

National Music Centre announces first wave of 2019 Artist in Residence participants

Next round of acts to use NMC's revered collection in the creation of groundbreaking new music

(Calgary, AB —February 27, 2019) The National Music Centre (NMC) is pleased to announce the next four acts that will participate in its Artist in Residence (AiR) program for 2019, composer and pianist **Jean-Michel Blais**, hip hop act **Jae Sterling**, psych-rock trio **néhiyawak**, and experimental electronic artist **Wish Lash**.

“The National Music Centre’s Artist in Residence program is a continued point of pride for the organization,” said Adam Fox, NMC’s Director of Programs. “Less than three years into the opening of Studio Bell, this program has already contributed to one JUNO Award-nominated record and a Polaris Music Prize-winning act, not to mention the intersections it’s produced across local, regional, and national music communities. The first four selected artists of 2019 are making some of the most exciting music right now within their respected genres and we are delighted to facilitate and propel that creativity and imagination.”

Montreal-based **Jean-Michel Blais** landed on the Polaris Music Prize Short List in 2018 for his sophomore record *Dans ma main*, an expansive album of post-classical piano music that blends his classical skill and precise pop sensibility with synthetic accompaniment. Blais will present a public workshop illuminating his personal philosophy of improvisation on July 27, 2019 at 1:00 pm. “I was able to preview the National Music Centre’s collection during a visit to Studio Bell in 2018,” said Blais. “To say that I was inspired by the breadth and depth of what was housed in the building is an understatement. I may not sleep during my time there.”

Calgary-by-way-of-Jamaica rapper-producer **Jae Sterling** was raised on a healthy dose of jazz, reggae, and golden-era hip hop, and those influences continue to permeate his music. Sterling will use his time in residence to record a new album working with a number of Calgary hip hop artists. This will be followed by a hip hop workshop for youth on April 20, 2019 at 1:00 pm at Studio Bell. “Working collaboratively with the community will be a really important part of this residency,” said Sterling. “A strong hip hop movement has already started to percolate in Calgary, and I want to use this opportunity to build a strong, lasting music community.”

néhiyawak hails from amiskwacyi in Treaty 6 Territory. The trio of Indigenous Canadian artists—Kris Harper (vocals, guitars), Marek Tyler (drums), Matthew Cardinal (bass) and new member Jason Borys (synth), transcends a new intersection of contemporary sound and the traditional storytelling of their ancestry. Their music is a resonant expression of indigeneity in the modern world. The band will present a public workshop on May 18, 2019 at 1:00 pm at Studio Bell.

Wish Lash is the solo moniker and experimental electronic fever dream of Calgary-based Kerry Megan, who builds ambient, dark leaning techno from layered synths, heartbeat drums and otherworldly

voices. Wish Lash will present a public workshop open to femme and LGBTQ+ identifying people at Studio Bell on May 4, 2019 at 1:00 pm. "I see Calgary on the cusp of being an up-and-coming electronic music city, and am interested in preemptively taking whatever steps I can to help the electronic community flourish as a diverse and inclusive landscape."

The National Music Centre's Artist in Residence program is designed to feed and nurture artistic creativity and technical innovation by providing artists at various levels of professional development with uninterrupted time and space, and the use NMC's singular collection and expertise, to create new and innovative works in a supportive, world-class facility.

The Artist in Residence program offers access to three historic recording consoles, including the Rolling Stones Recording Mobile (RSM), and over 300 musical artifacts, spanning 450 years of music technology and innovation.

Since moving to Studio Bell, AiR participants have included 2019 JUNO Award-nominated jazz artist Quinsin Nachoff, 2018 Polaris Music Prize winner Jeremy Dutcher, FRONTPERSON (the project of Kathryn Calder of The New Pornographers and Mark Andrew Hamilton of Woodpigeon), Luke Doucet, and many others. In NMC's previous facility, Basia Bulat, Gotye, Timber Timbre, and iconic Canadian artist and producer Daniel Lanois took part in the program.

Tickets for all NMC Artist in Residence performances are available now. Please go to studiobell.ca/whats-on to purchase your tickets in advance.

The National Music Centre's Artist in Residence program is generously supported by Bell Media.

About Studio Bell, home of the National Music Centre

The National Music Centre (NMC) is a national catalyst for discovery, innovation and renewal through music. In its new home at Studio Bell, NMC is preserving and celebrating Canada's music story and inspiring a new generation of music lovers through programming that includes on-site and outreach education programs, performances, artist incubation, and exhibitions. For more information, please visit studiobell.ca.

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