



Beth McKenna

Saxophonist, Bandleader, Composer

(Montreal, QC/Nova Scotia – English/Français)

Finalist – Grand Prix du Jazz TD (FIJM) 2019

Two-time Finalist – Révélation Radio-Canada

Winner – Prix Opus – Concert de l'année – Jazz & Musique du Monde

Finalist – Prix Opus – Création de l'année

"One of the most versatile and talented artists in Montreal's jazz scene"

(Festival Internationale de Jazz de Montreal)

"McKenna est l'une des plus belles arrivées sur la nouvelle scène du jazz canadien. Elle confirme en même temps le statut de Montréal comme pointure fort du jazz moderne en Amérique"

(Frédéric Cardin – ICI Musique)

"L'univers musical est très évocateur, riche en émotions et fait facilement naître des images ou des impressions à l'auditeur. Beth McKenna a su charmer le public en livrant ses impressions musicales de plusieurs lieux et expériences. Sa musique affirme la primauté de l'émotion et de l'imagination, elle nous emmène en promenade sans pour autant nous surprendre. Un spectacle très agréable qui nous plonge dans l'imaginaire le temps d'une soirée"

(Benjamin Goron – Camuz.ca)

"Dans sa écriture, nous reconnaissons facilement les influences et les styles d'écriture, et surtout, l'immense apport du maître que fut Gil Evans. À mille lieues de ce que firent Ellington, Basie ou Kenton, Beth McKenna se fait l'avocate d'une approche poétique où toutes les pièces trouvent leurs appuis dans le maillage des atmosphères"

(Christopher Rodriguez – Journal de Montreal/Sortiesjazznights.com)

Known for her "jazz-rock" approach to writing, Beth McKenna is known in the Canadian jazz community for her unique approach to writing for large and small ensembles. She is best known for her large ensemble work, "Home: Montreal" which has received Canadian and international airplay, as well as recognition by critics, colleagues and audiences alike.

A graduate of McGill University's Schulich School of Music (2013, B.Mus/B.Ed), Beth's own personal musical tastes never really stuck to "classic jazz", traditional swing, bebop or "cool" jazz—even though she studied it intensively as part of the jazz curriculum. Upon discovering the music of her soon-to-be mentors Darcy James Argue, Christine Jensen, Jim McNeely, Maria Schneider and John Roney, Beth realized that her writing didn't fit in the box – rather, was influenced by her love of rock, pop and cinematic music.

Beth's compositions were consistently inspired by the world around her, used as a way of re-telling stories and illustrating places, powerful personal experiences or feelings to share with her audience. Using training from both her B.Mus and B.Ed degrees, Beth wrote for, arranged, coached, conducted and led the production of "Home: Montreal" from sketches on staff paper inspired by 8 locations within the city of Montreal, to a 4-track studio demo recording, to receiving a Prix Opus for her work, and a

main stage featured performance of *Home: Montreal* at the Montreal International Jazz Festival with the full band.

Following the success of her 1-hour, 18-piece ensemble concert “*Home: Montreal*” in 2017, Beth took on the new challenge of expanding her inspiration for writing, while reducing the ensemble size—writing her emotionally charged, powerful music for five-piece ensemble. Beth’s most recent work, “**Spaces Beyond Here**” is inspired by 10 different concepts of how humans are changing this planet—and how our decisions radiate out far beyond what’s directly in front of us.

Spaces Beyond Here reduces Beth’s ensemble from 19 members, down to 5, working alongside **Guillaume Martineau** on keyboards, **François Jalbert** on guitar and electronics, **Olivier Babaz** on electric bass and **Peter Colantonio** on drums. The 11 pieces within “*Spaces Beyond Here*” are 8 full-length tracks and 3 interludes—shorter works that are reduced in instrumentation and more like small thoughts, considerations or context building into some of the larger and more drastic statements.



(February 24, 2020 performance – Maison de la Culture Janine-Sutto, Montreal, QC)

“**Spaces Beyond Here**” focuses on global issues and using them as a point of inspiration for another series of works, creating a full-length, epic and high-energy concert work and studio recording (Studio Recording – October 2020, to be released early 2021).

The concept of the new work “**Spaces Beyond Here**” zooms out from focusing on only Montreal, as an illustration of situations and global problems that are not only in front of us, but affecting the entire planet and the human race as a whole, quickly changing how we live each day—identifying and illustrating environmental, social, societal, economic, cultural and international relations issues. These illustrations look to give perspective and awareness of these problems and issues through a programmatic, through-composed writing approach and inspiration from true events.



Not intended as a “protest” work, “Spaces Beyond Here” is meant to take an observational approach as a bystander to the world happening around us, creating a space for the audience to consider the effect we and others have on the world around us, and how we got where we are today.

Beth’s inspirations as a composer and performer includes: Donny McCaslin, David Binney, Maria Schneider, Radiohead, Pat Metheny, Mike Stern, John McLaughlin, Chick Corea, Joshua Redman, Brad Mehldau, Christine Jensen, Darcy James Argue, Keith Jarrett, Hiromi Uehara, among many others.

More information: Bethmckenna.ca
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Set List: Spaces Beyond Here:

1. *Introduction – Spaces Beyond Here*
2. *Perspective*
3. *Not Alone**
4. *Streets of Mexico City*
5. *Tides*
6. *Human Malfunction**
7. *Running Out*
8. *Indifference**
9. *Letting Go*
10. *From Divided to One*
11. *Ele(ctr)phant*



Photo Credit: T. L. Truong/B.McKenna

BETH MCKENNA QUINTET

Spaces Beyond Here

24 février, 19h30 - Maison de la Culture Janine Sutto
Spectacle bilingue - Billets: gratuit

À la frontière entre jazz fusion et rock, le travail que nous livre McKenna dénonce les crises globales actuelles et à venir.

An epic jazz-fusion, groove and rock concert work - McKenna pulls inspiration from global issues in her own compositions, with inspiration and cues caused by individual decisions, radiating outwards to affect others far from us

Beth McKenna – Composition,
Saxophones
Guillaume Martineau – Piano
François Jalbert – Guitare
Olivier Babaz – Basse
Peter Colantonio – Batterie