



Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall presents
MASSEY HALL SOUND MUSEUM



“Where are the museums for disappearing sounds?”

R. MURRAY SCHAFER (Composer, Educator
and Companion to the Order of Canada)

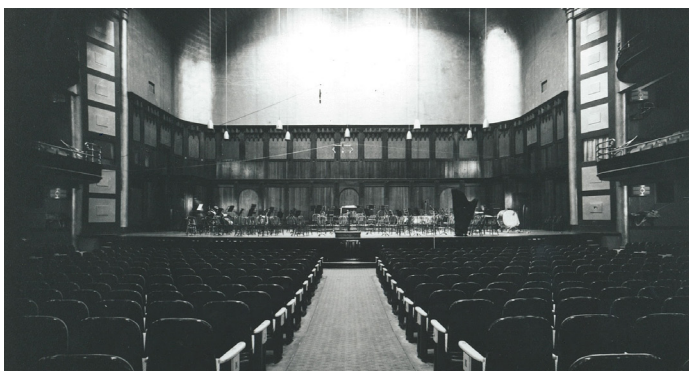
AT-HOME ACTIVITY GUIDE

As you likely know, Massey Hall is currently closed for our revitalization. The concerts there have been heavily archived, some of those recordings have become best-selling records. But what about the sounds within the hall, of the hall itself?

The sound of the 1930s orchestra and balcony chairs sliding into place, or being popped back up after an amazing show. The wooden clunk of the original 1890s chairs in the gallery seating. The old spring-loaded door stops and cylindrical garbage cans. The storied creak of the well-worn stage. These aspects of the hall are now in the process of being improved upon, but we can still miss these sounds. So... we recorded them!

R. Murray Schafer suggested that preserving sound can teach us a great deal about our surroundings, history, possible futures, and ourselves. At masseyhall.com/soundmuseum, you'll find a “sound museum” of Massey Hall before the renovation. We have lovingly walked through the hall – backstage and in front, from deep corners to the roof – in search of sounds that will be gone. We have sat, tapped, slammed, squeaked, moved, poured, opened, closed, and rolled. And now, you can hear those sounds and remix them to create something new! Make remixes, design soundwalks, form beats, construct atmospheres, and otherwise create music with what is here. We also encourage you to think about sounds of your own day-to-day and to consider creating your own sound museum.

We've adapted this tool from our Teachers' Resource Guide to help you use the Sound Museum at home to investigate listening, creating music, and to think about found sounds in your own home. Explore the Sound Museum, think about how sounds affect your daily life, and have fun! We look forward to hearing how you use this resource. If you have any questions or just want to share, please contact our Education & Outreach department.



1. DEEPER LISTENING AND THINKING ABOUT SOUND

Here are some questions to ask yourself or your children to start thinking about music and sound:

- What are the most important elements of music?
- Most often we need our ears to listen to music. Can we train our ears to listen deeper?
- What do we hear right now?

Set a timer for **30 seconds** and after it runs out, describe what you heard in that time.

- What if we listen for longer and try to hear sounds that are farthest away?

Wait **1 minute** and then describe or write down everything you heard.

- Did you hear more that time?
- What else might we not be hearing?
- Try and describe the sounds you heard rather than naming them.
- It might be useful for us to consider some basic contrasts in sound:

higher - lower
louder - quieter
longer - shorter
faster - slower

Although these are not the only ways to describe sound, they can be a great start. They can also be used to describe and compose music. Movement from one contrast to another draws us into the song or composition.

2. R. MURRAY SCHAFER - SOUNDSCAPE AND SOUND MUSEUM

R. Murray Schafer (b. 1933) is a living Canadian composer and educator who is often credited for being the first person to use the word soundscape. He is considered one of the first to suggest that what we hear, and even what we might miss hearing, affects us as much, possibly even more, than what we see, smell, taste, and touch. He was highly concerned with the modern soundscape getting noisier and noisier. Many of his compositions incorporate aspects of deep listening, the sounds of our environment, and can be inspired by or even set to be performed at natural locations such as a lake at sunrise or a quiet northern forest. In one of his musical dramas, participants perform a howl after dusk around a campfire. They are often joined by real wolves!

You might consider listening to and viewing the following:



Photo credit: François Varin, 1971

SNOWFORMS

<https://youtu.be/GiOhtgRIT0k>

(a choral composition deeply inspired by sketches of snowdrifts and various inuit words for snow)

MINIWANKA

<https://youtu.be/ViBbRM3gFnI>

(a choral composition taking inspiration from the various states of water)

LISTEN

<https://youtu.be/rOlxuXHWfHw>

(a short recent video of Schafer at his farm)

<http://www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/episodes/sonic-magic-the-wonder-and-science-of-sound>

3. EXPLORING THE SOUND MUSEUM

Visit the online Massey Hall Sound Museum at masseyhall.com/soundmuseum with your child. Listen deeply and discuss what you heard with each other.

POSSIBLE GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- What is your favourite sound?
- What is the most interesting sound?
- What do you think is the lowest sound? The highest?
- What sound(s) surprised you the most?

SOUNDTRAP

Soundtrap is a digital audio workstation (DAW) and can be used to record, edit, and effect audio files. It is a free (with premium option) cloud-based program. You will have to create a free account using Google, Facebook, or email in order to use the program.

Children and youth will often intuitively learn how to use DAWs, however, you might consider viewing Soundtrap's "Crash Course" at soundtrap.com/tutorials together.

To use the Sound Museum with Soundtrap, you will need to learn how to upload and record sounds.

<https://soundtrap.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/205664281-How-to-import-audio-tracks>

Other tutorials can be found at soundtrap.com/tutorials or by googling whatever you're trying to do - chances are, someone else has already figured it out for you!

SOME IDEAS OF PROJECTS YOU CAN DO TO EXPLORE SOUNDTRAP:

- Make a drum beat
- Use loops in 3 tracks and edit to form a short piece with a beginning, middle, and end.
- Record your voice and add/change the effects.
- Change the volume in one section
- Cut out a middle section and combine the first and last sections.

GETTING SOUNDS ONTO SOUNDTRAP

- Open the Massey Hall Sound Museum by following the link masseyhall.com/soundmuseum, by searching "Massey Hall Sound Museum" on soundcloud.com.
- Scroll down to the sound you want to download and click on the three dots below, select "download."
- Open your project in the soundtrap.com studio
- Select "Import File" from the menu in the middle of the screen. Find your file and select it.
- Continue this process to add as many sounds as you want. Consider adding a variety of sounds on separate tracks (click "add track", then "import file")
- Practice moving them around, editing them, looping them, combining, layering, changing the volume, adding effects.

You can collaborate with any friends, family, or classmates who have Soundtrap by sharing projects with each other (this enables you to work on the same project from different computers). Once the Sound Museum files you want are uploaded onto the Soundtrap studio, anyone with access to that project can continue to edit, record, and collaborate on their computer, phone, or tablet, using the Soundtrap app.

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

SOUNDWALKS (SUGGESTED FOR AGES 8-13)

A soundwalk is a path mapped out by sounds. Consider what you hear while you walk to and from school, the grocery store, or a friend's house. For each of these walks, there are sounds that occur in a specific and significant order. Using Soundtrap and the files from the Sound Museum, create an ideal imaginary soundwalk through Massey Hall by ordering and possibly editing sounds (shortening, lengthening, making louder or quieter, repeating, changing order, adding effects):

- How might you like to start? With the nicest sound or should it be saved?
- What order of the sounds is most pleasing?
- Try adding more or less spaces between sounds.
- Try combining sounds or overlapping more ambient (continuous) sounds.
- What is the best sound, order or combination of sounds to have in the middle of your walk?
- What is the best sound, order or combination of sounds to have at the end of your walk?

Export your project (under the “file” drop-down menu) and send it to us at education@mh-rth.com! We'd love to hear your creations.

Next, turn your soundwalk into a musical experience by adding instruments and voices, whether recording your own or using the pre-sets that are already in Soundtrap. These instruments or vocals might imitate or replace the sounds from the Museum that are already in your soundwalk, or they might be something completely different that complements, contrasts, or adds something new to the piece. When listening to your soundwalk, do you hear some rhythms and melodies? Use these as a starter and expand on them using instruments in the app, or by playing your own instruments into a microphone.

MUSIC WITH NOISE (SUGGESTED FOR AGES 13+)

Revisit the sounds on the Massey Hall Sound Museum.

Think about:

- What are the most musical sounds?
- What are the least musical?
- What are your favourite noises?
- Why?

Using Soundtrap, try to combine some of the most musical sounds overtop of longer ambient noises.

- What combinations sound the best? Why?
- What effect does this have?
- Record some imitations of these sounds with your voice or with instruments, if you have any (remember: anything can be an instrument! Play with spoons, make homemade shakers, use a table as a drum!)
- Record some short melodies inspired by these sounds (using “instruments”/voices)

Using Soundtrap, create a “beat” from your favourite sounds.

- Use the rhythm grids provided in the app, trying varying patterns and combinations of short sounds.
Note: you can change the speed/tempo of the grids
- Consider that drum beats often use a repeated pattern of three sounds.

Kick/bass drum

Snare (often alternating with the kick)

Hi-hat (often overlapping an connecting the kick and snare

Most beats are in 4/4. The rhythm grids will be or can be set to this.

Try to create a piece that uses the “ABA” format:

- A - has an introduction that makes use of the some of the musical sounds (from or inspired by the Sound Museum) placed overtop some of the longer, more ambient sounds.
- B - shifts into your created beat with or without ambient sounds, and
- A - ends again with your introduction, or a close adaptation of it.

Export your project (under the “file” drop-down menu) and send it to us at education@mh-rth.com! We'd love to hear what you've made.