

The Helen Carswell Chair in Community Engaged Research in the Arts

The Helen Carswell Research Team 2021-2022



Project title

“Re-imagining music education after a pandemic: Leveraging community engaged research to inform music education programs for youth”

Uzo Anucha, Associate Professor in the School of Social Work and the founding Director of the Applied Social Welfare Research and Evaluation Group. Dr. Anucha conceptualizes her applied research scholarship as a community dialogue that must fully engage the community studied. She actively seeks to bridge the gap between knowledge production and knowledge use by translating and disseminating research findings to end users (policy-makers and practitioners) using multiple channels. She frequently presents her work in diverse forums that are accessible to communities, agencies and policy makers

Read more about Professor Anucha [here](#).

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Project title

“Black Opera: A showcase of Black opera companies, works and artists”

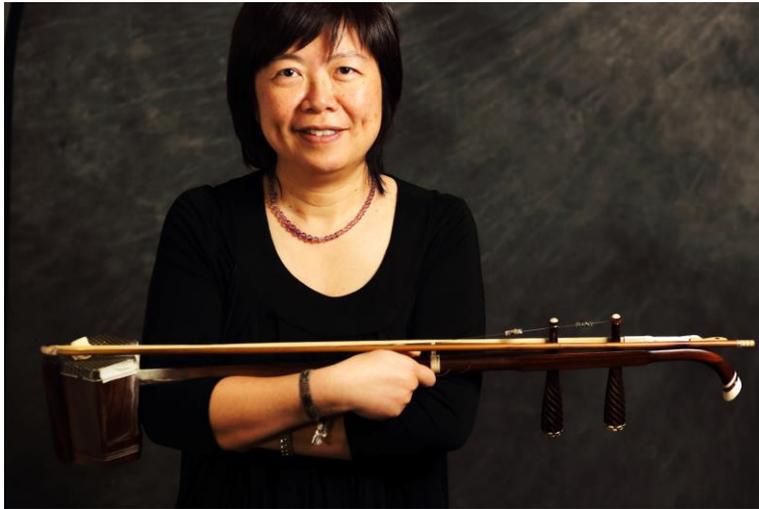
Sophie Bisson is an opera singer and a PhD candidate at York University. She is also a graduate research associate of the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies (RCCS), co-editor of RCCS’s Canada Watch (Spring 2022 edition), and the creator and editor of the online Encyclopedia of Canadian Opera (spring 2022).

A recipient of the Sunnuz Sarah Taheri Graduate Award in Fine Arts, she has written and presented on topics that include how institutional policies influence the creation of opera in Canada, re-righting the wrongs of Louis Riel’s Kuyas, the evolution and themes of the Canadian aria, and articles on the revival of Claude Vivier’s opera Kopernikus. She also presents and guides others on the challenges and possible solutions for disseminating large-scale digital humanities projects in music and the arts in general.

Sophie’s dissertation studies the representation of women in nine 21st Century Canadian operas (“Breaking the Killing Jar: A Study of Female Representation in 21st Century Canadian Opera”) and her Helen Carswell research project revisits Canadian operatic history with an inclusive lens to highlight Black opera companies, works, and artists (“Black Opera: A Showcase of Black Opera Companies, Works, and Artists”)

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Project title

“Cultural connections through music”

Patty Chan is a second-generation Chinese Canadian erhu musician, educator, and author. She is the Music Director of the Toronto Chinese Orchestra, Co-Founder of the cross-cultural PhoeNX Ensemble, and Director of Centre for Music Innovations (musinno.com). As an erhu musician, Patty has collaborated with many ensembles and organizations, including the Strings of St. John's, Red Snow Collective, the Toronto Masque Theatre, and the Canadian Children's Opera Company. She has performed in world premieres of theatre/opera productions such as Red Snow (2012), The Lesson of Da Ji (2013), Comfort (2016), and The Monkiest King (2018). Patty's composition, Redemption: The Chan Kol Nidre (2015) for erhu and viola da gamba has been added to the archives at the Beit Hatfutsot in Tel Aviv, a museum for the Jewish people.

Patty has taught erhu and Chinese music at York University, Ryerson University, and Carleton University. She has led and participated in music exchanges and tours in Canada and Asia. Patty has written several books about the erhu that have sold in over 30 countries, and a storybook in three languages about Chinese instruments for children. She is also currently creating a Chinese music database for English readers at the Centre for Music Innovations in partnership with the Little Giant Chinese Chamber Orchestra in Taiwan. Presently an MA candidate in Ethnomusicology, Patty's area of research is in the exploration of the history and development of Chinese orchestral music in Canada and its impact on identity and community. She looks forward to working with RPSM faculty and students to develop a program that will forge cultural connections through music.

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Project title

“Programming youth media arts via sight, sound, and storytelling module”

Barbara Evans, Associate Professor in the Department of Cinema and Media Arts, has worked extensively as a film director, producer, writer, researcher and editor. A graduate of the University of British Columbia and the National Film and Television School (UK) in film direction, she has worked in the UK for educational television, the BBC, ITV and on films sponsored by the British Film Institute. She was a founding member of the London Women’s Film Group and the British Newsreel Collective. In Canada, she has worked as editor for the National Film Board on such documentaries as *Wonderland* and *Bitter Medicine*, and on the feature films *Latitude 55* and *Walls*.

Read more about Professor Evans [here](#).

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Project title

"Improvisation and creativity workshop for wind, brass, and percussion students (featuring guest composers)"

Pratik Gandhi is a conductor, percussionist, clinician, and researcher based in Toronto. He currently serves as music director of the Rouge River Winds and vice-chair of the Concert Band Division of *MusicFest* Canada. Pratik is pursuing a Ph.D. in music at York University, where his research, supported by an Ontario Graduate Scholarship, investigates issues of equity and representation among wind band composers in Canada. He has been an active member of the wind band community in Canada for over a decade, and is passionate about creating space and opportunities within it for composers from historically excluded groups. Recent publications include a feature on Cait Nishimura's "Lake Superior Suite" for WASBE World and an analysis of composer representation on Canadian festival syllabus lists for Canadian Winds. Pratik holds degrees in music education and conducting from Western University.

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Project title

"Programming youth media arts via
sight, sound, and storytelling modules"

Sharon Hayashi is an Associate Professor in the Department of Cinema and Media Arts. Her research focuses on the intersection of visual culture and history. Her current research interests include digital mapping, architectures of cinema, and the resurgence of artistic and political collectives in urban Japan. She has published articles on Japanese pink cinema and the travel films of Shimizu Hiroshi, and is currently creating Mapping Protest Tokyo, a historical mapping website that analyzes the new media work of artistic collectives and new social movements in relation to artistic performance and political protest in Japan and globally from 1960 to the present.

Read more about Professor Hayashi [here](#)