

human actions". Now this is something that could be useful in my job as a planner in the Highlands. But it might be seen like showing up at a Public Hearing, ouija board in hand. So last year as we were grappling over the siting of the new municipal office, I quietly compared Feng Shui principles with the proposed location. Long story short, it's a lucky site. Very lucky.

A powerful yin/yang energy balance is offered by the orientation of Mt. Finlayson (the white tiger) and Skirt Mountain (the green dragon, which must always be on the left). The little mound containing the lime kiln by the driveway symbolizes a crimson phoenix, which represents the fire energy of the south. Even the small rock formations along the driveway can represent good fortune. And while the doors to the old offices—the little trailers that were squeezed next to the firehall—had the misfortune of facing blank walls, the new office has "the bright hall"—empty land in front of its main door. However, the new driveway straightens directly into the main door and might become a poison arrow bringing in bad luck, if not softened by landscaping. The towering trees surrounding the other sides ensure that the inhabitants receive support in troubling times (and some errant branches in a big wind storm).

The most delightful discovery was the influence of water on the building, as the presence of slow-moving rivers or gentle streams always indicates good Feng Shui. Water almost always symbolizes wealth and prosperity. In fact, the most ideal locations are those embraced by water, as long as it is not stagnant or polluted. An ancient text, the *Water Dragon Classic*,

describes an ideal location as one nestled around a watercourse, protected by the belly of the dragon. Chi, or positive energy, flows from Millstream Creek and through the Hatcher Wetland which surrounds the site, effectively nourishing the building. Even light rain is considered an auspicious sign, signifying a happy sky dragon which brings plenty, money and wealth. And we certainly get our share of rain.

This year, the year of the Dragon, a dedicated group of Highlanders will be designing and creating the landscape surrounding the office, bringing back to life what was recently just a messy building site. It will look as though the building belongs there. I hope they find luck as they dig and plant. Because Feng Shui simply represents luck from the earth and it complements the heaven luck and human luck that we are born with. It's the value that doesn't show up on our assessment notices. It's that feeling of waking up on a quiet Saturday morning and standing out in your yard or garden. It's what we planners call *place*. Realtors call it *location*. You simply call it *home*.

Feng Shui. Wind and water. Good luck and bad luck. Now with this new, mental divining rod, I won't look at any building or landscape without wondering if this ancient art can tell me something about not-so-hidden values. It reminds me of when I was a kid, turning maps upside-down or sideways to discover something I hadn't noticed before. Just my luck.

"This is the place!" . . . Brigham Young 1847. ☸

Kevin Key is the District of Highlands Planner. His wide ranging interests include, besides Feng Shui, travel and cycling (He rides to work most days, weather permitting.)

## IN PIONEER TIMES

### How Early Settlers Acquired their Land: *Pre-emption and Crown Grants*

*Nancy McMinn*

The first homesteading in the Highland Land District was at Pike and McKenzie (Long) Lakes, now part of View Royal, during the 1870s. Gradually settlement spread into the rest of the area. Vancouver Island was becoming a popular destination for settlers, anxious to build their homesteads and plant their crops. To accommodate them while keeping some order in land settlement, the Colonial Government introduced the process of "pre-emption" (Latin *pre*, "before", and *emptio*, "purchase"). Settlers could then occupy and work a block of land on a temporary basis. Any "head of a family, widow, single man over eighteen and a British subject, or alien (upon making a declaration before a Commissioner or J.P. of his intention to become a British subject)" was eligible to pre-empt 160 acres, providing it did not infringe on "any Aborigines of this Continent." Having declared themselves eligible under the law, applicants became "homestead settlers" on payment of two dollars and received a Certificate of Pre-emption. Pre-empted land was not transferable, although, as in the case of Caleb Pike, if the pre-emptor died, the right to

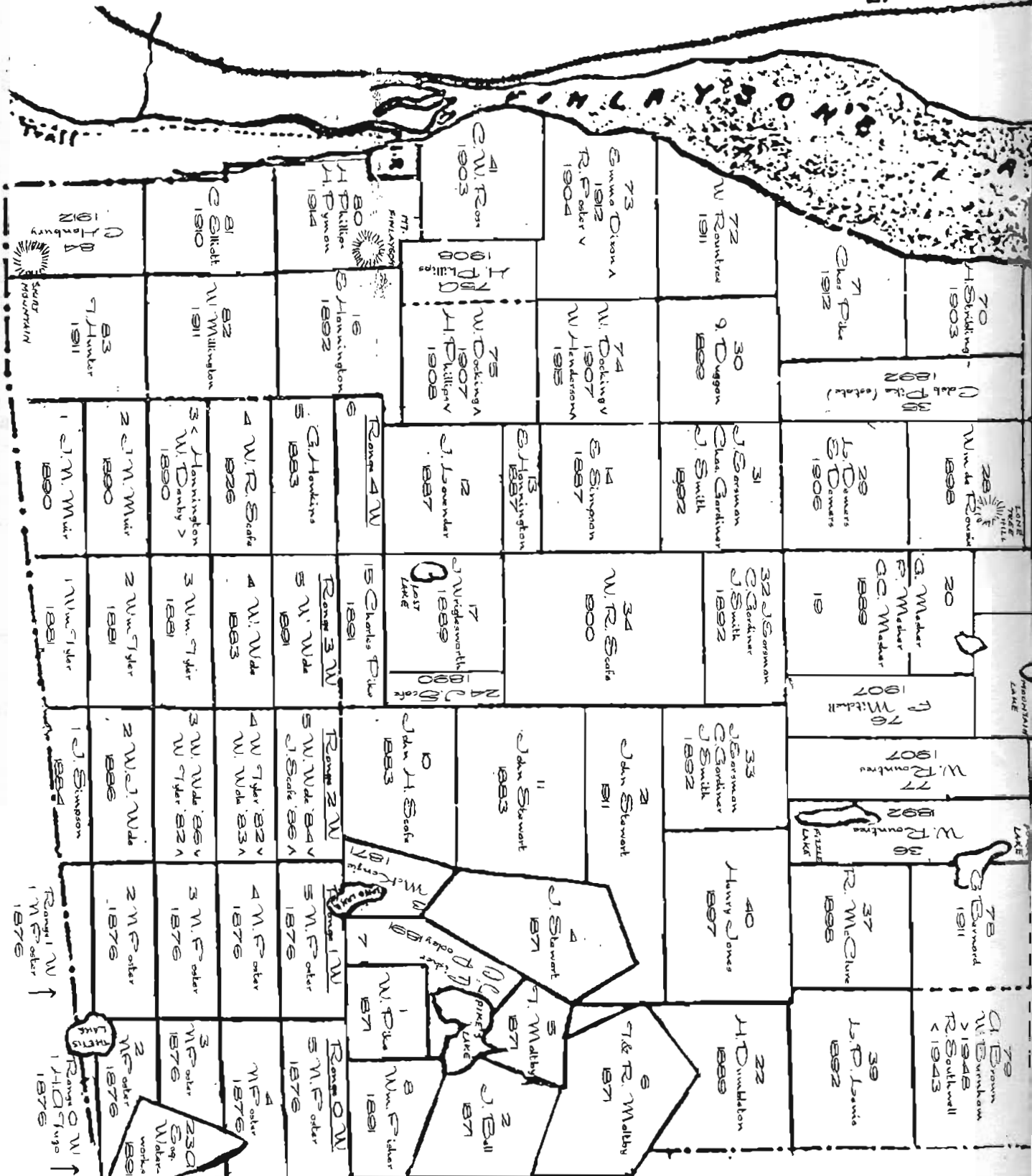
purchase a Crown Grant passed to his heirs. Caleb pre-empted Section 35 in 1883. He died in 1888 and in 1892 his son, Henry, paid \$160 for a Crown Grant to the 160 acre farm.

Pre-emptors also must occupy the land for at least ten months of each year. Once improvements, such as buildings, clearing, fencing, etc., had been made to the value of \$2.50 per acre, a Certificate of Improvement was issued, after which a Crown Grant of fee-simple ownership could be purchased for a nominal price. Most 19th century Crown Grants in the Highlands went for about a dollar an acre.

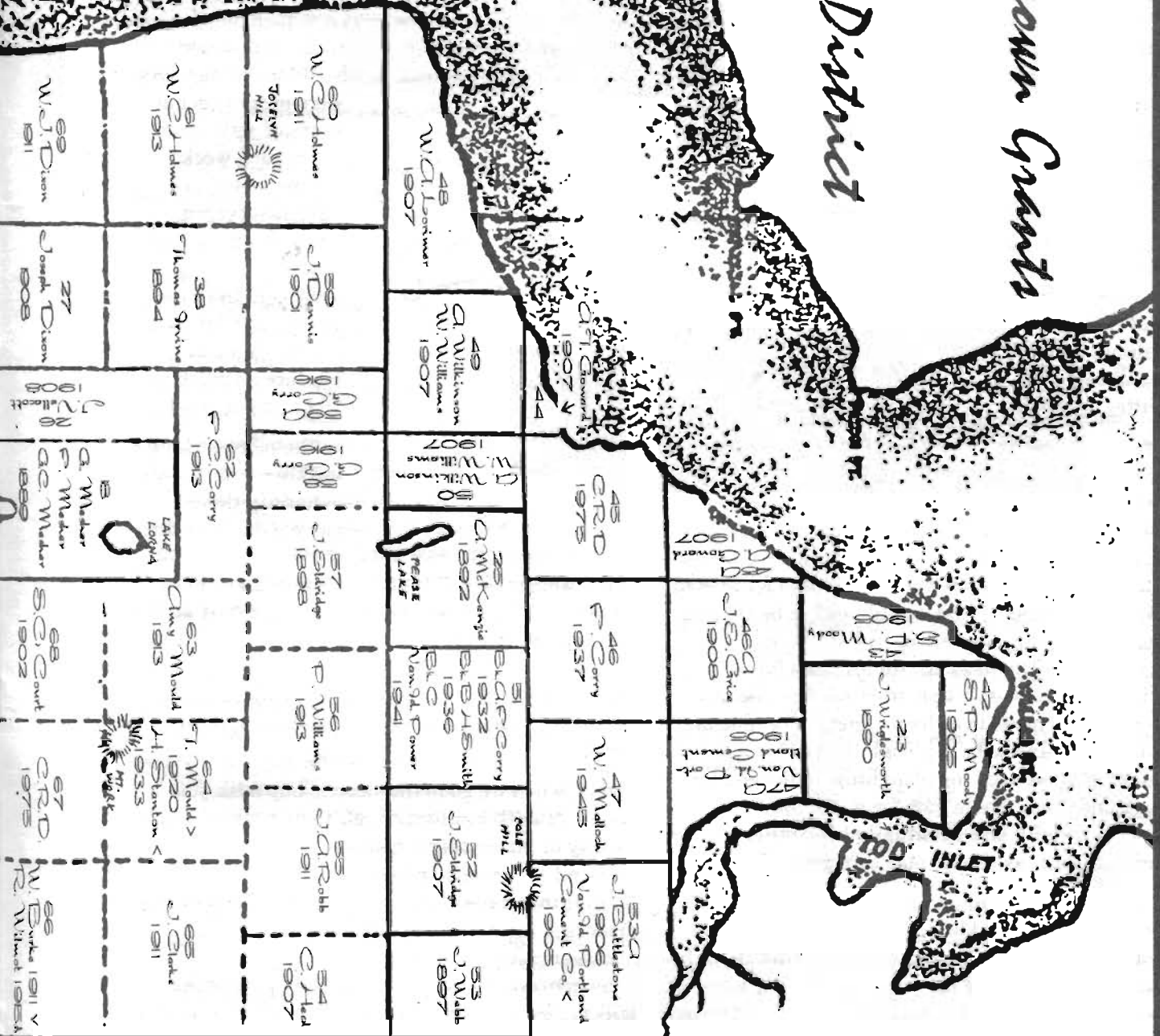
For various reasons some of the original pre-emptors did not take up Crown Grants. Sometimes they were unable to meet the requirements for "improvements" or could not pay the purchase price. Others simply moved on, the land then reverted to the Crown and became available for another settler.

Overleaf is a map showing the names and dates of the original crown grants in the Highland Land District. ☸

E. & N. R. R.



# Original Crown Grants in the Highland District



## Highland Artists: Part Two

*in conversation with Thelma Fayle*

### KAREL ROESSINGH

*Most Highlanders know Karel Roessingh as the new mayor of our municipality. He is also a successful and many-sided professional musician. Here he talks about this other part of his life*

**Thelma:** How long have you been a professional musician?

**Karel:** Since I finished high school in 1970. After a few years of playing in bars on the prairies, I went to Berklee College of Music in Boston. The college has a great reputation in the field of jazz studies.

When I moved to Victoria in 1974, there weren't many opportunities to work in music, so I went back to school to get a teaching degree. I did some substitute and private teaching, but gradually got busier with playing and arranging.

In the mid 80s I started composing for television and video projects. I and four partners formed a music production company at a studio downtown. Our first break came when we were asked to compose music for a regular aerobics show.

**Thelma:** Couldn't an aerobics show play any music?

**Karel:** They used top 40 hits originally, but they found the music licences too expensive and they didn't want the aerobics instructor to have to shout over the lyrics. She gave us a list of tempos she wanted, and we wrote the music to her specifications.

A few years later, I started making recordings of my own, and about that time I stopped teaching. I now do all my recording and production in my studio at home. I've done a series of four music and nature sounds CDs, as well as a jazz trio CD and a few solo piano recordings.

I am currently working on a diving series called "Undersea Explorer" which finishes up in a couple of months. Last year's major project came to me as a result of my website. I received an email from China, just out of the blue. I was invited to compose for a touring production.

**Thelma:** Can we share your website address?

**Karel:** Sure. It's <[www.coastnet.com/~roessong/](http://www.coastnet.com/~roessong/)>

**Thelma:** The China connection is interesting. Tell me more about it.

**Karel:** In May the China Performing Arts Agency invited me to Beijing and Shaolin, the birth place of martial arts and Buddhism in China. The people from the agency have travelled extensively, and fortunately their English was very good, so language wasn't a problem. I worked for three very intense days with a group of martial arts performers (who will tour North America this fall) and their choreographer. I took

along a metronome and a stopwatch so that I could get the timing exactly right. Then I came home and did the writing and production here, and we worked out the fine details by email.

**Thelma:** You would think that a Chinese production company producing a Chinese production would want to use a Chinese composer.

**Karel:** Normally they would, but the audience for the show will be North American, and they wanted a combination of Chinese instrumentation and North American style.

**Thelma:** Were you challenged in being able to accommodate Chinese instrumentation?

**Karel:** Yes, but I have a good collection of digitally sampled Chinese instruments. It was a truly enjoyable experience.

**Thelma:** What else are you doing?

**Karel:** I still play the piano for concerts, gigs, and at the Empress occasionally.

I'm working on a recording project with folk singer Holly Arntzen. She is working with a number of elementary school choirs and writing music that ties into their curriculum. Last fall we worked together on a CD about various aspects of water, and this spring we're doing another about the ocean. She's done a tremendous job with the children, and their singing on the CD sounds wonderful. The project includes a songbook and curriculum guide.

I'm writing music for a British music library, also as a result of the internet. It's similar to a photo library in that clients can choose music from a variety of categories. I've produced mystery, action, passage of time, and fanfare tracks so far. I've recently written music for a short animated film.

**Thelma:** Do you ever miss the early days of teaching?

**Karel:** Not much really. Occasionally I do specialized workshops with high school and college-level musicians, and give lectures. I enjoy that very much.

**Thelma:** Do you see yourself retiring one day?

**Karel:** I don't think music is something you retire from. For me, it is a perpetually changing, lifelong interest. Each project is completely different from the last. I spend a lot of time thinking about music and find my ideas about it changing daily. Composing in

itself offers so much variety, but I also like playing, producing, orchestrating, and sometimes teaching or doing workshops. I love to play jazz, but it's not something I can make a living at.

**Thelma:** Do you dream about composing?

**Karel:** When I have something to compose, I begin by doing research. I watch movies that the producer has made, or see shows of the same genre as the project. Then I sleep on it. I might wake up any time in the night and start writing. I keep manuscript paper by the bedside so I can write it out right away. It's not that I dream about music, but my brain seems to organize things at night and the next morning, the sketch is done.

The production work takes time in the studio after that. I start by experimenting on the keyboard with different instruments until the arrangement sounds right. It's an interesting process, because there are so many ways any melody can be produced. Different colours, different instruments.

**Thelma:** What do you mean by 'colours'?

**Karel:** 'Colouring' in music is instrumentation and arrangement, which determines the emotional message. For me, music is a variety of different languages, and I like to get to know as many as I can.

There are many similarities between music and art; for example, I start with a sketch of a melody line like a pencil sketch of a drawing. When I orchestrate and arrange, I add the instruments like colour to a painting. The pallet is the instruments you have to choose from.

**Thelma:** You mentioned that your wife is an artist as well. Does she work in the same field?

**Karel:** No, Brenda is a visual artist. She primarily draws, paints and works in printmaking.

**Thelma:** Can a visual artist help a composer with the work?

**Karel:** Yes, she helps me by listening critically. Sometimes I get so involved and close to a project that I can lose track of whether or not I am communicating the essential emotional message. In a soundtrack, the music has to be coloured exactly to make you feel a fairly specific way that fits with the story in the pictures. As I work on a project, I often ask Brenda for her emotional response to my work.

**Thelma:** Is there a cultural component to how we feel when we hear certain pieces of music? Does a Japanese person, for example, respond differently than a Canadian to the same piece of music?

**Karel:** There are universal emotional triggers, but there are also definite cultural emotional clues. The cultural language changes with time as well. What was funny or scary a few decades ago doesn't have the same effect now. Instrumental music by itself can elicit a great range of emotions, but when linked to film, the range is much more narrow.

**Thelma:** Tell me about your studio.

**Karel:** It began as a studio to record my grand piano, and grew from there to a full post-production music studio.

**Thelma:** I see you work with a Macintosh computer.

**Karel:** Yes, I use three or four of them. Macintosh is still the standard for art and music.

**Thelma:** You use the keyboard to make sounds from this machine?

**Karel:** Yes. The keyboard is hooked into the computer through a MIDI (musical instrument digital interface) system. Sampled sounds of various instruments are stored on CDs and can be loaded into the computer to create instruments, and I control them from the keyboard. I can load up a string section, or French horns, or woodwinds, for example, and play them. I also have a variety of synthesizers that are hooked into the system.

When I'm scoring to picture, the computer reads a time code on the video and records everything in synchronization with the pictures. So I'm composing and orchestrating as I watch the show on the screen above the keyboard, and the computer is recording every move I make on the keyboard.

I can also add piano or MIDI tracks to recording projects that have been done at other studios.

**Thelma:** Thank you so much for your time, and the studio tour and the jazz and nature sounds CDs. One last question... Why do you have four identically sized, framed pieces of written music hanging on the wall in your living room?

**Karel:** I composed a piece, "DAD", for my father's memorial last summer, based on the notes D, A and D. Then I wrote 25 fragments of the orchestration on separate pieces of paper, each representing a small facet of his personality. The result was included in a book, entitled *Artifact*, a collaboration in which nineteen artists contributed. Four of my pieces are hanging here. The intent is that when the pieces come together, as people came together for his memorial to share memories, the character of the whole man becomes clear. So these pieces are a tribute to my father, a visual representation of a musical representation of his life.



Brenda Alexander-Roessingh