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Short Bio

PAUL CRAM

As an award-winning film composer, arranger and bandleader, Canadian saxophonist, clarinetist and jazz iconoclast Paul Cram has a multi-faceted career that spans over 30 years in Canada. From Vancouver to Toronto to Halifax he has forged a mature and unique voice that cuts across record bins and stylistic ghettos to capture the metaphorical "middle kingdom" between Europe, Asia, and America.

Detailed History

PAUL CRAM

Composer/Bandleader/Artistic Producer
Tenor Saxophonist/Clarinetist/Film Scoring

Paul Cram has a career that spans over thirty years from coast to coast in Canada. Originally from Vancouver he spent his formative years playing in R B bands and burlesque houses. In the late seventies he studied composition at the University of British Columbia and earned a Bachelor of Music Degree. After graduation he co-founded the New Orchestra Workshop, an organization that continues to this day to develop new ways of juxtaposing composition and improvisation in a large ensemble context. In 1982 he moved to Toronto and worked there for seven years leading the Solar System Sax Quartet, The Paul Cram Quintet and Orchestra and the Hemispheres Ensemble. In this period he developed a strong interest in writing music for theatre and film which led him to embrace technology before moving with his family to Nova Scotia in 1989. He has toured Canada extensively and been nominated twice for Juno Awards for Best Jazz Album. He now performs as a saxophonist/clarinetist with the UpStream Orchestra, The Guerrilla Orchestra, The Paul Cram Orchestra and Sextet and writes for television, theatre, and concerts.

For several years he has been Artistic Producer of the UpStream Music Association, a musician-based collective that produces cutting-edge collaborations in Halifax of local, national and international artists who share an interest in the flourishing of creative music. He has worked with Barry Guy, Julius Hemphill, Peter Lieberman, Alain Trudel, Lisle Ellis, Pierre Tanguay, Matt Brubeck, Jean Derome, Marilyn Lerner, Tena Palmer, Lori Freedman and Han Bennink to name a few.

His most recent CD "Campin Out" with the Paul Cram Orchestra was released on Victo Records to rave reviews and nominated for National Jazz Awards in two categories: best composer and best big band. The Orchestra performed at the prestigious Jazz em Agosto Festival in Lisbon, Portugal in the summer of 2004 and a new CD "Live in Lisbon" is available on Ombu Records of Montreal.

Selected film and television work includes : Silent Messengers (2005) – a feature documentary for the National Film Board., Foodessence - 39 episodes for the Life Network, Stanton T. Friedman is Real - documentary for Space Channel, Gullage's - a 13 episode comedy series for CBC shot in St. John's, Newfoundland and One Heart Broken into Song, a CBC MOW that won him a FIPA D'OR for best dramatic score from the Festival International de Programmes Audiovisuel in Biarritz, France. In theatre he has worked for Neptune, Mulgrave, Eastern Front, Ship's Company and Mermaid Theatres. He has had concert commissions from Bradyworks, UpStream, New Orchestra Workshop, Hemispheres and Symphony Nova Scotia.

He is a member of the Canadian Music Centre, SOCAN, The Canadian League of Composers, The American Federation of Musicians, Local 571 and the Guild of Canadian Film Composers. He uses Logic Audio music software on a Mac-based system. He resides in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia with his wife Mary and daughters Katharine and Laura.

He is currently writing a series of scores for silent films to be performed with his recently formed five-member Sunrise Film Orchestra.

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