



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Saskatoon composer wins the Canadian Music Centre's Emerging Composer Competition**

**November 13, 2009 (CALGARY, AB)** – This February, Darren Miller, a young Saskatchewan composer, will have a new work premiered by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra on February 10, 2010, as part of the Winnipeg New Music Festival as part of his prize for winning the 2010 Emerging Composer Competition of the Canadian Music Centre, Prairie Region. Another part of his prize is a composition residency at the Banff Centre.

The winning composition, *for amma*, was composed after the recent passing of Alda, his grandmother (amma in Icelandic) and is dedicated to her memory. “In 2001, my amma paid for the first year of my musical studies at the University of Saskatchewan, and she continued to encourage all of the compositional activities that resulted from these studies,” Miller says. “She was a lifelong resident of Gimli and Winnipeg, making the premiere of this work in Winnipeg so soon after her passing an extremely moving experience for me.”

Miller’s work, *for amma*, was chosen from orchestral works submitted by emerging Canadian composers with Prairie connections by a jury, which included composer-in-residence of the Winnipeg Symphony and former Emerging Composer Competition winner Vincent Ho.

Currently a PhD student at the State University of New York, Miller received his Bachelor degree at the University of Saskatchewan and his Master’s from The University of Victoria. He has also pursued studies in Germany and at the Banff Centre, where he directed the 2009 International Young Composers Forum. Ensembles from Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal to Turning Point Ensemble to the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra have performed his works. In addition to composition, Miller also dabbles in conducting and computer music performance. His website is: [www.darrenmiller.ca](http://www.darrenmiller.ca)

The Emerging Composer Competition prize, established by an anonymous donor and administered by the Canadian Music Centre, Prairie Region aims to help young composers establish themselves in this extremely challenging and competitive field. The chance to have a work performed by a professional symphony orchestra is not an opportunity afforded to many composers, and is a great honour. Previous winners include Abigail Richardson and Jocelyn Morlock and Vincent Ho, who have gone on to very successful composing careers.

For more information:

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# Backgrounder

## Darren Miller

Born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Darren Miller began piano lessons at a relatively young age. Impatient with the difficulties involved in learning western art music, Darren instead turned to the punk and underground music scenes of Saskatoon. Ventures in this realm afforded him the chance to travel across Canada for the first time, and resulted in several months spent living in a van with three of his best friends. Upon his return to Saskatchewan, a music appreciation class with Joan Halmo awoke in Darren a desire to pursue music seriously. Having forgotten any earlier musical training, Darren began from scratch with strict practice and study regimens under Saskatoon pianist Martin Janovsky. In the fall of 2001, Darren was accepted to the theory and composition program at the University of Saskatchewan, where he obtained a B.Mus. with distinction. While at the University of Saskatchewan, Darren had the chance to study with Bonnie Nicholson, Walter Kreyszig, David Kaplan, Elizabeth Sayrs, and Gyula Csapó.

Between 2006 and 2008 Darren completed his M.Mus. in composition at the University of Victoria under Michael Longton, Christopher Butterfield, Andrew Schloss, Jonathan Goldman, Dániel Péter Biró, John Celona, and Harald Krebs, among others.

In the summer of 2008 Darren left Canada for the first time to present his newly composed string quartet at the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music in Darmstadt, Germany. The following fall and winter were spent composing, programming, studying, and performing at the Banff Centre, where Darren also organized and directed the 2009 Banff Centre International Young Composers Forum.

Though a relative newcomer to the world of composition, his works have already been performed or read by: The Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal (2006), Susu Robin (2006), The Turning Point Ensemble (2007), Aventa (2007), The Quatuor Bozzini (2007 and 2008), The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (2008), The New York Miniaturist Ensemble (2008), as well as countless student ensembles.

Darren is currently a PhD candidate with the State University of New York at Buffalo. While focusing mainly on his compositional studies with Cort Lippe, Darren is also pursuing opportunities off campus as a pianist, performer of computer music, conductor, and composer. Upcoming performances and collaborations are scheduled with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, pianist Luciane Cardassi, the Talujon percussion quartet, recorder and electronics duo Terri Hron and Juan Parra, visual artist Lindsay Royale, and the In Extensio trio of Montréal.

## The Canadian Music Centre

The Canadian Music Centre (CMC) celebrates its 50th Anniversary in 2009 as Canada's only organization mandated to house, actively promote and distribute the music of Canada's composers within Canada and around the world. The CMC acts as a multi-pronged organization offering a rich portfolio of programs, products and services that help develop a viable marketplace for the music of its Associate Composers. With over 700 established composers to date, the CMC is Canada's primary resource for scores, parts, recordings and information about Canadian composition and is an essential body in Canada's cultural landscape. It makes its vast catalogue of music accessible through an array of programs. At its core, the CMC houses a public lending Library and Archive with some 20,000+ scores and recordings which continue to expand as composers deposit new works. Visit [www.musiccentre.ca](http://www.musiccentre.ca) for more information.