

## **BERTRAND-HAMEL, THORNBORROW ARE TOP WINNERS IN SOCAN FOUNDATION AWARDS FOR A-V COMPOSERS**

**Toronto, July 16, 2013** –The SOCAN Foundation today announced nine recipients of the third annual SOCAN Foundation Awards for Young Audio-visual Composers.

This year's competition attracted 52 entries, awarding \$21,000 to nine prizewinners. "This is a unique competition, the only one of its kind in Canada," said Rick MacMillan, Manager, SOCAN Foundation. "It offers us an excellent opportunity to spotlight the many talented composers working in Canada's film and television industries, including this year's top multiple prize-winners, **Merlin Bertrand-Hamel** and **Chris Thornborrow**."

The SOCAN Foundation Awards for Young Audio-visual Composers recognize Canadian composers 30 years of age and under for specific musical works in four categories of music created exclusively for audio-visual support (film, TV, Internet). The competition was judged by a jury of three prominent, award-winning media composers: Ari Posner of Toronto, Richard Grégoire of Montreal and Graeme Coleman of Vancouver.

In a joint statement, the jury members praised the theme for the film *Féminines*, by **Merlin Bertrand-Hamel** of Prévost, QC, which won the \$3,000 first prize in the Musical Theme category, noting its "strong theme and magical, neat writing for a small string and woodwind ensemble." Likewise, the jury members lauded Toronto composer **Chris Thornborrow**'s "understated but tension-laden score" for *We Ate the Children Last*, which won the \$3,000 first prize in the Fiction category: "We were totally immersed in the film's people-vs-pigs theme."

Bertrand-Hamel also shared first prize in the Animated category for his score to *Amiko*, winning \$2,625. His co-winner, **Vincent L. Pratte** of Montreal, earned his \$2,625 share for his work on *SubLIME*. Thornborrow won the \$1,500 second prize in the same category, for *Lucian*.

Also capturing two prizes in the competition are **Rachel C. Léger** of Toronto, who won the \$1,500 second prize in the Musical Theme category for *Récit d'hyperinflation – Ouverture* and shared third prize (winning \$750) in the Fiction category for *Récit d'hyperinflation – Myseria*, and **Spencer Creaghan** of London, ON, winning two \$1,500 second prizes: in the Fiction category for *Accursed* and in the Non-Fiction category for *The Dirigible Journey*.

Additional Award recipients include **Dmitri Belichenko** (third prize) in the Musical Theme category; **Alexander Purcell** (shared third prize) in Fiction category; **Timon Wientzek** (third prize) in the Animated category; and **Benjamin Goron** (third prize) in the Non-Fiction category.

**(Recipients' bios and awards categories attached.)**

### **About the SOCAN Foundation Awards for Young Audio-visual Composers**

The SOCAN Foundation Awards for Young Audio-visual Composers is open to Canadian citizens 30 years of age and under.

### **About SOCAN Foundation**

Founded in 1992, SOCAN Foundation is dedicated to fostering musical creativity and promoting a better understanding of the role of music creators in today's society. The Foundation is an independent organization guided by its own board of directors. The board, which consists of composers, songwriters and music publishers, reflects concert music and popular music genres as well as the geographic and

linguistic regions of Canada. It is closely aligned to the interests of the members of SOCAN – the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada.

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### **3<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL SOCAN FOUNDATION AWARDS FOR YOUNG AUDIO-VISUAL COMPOSERS RECIPIENT LIST**

#### **Best Original Musical Theme (opening or closing)**

**First Prize: \$3,000 – Merlin Bertrand-Hamel, 28, Prévost, QC—*Féminines* (director Natacha Veilleux)**

Merlin Bertrand-Hamel completed his Bachelor's degree in popular music and a Diplôme d'Études Supérieures in film music at l'Université du Québec à Montréal. He performs as a drummer and percussionist in various bands. His knowledge of percussion, guitar, bass, piano and charango (an Andean string instrument), as well as his technical skills, allow him to work in a variety of styles in his film-music composition. He won second prize in the 2012 edition of the SOCAN Foundation Awards for Young Audio-visual Composers (animated category) for his work on *Mine de rien*.

**Second Prize: \$1,500 – Rachel C. Léger, 26, Toronto, ON— *Récit d'hyperinflation - Ouverture* (director Jason Ambrus)**

Rachel C. Léger has written music in various styles and has developed a special interest in scoring for visual media. Over the past several years she has worked in Los Angeles alongside composers Laurent Eyquem, Mike Regan and Mark Isham. Her television debut came with the airing of *Taking Park City*, by director Vincent Singleton. Other films featuring her scores have been exhibited at the Los Angeles International Underground Film Festival and Independent Film Quarterly Film Festival.

**Third Prize: \$750 – Dmitri Belichenko, 27, London, ON— *Metal and Flesh* (director François Driessen)**

Dmitri Belichenko is a composer and sound designer working in the field of electronic music. Born in Ukraine, he immigrated to Canada at the age of 15 and attended the Ontario Institute of Audio Recording Technology. His passion for all genres of music has inspired a clean slate for every project he undertakes, often leading to a mashup of styles. *Metal and Flesh* is an inspiring film about snocross champion Mike Schultz, who lost a leg in a tragic accident and designed his own prosthetic leg, eventually allowing him to return to his sport.

#### **Best Original Score: Fiction**

**First Prize: \$3,000 – Chris Thornborrow, 30, Toronto, ON— *We Ate the Children Last* (director Andrew Cividino)**

Chris Thornborrow has scored more than a dozen short films. He is co-founder and artistic director of Toy Piano Composers, a Toronto-based collective that over five seasons has

premiered more than 100 new chamber music works, short operas, songs and orchestral works by emerging composers. His music has been performed across Canada and the U.S. by many ensembles, including TorQ Percussion, juntQin keyboard collective, Ensemble Paramirabo and Arraymusic.

**Second Prize: \$1,500 – Spencer Creaghan, 21, London, ON— *Accursed* (director Pedro Pimentel)**

Spencer Creaghan studies music composition at York University in Toronto. He has composed music to more than 20 short and feature films, four stage shows, several advertisements, a video game and a children's theme park. In 2012 he was named the first recipient of a new mentorship placement with Orchestra London Canada, under conductor Alain Trudel. He has produced, mixed, mastered and provided orchestration for albums and EPs of several artists and bands, and released seven albums of self-produced material in various genres.

**Third Prize: \$750 (shared) – Alexander Purcell, 22, Toronto, ON— *167* (director Orhan Sumen)**

Alexander Purcell studied at the Royal Conservatory of Music and Humber College in Toronto and currently performs in ColinResponses as a guitar soloist and support player, appearing in Toronto clubs and online through the band's website. A new album is to be released this summer. While at Humber, he became closely involved with that school's film program and scored several documentaries and fourth-year thesis projects.

**Third Prize: \$750 (shared) – Rachel C. Léger, 26, Toronto, ON— *Récit d'hyperinflation - Myseria* (director Jason Ambrus)**

See bio listed under Best Original Musical Theme

**Best Original Score: Animated**

**First Prize: \$2,625 (shared) – Vincent L. Pratte, 26, Montreal, QC.— *SubLIME* (director Marielle Cuthbertson)**

Vincent L. Pratte earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in composition from l'Université de Montréal, studying with Alan Belkin, Isabelle Panneton and Pierre-Daniel Rheault. In 2013, he began studies in film music composition at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. His concert works have been performed by a number of musicians and ensembles in Quebec, and he has taken part in workshop readings of his works by Nouvel Ensemble Moderne and l'Orchestre de l'Université de Montréal. He has scored several short animated films and won first prize in the 2011 edition of the SOCAN Foundation Awards for Young Audio-visual Composers (fiction category) for his work on *Der triebende Fischer*.

**First Prize: \$2,625 (shared) – Merlin Bertrand-Hamel, 28, Prévost, QC— *Amiko* (director Marie-Annick Desrosiers)**

See bio listed under Best Original Musical Theme

**Second Prize: \$1,500 – Chris Thornborrow, 30, Toronto, ON—*Lucian* (director Randolph Lizarda)**

See bio listed under Best Original Score: Fiction

**Third Prize: \$750 – Timon Wientzek, 30, Toronto, ON.— *Story Explorers, episode #18* (director Justin Stephenson)**

Timon Wientzek graduated at the top of his class in 2008 at the Audio Recording Academy and is also an engineer and music producer for various bands. He has composed music for films, documentaries and television productions and commercials that have aired on The Learning Channel and National Geographic. *Story Explorers* is a new 26-episode children's series set to debut this fall on TVOntario. The series emerged from a workshop during which kids learn basic story structure and then write their own stories based on some basic visual building blocks. The stories are then animated and composed based on performances by the kids.

### **Best Original Score Non-Fiction**

**First Prize: Not awarded**

**Second Prize: \$1,500— Spencer Creaghan, 21, London, ON— *The Dirigible Journey* (director Kevin Badali)**

See bio listed under Best Original Score: Fiction

**Third Prize: \$750— Benjamin Goron, 23, Montreal, QC.— *Papi Gaston* (director Marc-André Brazeau)**

Composer is originally from Toulouse, France, where he studied literature, music, history, philosophy, German and ancient Greek. He focused on musicology at l'Université de la Sorbonne in Paris, earning a Master's degree in 2011 with special mention. During that time, he wrote film and theatre reviews, and musicological articles, for various journals. A pianist and trumpet player, he was interested in composition from a young age. Moving to Canada, he studied film music at l'Université du Québec à Montréal, working with Michel Corriveau, Mathieu Lavoie and Marc Ouellette and graduating with a Diplôme d' Études Supérieures.