

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** through January 16, 2016, Victoria, Canada



Royal BC Museum Victoria, BC, January 15 and 16, 2016

**Event:** Music for Natural History – a live performance

**Produced by:** LaSaM Music and the Royal BC Museum

**Composers:** Tina Pearson and Paul Walde

**Performers:** LaSaM Music and guests from Victoria's art community

**Dates / Times:** January 15 & 16, two shows per night at 7 pm & 8:30 pm (Limited seating)

**Venue:** Royal BC Museum 675 Belleville Street, Victoria BC

**Tickets:** \$25 (\$22 members) available online at <http://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/events/music-for-natural-history/>

**More info:** <https://lasammusic.wordpress.com/>

**Contact:** Royal BC Museum Tel: 250-356-7226 or LaSaM Tel: 250-885-1343

Part tragic love song for the wilderness, part performative sound art, *Music for Natural History* is a live performance that gives voice to the taxidermied birds and mammals, human-made trees and painted landscapes that form the exhibitions in the **Natural History Gallery** of the **Royal BC Museum** in Victoria.

Through careful cataloging, research and transcription, composers and sound artists Tina Pearson and Paul Walde have translated sounds of the flora and fauna seen in the dioramas into two naturalistic sound scores that invite performers and audiences an entry to forgotten ways of listening and sounding.

With the Museum's prerecorded audio silenced for the evening, audiences will take an alternate sound-focused journey through the exhibition spaces. Sixteen vocalists, sound artists and music instrumentalists have spent weeks learning to viscerally replicate the sounds of wind, birds, mammals and ocean surf of the Pacific Northwest. They will perform a sonic story moving from a dry coastal forest down to a rainforest stream and onto the Pacific shore as they reveal, in sound, detailed interactions of the displayed life forms.

In the Gallery's enclosed Forest diorama, the *Elk Concerto* opens with a dawn bird chorus. It unfolds to reveal an alternately quiet, dramatic, and charged web of sonic activity featuring an Elk in rut, annoyed squirrels, warbling songbirds, cooing pigeons, a furtive cougar and more. In the expansive Seashore diorama, the dynamic *Shoreline Operetta* is filled with sounds of shifting ocean surf and the sometimes peaceful, sometimes playful and often cacophonous, voices of Pacific coast sea lions, cormorants, surfbirds and other shoreline creatures.

*Music for Natural History* is bookended with two audio pieces: an icy subsonic prelude within the pre-history of the Woolly Mammoth's domain, and a postlude in the Delta estuary display – a collage of bird song blended with increasing layers of human soundscape.

***Music for Natural History*** is part of a growing global movement of art projects that intend to foster renewed connections with the biosphere. The project blurs boundaries between sonic mimicry, soundscape composition, classical music, and dada-ist sound poetry within the already paradoxical setting of the Museum's exhibitions. In its aural animation of these surrogates for the natural world, the work is at times corporeal, tragic, poignant, alluring, and even humorous. At its heart, however, it might remind us that nearby environments that were once teeming with the complex array of sounds made by millions of creatures sensing and interacting with each other, with plants and trees and with the shifting sonic patterns of wind, rain, snow and heat, are rapidly being silenced by loss of habitat and species as they become overwhelmed by human-made sound.

Recognizing that human ancestral responses were deeply woven into a sophisticated sonic engagement with such dynamic soundscapes, ***Music for Natural History*** might also be interpreted as a longing for remembering what we no longer hear, and what we no longer sing.

***Music for Natural History*** will take place at the **Royal BC Museum** on **January 15 and 16, 2016** and features local musicians and community members using conventional and invented instruments, objects and voices in unusual ways with no prerecorded or electronic sounds. This will be a very compelling evening.

#### PERFORMERS

Ajtony Csaba (cello)  
Alisa Gordaneer (voice)  
Arlene Carson (accordion, voice)  
Chris Tooley (voice, whistles, recorders)  
Claire le Nobel (percussion)  
George Tzanetakis (clarinets, sax, flutes)  
Geraldine Bulosan (voice, recorder)  
Janet Sit (recorders, percussion, voice)  
Joanna Hood (viola)  
John G Boehme (voice)  
Julio Lopezhiler (violin)  
Nathan Friedman (clarinets)  
Paul Walde (percussion, recorders)  
Rachael Wadham (percussion, recorders)  
Tancha Dirickson (ocarina, voice, recorders)  
Tina Pearson (flute, recorders, voice)

#### FEATURING SONIC INTERPRETATIONS OF

The Golden-crowned Kinglet, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Common Flicker, Bewick's Wren, Brown Creeper, Varied Thrush, Hairy Woodpecker, Pacific Wren, Band-tailed pigeon, American Dipper, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Screech Owl, Raven, Stellar's Jay, Black-Tailed Deer, Cougar, Douglas Squirrel, Roosevelt Elk, Grizzly Bear.

The Pelagic Cormorant, River Otter, Western Sandpiper, Black Oyster Catcher, Surfbird, Harbour Seal, Northern Sea Lion, Black Turnstone, Pigeon Guillemot, Glaucous Winged Gull, Tufted Puffin, Common Murre, Long-billed Dowitcher, Northwestern Crow, Semi-palmated Plover, and more.

Wind blowing through Douglas Fir, Western Hemlock, Sitka Spruce, Garry Oak, Red Alder, Cottonwood and Arbutus trees; and the sounds of Pacific waters washing into sand beaches, pebbled shorelines and exposed Triangle Island cliffs.

**Tina Pearson** is a wilderness-bred composer, performer and facilitator whose work plays with sonic phenomena, communications between species, cultures and identities, and the relationships between creators, performers and audiences. Pearson has led soundwalks, worked with soundscapes in urban and wilderness projects and led collaborative art projects since the 1980's. She performs with flute, voice, glass and virtual instruments.

**Paul Walde** is an intermedia artist, composer, and curator. Walde's body of work suggests unexpected interconnections between landscape, identity, and technology and includes painting, photography, printmaking, video, installation, and audio. In 2013, Walde completed *Requiem for a Glacier*, a site-specific sound performance featuring a fifty-five-piece choir and orchestra live on the Farnham Glacier in the Purcell Mountains to international acclaim.

**LaSaM Music** has been producing creatively adventurous music events in Victoria since 2008 and is known for original themed projects inspired by relationships between the natural world, sound and music. Previous projects include *Music For Mycologists* (2013) *Dark Listening* (2014), *In a Large Open Space* (2011), "And Beethoven Heard Nothing" (2010), among others. [www.lasamusic.wordpress.com](http://www.lasamusic.wordpress.com)

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ROYAL BC MUSEUM