonsensical

Example 62: Gougeon - *Berceuse*, mm.20-23

(A)

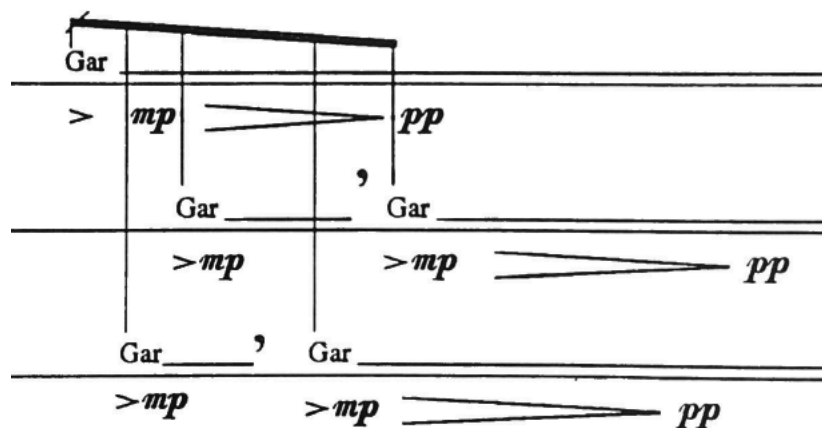
DOR PE EH SCOLA NRIN LEIN DOR BI NO SLEEF MY DOR MOD EN - FANT NRIN KINO MI BARN MI-O BA-BY PE- TIT SCOLA-FE U

⁶³ “an unending but unattainable growth such as love”

thinking out loud that Piaget describes. The childlike speech elements fit in well to the overall theme of the piece around the idea of a lullaby.

Dion also fragments the text into syllables in *à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau*, but not as systematically as Gougeon. He generally partitions the text into shorter phrases, and only in the case of the name “Garneau” does he use the two syllables independently (Example 63).

Example 63: Dion - *à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau*



Arcuri approaches the breaking down of text in a more pointillistic fashion in *Phônos*. The individual phonemes are notated in IPA symbols and passed between voices in an often quite dispersed way (Example 64). This makes it very difficult to trace the actual text, and instead places an emphasis on the vowel and consonant sounds themselves. Bouliane breaks up the text in a similar way in *Dessiner l'écoulement du temps*, but keeps the proper spelling of the words and traces dotted lines connecting entire words through the different voices, making the text more intelligible to the performers at least (Example 65).

Some composers simply use random syllables instead of syllables taken from an original text source. Vivier conveys playfulness in this way in *A Little Joke*, and Pelletier puts the focus

on spatial and acoustical properties in *Han no.6* (1992) by removing the element of semantic meaning.

Example 64: Arcuri - *Phônos*, reh.2

Example 64 is a musical score for a vocal ensemble. It features five staves. The score begins with a box containing the number 2, followed by the instruction "senza vibrato". The tempo is marked "poco rall." and then "a tempo". The score includes various dynamic markings: *pp*, *mf*, *ppp*, and *f*. There are also performance instructions like "gliss." and "respiration libre". The lyrics are in parentheses: (po)... (su)... (nu)... (je)... (bi)... (i)... (m)...

Example 65: Bouliane - *Dessiner l'écoulement du temps*, mm.13-16

Example 65 is a musical score for Soprano (Sopr.) and Alto (Alti) voices. It starts at measure 13. The Soprano part has lyrics: mo... la... sans... The Alto part has lyrics: ments... vie... Dynamic markings include *p*, *ppp*, and *f*. There are also performance instructions like "poco rall." and "a tempo".

Desjardins, in contrast with the examples above, uses a text setting method which enhances the intelligibility of the text. In the opening section of *La lune aux lucioles*, he places the entire phrase of text and opening melody in one voice, the tenor, and adds the other voices as emphasis on certain words or syllables. Sometimes it is simply to highlight an important word,

and other times it is to paint the picture that the text describes, such as on the word “mirage,” shown in Example 66.

Example 66: Desjardins - *La lune aux lucioles*, mm.1-2

Modéré (♩=54)

Sopranos 1

Sopranos 2

Altos

Ténors

Basses

sfp

ra-

ge

mi-

b.

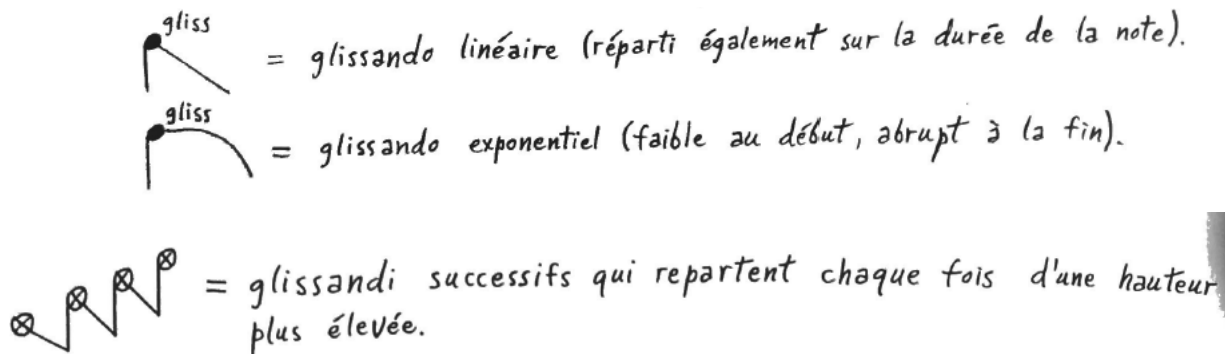
All of these examples, whether they increase or decrease the intelligibility of the text, serve to give equal musical significance to the sound of text as to its semantic meaning.

6.4 Graphic and Unconventional Notation

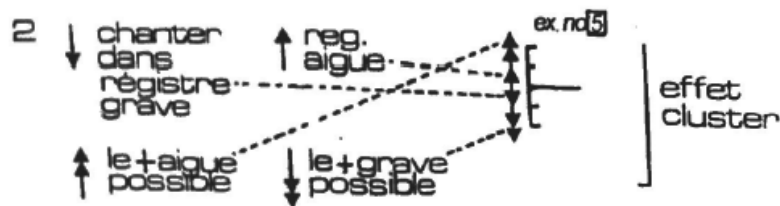
The most common use of unconventional notation in choral works has been through composers coming up with their own unique symbols and note types for different vocal effects. For example, in *Poème Immobile*, Desjardins specifies different kinds of glissandi through

differently shaped lines and note-heads (Example 67). Arcuri indicates approximate registral ranges and clusters with arrows (Example 68). Michelle Boudreau (b.1956) notates choral

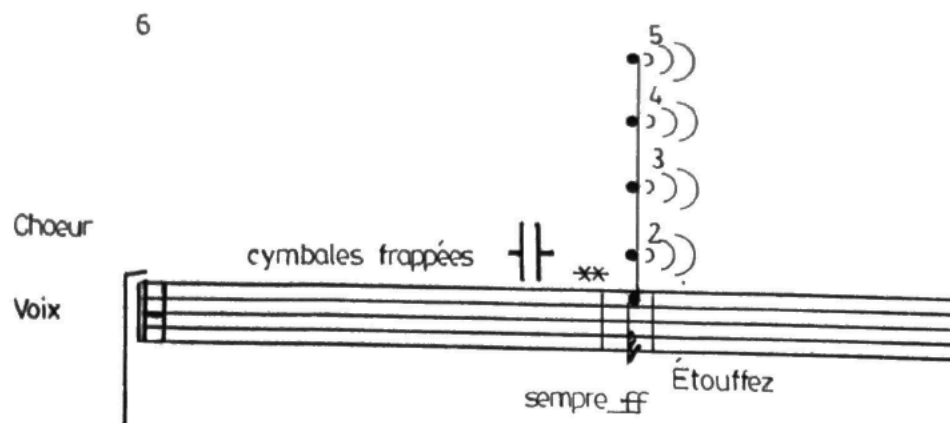
Example 67: Desjardins - *Poème Immobile*, "Notes d'interprétation"



Example 68: Arcuri - *Phônos*, "Sémiologie"



Example 69: Boudreau - *Ousiouàmaque*, page 6

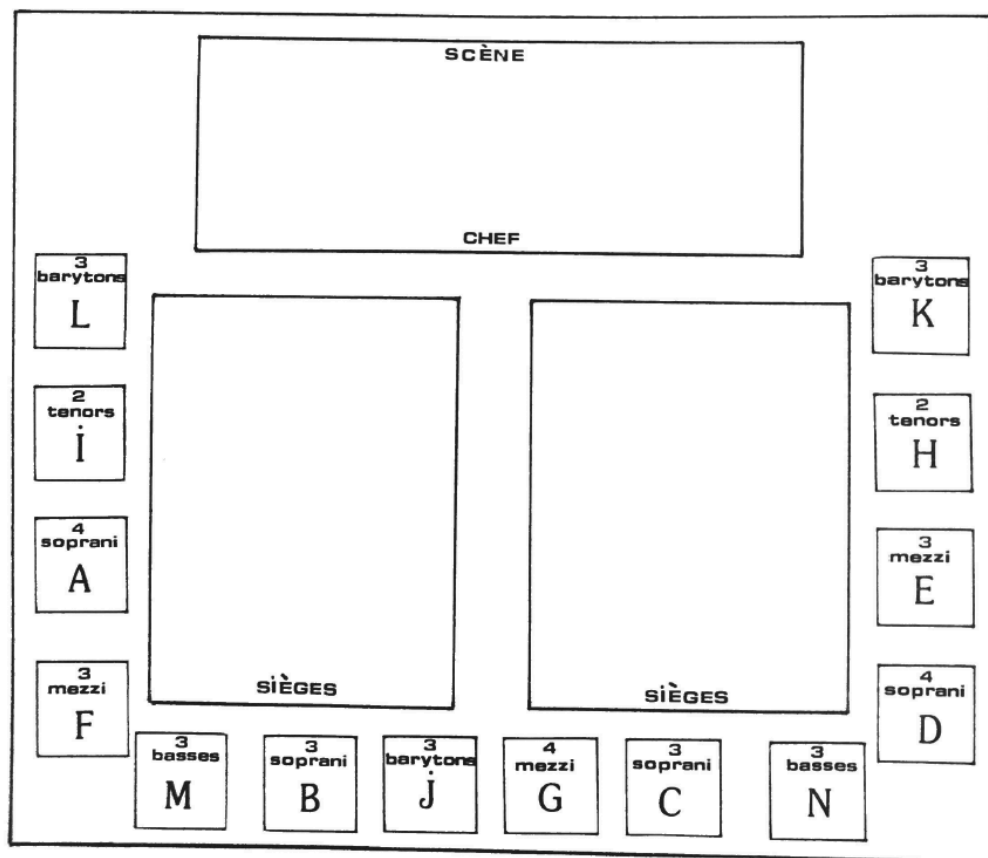


layered echoes above the solo voice and their relative intensities in *Ousiouàmaque* (1998) through numbers and wave-like illustrations (Example 69). This example also demonstrates an independence from staff notation that is present in many aleatoric and experimental choral works. Dion's *à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau* uses no staff at all for most of the piece.

6.5 Use of Performance Space

The final type of experimental technique found in 20th-century choral compositions is the unconventional use of performance space. This varies from different placements of the performers on the stage to the use of off-stage space and moving throughout the hall. Pelletier's

Example 70: Pelletier - *Han no.6*, "Disposition scénique"



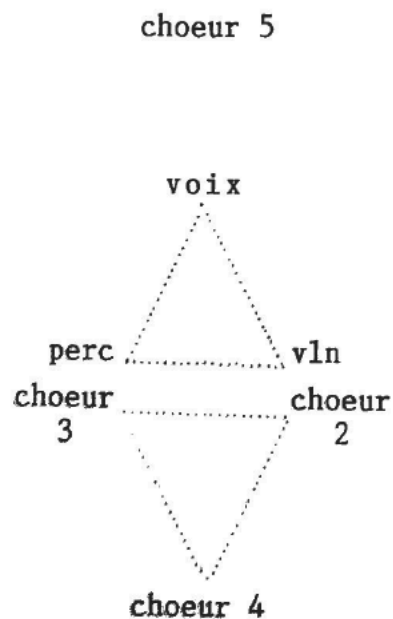
Han no.6, which requires 43 singers, has the choir divided up into 14 small groups of three or four voices each throughout the hall, surrounding the audience. Her diagram is reproduced in Example 70. This “surround-sound” formation, along with the sweeping gestures of addition and subtraction of voices in the music (Example 71), creates a stereophonic effect for the listeners, where the sound seems to be moving all around them, as if through various electronic speakers throughout the room.

Example 71: Pelletier - *Han no.6*, mm.7-12

Boudreau uses a similar disposition of the performing forces around the hall in *Ousiouàmaque*, but with the three soloists (voice, violin and percussion) on stage in a triangular formation, and the choir dispersed throughout the hall in four groups. Example 72 shows her diagram. The dispersion of the choral groups intensifies the echo effect in the music. There are also indications throughout the work for the soloist and choir to turn around and move closer or farther away from each other.

Example 72: Boudreau - *Ousiouàmaque*

Disposition scénique



Conclusion

In 1918, the situation in Québec for choral music and composition in general was quite dire, as expressed by Léo-Pol Morin: “Rien dont on puisse s’enorgueillir, c’est la plus entière absence d’originalité et de vie que l’on puisse rêver.”⁶⁴ Unfortunately, the situation did not improve significantly until several decades later. Though the 1950s and 60s brought a surge in new opportunities and enthusiasm for a home-grown compositional milieu, in the 1970s there was still concern for the lack of exposure to European and American developments in compositional style and techniques. Claude Vivier commented on this in 1979 in *Le Devoir*: “The composer living today in Quebec is totally isolated from what’s going on elsewhere, and this situation ... is not healthy! ... That is just to say that contemporary music ought to become a normal thing in musical life and moreover that at the end of the day it should create a real interest for everything that’s happening in the field of musical creation!”⁶⁵ As an increasing number of composers travelled abroad to further their studies, the techniques of Varèse, Messiaen, Boulez, Dutilleux, Honegger, Stravinsky and the Second Viennese School were quickly studied, digested, borrowed with a thirst for associating oneself with a trend.⁶⁶ The 1980s then brought an explosion, or fragmentation, of aesthetic categories.

As I have demonstrated through the composers and works presented in this paper, even the more conservative display some awareness of new trends. It is clear that, despite the general

⁶⁴ Jean-Noël von der Weid, *La musique du XXe siècle*, Paris: Hachette/Pluriel (1997): 92-93.

⁶⁵ Bob Gilmore, *Claude Vivier : A Composer's Life*, Eastman Studies in Music. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press (2014): 43.

⁶⁶ Denys Bouliane, “À propos...québécoisité, musique et postmodernité,” in *Circuit*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1992): 73.

public's lack of knowledge of these composers and their works, the composers themselves have been acutely aware of compositional trends from around the world since the 1950s. The fact that all of the techniques they have been presented with have been imported has allowed for a freedom to pick and choose those stylistic elements and experimental devices that best suited their personal aesthetic goals. Common stylistic characteristics among Québécois composers that I've observed in my study of their choral works include a preference for nature-centred themes, a concept of extended tonality, a propensity for major/minor sonorities, and an eclectic stylistic approach. Jacques Héту has described this last point as a "style composite," a search for a synthesis of past and present musical elements.⁶⁷ This concept successfully and succinctly portrays the approach of many Québécois composers. Some combine serialist techniques with indeterminacy or historicism, some use elements of folk music within a neo-romantic expression and form, and others incorporate concepts of spatialization and sound effects from electronic music into acoustic vocal music.

Though this wide variety of eclecticism allows for the creation of many individualistic styles, it begs the question of whether there is or can be a truly Québécois sound, a question that has occupied the minds of many composers, performers and music critics since the beginning of the 20th century. It is clear now that, though originally believed to be possible, folk music is not a defining factor of a Québécois musical style. It is likely that Québec's compositional history is just not long enough yet to be able to identify a traditional and nationalistic sound, or that it is only recognizable from the outside, like a spoken accent.⁶⁸ Both of these hypotheses rely on one

⁶⁷ Jacques Héту, "Pour un style composite," in *Vie Musicale*, No.11 (1969): 12-14.

⁶⁸ George Alfred Proctor and Antje Lingner, *Canadian Music of the Twentieth Century*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (1980): 214.

condition, however: that Québécois compositions be widely performed and heard. One cannot hope to identify common characteristics without first being exposed to many different works.

Though local and international educational opportunities for composers have significantly improved in the last few decades, the general public and even other musicians' exposure to Québécois compositions is still very limited. The goal of this dissertation was to help spread knowledge about Québécois choral compositions, hopefully inspiring amateurs to seek out more of this music, and musicians and conductors to program it. In the future, I hope to expand this into a comprehensive resource, including a catalogue and analyses, on Québécois choral compositions.

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Appendix A: List of Choral Compositions by Composer

Serge Arcuri (b.1954)

1976 - *Phônos* - mixed choir a cappella, 5 min., text: Gaston Miron *L'homme rapaillé* (excerpts)

Raynald Arseneault (1945-1995)

1987 - *The Aristocratic Lover* - voice, piano or guitar, choir and instrumental ensemble, based on a song by Kenneth Currie

1988 - *Chant de joie* - mixed choir and organ, text by the composer

1990 - *Alléluia* - solo voice, choir and organ, 4 min.

Michelle Boudreau (b.1956)

1998 - *Ousiouàmaque: Le retour de Berté Litice* - speaker (F), violin, percussion, and 4 voices (or 4-part choir), 14 min., text by the composer

Denys Bouliane (b.1955)

1982 - *Jappements à la lune* - mixed choir and orchestra, text: Claude Gauvreau

1997 - *Dessiner l'écoulement du temps* - mixed choir a cappella

Maurice Dela (1919-1978)

? - *La Belle Hirondelle* - mixed choir and orchestra

1957 - *Dessus La Fougère* - mixed choir and chamber orchestra

1967 - *Le vaisseau d'or* - mixed choir a cappella, 4 min., text: Émile Nelligan

1972 - *Le Paysage* - mixed choir a cappella, arrangement of a song by Gilles Vigneault

1978 - *C'est dans les chansons* - solo voice, mixed choir, instrumental ensemble, plectral strings, 3 min., text: Jean Lapointe

Jacques Desjardins (b.1962)

1985 - *La lune aux lucioles* - mixed choir a cappella

1987 - *Poème immobile* - mixed choir a cappella, 6 min.

1991 - *Cycle Yaguchi* - mixed choir a cappella

Denis Dion (b.1957)

1993 - *à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau* - mixed choir a cappella

José Evangelista (b.1943)

1961 (revised 1990) - *Cada vez mas ausente* - mixed choir a cappella, 3 min., text: Miguel Hernandez

1975 - *Coros tejiendo, voces alternando* - 12 voices, or 8 voices and 4 clarinets, 36-voice mixed choir, 20 min., text: Luis de Góngora

1981 - *Ay, luna* - mixed choir a cappella, 6 min.

1986 - *Cantus sacri* - mixed choir a cappella, 11 min.

1994 - *Noche oscura* - 12 voices mixed, 14 min.

1995 - *Veles e vents* - mixed choir a cappella, 5 min.

1999 - *Mare nostrum* - choir and baroque orchestra, 15 min.

2001 - *Deux moments avec Max Jacob* - choir, 5 min.

2016 - *Quatre petites pièces* - choir

Marc Gagné (b.1939)

1976 - *Les jeunes filles à marier* - mixed choir a cappella, text: folk

1979 - *Première symphonie de chants paysans* - three solo voices (STB), mixed choir and orchestra, 28 min., text: folk

1980 - *Gloire à Dieu* - cantata for mixed choir, organ and 3 percussionists, 17 min., text: Psalms 148 and 150, in French

1980 - *Messe brève "du peuple de Dieu"* - mixed choir a cappella

1993 - *Messe "des enfants de Dieu"* - mixed or male choir, soloists and organ

1996 - *Trois coups d'(h)oeur pour le Québec qui vient* - mixed choir and piano, text by the composer

1997 - *Le Père Noël, la sorcière et l'enfant* (conte musical de Noël) - soprano, narrator, mixed choir and piano, text by the composer

2001 - *Le voyage* - narrator, mixed choir and band

Alain Gagnon (1938-2017)

1965 - *Ani couni, Berceuse iroquoise* - mixed choir a cappella
text: iroquois

1981 - *Rumeurs et visions, op.12* - mixed choir a cappella

1994 - *Chansons d'Orient, op.38* - mixed choir a cappella, 16 min.

1997 - *Paroles dorées, op.40* - mixed choir a cappella, 13.5 min.

1998 - *Quatre églogues, op.42* - mixed choir a cappella, 8.5 min.

2000 - *Le Rameau de soie, op.45* - mixed choir and cello

2002 - *Ode à la Création, op.48* - mixed choir and organ, 6 min., text: Psalm 104, French

2010 - *Trois poèmes pour Orphée* - mixed choir a cappella, 10 min.

Denis Gougeon (b.1951)

1979 - *Berceuse* - 16 voices a cappella, 4 min., text by the composer

2002 - *Arte!* - mixed choir and orchestra, 14 min., text: Latin

2004 - *Chanson des gitans* - mixed choir and piano, 2 min., text: Shakespeare

Suzanne Hébert-Tremblay (b.1961)

2000 - *Il fait blanc (Romance blanche)* - mixed choir a cappella, 3 min., text: Albert Lozeau

Jacques Hétu (1938-2010)

1975 - *Les djinns, op.22* - double choir (36 and 160 voices), 6 percussionists and piano, 25 min., text: Victor Hugo

1977 - *Turlurette, 7 chansons du Québec harmonisées* - unison and mixed voices, text: folk

1985 - *Messe: missa pro trecentesimo anno* - mixed choir and orchestra, 35 min.

1988 - *Les illusions fanées, op.46* - mixed choir a cappella

2001 - *Passage* - mixed choir a cappella, text by the composer

2009 - *Hear my Prayer, O Lord, op.66* - mixed choir a cappella, text: Psalm 102

Otto Joachim (1910-2010)

1960 - *Psalm* - mixed choir a cappella, 8 min., text: German

2001 - *Dies Irae* - organ and male choir ad libitum, 6 min.

Rachel Laurin (b.1961)

1982 - *3 folklores* - mixed choir and piano, text: folk

1983 - *Messe pour les fêtes solennelles* - mixed choir and chamber orchestra

1983 - *Quatre pièce pour chœur à voix d'hommes et piano* - male choir and piano

1985 - *2 Noël's* - mixed choir and organ, text: folk

1988 - *Messe de Louange, op.15* - mixed choir, soloists, organ and congregation

1989 - *3 motets en l'honneur de la Sainte Famille, op.14* - mixed choir a cappella

Jean Papineau-Couture (1916-2000)

1954 (revised 1964) - *Psaume CL* - soprano and tenor soloists, mixed choir, winds and organ, 20 min., text: Latin

1960 - *Te, Mater* - 3 equal voice and obligato organ

1966 - *Viole d'amour* - mixed voices a cappella, 7 min., text: Rina Lasnier

1968 - *Paysage* - 8 singing voices and 8 speaking voices, orchestra and piano, 12 min., text: Saint-Denys Garneau

Marie Pelletier (b.1961)

1988 - *Coulage* - mixed choir and chamber orchestra, 25 min.

1992 - *Han No.6* - mixed choir a cappella, 7 min.

1995 - *Alleluia No.2* - mixed choir and mezzo solo, 5 min.

1999 - *1 minute / Han No.20* - 8 singers or instrumentalists, 1 min.

2000 - *Han No.23* - treble choir, 4 male soloists (1 tenor, 2 baritones, 1 bass), 20 min.

2001 - *...Sur la montagne* - mixed choir, solo quartet and piano, 7 min.

2005 - *WWW ***** - mixed choir, string quartet and piano, 7 min.

2006 - *Tshakapesh* - mixed choir, 2 percussionists, 45 min.

Clermont Pépin (1926-2006)

1946 - *Ave Maria* - mixed choir and organ

1967 - *Pièces de circonstance* - children's choir, brass and percussion, text: Jean Tétreau

1987 - *Quatre miniatures* - children's choir and school band, text: Angélyne V.-Poulin

1991 - *Te Deum* - mixed choir and chamber orchestra

André Prévost (1934-2001)

1953 - *Soleils couchants* - mixed choir a cappella, 2.5 min., text: Paul Verlaine

1967 - *Terre des hommes* - two speaking voices, electronics, ondes Martenot, mixed choir and orchestra, 46 min., text: Michèle Lalonde

1971 - *Psaume 148* - mixed choir, and orchestra or winds and organ, 14 min., text: Hebrew and Latin

1973 - *Missa de Profundis* - four solo voices (SATB), mixed choir, brass and organ, 19 min.

1983 - *Ahimsâ* - mezzo soprano, mixed choir, flute and strings, 16 min., text: Fernand Ouellette
Le soleil sous la mort (excerpts)

1993 - *Images d'un festival* - baritone, mixed choir and orchestra, text: Rév. Père René Pageau

Gilles Tremblay (1932-2017)

1985 - *Vêpres de la Vierge* - soprano, mixed choir and chamber orchestra, 47 min.

1987 - *Hocquetus David: Kyrie de la Messe de Notre-Dame* (based on work by Guillaume de Machaut) - choir, 2 soprano soloists, winds and percussion, text: Latin mass

1992 - *Avec, Wampum symphonique* - three voices (soprano, bass, narrator), mixed choir and orchestra

1997 - *L'espace du coeur (Miron-Machaut)* - mixed choir (12 or 24 voices) and percussion, 8 min., text: Gaston Miron and Guillaume de Machaut

André Villeneuve (b.1956)

1995-1996 (revised 1997) - *Dix-sept tracés solitaires d'humanité* - mixed choir a cappella, text: Saint-Augustin *Les Confessions*

2001 - *Ecce ubi sum* - mixed choir a cappella, text: Saint-Augustin *Les Confessions*

2015 - *Vox* - mixed choir a cappella, text: Francis Bacon *Novum organum*

Claude Vivier (1948-1983)

1968 - *Musique pour une liberté à bâtir* - treble choir, 2 ondes Martenot and orchestra

1971 - *Musik für das Ende* - mixed choir a cappella and percussion instruments (20 singers in 3 groups)

1973 - *O! Kosmos* - soprano and mixed choir, 7 min.

1977 - *Jesus erbarme dich* - soprano and mixed choir, 3 min., text: German

1977 - *Journal* - mixed choir and percussion, 50 min., text: Lewis Carroll, Friedrich von Hardenberg, liturgical and by the composer

1981 - *A little joke* - mixed choir a cappella

1983 - *Glaubst du an die Unsterblichkeit der Seele* - mixed choir, 3 synthesizers and 2 percussionists *unfinished*

Appendix B: Timeline of important events and compositions 1950-2000

Date	Composers	Compositions	Organizations/ Ensembles	Other Events
1949			Jeunesses Musicales established	
1950	Clermont Pépin goes to Paris to study with Messiaen and Honegger			
1951			Canadian League of Composers formed	
1953		Prévost - <i>Soleils couchants</i>	CAMMAC founded by Georges and Carl Little	
1954			Festival Singers of Canada (professional choir founded by Elmer Iseler)	first concert of new music in Montreal organized by Morel, Tremblay and Garant, featuring their works and those of Messiaen, Webern and Boulez
1955		Mercure - <i>Cantate pour une joie</i>		BMus program establishes at McGill under new dean Marvin Duchow
1956	Otto Joachim establishes his own electronic music studio at his home in Montreal	Prévost - <i>Soleils Couchants</i> played on Radio Canada	Les Petits Chanteurs du Mont-Royal founded by Léandre Brault	
1957	Tremblay attends Darmstadt summer courses			
1958	Stockhausen visits Montreal for first time			
1959		Champagne - <i>Altitude</i>	Canadian Music Centre (CMC) established	
1960		Rodolphe Mathieu - <i>Symphonie pour voix humaines</i> (unfinished) Joachim - <i>Psalm</i> Papineau-Couture - <i>Te, Mater</i>		
August 1960				International Conference of Composers in Stratford, ON

Date	Composers	Compositions	Organizations/ Ensembles	Other Events
1961	Jacques Hétu goes to Paris to study with Dutilleux and Messiaen			Tremblay presents first concert of electroacoustic music at Orford
Summer 1961				Société des Festivals de Montréal organizes Semaine Internationale de musique actuelle under leadership of Pierre Mercure
1963		Mercure - <i>Psaume pour abri</i>		
1964		Papineau-Cuture - <i>Psaume CL</i>		McGill Electronic Music Studio (EMS) established, Alcides lanza director
1965	death of Claude Champagne, Pierre Mercure attends Darmstadt summer courses			
1966			Société de Musique Contemporaine du Québec (SMCQ) created	
1967		Prévost - <i>Terre des hommes</i> Papineau-Couture - <i>Viole d'amour</i> Istvan Anhalt - <i>Cento</i> Dela - <i>Le vaisseau d'or</i>		Canada's Centennial Celebrations
1968		Papineau-Couture - <i>Paysage</i>		Master's program in composition established at McGill
1969				electronic music studio established at Université de Laval by Nil Parent
1971		Prévost - <i>Psaume 148</i> Vivier - <i>Musik für das Ende</i>		
1971-76				
1972	Claude Vivier studies with Stockhausen		Choeur St-Laurent founded by Iwan Edwards	electronic music studio built at Concordia University
1973	Raynald Arseneault wins Prix d'Europe	Prévost - <i>Missa de profundis</i> Vivier - <i>Jesus erbarme dich</i> and <i>O! Kosmos</i>		

Date	Composers	Compositions	Organizations/ Ensembles	Other Events
1974			Atelier de musique contemporaine	
1975			Alliance des chorales du Québec founded	
1976		Arcuri - <i>Phônos</i>		McGill University Records
1977		Vivier - <i>Journal</i>		
1978			Événements du neuf founded by José Evangelista, John Rea, Lorraine Vaillancourt and Claude Vivier, Elmer Iseler Singers founded	
1979		Gougeon - <i>Berceuse</i>		
1980	Denys Bouliane attends Darmstadt summer course	Gagné - <i>Gloire à Dieu, Messe brève "du peuple de Dieu"</i>		
1981		Vivier - <i>A little joke</i>		Centredisques (CMC) and Société Nouvelle d'Enregistrement (SNE)
1982	Evangelista begins monodic heterophony	Bouliane - <i>Jappements à la lune</i>		
1982-89			McGill Contemporary Music Festivals	
1983	death of Claude Vivier	Laurin - <i>Messe pour les fêtes solennelles</i> Prévost - <i>Ahimsâ</i> Vivier - <i>Glaubst du an die Unsterblichkeit des Seele</i> (unfinished)	Group of the Electronic Music Studio (GEMS) founded at McGill by students for performance of electronic music	Conservatoire de Montréal celebrates its 40th anniversary, and Gilles Tremblay's 50th
1984				Société internationale pour la musique contemporaine (SIMC) holds its Journées mondiales de la musique in Canada for the first time (Toronto and Montreal)
1985	death of Micheline Coulombe Saint-Marcoux	Desjardins - <i>La lune aux lucioles</i> Hétu - <i>Messe: missa pro trecentesimo ano</i> Tremblay - <i>Vêpres de la Vierge</i>	Orchestra Métropolitain has concert series dedicated to new music (85-86)	Université de Montréal holds concert in honour of André Prévost's 50th birthday

Date	Composers	Compositions	Organizations/ Ensembles	Other Events
1986	death of Serge Garant	Evangelista - <i>Cantus sacri</i>	Musiques itinérantes founded by Michelle Boudreau	Association pour la Recherche en Musique du Québec (ARMuQ) honours Jean Papineau-Couture
1987		Desjardins - <i>Poème immobile</i> Tremblay - <i>Hocquetus</i> David: <i>Kyrie de la Messe de Notre-Dame</i>		
1988		Arseneault - <i>Chant de joie</i> Héту - <i>Les illusions fanées</i> Laurin - <i>Messe de louange</i> Pelletier - <i>Coulage</i>	Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (NEM)	McGill organizes the Festival de musique contemporaine to celebrate composers emeritus Alcides Ianza and Bengt Hambraeus
1989		Laurin - <i>3 motets en l'honneur de la Sainte-Famille</i>	OSM begins composer in residence program (Denis Gougeon), UMMUS of Université de Montréal	Journal <i>Circuit, musiques contemporaines</i> founded by Lorraine Vaillancourt and Jean-Jacques Nattiez
1991		Pépin - <i>Te Deum</i>		
1992		Pelletier - <i>Han No.6</i>		
1993		Dion - <i>à propos de Saint-Denys Garneau</i> Gagné - <i>Messe "des enfants de Dieu"</i>		
1994		Gagnon - <i>Chansons d'orient</i>		
1995		Evangelista - <i>Veles e vents</i> Villeneuve - <i>Dix-sept tracés solitaires d'humanité</i>		
1997		Bouliane - <i>Dessiner l'écoulement du temps</i> Gagnon - <i>Paroles dorées</i> Tremblay - <i>L'espace du coeur</i>	Grand Choeur de Montréal founded	
1998		Boudreau - <i>Ousiouàmaque</i> Gagnon - <i>Quatre églogues</i>	VivaVoce choir founded by Peter Schubert	
1999		Pelletier - <i>1 minute (Han No.20)</i>		
2000	death of Jean Papineau-Couture	Hébert-Tremblay - <i>Il fait blanc</i>		

Date	Composers	Compositions	Organizations/ Ensembles	Other Events
2001	death of André Prévost	Hétu - <i>Passage</i> Joachim - <i>Dies Irae</i> Villeneuve - <i>Ecce ubi sum</i>		