



Featuring the award-winning Live at Massey Hall films, these free films offer insight into the Canadian music scene, with behind the scenes interviews with artists, stellar performances, plus short curriculum connected guides with pre- and post-viewing activities for select films. Activities can be completed synchronously or asynchronously, in-school or at-home.

Suggested age: Secondary school, some concerts contain explicit language. See specific details, notes, and highlights in the "Concert Highlights" section below.

OWEN PALLETT



Owen Pallett, also known previously as "Final Fantasy" is a Milton raised Toronto-based composer, vocalist, producer, and multi-instrumentalist. He is well known for his collaborations and tours with band Arcade Fire. In 2014, Owen and Arcade Fire member William Butler received a nomination for best original score at the Academy Awards for the 2013 film *Her*. His music and performances make good use of looping pedals and his music crosses multiple genres including indie pop, classical, baroque pop, art rock, and electronic music. Owen has won and been nominated for many awards for his composed and collaborative work along with his solo pieces. Notable wins include a 2006 Polaris Music Prize and several wins for original score from the film *Her*.

TALKING POINTS

Owen played the violin during this film and used many different techniques on the instrument. Can you name how many and what kind of violin techniques he used (ex. Tremolo, plucking, bowing, etc.). If you see a certain technique but don't know the name, see if you can research it online. How did these different techniques affect the music?

When Owen was playing solo, he made great use of looping pedals. Have you seen other artists use looping pedals? What are the pros and cons of using looping pedals rather than having live artists play the looping sections?

Owen sings in a falsetto for some of his music. What is falsetto? Look this up if you don't know, and listen to some examples of the technique. How does this change the mood of the music? Do you know any other artists that use this technique?

Owen is a multi-instrumentalist. The instruments he plays in his music include: violin, viola, vocals, piano, harpsichord, synthesizer, guitar, and bass. How many instruments do you play? Do any of the skills from one instrument make another easier to play? What technique can you use on one instrument for another?



CONCERT HIGHLIGHTS AND NOTES

- 0-0:30** Talking about sound of Massey
- 11:58- 11:30** Talking about personal music background and career

ACTIVITY 1

For any way you make music (vocal or instrumental) find one technique you aren't familiar with and start to learn it. See what different ways you can learn to make music. You can take inspiration from this film for different techniques you might want to learn. Write a plan of how you will practice this new technique.

ACTIVITY 2

Make your own performance using looping! Use a looping app or software (Garageband, Chrome Music Lab, and Beat Maker) and create a looping beat you can either sing or play an instrument over. You can either make a digital loop or record something to loop. If you want to make a more complex looping performance, you can use two looping apps at once and have one loop a rhythm and one loop a melodic line. Try this in groups or as a solo performer!

ACTIVITY 3

This film features some theatrics in Owen's performance. How does this add to the performance? Do you think the music is enhanced by the lighting and smoke, theatrics and Owen's movement on stage? How can you liven up a performance? Find a song to play or sing and add 1-3 elements of theatrics to make the music more engaging.

ACTIVITY 4

In the song "The Riverbed" Owen conducts the quartet during the performance. Have you tried conducting before? Pair up or get into groups of 3. Alternate between your group who is the conductor and try to conduct each other for songs you already know. Learn how to lead and follow tempo with each other. To start, you can use songs that are in 4/4 as that is the most common time signature.



STAFF INTERVIEW Stephen McGrath, *Media and Artist Development Manager*

- *What is your role at Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall?*

I'm the Media and Artist Development Manager, responsible for developing and creating original digital productions, such as our liveatmasseyhall.com series, Variations, documentary short films, house presentations of Live Streams, etc., more notably, the role helps foster meaningful relationships with the artists we present on our stages and their audiences. Primarily, the work I do is integrated into the artist team (along with managers, labels, publicists, agents) to support creative and audience growth collectively.

- *How did you get in the world of Artist and Audience Development?*

Initially, in my earlier role as the in-house publicist, we realized that artists could and needed to represent themselves in more dynamic ways, beyond promoting just the concert we were selling tickets to. This goes back over a decade, as social media really began to take centre place as the medium that folks primarily consumed music news. When we promoted concerts for emerging acts that didn't always have the resources or teams to do this work, I assumed the role and created or contributed to building press kits, session videos, and other media assets with them. The need for strategic support for Artists became a priority task, and this development work became a way of life in our overall promo efforts. It naturally took on a significant piece of my time, so about three years ago, we made the strategic decision to designate a department dedicated to Artists and Media development officially. We started to pilot all sorts of ways we might be of greater use to the music community. It feels like we are really only getting started - which is also very exciting.

- *Tell us more about your education, career path, and interests?*

Through High School, I always played in bands. I grew up as a drummer and a pretty major fan of the live music experience. I attended or played at pretty much every show I could and was just obsessed with music. After one year at college (I attended the Humber College music program), I started touring in bands professionally around the world. Though it was fun and memorable, after about eight years of solid travel, I

realized that it wasn't the lifestyle I wanted for myself in the long term. So at the suggestion of the band's A&R person, I started an internship at our record label just to see what it was like on the other side of the music business. That quickly progressed into a full-time job at Universal Music in both the head office in Toronto and later as the west coast PR and promo rep in Vancouver for about six years. I moved back to Toronto to work in a boutique indie label called Arts & Crafts, where I worked as the label's publicist and as an artist manager. From there, I was drawn back into the live music side and started my path at Roy Thomson & Massey Halls. I am a long-time volunteer and juror with the JUNO Awards and various music-focused programs. I have published creative writing in magazines, and taught promotions and PR at Durham College.

- *How were you involved in Owen Pallet's Live at Massey Hall?*

As I have been for each of the films in the series, I am the film's Producer, the primary point person between the film crew and director, the audio capture and mix team, the Massey team, and the Artist and their team directly. I helped develop the series and make sure everyone had what they needed to do their respective roles. I ensure there is continuity in communication amongst everyone. I lead our team through the editing process, providing everything from creative feedback to getting permissions and approvals from the Artist manager and label. I was also the person off-camera, asking the questions during the interview section.

- *Who do you work with at the Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall?*

Though I am currently the sole person in Artist Development at the Halls, I'm in a unique position where my work interacts directly with several other departments. I mostly interact as part of the Programming team but also contribute to Marketing, Communications, Education and Outreach, Development, and Production, for example. A good portion of my work on behalf of Artists is interactions with external partners. I engage many contract workers and creative types, from photographers, filmmakers, writers, publicists, managers, and more. There are rarely two days that feel the same, which keeps it interesting.





STAFF INTERVIEW *Stephen McGrath, Media and Artist Development Manager*

- *What is some advice you have for someone interested in pursuing a career in Artist and Audience Development?*

Firstly, I think it's essential that you put the artist and their work first. Everything in the music business is possible because of them. To work in Artist Development, you need to respect that and understand all the elements that go into promoting an artist, and find ways that you can help enhance the work of the team around them. Each act has its own unique creative vision (or they are on a path to discover what that will be), and the job is to support and help create opportunities and connections for that artist to make the best work possible. Because when they do, we'll not only have the most incredible shows that audiences will remember forever, but life is much more enjoyable when we can share amazing experiences like that.

- *What is your favourite part of your job?*

Two things - Seeing acts accomplish goals and milestones, like getting to take that first step out onto the Allan Slaight stage at Massey Hall. Hearing the applause and being in the room when that happens is unlike most things. It's pretty great. And secondly,

being a part of events that could only occur with the team's collective expertise at the Halls. So many integral things need to happen at a very high level all at the same time, and it's mind-blowing to be a part of something that magical, night after night.

- *What is your favourite memory of the Halls?*

I honestly have so many. As a music fan, Massey Hall is like an amusement park - so many wild rides! Some dizzying, adrenaline-inducing, and some just plain fun. Seeing so many musical heroes is a fantastic job perk. But my favourite memories are always when you get to stand back, look up at all the people, often swaying with pals arm in arm, having the time of their lives.

- *Are there any other comments you would like to share with student readers?*

The music business is something that changes all the time. What worked once doesn't always work twice. It needs people like you in it to keep it evolving and getting better. There are many roles, and every job is important. The sum is greater than its parts.

Photos by Malcolm Cook

