

REBECCA FOON

BIOGRAPHY 2017

Cellist and composer Rebecca Foon has been a fixture of the Montréal music community for two decades, since moving to the city from her native Vancouver in the late 1990s. She co-founded the Juno Award-winning contemporary chamber group Esmerine in 2002 and was a core member of the celebrated cult post-punk band Thee Silver Mt. Zion Memorial Orchestra from 2001-2008 and the experimental instrumental collective Set Fire To Flames. Foon was also a founding member of the instrumental trios The Mile End Ladies String Auxiliary and Fifths of Seven. Alongside over a dozen albums as a composer and player with the aforementioned projects, Foon has a long list of recording and performing credits as a guest player, and several soundtrack projects under her belt (including the award-winning tar sands documentary *H2Oil*). Most recently, she has been a member of Colin Stetson's acclaimed "Sorrow" orchestra (performing Gorecki's 3rd Symphony) and part of the band for the live documentary performances of filmmakers Sam Green and Brent Green

Saltland is Foon's 'solo' project, the seeds of which were planted with a series of local Montréal performances under her own name in 2010-2011. As a first album took shape in 2012, Foon wished to give the music its own moniker and identity, and to leave room for the project to take on various members and configurations. Saltland's 2013 debut record *I Thought It Was Us But It Was All Of Us* was released to broad critical acclaim and featured a long list of Foon's friends and past collaborators as guest musicians, including Jamie Thompson (The Unicorns, Islands), Richard Reed Parry and Sarah Neufeld (Arcade Fire), Mishka Stein (Patrick Watson) and Laurel Sprengelmeyer (Little Scream). The record was produced by Grammy-winning engineer Mark Lawson (Arcade Fire).

For her second Saltland album *A Common Truth*, Foon set out to create a more rigorously solo work, using her cello as the predominant source for all the music and sounds on the record. Working with

producer/engineer Jace Lasek (The Besnard Lakes), Foon combines both unadulterated and processed cello to forge the entire sonic landscape – the notable exception being violin and pump organ contributed by special guest Warren Ellis (Nick Cave, Grinderman, The Dirty Three) for the album’s four instrumentals. Foon sings on the other five songs in a voice that UK music magazine Mojo has described as “an instrument of somnolent, gossamer allure which floats gracefully amid the eddying, amniotic music”.

A Common Truth is also an album about climate change and an attempt to musically translate a complex mix of emotional, social and political resonances in this regard. Foon unfolds an atmosphere and pace on the album that allows for the coexistence of optimism and despair, resolve and resignation, the intimacy of the local/personal and the hope of the global/collective.

Climate action is of particular importance to Rebecca Foon as she has devoted much of her life in recent years to working for decarbonization, land conservation, renewable energy and urban green strategies – as a member of the Canadian cooperative consultancy Sustainability Solutions Group, as founder of the Peruvian-based rain forest conservation charity Junglekeepers, and as co-founder of Pathway to Paris, an international concert series bringing together musicians, writers and environmental activists to help raise consciousness and create action in support of a robust international climate agreement.

Rebecca Foon’s new Saltland album ***A Common Truth*** is the fullest expression and coalescence of the multiple trajectories this committed and inspiring artist, activist, teacher and organizer has been living and pursuing in recent years.

www.saltland.ca

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