Thoughts on R. Murray Schafer's Wolf Project
Emily Doolittle, 2001

It is easy for composers to talk about what is wrong with the world of "new music" performance, but much harder to come up with solutions, or even alternatives, to the many valid criticisms of the concert hall and its traditions. Other possibilities may be imagined, but it is rare that one will actually be able to experience them. The Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer's collaborative project "And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon" does provide an alternative context in which one can be a composer and artist, and solves some of the problems inherent in the concert hall, or at least suggests different ways in which art can fit into the world.

The "Wolf Project", as it is called by the participants, has been taking place annually for 12 years, and I have been a part of it for eight. It is the conclusion of Schafer's Patria Cycle, a series of 12 very non-traditional works involving music and drama which deal, basically, with alienation and misunderstanding between two characters, a male archetype (variously a refugee, a criminal, Theseus, Mozart, Nietzsche, Anubis, and a wolf) and a female archetype (variously a child, a mental patient, a party girl, Ariadne, and a celestial princess). The Patria works take place in a variety of circumstances including a typical concert hall, a reenactment of a country fair, dawn at a lake, or an entire night in an abandoned subway station. In each, the male and female characters search for each other, meet, attempt reconciliation and fail: only in "And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon" do they finally reach understanding, thereby also making whole what is broken in the world. The other works in the Patria Cycle have been purely of Schafer's creation, beginning with "Wolfman" (1966-74), and including the work he is currently completing, "The Palace of the Cinnabar Phoenix." From the start, however, the Wolf Project has been a collaboration. While Schafer wrote the basic outline, the details of the project have very much been determined by its members.

The project takes place each summer during the last week of August at Haliburton Forest, in the remote wilderness of Ontario: participants hike and canoe for several hours to reach the primitive campsites where they spend the week. Initially a final performance was planned for 1994, but the project has developed into something ongoing, with no final performance projected. Membership has grown from five people in the first summer to an almost-full complement of 60 adults, plus assorted kids, with ages ranging from newborn to 70's. The participants include professional and amateur artists of all types -- actors, directors, dancers, choreographers, instrumentalists, singers, composers, visual artists, poets, and writers -- and people who are skilled in the out of doors, as well as people with no particular artistic or woods skills, but simply with an interest in the project. The people are divided among four different campsites, each between 45 minutes and 2 hours hike away from the other campsites. The campsites are further broken into two "clans" of about eight people. Daily work is divided as equally as possible within the campsites, with everyone taking part in cooking and basic camp chores. More specialized work is divided according to ability and desire, with most of the complicated musical and dramatic roles being played by the professionals or capable amateurs, and physically demanding work being taken on by the strong. Anyone may join the project provided that two current members are willing to sponsor them. Sponsors answer any questions prospective members may have, provide them with background materials, and prepare them as well as possible for the experience. Of course no one can know how they will feel about the Wolf Project until they have attended, but joining is expected to be an ongoing commitment, not just something to try once. A few people have left after one year, but many have been there for five or ten years, and three of the five founding members still participate (one left due to old age, and one due to discomfort with performing in a situation so different to the concert stage.)

The structure of the project is a bit hard to understand, but it helps to imagine that there are several nesting, interrelated artistic projects taking place simultaneously. At the largest level, everyone is working towards a performance on the final day of the week, "Great Wheel Day", in which everyone

from all the campsites comes together and takes part. This is a three hour ritual drama which tells the central story of the coming together and eventual reconciliation of the male and female characters, in this case Wolf and princess Ariadne: this coming together is also symbolic of the resolution of the larger disharmony between humans and nature. On Great Wheel Day everyone is at once participant and audience: no non-participant audience is ever present. Although some people have more central roles than others, according to ability, desire to perform large parts, and seniority, all people have a specific part (musical, dramatic, or both) to play. Schafer has written the story and invented the main characters, but the project members develop their own roles freely, and provide many of the details of the Great Wheel Day performance. Performers keep their parts as long as they want, and are responsible for choosing and training their own successors. Because Great Wheel Day tells the main story of the project and is the most recognizable artistic focus of the week, it is probably what seems like the most important aspect of the project to the outside observer. I was expecting it to be such when I joined, but have not found it to be so. Despite its participatory nature and unusual setting, it is actually the part of the week that most closely resembles performances I am used to, being a precisely scripted, well-rehearsed, (long) concert-length performance. Perhaps because of this, it is actually the least important part of the week for me. It is instead the smaller structures which affect me and, I believe, most project members, most profoundly.

During Wolf week, in addition to preparing for Great Wheel Day, each of the eight-person clans works on preparing a smaller midweek performance, a "Forest Encounter" which, on an appointed day, the other clans come to see. These tend to have more personal significance for the performers because, although Schafer has given a very basic outline or theme for each of these performances, the clans develop them on their own. Whereas a shy person might hide in an insubstantial role on Great Wheel Day, during the Forest Encounters, each clan-member will find their ideas and abilities used to the fullest. Enough professionals or experienced performers can usually be found to fill the most prominent roles for Great Wheel Day, but in the Forest Encounters one has to work with only the eight people at hand. In addition to being called upon to contribute one's habitual artistic activity, a musician may find they are needed to play a dramatic role, or a poet may find it necessary to learn enough music to teach a song to the audience. The choreographers, composers, and directors learn to shape the productions around the strengths and the limitations of the eight people available. The Forest Encounters vary from fairly traditional plays, to Eastern-inspired ritualistic theatre, to predominantly musical performances, to experiential events, depending on the expertise of those involved. Each is complete in itself, but pieced together they contribute to the story told on Great Wheel Day.

In addition to these explicit dramatic productions, each day is structured around a number of rituals designed to lead to greater awareness of the world around, both natural and human, to draw attention to the art inherent in life, or to encourage meditation and contemplation. Each morning, for example, we are awoken by music, an "Aubade", and then silent until we look together at the sunrise and say poetry. In the evening, we look at the sunset together. Following dinner and a campfire, the morning ritual is reversed: we say poetry and hear a piece of music, the "Nocturne", just before going to sleep, after which we are silent until morning. Twice daily we gather in a circle in a particularly beautiful location, sing, and contemplate in silence: this is repeated on Great Wheel Day with all the project members together. The daily rituals differ slightly in each campsite, but all are variations on the same ideas.

Besides these prescribed artistic activities, much time is spent informally creating the general background of the project. Each night there is a campfire at which project-related stories are told, music is sung, and dances are danced. This sort of thing happens spontaneously throughout the day too: often there is singing after breakfast, or a poem or story told at lunch or dinner. In the early days of the project much of the material used was adapted from non-Wolf sources. Now there is a substantial body of material created specifically for the Wolf Project, but people do continue to bring in outside material as appropriate. That which fits usually stays, while that which doesn't is quietly forgotten. Each story, piece of music, or dance that has become part of the Wolf repertoire has a known history. Because we have several Brazilian members, we have several Brazilian songs and dances. People who have worked with Native people in the Canadian north have brought stories told to

them by Native people. Composers, choreographers, and story-tellers each bring their own pieces, dances, or stories, and their work remains even if they leave.

Music serves a number of different functions in the Wolf Project. Performance music for Great Wheel Day and the Forest Encounters is usually composed music, and is closest to concert music. It is played by the more accomplished musicians, is fully notated, is rehearsed, and is repeated from year to year (with new additions being added as the project develops.) Most of these pieces have been written by Schafer, but any composer member of the project could potentially write for Great Wheel Day or a Forest Encounter. These pieces, of course, are written for the specific instrumentalists in the project and tailored to their abilities. We have virtuosic trumpet, soprano, alphorn, clarinet, and flute players, so these parts tend to be the most difficult: accordion, recorder, percussion and oboe (played by me!), are usually a bit easier, in fitting with the capabilities of these players. Improvised music, either free or around a specified framework, may also be used in Great Wheel Day or Forest Encounter performances. In some cases the intent is that music in a certain place should always be improvised: in other cases an improvisation may be holding the place of eventual composed music. Outside music would very rarely be used in these performances.

Aubades and Nocturnes are also often composed specifically for the Wolf Project, and for the particular performers available at each campsite. Usually these are solos, but occasionally duets or for larger groups. Schafer has composed many, I have composed several, and other composers are working on some for next year. Here, players do sometimes bring in outside music. Improvised Nocturnes and Aubades are also common.

Chants and songs, simpler music sung by the group as a whole during performances, rituals, around campfires, or at any time, are different from performance music or Aubades and Nocturnes in that there is no separation of audience and performer. They must be singable by everyone, or at least not likely to be ruined by the occasional tone-deaf singer.

As one might imagine, the different musics are in a wide variety of styles, with suitability to the performer and the situation, and the taste of the composer or performer more important than any universal stylistic ideology. The performance music for Great Wheel Day and the Forest Encounters tends to be most like “new music”, and of course its performance context is also most similar to this. Many of the Aubades and Nocturnes are also “new music”-like, but are made for a specific purpose -- either to wake or to put to sleep. My “Aubade” for solo flute, for example, follows both the mental pattern and the practical issues of waking up in the morning. Since there are no sound-proof practice rooms in the wilderness, I have incorporated long tones into the beginning of the piece. which enable the flutist to warm her fingers and the instrument without disrupting the early-morning silence that precedes it. Fragments of a chant are then slowly worked in. My hope is that the sleepers will at first incorporate these bits of chants into their dreams, and only gradually come to realize that it is the beginning of the new day they are hearing, and not memories of the previous. As the piece develops, it brightens and quickens, according to the pattern of the dawning day. By the end of the piece the listeners will, ideally, find themselves pleasantly awake. When outside music is brought in for an Aubade or Nocturne, it is always something similarly suitable for awakening or for inducing sleep, as is improvised music in these circumstances.

The chants and songs differ most from new concert music. Many of these have been composed for the project, by Schafer, myself, and several of the other composers or musical people. Brazilian, Greek, and Swiss folk songs represent the presence of Brazilian, Greek, and Swiss Wolves. People also bring music they have simply heard and thought suitable to the project, including various other folk or traditional songs, and the occasional piece of early music. Both the composed and the traditional songs and chants take many forms. Among them are monophonic songs, songs with two or more parts, spoken chants, rounds, or songs made up of different overlapping layers. The varied level of musicianship among the group as a whole is often accommodated by music with one difficult part and one or more easy parts, or by music with an option for improvisation. Most of the chants are cyclical in form -- they can be repeated as many times as the group wants. A few are more directed, either building to a climactic end, or growing and receding in an arch form.

An important thing for me has been learning to write pieces that are at once pleasing to me and singable by non-musicians. My earliest attempts were too difficult for the non-musically-educated, but when I tried to simplify the pieces they bored me. Eventually I discovered that I could most easily introduce unfamiliar musical elements if I combined them with something familiar. For the non-musician, uneven meters require diatonic tonality, while unusual modes or chromaticism work best with regular meters. A new form might require both diatonicism and metric regularity.

It is interesting to note that the composed songs and chants live the life of a folk song rather than that of "new music". They vary slightly, depending on who is singing them, and over the years may acquire permanent changes. Once I wrote a chant for people at another campsite, and when I heard them sing it the following year, some notes and rhythms had been changed and it had become a round. For several years I tried to correct the notes and rhythms, but it was clear that they preferred their own version. Eventually I just gave up and learned to enjoy the variation. As in folk music, people may or may not remember accurately who is the author of which song. A particularly moving moment for me was last summer when I came upon a five year old from a different campsite singing a pleasant melody, and only after a minute did it occur to me that I had written it!

Pieces of music or dramatic presentations do seem to have their own natural lifespan. For years, one piece may seem perfect for a certain situation. One day, it will seem less suitable, and although it won't be officially decided that this piece will be retired, it may gradually fall out of use. Slowly, another will replace it. Some pieces seem immortal (or at least still healthy at 12!), and of course, a retired piece might resurface unexpectedly. Enforced introduction of new music is rarely successful over night. Rather, a piece will be introduced and reintroduced over time, and eventually there will come a point when its use feels appropriate to all. Some pieces never do catch on, or have not yet, anyway.

The conditions of the Wolf Project are clearly very far from those of the concert hall, and its problems and strengths are equally far removed. In the concert hall, the composer is likely to complain that:

- no one is interested in hearing new music
- even those who come to concerts are apathetic listeners
- performers are not committed to performing new music well
- pieces are given only a premiere, and performers can never really get to know a the piece
- composers are competitive with each other, instead of curious about each other's work
- fear of criticism prevents experimentation
- there is no funding
- "art" is overshadowed by mass entertainment
- concert-goers and performers are wedded to unnecessary old traditions

The performer may add that:

- composers don't consider the performers
- composers may be more concerned with what other composers think than with the music itself
- new music is not as "good" as old music

Audiences are bored of going to concerts and confused by new music, so turn to popular entertainment or to the already familiar "classics". The presenter drops the new music series altogether because it is not profitable. Of course, this is not always the case: many composers are enthusiastic about their opportunities, many performers love to play new pieces, many audience members are full of curiosity, and the occasional new music series prospers. But, these are recurrent issues, and often the arguments dragged out when a composer turns to another field, a performer refuses to play a new piece, a new music series is cancelled, or someone decides to stay at home and watch TV instead of going to hear a concert.

Almost all of these problems are avoided in the Wolf Project, because of the entirely different context in which music is written, performed, and listened to. One of the factors most responsible for creating this artistic context is, I believe, having a relatively small, fixed group of people working together over a long period of time, with no access to external art, artists, or entertainment. With no outside stimulation, people become hungry for the art that is around them. Living closely with people over time generates great curiosity about what they create. Knowing a person's strengths, weaknesses, and peculiarities, rather than just their resume or reputation, allows one to approach their work not only as an objective piece of art, but also as an important aspect of personality. Judgments such as good or bad, new or conservative, or original or conventional become only a small part of reacting to a performance in this context.

Without prepackaged entertainment available, art seems to become a need, more like food, sleep, or warmth than an optional pastime. Perhaps surprisingly, this gives the composer great freedom to experiment. If music is to be purchased -- by the audience, performer, or concert producer -- the composer feels obliged to provide the desired object -- or perhaps to react against this, which of course can be equally constraining. If music is needed, then the composer does the best thing they can think of with the materials at hand, and this often involves trying something entirely new. The outdoor environment itself suggests certain kinds of experimentation -- most obviously with spatial location and acoustics. Creation cannot occur without experimentation, and experimentation necessarily involves failure as well as success. As art is a necessity, its creation becomes more like the creation of other necessities. In cooking, for example, mistakes are an inevitable part of learning: they may be a source of amusement, but would never be such a source of shame as to discourage experimentation. So it is with creating art (as well as food) in the Wolf Project. That the project is repeated each year adds to this freedom: no composer need fear that an embarrassing work will be forever attached to their name. If an unsuccessful attempt is remembered at all it will be as a step along the way to a more successful work.

Involving everyone in the daily rituals and the performances avoids the problem of the passive or uninterested audience member. Even in a circumstance where someone is temporarily "audience" to someone else's performance, they will already have made a significant investment in getting there. Physical hardship focuses audience attention: no one is likely to fall asleep after a long morning's hike, or while perched on slippery rocks. A detached response to the performance would be unthinkable, as would be waiting to hear an accepted "critical" opinion before forming ones own. With no uninvolved audience, there are no sideline critics. Anyone unhappy with a piece of music, a story, or a costume, is free to improve on it. The involved audience listens and watches sympathetically -- criticisms are intended to help the following year's performance, not to discourage performers.

Likewise, the investment of each performer is much higher than in a typical concert or theatre situation. The music has been written for them, or they have developed their own dramatic role: no one is faced with having to present work they do not feel close to. The responsibility is on each performer to do as much as they can with each role: no better performer waits in the wings to take over, nor is there some great master to be imitated. That performers keep their parts as longs as they want allows them to mature into their roles, and perhaps to explore different aspects from year to year.

Because everyone at the Wolf Project is both audience and performer, no one needs to pay or be paid. Project members pay only for operational costs ($150/year). Since no one pays or is paid, no one can feel underpaid, or that they have not gotten their "moneys worth". People put in as much work on the project as they desire -- some plan and rehearse all year, while others devote only the one week in August. No one stops rehearsing in the middle of a piece because of a union break, or keeps rehearsing when people are too tired simply because rehearsal time has been paid for.

Equality among members is a principle of the project, and it is relatively easy to realize in a situation such as this, where peoples' interdependence is more readily obvious than usual. A dramatic or musical performance which is an hour's hike away cannot be enjoyed if no one has cleared a path through the forest so people can get there, and no one can undertake such a hike if they are not well fed beforehand. The performer, the trail maker, and the cook must be equally valued. Of course equality

must be continually reestablished -- hierarchies can develop remarkably quickly -- but having equality as a stated principle reminds us to strive for this.

With as many parts as players, competition is minimized. Each new member represents a possible new dramatic addition, not a possible threat. Since we are obliged to work with every project member, it is in the interest of all to find the best possible role for each person. A person who feels their role is too small can work to enlarge it, while a person who feels overtaxed can give away some of their role. That the project is continually under construction means that there is a continual need for more art. Many places are still without music, many roles skeletal, and many costumes minimal. Even when these are filled in, the continual environmental change that is part of any long-term outdoor performance, and the occasional departure of a performer from the project, necessitate new inventions each year. With more art needed than people available to provide it, everyone is able to make an important contribution, and to feel an integral part of the project.

Every summer the Wolf Project leaves me feeling transformed in a way that hearing a concert or visiting an art museum rarely does. I can think of only a handful of instances, out of the thousands of concerts I have attended, which have been similarly powerful. For days, weeks, and sometimes months after the Wolf Project I feel that I am more able to perceive the art inherent in life, more able to see what enhances and what threatens creativity, and more open to beauty around me -- in short, more fully aware and alive. I feel able to approach music focused on joy in sound and discovery, rather than on my own insecurities and confusions or on external pressures.

The Wolf Project has probably been the most significant musical event of my life. Of course this does not mean I would suggest replacing the concert hall with a plethora of Wolf Projects -- although I would certainly love to see more projects similar in spirit to the Wolf Project. We need as many different contexts in which we can make art as we can imagine -- an increase in the kinds of artistic experience available to us, rather than a replacement of any one kind with any other. In any case, the Wolf Project has difficulties of its own. To me these are very minor, but certainly they would keep some people from partaking in this kind of artistic endeavor.

An artistically trivial, but logistically major issue that we face is that of bringing instruments into the wilderness. The humidity, the nightly cold, and the heat of the midday sun all cause damage. Even when performers are willing to bring instruments into such conditions, the instruments may not work as well, or the performers may not be able to play their best. Transportation difficulties rule out double basses and other large instruments, and outdoor acoustics make others unsatisfactory. One can imagine that if the Wolf Project continued for long enough, a whole new set of instruments might be developed. Rudimentary attempts at making instruments do occur almost yearly -- each campsite has its handmade log drums or wooden chimes.

Weather and environment affect each performance as much as any human performer. Great Wheel Day has been postponed for hours to avoid the midday sun, or performed with raincoats and umbrellas covering all of the costumes. Bee stings, falling on sharp rocks, or toppling a canoe are ever-present risks. While many of us (tough Canadians that most of us are) thrive in these conditions, I suspect there are many who would enjoy the artistic content of the Wolf Project but could not tolerate these conditions. The very old or the handicapped, for example, would be unable to participate, as would musicians unprepared to take risks with their instruments. One could imagine a collaborative endeavour similar to the Wolf Project taking place in some unusual indoor setting or in an environment more forgiving than that of northern Canada, but I think an overly-familiar or comfortable environment would make it too easy to slip into old artistic habits, and detract from the impact of such a project.

Our performance spaces change yearly, as plants grow, trees fall, and water levels vary. This is mostly advantageous, preventing stagnation by forcing us to rethink our presentations each year, but it can occasionally be frustrating if one has spent months planning a performance, only to find that the envisioned performance location has been flooded or covered with fallen trees. The more serious threat is that all wilderness lands are in danger from humans. The forest we use is protected for the time being, but if it ever changes ownership it could all be clearcut. The land we have taken years to get to

know could be destroyed in a few days. Increasing pollution is a more insidious threat, slower to come, but also slower to fix. Recent increase of air travel over Haliburton has disturbed the silence we used to be able to rely on.

In addition to the physical difficulties of the Wolf Project, the degree of commitment necessary can cause problems. Many people can't take the time off from work that such a project requires (each year we lose someone because their employer will fire them if the take the last week of August off yet again.) Others could but won't make the commitment: many people would rather buy a ready-made artistic experience than create their own. Few will commit to such an undertaking before they know its power, but of course they can't know without experiencing it.

Every couple of years the idea of bringing an outside audience to the Wolf Project is discussed, but so far it has always been rejected. Having to explain everything to an audience who is observing rather than doing would diminish the experience of the participants: we would feel pressure to entertain in a project which is supposed to help us escape entertainment culture. Most importantly, however, we feel that no one could even appreciate the Wolf Project without participating. An audience expecting only a fancy kind of concert would come away disappointed -- the seats are uncomfortable, it might be cold and rainy, the mosquitoes are terrible, and the performances certainly have their rough spots. Nonetheless, we do feel it is important to make the Wolf Project accessible to those who are interested. A workable compromise is that sometimes small groups of Wolves perform selected pieces of the project in concert. At best, this can give greater public awareness of the project and attract new people. It certainly can't give the experience of the project, but it gives people a way in, and prevents the project from seeming too secretive or exclusive.

Another essentially practical problem is that people may feel distanced from some aspects of the Wolf Project story. Some members may find the masculine and feminine archetypes of Wolf and Princess Ariadne a bit old-fashioned, even if beautiful -- I suspect that I, for example, may have more in common with the Wolf than with the Princess. Others may be uncomfortable with borrowing material from other cultures. I think it is important to remember that with sensitive issues such as these, it is impossible to come up with a solution that will be entirely comfortable to all people at all times. Dealing with the profound issue of interpreting and symbolizing life necessarily involves some discomfort and difficult questions, no matter what the circumstance. It is obvious to all that the story is a necessary framework for the experiences of the week, and that there exists no one story which is perfect for all people at all times. Someone else's "Wolf Project" would, of course, have a different story -- which might smooth over some areas of potential discomfort, but which would surely bring up new such areas. I observe that over the years, the material of the Wolf Project gradually becomes more natural, more original, and more integrated.

When, as a 19-year-old composer with only two short pieces to her name, I joined the Wolf Project, it was because I liked Schafer's music and wanted to hear more of it. Curiously, this has become the least important part of the project for me. I have heard some excellent music there, but it is more the extra-musical aspects of the project which cause me to return each year. Art as a collective rather than a purely individual undertaking is very attractive to me. Certainly each Wolf spends hours alone, rehearsing, composing, writing, or preparing costumes, but when the work is finished there is a welcoming framework into which it fits. This is certainly an appealing alternative to convincing reluctant, overworked performers to play yet another piece and then begging for a spot on a poorly attended concert, which is so often a part of new music performance.

It is interesting to observe how real the sense of culture we create at the Wolf Project feels -- it certainly seems much more than just the byproduct of creating a work of art. Patterns of living emerge that are markedly different from those we engage in during the remaining 51 weeks of the year. These are defined by the rituals, music, stories, manners, daily schedule, and even by a certain set of ethics and taboos (usually having to do with issues of living in a community and in the wilderness) -- all the traditional hallmarks of a culture. Even "regional variations" occur from campsite to campsite. Certainly people are always creating and participating in a variety of cultures, beyond the most obvious ones of national, religious, or ethnic identity. The university, the orchestra, and the new music scene

are all cultures -- but because these are integrated with our daily lives they are not so apparent as such. With the one week of the year set apart for Wolf, one sees more clearly how quickly a culture can be created, and how strongly it can be felt.

Even a sort of spirituality seems to develop at the Wolf Project. One wonders if this is something in addition to the artistic experience, or simply a part of it. According to Schafer this is indeed a part of art:

> What is the Purpose of Art? First, exaltation. Let us speak of that. The change that occurs when we are lifted out of the tight little cages of our daily realities... Of the newness that stuns the mind and sends it reeling... And if we return to our daily routines they are no longer routines, but scintillate and have become magnificent by our sensing them with fresh eyes and noses and minds and bodies... This must be the first purpose of art. To effect a change in our existential condition.

Increased ecological awareness also seems an inevitable result of participation in the project. As one hikes over the trails, chooses special places for performances, and returns to the same spot year after year, one grows to love the land. Most come away from the project with a new awareness of just how much is lost when the natural world is thoughtlessly replaced with the human.

Thus far my experiences at the Wolf Project have informed my non-Wolf composition only in very minor ways. I write music for specific performers (often people from the Wolf Project), think carefully about my audiences, and seek collaboration and communities of artists when I can. I notice myself looking to structures already present in the natural world for inspiration for my pieces. The larger issues of Wolf Project, such as the creation of a sort of culture, I would not yet be comfortable tackling in my own work -- but perhaps this will become part of it as I mature as a composer.

A large-scale move towards enabling the population at large to participate in this kind of artistic experience would require a restructured society, in which art is part of the fabric of life, not an optional form of entertainment. People would need to be willing to put time directly into creating art, not into earning money to pay someone else to do it. Art would need to be largely community-based -- created by and for small groups of people, rather than by one person for the masses, as is the case with CD's, movies, or star performers. Certainly an individual cannot hope to restructure the whole of society, and in any case such a major change would happen over a period of centuries, not of decades. But one can imagine that more and more groups of people might tend in the directions taken by Wolf. For me, the Wolf Project serves as a model and inspiration for envisioning other ways art can be created, and a background against which I try to figure out how I want to be an artist and person in this world.