

TONTO Week puts 'holy grail of synthesizers' in the spotlight from November 14-18

Week of activities to feature TONTO co-creator Malcolm Cecil, *A Tribe Called Red*, *Phantom of the Paradise* screening, and more

(Calgary, AB — September 13, 2018) After years of careful restoration, the National Music Centre (NMC) will commission one of the crown jewels of its music and technology collection, The Original New Timbral Orchestra (aka TONTO), during TONTO Week from November 14-18.

To commemorate this milestone, NMC will host a week of music programming timed to coincide with Alberta Electronic Music Conference (AEMCON), running concurrently with TONTO Week at Studio Bell. **NMC Members receive discounted or free admission to all TONTO Week events (not including AEMCON conference passes), so purchase your membership online today at studiobell.ca/members. Individual tickets are available at nmc.ca/whats-on. AEMCON conference passes are available at albertaelectronicmusic.com.**

Members of **A Tribe Called Red** will be the first musicians to create new music with the legendary synthesizer, and they'll demo TONTO during a public workshop and incorporate the instrument into an evening Studio Bell After Hours set. "After seeing TONTO for the first time back in 2014, I knew that I had unfinished business at the National Music Centre," said 2oolman of A Tribe Called Red. "I have been waiting patiently ever since to get my hands on that instrument."

Malcolm Cecil, one of the co-creators of TONTO, will be in attendance to deliver demonstrations and lectures on the history of the instrument. NMC will also host a screening of the cult classic film, *Phantom of the Paradise*, in which TONTO appeared, and other activities associated with the instrument.

TONTO is one of the world's largest modular synthesizers. Created by Malcom Cecil and Robert Margouleff in 1968, its creation marked the first attempt at making a universal language for different synthesizers to communicate with each other, which was a revolutionary achievement. Under the band name Tonto's Expanding Head Band, Cecil and Margouleff released the highly influential album *Zero Time*. The album demonstrated the rich, layered sounds of the massive synthesizer and attracted significant attention.

Used on multiple Stevie Wonder and The Isley Brothers albums in the 1970s, TONTO helped shape albums by a long list of notable artists such as Minnie Riperton, Joan Baez, the Doobie Brothers, Quincy Jones, Randy Newman, Bobby Womack and more, and was prominently featured in *Phantom of the Paradise*.

"I needed to find a home for TONTO that would survive me and where it could be used," said Malcolm Cecil after NMC acquired the instrument in 2013.

“We made a promise to Malcom to ensure that TONTO would be used again in the creation of new music and that its legacy would live on,” said Adam Fox, NMC’s Director of Programs. “It took several years to properly restore the instrument, and now it’s finally ready to enter its next chapter. We couldn’t be more excited to hear where NMC’s Artists in Residence take TONTO next.”

TONTO WEEK SCHEDULE

Synthesis 101

November 14, 2018, 12:00 pm

Included with admission

Whether you’re a seasoned pro or just starting to dip your toes into the world of synthesizers, get an introduction to synthesis with NMC’s Electronics Technician John Leimseider. A veteran musician (and former member of Iron Butterfly), Leimseider has over 40 years of experience playing and repairing analog and digital synthesizers. Learn from one of the most sought-after synthesizer technicians in the world.

NMC AiR Workshop: A Tribe Called Red x TONTO

November 15, 2018, 12:00 pm

Included with admission

Multiple JUNO Award-winning act A Tribe Called Red (ATCR), currently comprised of Bear Witness and Zoolman, ignite dance parties wherever they land with their fusion of hip hop, club-ready samples and traditional pow-wow beats, and are among a new generation of Indigenous artists and activists making a strong cultural and social impact in Canada. As part of their 2018 residency, ATCR will be the first artists to use TONTO in the creation of new music after years of restoration work on the instrument. See ATCR share their creative process and provide a taste of new music at this public workshop.

Studio Bell After Hours: TONTO Edition

November 16, 2018, 9:00 pm

\$40 for non-NMC Members, \$32 for NMC Members, 18+

NMC’s popular late-night series returns with special headlining performances by A Tribe Called Red and Smalltown DJs, as well as selections from DJ and Chapel Sound co-founder Nancy Lee and Calgary break-beat-smith MollyFi. Bring your most comfortable dancing shoes as NMC turns down the lights and turns up the tunes. The night will also include pop-up bars and bites, a lecture on music and psychedelics, interactives, music experiments and other activities celebrating TONTO, as well as the AEMCON Marketplace, an electronic music culture and industry trade show with over a dozen vendors. This will not your typical night at the museum.

In Conversation with Malcolm Cecil

November 17, 2018, 12:00 pm

Included with admission

TONTO co-creator Malcolm Cecil will lead a conversation about the history of TONTO, chronicling its

creation, seminal works and collaborations with notable artists, and its enduring legacy.

TONTO Demonstration with Malcolm Cecil and John Leimseider

November 17, 2018, 1:00 pm

Included with admission

Alongside NMC's Electronics Technician John Leimseider, synth pioneer, Malcolm Cecil will reunite with TONTO for a rare demonstration on the legendary instrument that he helped to create.

Film Screening: Phantom of the Paradise

November 17, 2018, 7:00 pm

\$15 for non-NMC Members, \$10 for NMC Members

See the 1974 Brian DePalma horror-musical, *Phantom of the Paradise*, which immortalized TONTO after it was featured (as the "electronic room"). Though the film was a flop virtually everywhere after its initial release, it was a hit in two places: Paris (Daft Punk is said to have met at a screening in the City of Light) and Winnipeg, where it maintains a rabid cult following to this day.

Brunch and Film Screening: I Dream of Wires

November 18, 2018, 11:00 am

Included with brunch at the King Eddy

Nurse your TONTO Week hangover with a Southern soul-inspired brunch at the King Eddy and a matinee screening of *I Dream of Wires*. *I Dream Of Wires* is about the rise, fall and rebirth of a machine that shaped electronic music: the modular synthesizer. The 2014 documentary directed by Robert Fantinatto, features over 100 interviews from inventors, musicians and enthusiasts about their relationship with the modular synthesizer—for many, it's an all-consuming passion.

Tickets for all TONTO Week events are on sale now. Please go to nmc.ca/whats-on to purchase your tickets in advance.

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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 will preserve and celebrate Canada's music story and inspire 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 nmc.ca.

Media Contact:

Julijana Capone, Senior Publicist

National Music Centre

T 403.543.5123 | C 403.710.4758

julijana.capone@nmc.ca | @nmc_canada