

Curtis Andrews is a Canadian musician with global persuasions. A percussionist/composer/teacher who creates music that is informed by his many years of experience with West African, South Indian and jazz traditions yet transcends most categories.

Raised in the town of Carbonear (Newfoundland) Andrews taught himself to play the drumset as a youth after being inspired by recordings of Max Roach, late 80's/early 90's hip-hop and heavy metal. His personal musical journeys over the years have extended to villages and metropolises of Ghana, India, South Africa and Zimbabwe, and he has developed a deep knowledge of the history, culture and performance of music from these areas. His personal mentors have included (the late) Don Wherry (1997-2001), Trichy Sankaran (1999-present) and Frederick Kwasi Dunyo. Since receiving his first grant to travel and study, he has received dozens of grants from various levels of government to pursue his interest in learning various music traditions around the globe and implement this knowledge into his local practice.

A leader in his field, Curtis is the founder and artistic director of two West African drum and dance ensembles, **Dzolali Drum and Dance Ensemble** (NL) and **Adanu Habobo** (BC) which perform music and dance from Western and Southern Africa. He is a teacher of African and Indian percussion, drumset, Zimbabwean mbira and West African music, dance and song and is regularly called upon to give lecture-demonstrations and workshops in these fields. A regular participant in the international Sound Symposium since 1998, he has been a member of its artistic selection committee for the past 20 years.

He has toured and recorded with dozens of independent artists from across Canada in a myriad of styles and in December 2008 he released his debut album. This record, entitled ***The Offering of Curtis Andrews***, is a collection of 12 original pieces that draw from his studies and travels in Asia, Africa and at home in North America. An award-winning effort, it gained steady praise as some of the most original and refreshing music to come out of Newfoundland in recent years. With this album he was awarded the 2009 "Male Artist of the Year" and "Instrumental Artist of the Year" by MusicNL. In the same year, he was awarded the Atlantis Prize from The Scope magazine, which recognizes the best album of 2009 released in NL, based on artistic content rather than sales. Consisting of drumset, percussion, *mridangam* (South Indian classical drum), Ewe percussion (West African), electric bass, electric guitar, trumpet, alto/tenor sax, flute, vibraphone and Fender Rhodes, the pieces themselves range from the virtuosic and mind-bending to soothing and meditative.

In June 2009 he moved to Vancouver, BC and has steadily been making his

mark on that coast. He leads his own ensemble, **The Offering of Curtis Andrews**, to play his original world-jazz music, plays mbira, drums and marimba with Zimbabwean groups **Zhambai Trio** and **Zimbamoto**, explores South Indian classical Carnatic music with vocalist **Vidyasagar Vankayala**, regularly collaborates with local *Bharatanatyam* performers, and is a regular collaborator with various world music and jazz musicians in and around Vancouver, BC.

In 2013 he founded [Time Will Tell Arts Society](#), a non-profit performing arts society dedicated to promoting multicultural artistic expression from traditional, neo-traditional and original sources. This society collaborates with various local and international artists, ensembles and organizations to realize its mandate and has received funding from various funding bodies.

Andrews graduated from York University with BFA (Honours cum laude) in 2001 and was a recipient of the *Niravan Bhavan Foundation Scholarship* for studies in Indian Classical music and the *Karabekos Fine Arts Award* for studies in World Music. In the Fall of 2019, he earned his PhD in Ethnomusicology from the University of British Columbia and is currently a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow (2020-2022), focusing on the issues surrounding the oral transmission of culture in rural Ghana.

Aside from artistic and academic pursuits, Andrews has a philanthropic side. After benefitting so much from his time spent in rural Ghana, he decided to use his position and connections to give something back to the community of Dzogadze, which gave him so much. In 2007 he co-founded the Dzogadze Education Development Foundation which has enacted numerous activities designed to uplift the members of that community, with a focus on, but not limited to, education. Among many of the achievements of the foundation was the construction of a 3-room school block (which bears Andrews' name), a water pumping and reservoir system and a scholarship fund.

His sophomore album *Speaking Hands* was released in April 2021.

curtisandrews.ca