

OPEN EARS 2025▶

MAY 29▼

JUNE 1●

[OPENEARS.CA](https://openears.ca)

#OE25



# FROM THE DIRECTOR

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On behalf of our board of directors and general manager, I am excited to present to you our Open Ears Festival 2025 (#OE25). This year's festival brings some of the world's highest caliber musicians to our region, featuring local, national and international award-winning soloists and ensembles.

We are undergoing a shift in our society which is causing a lot of people to tune out. As a festival this is a daunting task to maintain momentum, but our audiences are resilient. The transformative experiences of Open Ears provide a reprieve from doom scrolling and encourage an opportunity to tune in to something else. We take pride that our programming provides engaging and somewhat challenging ideas to our curious ears. These experiences give us hope, meaning, and a renewed sense of purpose in the face of adversity.

In 2025, we continue to engage with long-standing partners and supporters of Open Ears, while developing new relationships, new sponsors and new donors. We are grateful for the ongoing support for Open Ears and for the shared belief and confidence in the future of the festival.

Open Ears will present numerous performances and workshops to appease your curiosity, and highlight the many cultural activities in our area, including the multi-Grammy award winning Caroline Shaw and her duo Ringdown, and the indie-classical chamber opera Memories Beyond the Grave. We also have more premiere performances including sound installations, multi-media, and a musical robot.

I can't wait to see you in the audience throughout the festival!



Richard Burrows  
Artistic Director

**Open Ears Festival of Music and Sound would like to acknowledge that we are on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to the Haudenosaunee people of Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. This territory is the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnabeg, and Haudenosaunee Peoples.**



**SAT. May 24th. 7-9pm**

## Drone Day

**PWYC - All proceeds go to performing artists**

### Waterloo Park Bandshell

Drone Day is an annual international event celebrating experimental sound and community. First dreamed of by Marie Calrie Leblanc Flannagan in Waterloo, 11 years on Drone Day is now celebrated in dozens (perhaps hundreds?) of cities across the globe. This is the second year Andrew Jacob Rinehart is hosting Drone Day in Waterloo Park where they welcome folks of all kinds to make beautiful noise together in short sets. This year's lineup will feature an eclectic assortment of local artists sharing ambient dreamscapes, synthesizer improvisations, experimental DJing, and more! Following featured sets, we end drone day in a perpetual community drone where we play together for the setting sun. Bring your voices, singing bowls, shruti boxes, whirly tubes, bells, whistles, and anything else that you'd like.

Come listen, drone, and join in as we stretch a sound around the whole world!

🚫 NO FLYING MACHINES 🚫

**THURS. May 29th. 5:30-7pm**

## **Synth workshop with Alejandro Franco Briones, Iván López Pineda, and Diego Villaseñor de Cortina**

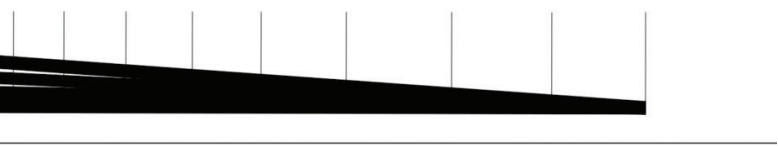
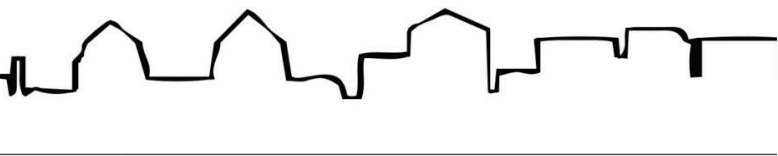
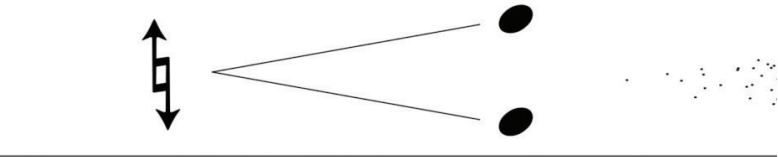
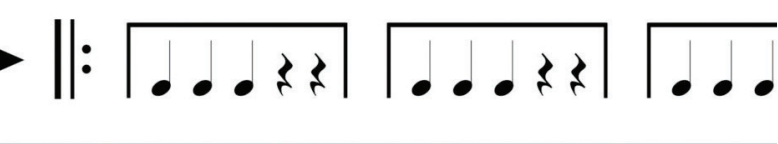
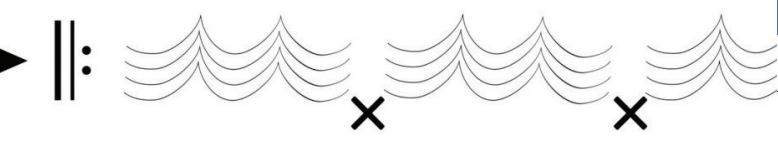
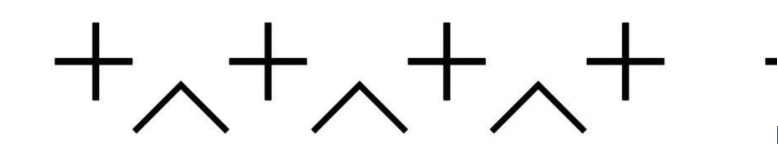
**FREE**

**Community Access Space (CAS), KWAG, 101 Queen St. North, Kitchener, ON**

Live Coding, Musical Synthesis and Networked Collaboration

Live coding is the practice of writing code as a performative act, with the output of this coding act taking the form of music, audio explorations, sound art, visuals, choreography, or storytelling. This workshop will allow participants to explore coding as musical performance using Estuary (<https://estuary.mcmaster.ca/>), a networked software that makes it possible for new practitioners to start making music in a zero-installation environment that favours collaboration. In our first session, participants will learn the basics of Estuary to create an ensemble, and we will introduce Tidal language syntax and basic operations. We will also visualize our sound output with Punctual language. In our second session, the facilitators will extend Estuary and enable it to connect via MIDI and OSC to any synthesizer with such capacities. We will explore synthesis with SuperCollider, Surge or any other instrument that participants would like to explore.





**THURS. May 29th. 8pm**

## **Null Point presents Relations, not Blank Slates**

**\$25/\$5 student with ID**

**The Registry Theatre, 122 Frederick St, Kitchener, ON**

Relations, not Blank Slates is a reckoning with the coloniality of settler experimental music, and a proposal for an otherwise musical practice. The program offers artistic inquiries into canonical works, and frameworks of settler experimental music are entwined with colonizing relations to Indigenous land as a terra nullius (“nobody’s land”) evacuated of Indigenous sovereignty and sanitized of troubling histories of colonization. Complementing this critical inquiry, the program also asks how Indigenous, arrivant, and settler musicians are proposing otherwise, power-sensitive ways of relating to Turtle Island lands. The program features recent works by Raven Chacon (Diné Nation) and Dylan Robinson (Stó:lō and Skwah Nations), and brings their reconceptualizations to past settler experimental music. The program features 1) critical, against-the-grain realizations of canonical settler experimental music works by John Cage, Alvin Lucier, and Fluxus, grounded in decolonial frameworks, and 2) a new decolonial performance practice for Yoko Ono’s neglected Hide Piece which learns from Ono’s own 1960s decolonial performance practices. Working at the rich boundary between music and contemporary art, the program features musical instruments, projection, ax, interactive electronics, theatre, noise, a banner, coins, found audio, spoken word, police whistles, and more.

**FRI. May 30st. 5:30-7pm**

## **Synth workshop with Alejandro Franco Briones, Iván López Pineda, and Diego Villaseñor de Cortina**

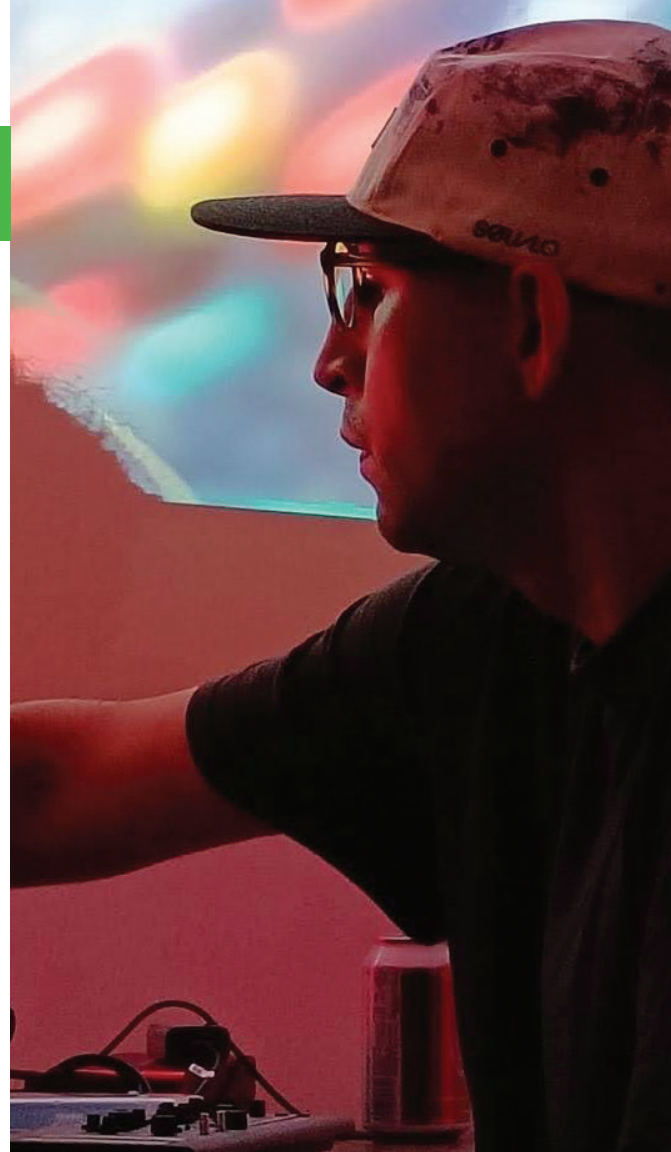
**FREE**

**Community Access Space (CAS), KWAG, 101 Queen St. North, Kitchener, ON**

Continuation of Synth workshop.

Live Coding, Musical Synthesis and Networked Collaboration

Live coding is the practice of writing code as a performative act, with the output of this coding act taking the form of music, audio explorations, sound art, visuals, choreography, or storytelling. This workshop will allow participants to explore coding as musical performance using Estuary (<https://estuary.mcmaster.ca/>), a networked software that makes it possible for new practitioners to start making music in a zero-installation environment that favours collaboration. In our first session, participants will learn the basics of Estuary to create an ensemble, and we will introduce Tidal language syntax and basic operations. We will also visualize our sound output with Punctual language. In our second session, the facilitators will extend Estuary and enable it to connect via MIDI and OSC to any synthesizer with such capacities. We will explore synthesis with SuperCollider, Surge or any other instrument that participants would like to explore.





**FRI. May 30st. 8pm**

## **(un)certainty**

**\$25/\$5 student with ID**

**Eastman Gallery KWAG, 101 Queen St. North, Kitchener, ON**

(un)certainty is an immersive, multi-disciplinary collaborative project between composer Lawton Hall, percussionist Abby Fisher, and multimedia artist Mare Hirsch. It engages with the most cutting-edge research being conducted in particle physics. The multi-sensory experience of (un)certainty brings together music composition and performance, data visualization, and installation art to engage with science currently being conducted at Fermilab's Muon g-2 experiment. The room-scale spatial nature of the performance, robotic percussion instruments, and lighting creates an immersive environment in which the performer and audience are surrounded by robotic instruments and dynamic light structures.

(un)certainty features a ring of computer-controlled mechanical woodblocks surrounding Fisher, who performs alongside the robotic ensemble. The piece is inspired by recent advances in physics, including the Muon g-2 project at Fermilab, which uses sensors on an electromagnetic ring to measure the behavior of strange subatomic particles called muons, and seeks a greater degree of certainty about the fundamental forces and elemental particles that comprise our universe. (un)certainty reflects a quest for knowledge through the combination of music, art, and embodied performance, and can be experienced as both a performance and an installation.

**FRI. May 30st. 9:30pm**

## **SlowPitchSound presents Within Touch**

**\$25/\$5 student with ID**

**KWAG, 101 Queen St. North, Kitchener, ON**

SlowPitchSound's otherworldly environmentally focused adventure *Within Touch* is a 50-minute audio/visual performance that features a unique style of musical making, which mirrors the incredible unfurling of the natural world. *Within Touch* is a multi-sensory show, combining music and visual projections to highlight the importance of the world's forests, as well as the life forms that inhabit them. The piece is performed using a turntable, looper, drum machine and video camera. During the performance the audience will have a closeup view of SlowPitchSound's (Cheldon Paterson's) process of storytelling projected on screen. They will witness improvised music and visual compositions created in a very unique way, an art form that SlowPitchSound has been developing for over two decades that he calls "Sci-fi Turntablism".







**SAT. May 31st. 9am**

## Channel Migration

**Free**

### **Victoria Park Lake at David St**

CHANNEL MIGRATION is a 14-station audio walk running the full length of Schneider Creek, from Victoria Park Lake all the way to Doon, where the Creek joins the Grand River. Each station's soundscape blends field recordings, creek-inspired music, and brief narrative reflections to consider Schneider Creek's ongoing relationship with the human and more-than-human communities that live beside and within the creek's path.

For over 192 years (and counting), Schneider Creek has experienced the impacts of settlement, industrialization, and urbanization in Berlin/Kitchener. The Creek has been extensively modified, straightened & partially contained in buried tunnels and open concrete culverts. These dramatic changes to the Creek's course and flow are important elements of our city's story, particularly now that 500m of the Creek is being 'renaturalized' to mitigate flood risks and improve urban ecosystem health in the face of climate change. Channel Migration invites listeners to attend to the Creek's history and consider the ways it is inextricably bound to our wider community, including both human and more-than-human lives who depend on these waters. Schneider Creek's story is our story, for good and for ill.

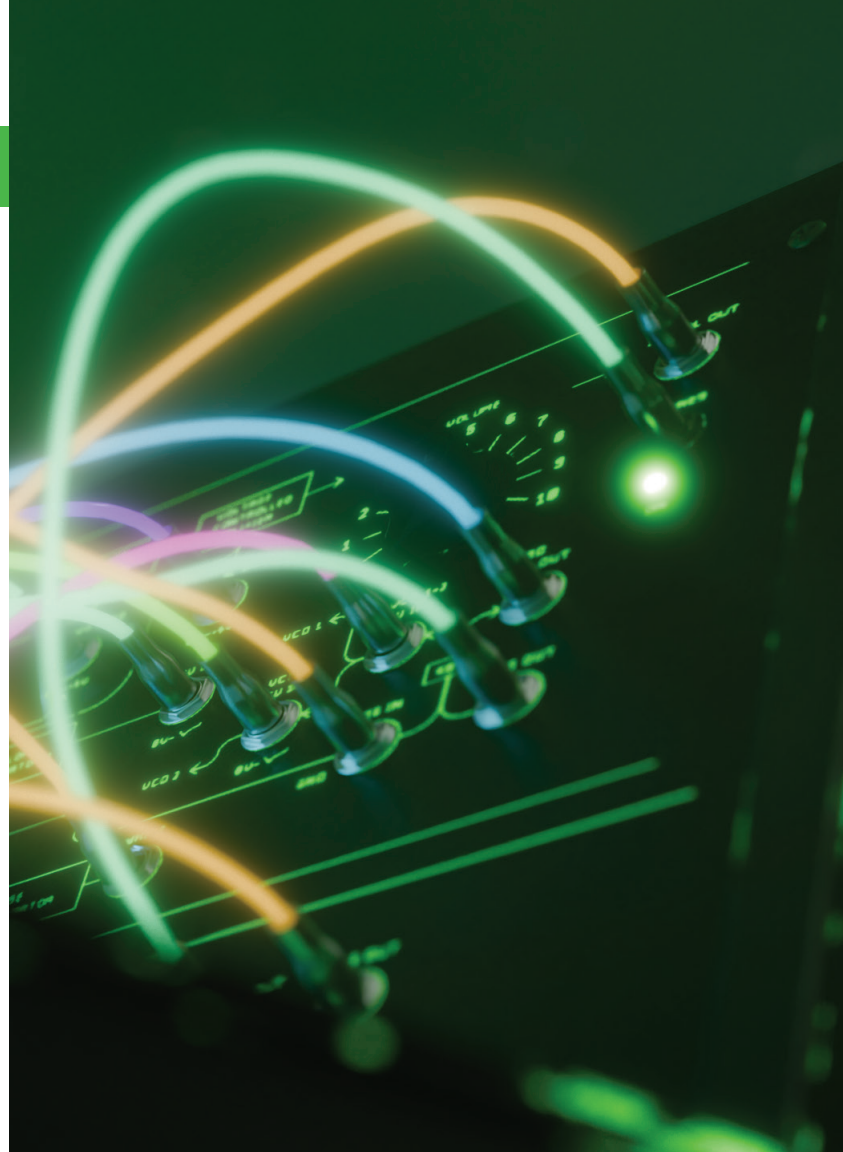
**SAT. June 1st. 11am-4pm**

## Synth Petting Zoo

**FREE**

**Community Access Space (CAS), KWAG, 101 Queen St. North, Kitchener, ON**

Are you “synth curious?” If so, stop by the Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery on Saturday, May 31st for an all-day “synth petting zoo!” There will be a range of synthesizers and electronic instruments to explore, ranging from classic keyboard synthesizers to mind bending sound machines to transport you into another dimension. In addition to being able to play with all the instruments on display, there will be staff on site to provide assistance, educational material on the history of musical synthesis and opportunities to connect with the local synthesizer community in Kitchener Waterloo.





**SAT. May 31st. 2pm**

## **Shawn Mativetsky presents Temporal Waves**

**\$25/\$5 student with ID**

**AOK Craft Beer and Arcade, 165 King St W Unit B03, Kitchener, ON**

*Temporal Waves is a new project from renowned Canadian tabla player Shawn Mativetsky, transporting the tabla into a rich electronic sound world. Shawn's tabla is bathed in the neon glow of analog synthesizers, the woozy warp of hand-manipulated tapes, and the electric patter of drum machines. Spanning crepuscular murk to widescreen elegies, Temporal Waves is an excursion deep into aural science fiction.*

*Temporal Waves' orientation toward yesterday's futuristic sounds certainly isn't superficial anemoia, it isn't even unadulterated nostalgia. Grounded in lived experience, the gravitation toward these sonorities and images connects to the underlying themes of the album on a fundamental level. The fascination with antiquated machinery expresses a longing for the more innocent futures depicted in 1980s popular culture, a stark contrast to the nihilistic question marks of today's uncertain forecasts. The music quietly outlines a redemptive arc, moving from the grim and very real foreboding of impending climate apocalypse and accelerationist capitalism to a more hopeful space where humanity discovers a more symbiotic relationship between nature and technology.*

*In the Temporal Waves live show, the tabla, a pair of drums from the North of India, takes centre stage, along with the use of analog synthesizers and guitar pedals. Video projections accompany the music, adding yet another dimension to the cinematic world of Temporal Waves.*

SAT. May 31st. 4pm

## Pirarán

**\$25/\$5 student with ID**

**The Registry Theatre, 122 Frederick St, Kitchener, ON**

Currently Pirarán is promoting *La Fábrica Colapsada*, this is a 30-minute-long operatic, networked piece made with visuals, multichannel audio, microtonal tuning, polytemporal rhythmic structures, fixed media, reactive algorithmic music in the form of improvisational semi-analogue synthesizers, and live coding accompanied by a website where the storytelling happens asynchronously. The artwork is also constituted by an online repository where the multimedia materials of the opera can be accessed and various pieces of software can be repurposed for geologic seismic data processing of the 2017 earthquake, wavetable synthesis instruments creation, and spatialisation.



# Memories Beyond the Grave

SAT. May 31st. 8pm

## Memories Beyond the Grave

**\$40/\$10 student with ID**

**Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts, 36 King St W, Kitchener, ON**

Memories Beyond The Grave follows the close sibling relationship between Francois René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) and Lucile de Chateaubriand (1764-1804), a bond strengthened through their love of nature during childhood and adolescence. Numerous poems and letters by Lucile and René are woven into excerpts from François René's world-famous autobiography *Mémoires d'outre tombe*. *Sung and spoken in both French and English, Donovan's fusion of contemporary and lush Romantic textures transports us into the magical and tumultuous world of these two siblings, masterfully staged and performed by a stellar ensemble of singers, instrumentalists and creative team.*

**Arts**  
NOVA SCOTIA  
NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

**SAT. May 31st. 9:30pm**

## **Erica Angell**

**\$25/\$5 student with ID**

**The Registry Theatre, 122 Frederick St, Kitchener, ON**

The Montréal-based Swedish vocalist and composer Erika Angell defies categorization. Her voice has been described as “a guiding presence” (Exclaim) that “splits the difference between the divine and demonic, skillfully unhinged” (Under The Radar) and “sits alongside the greatest indie female artists who are not afraid of anything” (Le Devoir).

Following two decades as a poetic and audacious force in genre-defying music in Stockholm and Montréal with projects including Josef & Erika, The Moth, Patrick Watson, and her acclaimed art-rock group Thus Owls, Angell has now released her first album under her own name: *The Obsession With Her Voice* - released via the legendary label Constellation Records on March 8th, 2024.





**SUN. June 1st. 11am**

## Anang Binesi

**Free**

**Willow Creek Island**

Biidanaamo (vai) “h/she takes h/ first breathe” Anang Binesi

*Biidanaamo (vai) is an immersive performance that uses Anishinaabe teachings to create a new experience where Indigenous perspectives and contemporary music come together. Inspired by the idea of a new space, this piece symbolizes the first breath we take in an act of connection, reflection and reconciliation.*

*Blending intuition and movement, Biidanaamo (vai) brings audiences into a place where music isn't just heard but felt and experienced.*



**SUN. June 1st. 1pm**

## Raphael Weinroth-Browne

**\$25/\$5 student with ID**

**The Registry Theatre, 122 Frederick St, Kitchener, ON**

Internationally renowned cellist and composer Raphael Weinroth-Browne is redefining the cello with his signature blend of metal and Middle Eastern music influences. His epic compositions combine cinematic soundscapes and unbridled virtuosity, and his live shows are a spellbinding and emotionally resonant experience.

**SUN. June 1st. 3pm**

## Ringdown

**\$25/\$5 student with ID**

**Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts, 36 King St W, Kitchener, ON**

Ringdown's music is like calling your first love on a rotary telephone, percussively tearing out the hammers from a 1924 vintage upright, and flinging each of them into space while you wait for every heartache you've ever felt to quietly return. Collaborators Caroline Shaw and Danni Lee Parpan—who between the two of them have a Pulitzer Prize, a handful of Grammys, and a “Best Drum Major” Award—describe Ringdown as an electronic cinematic pop duo based in Portland, OR and New York, NY. Others have described Ringdown as the love child of Johannes Brahms and Brandi Carlile—if they were born in the same century and if Brahms was a queer woman. You decide.







**DURATION of Festival**

## **(un)certainty (installation)**

**Free**

**Eastman Room, KWAG Community Room, 101 Queen St N, Kitchener, ON**

(un)certainty features a ring of computer-controlled mechanical woodblocks. The piece is inspired by recent advances in physics, including the Muon g-2 project at Fermilab, which uses sensors on an electromagnetic ring to measure the behavior of strange subatomic particles called muons, and seeks a greater degree of certainty about the fundamental forces and elemental particles that comprise our universe. (un)certainty reflects a quest for knowledge through the combination of music, art, and embodied performance, and can be experienced as both a performance and an installation.

Open Ears Festival is grateful for the support of the following:

Canada 



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des arts  
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

an Ontario government agency  
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



Region of Waterloo


FONDATION  
SOCAN  
FOUNDATION



WATERLOO REGION  
Community  
Foundation

The Musagetes Fund

Information + Tickets: [openears.ca](http://openears.ca)

   [openearsfest](https://www.openears.ca)

Open Ears is a registered Canadian charity under the Income Tax Act, registration number 81852 8861 RR0001.

Festival events may be photographed or recorded. Please be advised that photographs and/or video may be taken at all events for use by Open Ears in ongoing print, online, web, social media marketing and promotion.