FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winnipeg composer wins Emerging Composer Competition

December 3, 2010 (CALGARY, AB) – Luke Nickel, a young Winnipeg composer, will have his orchestral work premiered by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra on February 3, 2011, as part of the Winnipeg New Music Festival – part of his prize for winning the 2011 Emerging Composer Competition of the Canadian Music Centre, Prairie Region. In addition to the performance, Nickel will receive a cheque for $1000 and a two week residency at the internationally renowned Banff Centre.

The winning composition, L’étoile noyée translates to “The Drowned Star.” Nickel says of the piece: “It sonically represents the image of a star tethered under water, sputtering and dying. It is an image of extreme tension, at once fantastic and horrifying, radiant and full of despair.”

L’étoile noyée was chosen from orchestral works submitted by young 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.

A Winnipeg resident, Nickel earned his undergraduate degrees in composition and flute performance at the University of Manitoba where he studied under Jan Kocman, Dr. Michael Matthews, Dr. Gordon Fitzell, and Orjan Sandred. His works have been performed both locally and internationally and in 2009 he received second place in SOCAN’s young composers’ competition. Currently, Nickel is organizing the Cluster New Music and Integrated Arts Festival and hopes to continue his schooling at the graduate level.

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, Jocelyn Morlock, and Vincent Ho, among others, who have gone on to very successful composing careers.

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**Luke Nickel (b. 1988)** is a Canadian composer. He attended the University of Manitoba Marcel A. Desautels Faculty of Music, completing undergraduate degrees in both flute and composition studying with Jan Kocman, Dr. Michael Matthews, Dr. Gordon Fitzell, and Orjan Sandred. He has completed many projects and commissions for various groups, ensembles, and individuals, including: Antiphony, the Glenlawn Collegiate Wind Ensemble, the Harrington/Loewen duo, the University of Manitoba Saxophone Quartet “Mise à Sax”, the University of Manitoba Contemporary Opera Lab, and many others. His works have been performed all over the world, from Canada to France to Thailand. In 2009, he won second place in the SOCAN young composers’ competition (Godfrey Ridout category) for his chamber opera *Jack and his Jillions*, as well as first prize in the *New Music Under Living Skies* competition for his saxophone solo piece *Voguely Postfrangible*. His works have been read by the likes of Eighth Blackbird, Toca Loca, and the Quasar Saxophone Quartet. In 2008-09, Luke completed the ACI mentorship program with Vincent Ho and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, resulting in a reading of his orchestral work *L’étoile noyée*. Luke is currently organizing the second iteration of the Cluster New Music and Integrated Arts Festival and applying for further schooling at a Graduate level.

**The Canadian Music Centre**

The Canadian Music Centre, Prairie Region (CMC) celebrates its 30th Anniversary in 2010 as Canada’s only organization mandated to house, actively promote and distribute the music of Canada’s composers within Canada and around the world. Nationally, 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.