

The New School for Social Research Graduate Student Conference in Philosophy Presents:

Tar Sands Songbook

Performance

Friday April 15, 7:00 PM ET

Klein Conference Room A510, The New School, New York, NY

Part of “With/In Environments: Reimagining Frameworks and Practices for Environmental Philosophy”

Acknowledgement of Territory

This location is situated on the ancestral territory of the Lenape (“The Real People”). This was, and is, their land—a reality that all of us who have come here must acknowledge. The Lenape called the island Manahatta, which means “hilly island.” The tribe was matrilineal, organized into clans based on their mother’s descent. They practiced farming as well as hunting and fishing. They had no system of private land ownership. In some versions of historical record pertaining to the “settlement” of this region, the Lenape ostensibly “sold” the land where New York City was built to the Dutch governor Peter Minuit for \$24 in 1626. Competing narratives of this “sale,” however, reveal that the tribe perceived this as a transaction allowing the Dutch to share the land with the Lenape, not as a transfer of ownership. Once they assumed “legal” ownership of the land, the Dutch renamed this territory New Amsterdam. When the British acquired this land from the Dutch in the early 1700s, they renamed it “New York” and subsequently forced most of the indigenous peoples to relocate to Oklahoma. There are approximately 87,241 indigenous peoples, primarily of Algonquian and Haudenosaunee descent, living in New York City today.

—Jaskiran K. Dhillon, from the syllabus for NINT 5038/UGLB 4320, “Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Resurgence, and the Politics of Climate Justice”, The New School, Fall 2017.

About the Tar Sands Songbook

An illuminating work of documentary theater, The Tar Sands Songbook asks us to reconsider our unseen relationships with oil. Creator Tanya Kalmanovitch knows these relationships all too well. Born in Fort McMurray, Canada, near the site of the Athabasca Oil Sands, the world’s largest bitumen reservoir, she made her decision to become a musician as a teenager because “it had nothing to do with oil.” Fort McMurray has since become a flashpoint of international clashes over energy, the environment, and the economy. Kalmanovitch's polyphonic piece weaves together a chorus of voices with an original, improvised score. The words of indigenous activists, engineers, heavy equipment operators, elders, oil patch workers, scientists, and those of her own family fuel discussions of our past and the powerful forces that shape our future.

Performed By

Tanya Kalmanovitch
and
Andrew Boudreau

Written by Tanya Kalmanovitch
Research assistance by Katie Nixdorf
Dramaturgy by Katie Pearl

This performance will last about 85 minutes with no intermission.

Funded in part by grants from the Tishman Environment and Design Center, The New School’s Faculty Research Fund, and the New England Conservatory’s Faculty Professional Development Fund. An earlier version of this work was developed in collaboration with Cecilia Rubino.

In memory of David Efthyoulou, Ernest Kalmanovitch, Philip Kalmanovitch, Keith Russell Marten, and the Dolinsky Nine.

Scenes

SPARROW SONG

Music Has Nothing to do With Oil

INVOCATION

My Eiffel Tower
The Syncrude Loop
Part of the Machinery
Let's Talk About Oil

FOUR STRONG WINDS

Take Care of the Music and the Music Will
Take Care of You
A Vibrant Sustainable Region We Are
Proud to Call Home
My First Trolling

THROUGH WITH TRYING

All Roads Lead to Alice
It Was a Good Life, You Know. It Was the
Best
The Death That Lies Beneath

TWINKLE, TWINKLE / RED RIVER JIG

The Difference Between a Fiddle and a
Violin
You Never Learned to Play the
Red River Jig

MONEY WILL MAKE THEM PITIFUL

Externalities
It's Not Safe For You to Be Here
Three Perspectives on the Ontological
Status of Risk
Rare Cancers in Fort Chip / A Chorus of
Conflicting Accounts
The Difference Between a Billion and a
Trillion
Traditional Knowledge Interviews in Fort
Chipewyan

GOLDBERG VARIATION 25

Philip is Dead

KYRIE, ELEISON

Father is Dead
Nature Could Kill You But Cities Were Safe

O CANADA

Explain It To Me Like I'm Five

SPARROW SONG (REPRISE)

An Ecstatic Communion with Nature

RED RIVER JIG (REPRISE)

To Sing for the Fish
An Invisible Atlas of Alberta

Musical Selections

Sparrow Song

Composed by white-throated sparrows and transcribed by Tanya Kalmanovitch

"Air" from The Goldberg Variations

Composed by Johann Sebastian Bach

Invocation (Four Strong Winds)

Composed by Tanya Kalmanovitch

Four Strong Winds

Music and lyrics by Ian Tyson

Through With Trying

Music and lyrics by Sheldon Hughes

Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Traditional

Red River Jig

Traditional, after performance by Métis fiddler Andy DeJarlis

Variatio 25 a 2 Clavier, "Adagio" from The Goldberg Variations

Composed by Johann Sebastian Bach

Kyrie, eleison

As performed at the 12:00 mass at the Lac Saint Anne Pilgrimage, July 22 2018, Lac Saint Anne, Alberta

*Lord have mercy on your children
Lord have mercy on your children
Lord have mercy on your children
Lord have mercy on us all*

*Christ have mercy on your children
Christ have mercy on your children
Christ have mercy on your children
Christ have mercy on us all*

*Lord have mercy on your children
Lord have mercy on your children
Lord have mercy on your children
Lord have mercy on us all*

O, Canada

National Anthem of Canada

Composed by Calixa Lavallée, recomposed by Tanya Kalmanovitch

Red River Jig

The unofficial Métis national anthem.
Traditional, performed in the style of Andy de Jarlis

Biographies

TANYA KALMANOVITCH is a musician, writer and ethnomusicologist. Trained at the Juilliard School, her work as a violist bridges classical, jazz and experimental improvised music and has been profiled in *Jazz Times*, *DownBeat*, the *Globe and Mail* and the *New York Times*. Kalmanovitch's research in theoretical psychology and ethnomusicology has explored the history of science, postcolonial identities and musical globalization and has been published in *The American Psychologist*, *World of Music* and *New Sound*. She is an Associate Professor at Mannes School of Music at The New School, Affiliated Faculty at the Tishman Environment and Design Centre, and a 2017-2018 Fellow of the Graduate Institute for Design, Ethnography and Social Thought. She performs and teaches regularly in North America, Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia, and also serves as a faculty member at the New England Conservatory in Boston. Her work on the *Tar Sands Songbook* has been recognized by a nomination for the 2018 Andrew Carnegie Fellows, awards from the MAP Fund and the Canada Council for the Arts, and her being named to the Grist 50 Fixers, a select list of innovators leading the way towards a sustainable future. www.tanyakalmanovitch.com

ANDREW BOUDREAU is fast making a name for himself on the international jazz stage. One of eight Canadian musicians to receive the Astral Artist Prize at the National Arts Centre (Ottawa), Andrew is also the recipient of the OPUS Prize for Jazz Concert of the Year in Quebec. Andrew has completed a Master of Music at the New England Conservatory, Bachelor of Music at the Schulich School of Music (McGill University), and ARCT Diploma (Piano Performance) from the Royal Conservatory of Music. A native of Truro, Nova Scotia, Andrew currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. www.andrewboudreaumusic.com

KATIE PEARL is a director, playwright, and co-Artistic Director of the Obie-winning company PearlDamour, with whom she creates interdisciplinary, often site-specific work. Recipient of four Map Fund, two NEA, and a Creative Capital Award; commissions include Trinity Repertory Theater, The American Repertory Theater, The Kitchen, the Whitney Museum, PS122, Walker Art Center, and the Contemporary Arts Center/New Orleans. www.katiepearl.com

Selected Resources

The resources listed below are a few that I've found helpful in the process of coming to grips with the intellectual, technical and practical issues raised by this project. It is an incomplete list, updated continually on the project website at www.tarsandssongbook.com.

Grassroots activism and community action in the Athabasca River Watershed

Keepers of the Athabasca

<http://www.keepersofthewater.ca/athabasca>

Investigative journalist Mike De Sousa's collection of government records collected under Freedom of Information Act requests.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/recent>

Research and analysis on Canadian energy policies and practices

Pembina Institute
www.pembina.org

Tailings management in the Athabasca Tar Sands

Environmental Defense Canada, *Report: Alberta's Tailings Ponds. One Trillion Litres of Toxic Waste and Growing.*

<http://environmentaldefence.ca/report/albertas-tailings-ponds/>

The Peace-Athabasca Delta ecosystem

Kevin P. Timoney, *The Peace-Athabasca Delta: Portrait of a Dynamic Ecosystem*, University of Alberta Press (2013).

On the Energy Humanities

Imre Szeman, Ruth Beer, Warren Cariou, Mark Simpson, Sheena Wilson,

"On the Energy Humanities: Contributions from the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts to Understanding Energy Transition and Energy Impasse", SSHRC Imagining Canada's Future initiative Knowledge Synthesis Grants: Energy and Natural Resources (2016).

<http://petrocultures.com/on-the-energy-humanities/>

On the things disaster reveals

Clyde Woods, "Katrina's World: Blues, Bourbon, and the Return to the Source", *American Quarterly* 61(3), September 2009.

On the Red River Jig

Sarah Quick, "The Social Poetics of the Red River Jig in Alberta and Beyond: Meaningful Heritage and Emerging Performance", *Ethnologies* 30(1), 2008, 77-101.

On recording, editing and producing documentary radio

The website www.transom.org, and Transom's HowSound podcast (a podcast about podcasting!)

On neoliberalism and Donald Trump

Naomi Klein, *No is Not Enough: Resisting Trump's Shock Politics and Winning the World We Need* (Haymarket Books, 2017).

On hope as a political act

Rebecca Solnit, *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities*. Haymarket Books, Updated edition (2nd ed., 2016)

On resisting tyranny

Timothy Snyder, *On Tyranny: twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (2017)

Oil and Gas Pipeline Maps

FracTracker app is a free tool for reporters, residents, researchers, and groups concerned about many aspects of the oil and gas industry and its effects. Find wells, pipelines, and user reports near you on the map. Submit reports and view reports from other app users.

<https://www.fractracker.org/apps/>

Petrocultures:

www.petrocultures.com

The Petrocultures Research Group at the University of Alberta supports research on the social and cultural implications of oil and energy on individuals, communities, and societies around the world today. Since 2011, the research activities of Petrocultures have played a crucial role in enhancing and expanding this research, and in the process has positioned the U of A at the forefront of a growing field of academic study.

Collaborators

This work would not be possible without the practical and moral support, large and small, of a great number of people whose contributions might not otherwise be credited in a program. Some are my friends, and some have become friends as a result of this work, and some extended their assistance despite the fact we've never met. There are some people I won't list for reasons of privacy, or simply because we didn't meet in quite that way. Although their names don't appear in the list below, they are no less important.

Keepers of the Athabasca	Betty Hushlak	Katie Pearl
Cecilia Rubino	Patti Pon	Misha Friedman
Steve Byram	Jule Asterix	Jon Sandals
Jennifer Van Dyck	Cleo Reece	Jill Gatlin
Sarah Montague	Nitanis Desjarlais	Annie Phillips
Peter Jay Fernandez	Sharon Jinkerson Brass	Stephanie Munoz
Morgan Raspanti	Steve One	Wendy Eisenberg
Paul Hecht	Violet Cheechum	Austin Grossman
Sarah Montague	Alice Rigney	Marina Lomazov
Peter Lucas	Ray Ladouceur	Pascal LeBoeuf
Will Lucas	Robert Grandjambe	Demondrae Thurman
Anomie Williams	Bishop Denis Croteau, O.M.I.	Elizabeth Nonemaker
Phyllis Sandals	David Ngo	Daniel Krane
Lauran Sandals	Mike Hudema	Susan Hunter and John Siemens
Leah Sandals	Randy Marten	Norman Adams
Michael Kalmanovitch	Julia Gibot	Andrew Miller
Shirley D'Amour	Jadwiga Drewniak	Ian Marvy
Jamie Becker	John O'Connor	Cory Hill
Claudia Wigent	Regula Qureshi	Bene Coopersmith
Stafford Horne	Bob Labaree	Elke Jahns-Harms
Anne Loree	Heath Marlow	Reuben Radding
Russ Broom	David Gonzalez	Erin Flame
Robin Ryczek	Daniel Kelly	Judith Marcuse
Christian Wistehuff	Janet Benton	Regula Qureshi and Sabina
Michelle DePass	Bruce Ling	Alessandra Cronin
Adrienne Perovich	Hayes Griffin	George Poitras
Molly Craft Johnson	Frank Ettawageshik	Margie Coutereille
Timo Rissanen	Dorothy Bishop	Teika Newton
Richard Kessler	Ken and Diane Hill	Sheena Wilson
Erik Bestmann	Frances Jean	Natalie Loveless
Chris Stover	Harry and Eleanor Lewis	Scott Smallwood
Diane Ragsdale	Imre Szeman	Robin Moore
Susan Barry	Roger Levesque	Canadian New Music Network / Réseau canadien pour les musiques nouvelles
Ron Horton	Anabel and David Dwyer	Lindsey Zier-Vogel
Joe Grifasi	Glenbow Museum Archives	Sean Singer
Kathy Chen	Annie Hamburger	Jennifer DeVore
John Hyde	Students of COPA 5000A and ENTP 551 (Spring 2016)	Covi Brannon
Anthony Coleman	Jaskiran K. Dhillon	John Trotter
Hugh Raffles and GIDEST	Frank Flaherty	Change
Ed Keller	Evan Allen	Just Powers
Elizabeth Aaron	Genevieve Guenther	Petrocultures
Anna Marandi	David Rothenberg	Sustainability Council, University of Alberta
Dara Kell	Fred Moten	Kule Institute for Advanced Study
Ted Reichman	Katie Nixdorf	Research-Creation and Social Justice
Julia Warsowe	Michael Schober	CoLABoratory
Leo Reichman	Nadia Chana	Shalea Nichols
Priya Shah	Niko Higgins	Rezvaneh Erfani
Lara Pellegriinelli	Andrew Boudreau	Fiona Nicoll
Mat Maneri	Warren Senders	Sean Singer
Marika Hughes	Robbie Picard and Richard	Judi Pearl
Rick Hamm and Sue Henry	Jimmy Allen	
Scott Pfaffman	Taryn Dewar	
Molly Blieden	Tsēma Igharas	
Robert Albrecht	Lacy Gielen	
Robert Labaree	Michael Kaye	
Jason Belcher	Dean Cronin	
Sheldon Hughes		

Afterword

In October 2017, a week before I performed the first workshop of this piece, Sheldon told me, "There are five ways of healing in Cree: talking, singing, yelling, laughing, and crying." This teaching was passed down to him from Asiniwaciskwiw, and I repeat his words here because they strike me as a succinct and practical guide to the urgent work of healing ourselves and our planet. (Plus, if this performance has gone well, then in some measure, we'll have covered all five, together.)

So start where you are. Look for the plants pushing up through the cracks in the pavement. Listen for the sparrows. And if you hear yourself asking a question along the lines of, "What can a viola player do about climate change?" then by all means, answer it. When I thought music had nothing to do with oil, I saw climate change as something that happened to someone else, somewhere else. Now, I see that it's the story of my life.