

John Mark Sherlock blends the sounds of old electronic keyboards that he loves with traditional orchestral instruments



138

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MACLEAN'S 100

LEADERS AND DREAMERS

CANADA'S GREATEST INNOVATORS AND HOW THEY CHANGED THE WORLD

JOHN MARK SHERLOCK is connecting to the music as well. The Toronto composer toils happily, if somewhat obscurely, in the city's contemporary music scene, writing commissioned pieces for performers and small dance companies. He is in love with old electronic keyboards: Hammond organs, Rhodes pianos. His music blends their sounds with traditional orchestral instruments.

His works are a response to the music he loves, from pop songs to classical works to jazz. Composing for him begins with what he envisions as a kind of musical shipwreck, "with all this flotsam and jetsam floating around on the surface, and I'm just hanging on to a piece of something." It's like an advanced kind of digital sampling, with a human processor—himself. But the source music is deeply hidden, and the results are unique and unexpectedly easy to listen to, with a kind of stillness that is reminiscent, sometimes, in a devious way, of . . . Glenn Gould. 



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