

ARTISTS WHO PLAY IT FORWARD MUSIC & SOUND IN CANADIAN ART

Rejoice in the harmony, cadence, and rhythm
in these five visual works

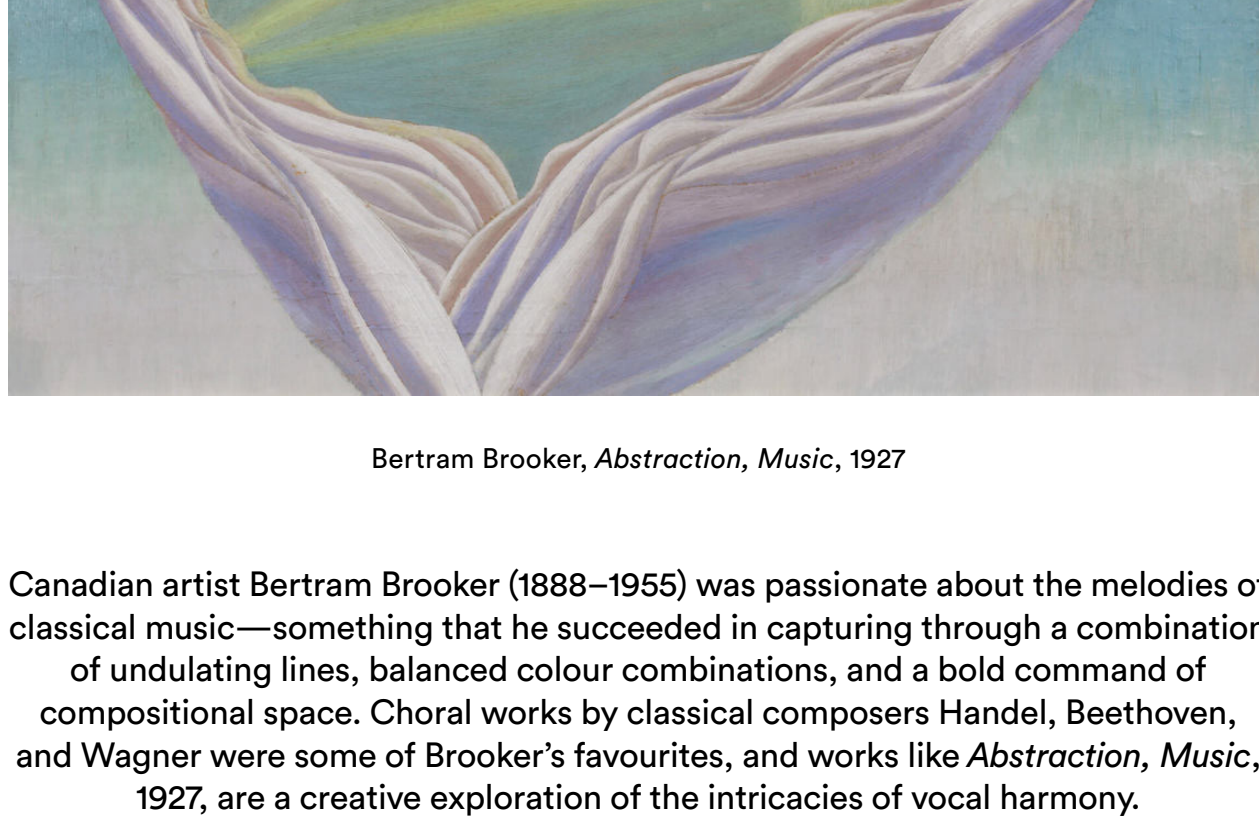


Greg Curnoe, *Short Wave Radios on Long Board*, 1987

How do Canadian artists bring together the sensory experiences of sound and sight? The “Razzle Dazzle” colour scheme in this large-scale watercolour by London, Ontario-born artist Greg Curnoe (1936–1992) emanates in dynamic ways—ones that symbolize electric sound waves. For this work, which was commissioned by Blackburn Radio Inc., a family-run business supporting local stations, Curnoe depicted five of his own radios and evoked their stories and syncopation through a frenetic use of colour. A love of music often goes hand-in-hand with a love of art, as evidenced in the unique representations of sound that we are exploring this week. From Shuvinaï Ashoona's creative design of an iconic Canadian musician's guitar to Jan Wade's rhythmic tribute to the “Godfather of Soul”, these creations are a tribute to the thriving traditions of music and art in Canada.

— The Art Canada Institute Education Team

Visualizing Sound



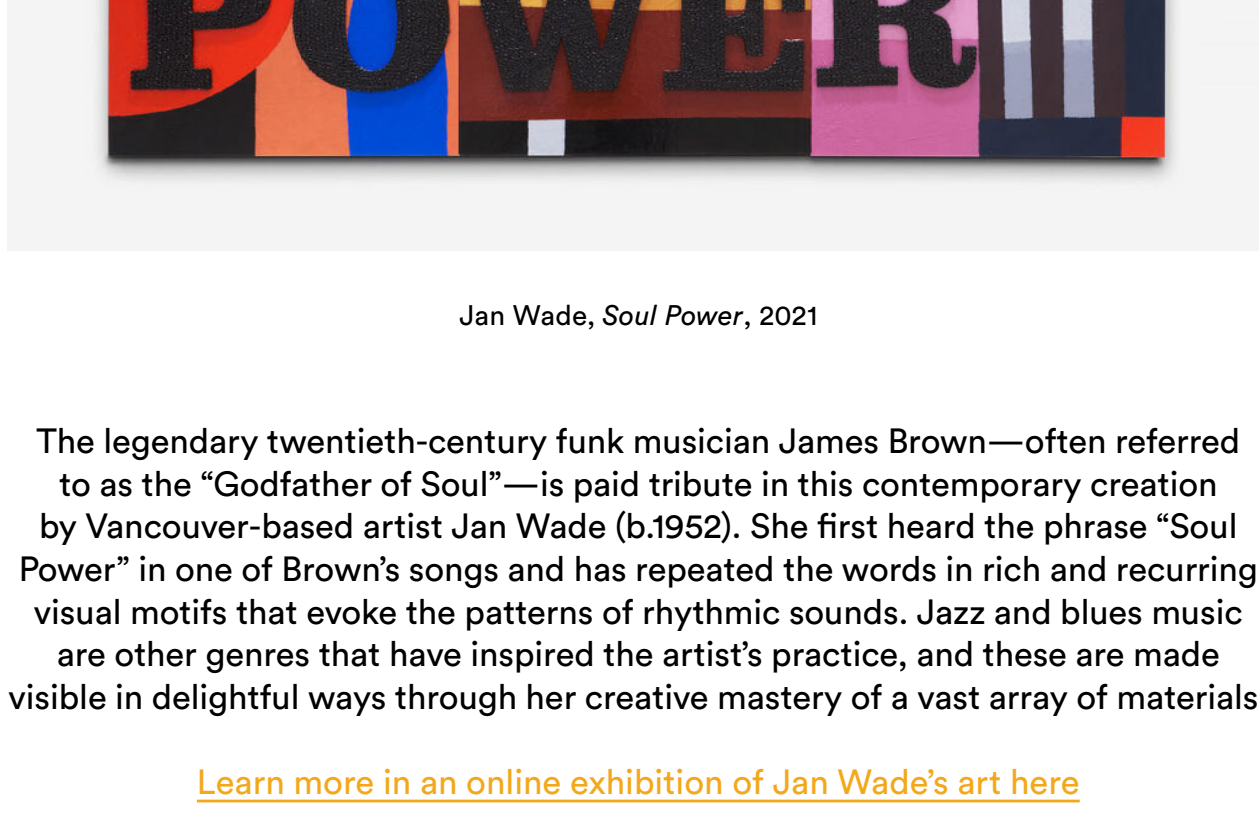
Bertram Brooker, *Abstraction, Music*, 1927

Canadian artist Bertram Brooker (1888–1955) was passionate about the melodies of classical music—something that he succeeded in capturing through a combination of undulating lines, balanced colour combinations, and a bold command of compositional space. Choral works by classical composers Handel, Beethoven, and Wagner were some of Brooker's favourites, and works like *Abstraction, Music*, 1927, are a creative exploration of the intricacies of vocal harmony.

[Download a Teacher Resource guide on Bertram Brooker and Musical Composition here](#)

AVENUES TO EXPLORE

Rhythm and Repetition

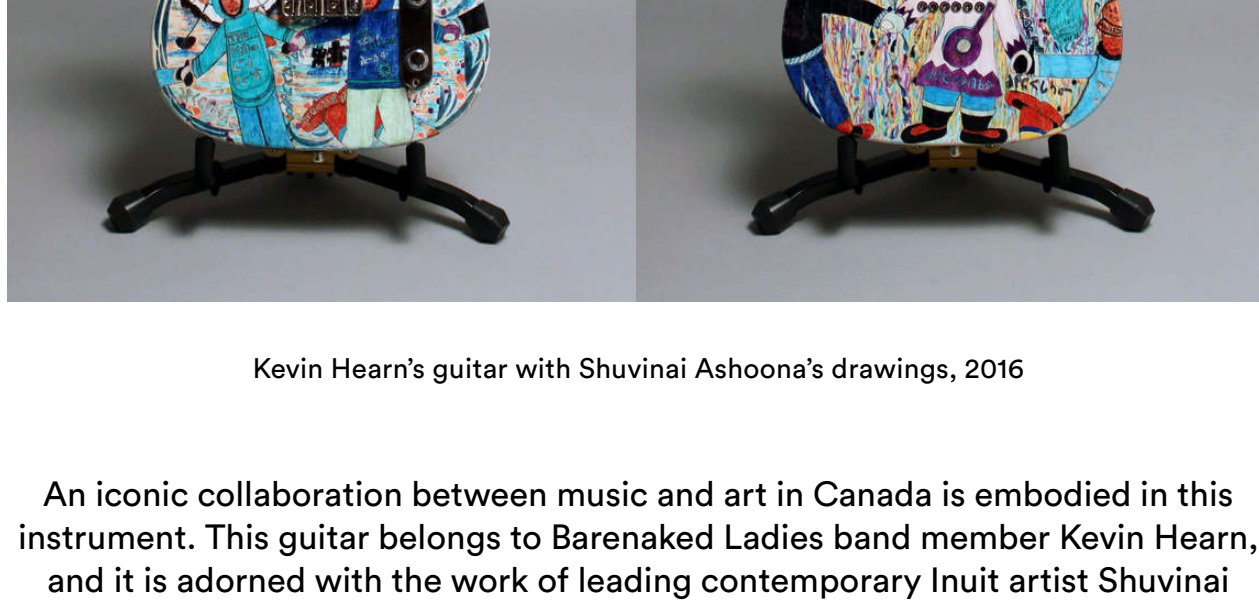


Jan Wade, *Soul Power*, 2021

The legendary twentieth-century funk musician James Brown—often referred to as the “Godfather of Soul”—is paid tribute in this contemporary creation by Vancouver-based artist Jan Wade (b.1952). She first heard the phrase “Soul Power” in one of Brown's songs and has repeated the words in rich and recurring visual motifs that evoke the patterns of rhythmic sounds. Jazz and blues music are other genres that have inspired the artist's practice, and these are made visible in delightful ways through her creative mastery of a vast array of materials.

[Learn more in an online exhibition of Jan Wade's art here](#)

Instrumental Compositions

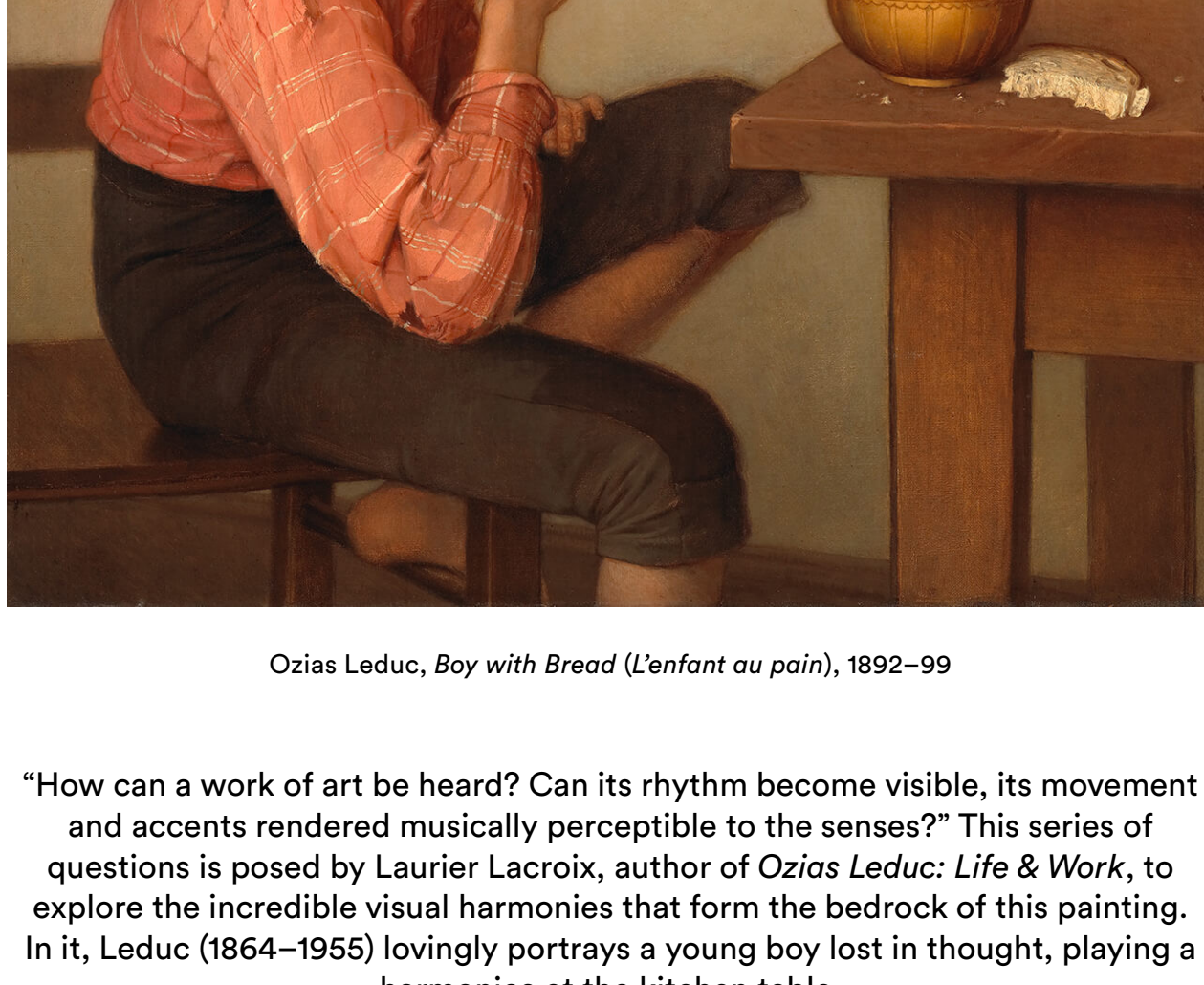


Kevin Hearn's guitar with Shuvinaï Ashoona's drawings, 2016

An iconic collaboration between music and art in Canada is embodied in this instrument. This guitar belongs to Barenaked Ladies band member Kevin Hearn, and it is adorned with the work of leading contemporary Inuit artist Shuvinaï Ashoona (b.1961). Hearn is a long-standing admirer and patron of Inuit art, and the guitar was crafted by musician and gallery manager Brad van der Zanden, who sent several guitars to Kingait Studios for the project. Hearn selected the instrument with Ashoona's iconic visual markings on it, and he had a chance to meet her in 2014 during a trip to Kinngait. His song *Walking in the Midnight Sun* is dedicated to the artist.

[Read more in Shuvinaï Ashoona: Life & Work by Nancy G. Campbell here](#)

Seeing Harmony



Ozias Leduc, *Boy with Bread (L'enfant au pain)*, 1892–99

“How can a work of art be heard? Can its rhythm become visible, its movement and accents rendered musically perceptible to the senses?” This series of questions is posed by Laurier Lacroix, author of *Ozias Leduc: Life & Work*, to explore the incredible visual harmonies that form the bedrock of this painting. In it, Leduc (1864–1955) lovingly portrays a young boy lost in thought, playing a harmonica at the kitchen table.

[Download a Teacher Resource Guide on Ozias Leduc, Food, and Nutrition here](#)

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We are creating a central digital resource to tell the world about Canada's most important works of art and where they are located. By functioning as an online art museum, a [digital library](#), and an interactive Canadian art encyclopedia, the ACI is an indispensable resource on Canada's visual heritage.

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