BUSINESS PLAN

Composing & Arranging

CONTACT INFO
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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY OF PLAN

Musical composition (and arrangement) in the so-called classical tradition is the exclusive focus of this business plan. At this point it continues as a supplemental venture to my 26 hour per week employment as a church musician, and yet, artistically speaking, it has always been the most important musical activity to me of all those in which I am involved.

This business plan seeks to expose the fruits of my compositional labour, both past and future, in a much more intentional and strategic way to the market, so that they can be experienced by more people, and bring in more remuneration and greater opportunities for future projects.

The main strategies detailed in this plan centre around putting the finishing touches (revisions, editing etc.) on scores and recordings of previously performed works; creating a database to organize the work and its presentation to the market; renewing old contacts and making new ones; being intentional and organized about applying for funding; and finally, creating a web presence, initially through a business website and through presence on the websites of the Canadian Music Centre and SOCAN (as I am a member of both), and subsequently through select social media.
SECTION 2
THE BUSINESS DESCRIBED, ITS MISSION & GOALS

DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Business Activity
Over the years I have composed a substantial body of musical works in the “classical” tradition; this business will market this catalogue of works in various ways to performers and presenters. The business will also market my abilities and track record as a composer to bring in new commissions for fresh work.

Legal Form of Ownership
The business has been a Sole Proprietorship, and there is no reason to contemplate a different form of ownership at this point. It also encompasses any other form of remunerative musical activity in which I engage, but not the 26-hour church position as it once did.

STATEMENTS

Identity Statement
I am XXXXXXXXX and I compose mostly classical music for a variety of musical contexts, with a specialty in choral and vocal works.

Vision Statement
I want to be able:

◆ to compose steadily for a wide variety of contexts;
◆ to have my scores readily available for purchase and performance through various channels;
◆ to have my compositions performed widely; and
◆ to gain commissions both privately and through grants organizations.

Mission Statement
I create musical compositions in a variety of classical genres that are artistically meaningful to me, but also respond to the needs and desires of commissioners, performers, and audiences.

Value Statement (Business/Art Philosophy)
It is important to write music that expresses my own voice, and to continually strive for artistic integrity and excellence, transcending the immediate context so that the result might continue to have a life after the first performance. I prefer not to create art in a vacuum but rather in dialogue or collaboration with other artists, including commissioners.
GOALS & OBJECTIVES
(see also Section 4. Marketing Plan)

Goals:

◆ Increase my profile as a composer in city, country, and the world
◆ Be in demand for and successful at receiving commissions
◆ Have works performed regularly
◆ Make my scores easily and commercially available for performance
◆ Have significant time in my schedule for composition
◆ Bring in enough free-lance revenue to be able to consistently write off all business expenses (including business-use-of-home)

Objectives

◆ learn database program (Filemaker Pro) (started already)
◆ build a database catalogue of all my compositions with fields to keep track of commissions, performances, marketing possibilities and records, publishing sales etc.
◆ finish refining/preparing for the marketing and publication of previous compositions
◆ finish editing sound recordings of previous work
◆ establish a web presence starting with a well-designed website
◆ market existing works to potential presenters, reviving old contacts and seeking out new ones.
SECTION 3

THE PRODUCT & ITS MARKET

THE PRODUCT

General Description
The product of my artistic practice is musical compositions, mostly for the classical music world in the “classical” music tradition (including the incorporation of “outside” influences).

Detailed Description
Compositions and Arrangements:
♦ Anthems
♦ Solo songs and song cycles
♦ Larger choral works (cantatas) with piano or with instrumental ensemble
♦ Multi-movement instrumental works (suites) for chamber groups, orchestras
♦ Musical Theatre works including for young audiences
♦ Arrangements of folksongs, historical popular songs
♦ Hymn and Carol arrangements

THE MARKET

Historical Context: the Changing Structures of Patronage
The career of a “classical” composer was originally tied to a court (Haydn ate with the servants) or religious institution (Bach was a Cantor, Vivaldi taught at a school for female orphans). With the rise of the middle class and the consequent advent of public concerts and opera, some composers started to break away to adopt the life of a freelancer. Handel in London, Haydn late in his career (also in London), Mozart and Beethoven are notable examples. The rise of music publishing to supply amateurs (and professionals) with sheet music also became a source of income. Some governments (e.g. the USSR) would supply stipends, though there was often a price to pay in terms of ideological correctness.

In the present era, religious institutions continue to support composers, though composition is no longer part of their expected duties; and secular institutions such as conservatories and universities also provide a steady pay-cheque with the requirement of compositional output as part of the professor’s academic contribution. Freelance compositional activity is usually supplemented by other musical activity (employment or free-lance) such as teaching, conducting, or commercial composition/arranging. There are a few who somehow manage to compose more or less full-time. Sources of free-lance income are mostly government or foundation grants and
commissions, but also comprise performing rights, publication royalties, and recently, direct sales of self-published work in music stores and over the internet.

The centering of music patronage in the university and the peer-reviewed grant structure has led to classical music, and especially the avant-garde, being now often considered as the music of an intellectual and social elite (and increasingly economic elite, as public subsidization has fallen off and ticket prices have risen). It’s unclear when “elite” becomes “elitist” . . .

These modern social/economic changes have gone hand in hand with changes in compositional style and approach, the role and status of the composer, and the market for the composer’s work.

Challenges and Opportunities: Discussion

The Market: Entry Barriers and Openings

Entrance to the market is controlled by the interpretive intermediaries between the creator and the audience, unless the composer is him/herself a public presenter.

Thus relationships with performers can be very important. Certain performers/artistic directors will promote the work of a composer or set of composers who suit the mandate of the organization, and perhaps have a developed personal or professional relationship with the intermediary. This promotion can take the form of applying for or arranging for commissions, initial or repeat performances, recordings by the presenter, or recommending works for inclusion in a series of publications under the performer/director’s editorship.

Of course the audience’s impression of a composition is only as good as the work’s performance. The work’s (and composer’s) reputation is enhanced by performance by a well-known artist or ensemble and by broadcast on radio or professional recording. This may lead to repeat performances, but not necessarily, and so requiring further marketing efforts. However, if a recording (even archival) can be made of a performance, that becomes useful for marketing and for grant applications for future commissions.

This would indicate that networking with others in the classical music field is a very important part of career building. (Student days are particularly important time to build up contacts.)

The newer forms of Internet marketing and sales can to some extent eliminate the “middleman”, but reputation is still a very important part of it.

So even though the market is small, and the financial rewards also, there still exists a “star” system whereby composers’ work will be more likely to presented if they have a “name”.

Finally there are the juries of peers convened by granting bodies; the opinions and biases of jury members obviously affect who gets the goods.

Other Factors Affecting the Market

One frustration for composers is tokenism, especially on the part of large traditional performing organizations that aren’t willing to take the risk of presenting large contemporary works. So they present short works (such dictates prompting Murray Shafer’s Toronto Symphony commission No Longer than Ten Minutes). A recent trend is to fulfill their obligations to living, especially
local, composers through barely rehearsed “New Music Festivals”. This situation creates a vicious cycle where composers don’t get the experience necessary to write substantial works that can compete with symphonic music of the past. Attempts are made to remedy this through workshops for “emerging composers” with the National Arts Centre Orchestra etc., and through Toronto’s Esprit Orchestra that specializes in new works for orchestra.

Another frustration for composers is “premiere-itis”. New work is valued for the excitement that goes with a “world premiere” but then rarely gets a second hearing, let alone make it into the repertoire. (One successful Canadian composer has reframed his career as being like a cabinetmaker creating one-off pieces for his clients.)

There is more potential for repeat performances in the church/school/community choir world, and someone like John Rutter has made a good go of writing well-crafted but highly accessible, often pop-inspired small and large pieces for this clientele. He also formed his own professional choir to create commercial CDs, especially of his larger works. There is a very active online community around choral music, and this would seem to lend itself to marketing and sale of such compositions over the internet.

Philip Glass has done very well by using pop music strategies to build a classical reputation.

Finally, the funding situation for classical music composition has deteriorated, with government cutbacks, less arts friendly political ideology, an attempt to broaden the range of types of art funded to reflect a multi-cultural (or culturally fragmented) society etc. As well, such supports as the CBC orchestra have been dismantled.

**List of Trends Relative to Compositional Practice and Market**

- Increased use of Internet
- Increasing cultural diversity
- Reduced music education in the schools
- Reduced purchase of CDs in favour of downloaded mp3 files
- Increased use of portable music, often pirated
- Increased use photocopied music, often not respecting copyright
- Creative Commons
- Decreased participation in mainline churches
- Decreased adventurousness of orchestras
- Anti-elitism, anti-intellectualism, cuts in funding
- Ideological belief that arts should pay their own way (anti-subsidization)
- Do-it-yourself practices employing digital technology for:
  - music engraving and recording
  - word processing
  - internet marketing
List of Challenges and Opportunities Presented by these Trends

**Challenges**

Roads to market more multi-faceted.

Will need to:

- use more individualized approaches to connecting
- be more strategic and more intentional about planning in order
- be technologically adept and up-to-date
- be more entrepreneurial

At the same time will have to avoid spreading oneself too thin.

**Opportunities**

- Possible to self-publish and self-record
- Possible to reach an international audience through the internet
- Possible to publicize cheaply and quickly through the internet

THE PRODUCT & THE MARKET

The Product in Relation to the Market

The music I create is of the 20th and 21st Century in approach, but not really “avant-garde”. It is technically challenging, but not prohibitively difficult for good amateurs and professionals to perform, and moderately challenging to the average classical music listener.

On the surface there is nothing earth-shatteringly unique about my work, but I have been told that I have a distinctive personal voice that shines through...

My existing body of work, or at least much of it, I believe is fairly marketable, and has been published (a few titles) and performed by a variety of artists and ensembles.

Strengths, Competencies, Advantages of the Business and Product

My compositions are imaginative, often incorporate elements of various types of music, and are technically accomplished. They are usually designed to be idiomatic to the instruments or voices that will be playing them, and are sensitive to any text that is being set. This is partly due to my ongoing experience as a practical musician/performer/director.

As Director of a church music program that includes a willing choir with paid soloists and a budget for instrumentalists, I have the advantage of being able to perform and record some of my compositions at no cost to myself (but without immediate financial gain either). There is also the availability of free space for rehearsal or concert presentation, and financial support for music
software, database software, some storage for scores etc., not to mention a steady income. There
is also sophisticated printer/photocopier/scanner equipment that I can employ at a preferred rate.

I work hard to bring the work to as polished and well-crafted a state as possible.

I engrave my compositions with music software, and I have made a point of refining my
technique so that they look like professionally prepared scores.

I have demonstrated a capability of meeting deadlines.

**Listing of Potential Audiences** (in the broad sense of “buyers”, “consumers” or “customers”)

**Performers**
- church choir music directors
- community choir conductors
- school ensemble conductors
- chamber musicians
- soloists
- music theatre/opera producers, artistic directors

**Publishers**
- commercial publishers esp. choral
- Royal Canadian College of Organists publications
- performer-editors of publisher “signature” series
- Canadian Music Centre library (sales and rentals)
- music store managers (for self-published works on consignment)
- composer him/herself through own website (self-published)

**Others**
- scholars/academics
- music librarians
- journalists (reviewers)
- broadcasters and record companies (including the Canadian Music Centre)

**Public**
- church singers and congregations
- amateur community and scholastic singers and their audiences
◆ audiences for professional concerts
◆ listening audiences of radio and TV
◆ purchasers of classical CDs

**Listing of possible points of distribution**

◆ traditional publishing or scores (precarious, as I have discovered the hard way) including the Royal Canadian College of Organists press

◆ rental or sales through the Canadian Music Centre (of which I’m a member but which I haven’t used to advantage)

◆ self-publishing over the internet (which would be a new venture, and on which I intend to focus).

◆ some self-publishers also manage to distribute through retail stores

◆ recordings (I have arrangements on one CBC recording which bring in small amounts from broadcast from time to time, and on one non-commercial (fundraising) CD.) Recordings of concert performances broadcast on media another possibility. Recordings through the CMC another possibility.

◆ grant programs and composition competitions are chancy and labour-intensive but enticing opportunities to enhance distribution (and reputation and exposure).
### SECTION 4: MARKETING PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Target Consumers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Benefits</strong></th>
<th><strong>4 Ps Product, Place, Price, Promotion</strong></th>
<th><strong>Marketing Tools and Resources</strong></th>
<th><strong>Time-lines</strong></th>
<th><strong>Budgeted Expenses and Revenues</strong></th>
<th><strong>Evaluation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ Conductors</td>
<td>♦ Caché of Canadian premiere ♦ Excitement of learning and performing new work ♦ New musical interpretation of old texts ♦ Presentation of new texts to a wider audience ♦ Sacred music supplying current theological and liturgical needs (themes) ♦ Shows youngsters not all classical composers are dead</td>
<td>♦ Product ♦ Moderately difficult, reasonably accessible classical compositions.</td>
<td>♦ CMC library: deposit scores ♦ CMC website: create profile ♦ CMC newsletter: give notice of performances etc.</td>
<td>♦ Jan. 31, 2010: build lists of Target Consumers ♦ Jan. 31, 2010: design and build catalogue of compositions. Divide into marketing categories (Internet; CMC; publisher)</td>
<td>♦ get trained on Filemaker Pro through my “day job” (free) ♦ get Filemaker Pro software through my “day job” (free) ♦ no new revenues planned until 2010 (the “day job” covers living expenses)</td>
<td>♦ evaluate progress at end of each month</td>
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<tr>
<td>♦ Ensembles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Place ♦ Internet ♦ Interactions with performers ♦ Mail (publishers)</td>
<td>♦ Music Faculty newsletter: send in news ♦ Personal website: build, list and sell compositions</td>
<td>♦ Jan. 31 2010: Have grant deadlines and requirements for 2010 researched and strategized ♦ Jan. 31 2010: Have researched online resources of CMC, CLC, SOCAN ♦ Mar 31, 2010: learn Filemaker Pro</td>
<td>♦ 2010: start selling over the internet ♦ 2010: receive at least one commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>♦ Performers</td>
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<td>♦ Price ♦ Cost of commission ♦ Time and staff resources for grant proposal by commissioner ♦ Costs of Publishing, Promo, Royalties by publisher</td>
<td>♦ Data base: compositions and arrangements ♦ performance history ♦ potential “clients” ♦ E-mail: build e-letter list ♦ Mail: mail off scores to potential performers, commissioners</td>
<td>♦ 2010: organize suitable project and apply for OAC and CC grant</td>
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<td>♦ Arts Councils</td>
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<td>♦ Promotion ♦ Sending around scores and recordings ♦ Media (old &amp; new) advertising, including “trade” ♦ Depositing scores at CMC, libraries ♦ Singing teachers</td>
<td>♦ Grants: be intentional about submitting projects ♦ Contacts: renew personal connections with old “clients”</td>
<td>♦ 2010:</td>
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<td>♦ Foundations</td>
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<td>♦ Patrons (individual)</td>
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<td>♦ Publishers</td>
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<td>♦ Recording companies, organizations (CMC)</td>
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<td>♦ Teachers (individual and class)</td>
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<td>♦ Libraries</td>
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<tr>
<td>♦ Conductors</td>
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<td>♦ evaluate progress at end of each month</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 5
OPERATIONS & FINANCE

OPERATIONS
The business operations are relatively simple. The home dining area also houses computer, sound equipment, bookshelves and filing cabinets. Some overflow is stored at the church where I am Music Director. This is not 100% ideal, and there is currently a need for more space, which hopefully can be freed up by some purging and reorganization. I do my own taxes, music copying and recording etc., and have not needed to employ outside help. This keeps overhead to a minimum.

FINANCE
Fees, Prices, Commissioning and Royalty Structures

◆ Commissions for third-party funded compositions usually based on a fee schedule set by the Canadian League of Composers and endorsed by the Canadian Arts Council and Arts Council of Ontario.
◆ Private commissions use the CLC scale as a starting point, but are open to negotiation if the resources are limited.
◆ Sale of scores is based partly on cost of reproduction and partly on the going rate for music purchases in retail stores.
◆ Dramatic works are separately negotiated and do not follow any CLC guidelines. 10% of the cost of a performance usually goes to the composer.
◆ Performance licensing fees are distributed by the Society of Composers Canada (SOCAN) according to reports supplied by presenters, media etc.
◆ Royalties from publication by a publisher to which copyright has been assigned are based on a contract between the composer and publisher.
## Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUE (Employment and Business)</th>
<th>AVERAGE 1995-2008 (not inflation-adjusted)</th>
<th>% of GROSS</th>
<th>BUDGET 2010</th>
<th>% of GROSS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHURCH (was contract; employment since date)</td>
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<td>OTHER (marking Conservatory papers etc.)</td>
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<td>DIRECT SALES (internet etc.)</td>
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<td>Category (Tax Return)</td>
<td>BUSINESS EXPENSES</td>
<td>Average Actual year - year</td>
<td>Budget for Coming Year</td>
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<td>Meals and Entertainment</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>Equipment Repair</td>
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<td>Sheet Music/Scores</td>
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<td>Reference Books</td>
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<td>CCA 10</td>
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<td>Accommodation (?)</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>$6,074</td>
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Business expenses from tax return (FY) $2,874.24 (and no CCA was claimed)
Business-use-of-home expenses from return (FY) $1,915.09 (carried forward to 2009)

The financial goal would be to increase the revenue from compositional activity to consistently effect at least a break-even state on the annual business tax return.