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*Sarah Quick*

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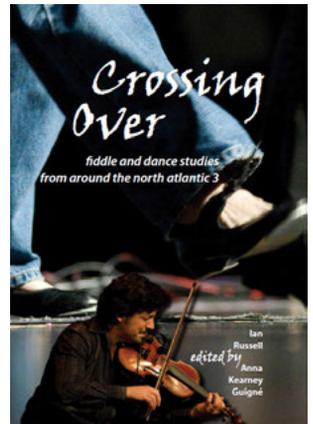
**Crossing Over**

Fiddle and Dance Studies from around the North Atlantic 3

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About the author:

**Sarah Quick** currently teaches at Winthrop University. She holds a PhD in Social-Cultural Anthropology (Indiana University, 2009) and received fellowships from the Canadian Studies Grant Program and Skomp fund (Indiana University). Research interests include Métis and First Nations music/dance, culture and history; the heritage industry, and, recently, food movements.

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## Two models in the world of Métis fiddling: John Arcand and Andy DeJarlis

SARAH QUICK

Andy DeJarlis and John Arcand are two fiddle-composers well known in Western Canada in part because of their influence on Métis fiddling practice. Previous scholarship has tended to focus on traditional tunes and traditional stylistics in relation to Métis fiddling; while recent compositions and commercial fiddling have largely been conceived as negatively influencing the unique qualities that define traditional Métis fiddling as a genre. This paper, however, suggests that commercial compositions are also worthy of study for their insight into the musical worlds that fiddler-composers reaffirm in their tunes and tune titles.

### **Métis identity and Métis fiddle music**

*Métis* translates from French as a person of mixed heritage, and in this case the term (among others) first referred to the progeny of European and Aboriginal unions during the fur trading days in North America. Métis currently refers to a collective group recognized by the Canadian government, although exactly what Métis means in terms of Aboriginal rights and who then qualifies for these rights is contested and negotiated at national and provincial levels. While Métis are not recognized as a separate group in the USA, historically, Métis from the Red River region of Manitoba and North Dakota were the prototypical models for Métis national identity; and all three Prairie Provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta) in Canada have been seen as the eventual homes to scattered Métis communities after the Red River Métis' late nineteenth-century dispersals. Métis is now seen as a cultural identifier in much broader terms with overlapping affiliations to First Nations communities in many locales across northern Canada. Furthermore, the lines between First Nations and Métis communities (and French communities in some places) are often difficult to draw because of the historical, familial, and political interrelationships between these communities.

Several references to Native fiddle dances appeared in accounts of nineteenth-century life on the Canadian prairies (and beyond),<sup>1</sup> but Roy Gibbons' research appears to be the first in the scholarly record to have used the term 'Métis' to describe the fiddle performance style practised by Native peoples in the Prairie Provinces. In

the late 1970s, Gibbons recorded Métis and First Nations fiddlers in Saskatchewan and Alberta; he referred to these fiddlers generally as Métis, but since he included reserve locations for some recordings, I include First Nations as a descriptor.<sup>2</sup> In general, although this genre is identified with Métis culture, First Nations people are also active participants in fiddle dance performance.

Anne Lederman is the scholar most often cited regarding Métis fiddling's formal qualities, due to her seminal research in the mid-1980s when she worked with Métis and First Nations reserve communities north of Winnipeg, Manitoba. In her scholarly and popular publications she has asserted that the fiddle music she sought out and recorded exhibited a syncretism of Native and European musical structures. Lederman argued that although localized (non-Native) stigmas existed toward these fiddlers' renditions of tunes often in 'crooked' or asymmetric phrases, these musical-structural features were indicative of Native musical influence from Ojibwa singing. Lederman also contended that this syncretic tradition had largely been ignored because of the assumptions of past scholars viewing European and Native musical forms as very different. Lederman, instead, pointed to the similarities between vocal/drum performance and rhythmic fiddling, the fiddle's range mimicking the human voice and its performance, primarily for dancing.<sup>3</sup>

Other scholars and projects have generated study of and broader attention to this fiddling genre. Folklorist Nicolas Vrooman's 1983 Folkways recording on the Turtle Mountain Chippewa reservation in North Dakota was re-released as a Smithsonian Folkways CD in 1992. The Gabriel Dumont Institute in Saskatchewan published a collection of Métis music that included a couple of Métis fiddle tunes in 1993, while the Gabriel Dumont Institute recorded, archived, and published a collection in 2002, based on several elder Métis fiddlers from the Prairie Provinces and the Northwest Territories, entitled *Drops of Brandy: An Anthology of Métis Music* with an accompanying set of four CDs. Byron Dueck has researched fiddle and dance performance on First Nations reserves in the vicinity of and including Winnipeg, Manitoba; I have taken up the study of fiddle and dance performance primarily in Alberta (but also in Saskatchewan settings); and Anne Lederman observed and recorded fiddle dance activities in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories in 2008, continuing Craig Mishler's earlier research on Gwich'in fiddling.<sup>4</sup>

Besides the asymmetric phrasing that gives Métis fiddling an 'out of metre' feel, as brought to light by Lederman's research, Métis fiddling is seen as contrasting with more mainstream Canadian fiddling (often described as 'down east' style) in a number of other ways. Elder fiddlers generally accompany themselves by clogging their feet in a set rhythmic pattern, similar to that which Québécoise fiddlers do. A number of the old tunes require tuning the fiddle in non-standard tunings, and most fiddlers play open strings or double stops for phrase emphasis. Finally, many fiddlers point to Métis fiddling's 'bouncy' or 'jumpy' quality, which can be attributed to bowing techniques as well as the already mentioned use of asymmetric phrases.

As Mark Slobin characterised, *affect* is an analytic tool for recognizing what musicians do to convey a mood so that their audience is moved in a certain way.<sup>5</sup>

The dance aesthetic emphasized in Métis fiddling obviously ties to its traditional function as dance accompaniment, and the dances, in turn, often accompany celebratory social gatherings. Therefore, this dance aesthetic relates to the affect, or the emotional mood that performers generally convey in the upbeat tunes played to inspire dancing, a mood intertwined with informal fun, the lifting of spirits, and the celebrating of significant events. Nonetheless, affect can also be related to the creation of new tunes, and here I focus especially on the affective qualities of Dejarlis and Arcand's tunes and tune titles in comprising a dense and evocative terrain of meaning-making.

### **Andy Dejarlis**

Andy Dejarlis is now recognised as the first major Métis fiddling recording artist, his career extending from the 1930s into the 1970s. He died in 1975 having only reached the age of 60, but during his lifetime he recorded close to forty LPs, composed hundreds of fiddle tunes, and in 1970 received a Gold Record from London Records for sales exceeding 500,000 albums.<sup>6</sup> Born near Woodridge in southeastern Manitoba in 1914, Dejarlis started fiddling when he was fifteen or sixteen, learning from his father and other well-known local fiddlers. He moved with his family to Winnipeg in 1933 or 1934, and soon after he began playing for the local radio and dances.<sup>7</sup> Beginning in 1935 he had his own radio programme with the 'Red River Mates' on CJRC in Winnipeg, and in 1936 he and his band also broadcast over CKSB in St Boniface, Manitoba. In 1938, Dejarlis took violin lessons from Professor Rutherford in Winnipeg for six months; and during the 1930s and 1940s, he toured with his band in many communities in Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan; in 1946 and 1947, Dejarlis lived in Vancouver and performed as 'Andy De Jarlis and His Early Settlers' for old-time dances. He returned to Winnipeg in 1948, suffered from several bouts of ill health, but still performed regularly at old-time dances.<sup>8</sup>

In 1956 Dejarlis first recorded with Quality records,<sup>9</sup> and in 1959 he began a recording career with London records that lasted fifteen years. He moved to Montreal in 1962 to continue recording with London records and during this time he appeared on Don Messer's Jubilee and was featured on a television show on CFTM-TV in Montreal. In addition to his many recordings with his 'Early Settlers', he published three books of mainly original tunes (1961, 1963, and 1969). Dejarlis returned to Manitoba in 1965, receiving in his later years many awards and accolades for his recording career, compositions, and contributions to Manitoba (his tune titles make extensive use of Manitoba place names).<sup>10</sup>

Dejarlis's impact is seen in both the traditional dance repertoire as well as tunes associated with more recent dance forms such waltzes, polkas, two-steps, and fox trots. Of the tunes associated with accompanying traditional Métis dances, he recorded the 'Red River Jig', 'Drops of Brandy', a 'Duck Dance', and 'Whiskey Before Breakfast'. His version of the 'Red River Jig' is perhaps the most significant version influencing contemporary fiddlers' repertoires, and, to some, his versions of these traditional tunes have become the standard models to follow.

DeJarlis also recorded other tunes already in the local Manitoba repertoire. In addition to the jigs – ‘Romeo’s First Change’ and ‘House Party Jig’ – standards for square dance first changes, he recorded ‘Crossing the Ferry’ as a second change, ‘Wind that Turns the Mill’ as a breakdown, and ‘Trading Post Reel’ – all based on traditional tunes. In these cases, he did not attribute these tunes to himself, but in other cases, perhaps when he added to or refashioned significant portions of the tune, he claimed them as his own. For example, Anne Lederman cited ‘Grandpa’s Whiskers’ (jig) as well as parts of ‘Jack Pine Trail’ and ‘Pemmican Reel’ as likely to be already in the aural tradition in Manitoba.<sup>11</sup>

DeJarlis’s influence is quite pronounced among many fiddlers (Métis and non-Métis) in western Canada and beyond. At old-time jam sessions and fiddle contests, several DeJarlis tunes are consistently present: ‘Sunshine and Flowers’ (fox trot), ‘Manitoba Waltz’, ‘Lucky Trapper’s Reel’, ‘Rooster on the Fence’ (reel), ‘Poor Girl’s Waltz’, and ‘Sleeping Giant Two Step’ are just some of the many. Besides several Aboriginal fiddlers – Reg Bouvette, Alex Carriere, Mel Bedard, Cliff Maytwayashing, and John Arcand to name only a few – and several other western Canadian fiddlers have recorded DeJarlis tunes – Graham Townsend, Patti Lamoureux, and Calvin Vollrath. He was particularly known for his long and smooth phrases in waltzes (not a quality usually associated with the older Métis style), and his ‘Manitoba Waltz’ (one of many waltzes he created) won an award in 1967 from BMI. Even ‘down-east’ fiddler Don Messer produced a tribute album of DeJarlis tunes called *Manitoba’s Golden Boy*.<sup>12</sup>

DeJarlis’s style of fiddling has actually been characterised as conforming to the smooth sound of Don Messer to create a ‘synthesis of Messer’s “down-east” style with native and Métis repertoires’.<sup>13</sup> As Lederman observed, this conformity altered some of the traditional tunes so that they fit into the ‘straight’ 16-bar formula.<sup>14</sup> Along with his penning names to traditional tunes, this aspect of DeJarlis’s career is controversial – perhaps too harsh a qualifier since he is also a source of pride. Furthermore, even though DeJarlis’s tunes fit the standard in metric consistency and bar lengths, overlapping phrases (another feature attributed to traditional Métis fiddling) appear in many of the tunes he recorded. Also, some of his tunes do not divide into the symmetric two-measure motifs that guide the structure of many mainstream Canadian tunes (for example, ‘Lucky Trapper’s Reel’, ‘Pemmican Reel’, ‘Jolly Dolly Polka’, and ‘Bull Moose Reel’). Still, an impression exists that DeJarlis contributed to old fiddling ways ebbing out of practice, and, to some, these old ways are what makes this kind of fiddling intrinsically Aboriginal. Nonetheless, many fiddlers also distinguish Andy’s ‘Red River’ style – his way of bowing faster tunes, in particular – from the down-east style. Mel Bedard, another well-known and commercially-recorded fiddler from Manitoba, who had known DeJarlis, spoke of this particular style during his interview for the *Drops of Brandy* anthology:

It was jumpy sort of a thing [as compared to] [...] the Don Messer style, it was more smooth, more even flow, [...] this Red River style, distinctive notes,

individual notes stick out in the playing [...] so it differed very much from the down-east style. The down-east style is up tempo and the Red River style is nice danceable tempo [...] and the bowing is very different in it – very, very different.<sup>15</sup>

Andy DeJarlis was actually born Joseph Patrice Ephreme Desjarlais, a common Métis surname with ties to a Québec family active in North America's fur trading history.<sup>16</sup> Early on he used the anglicised 'De Jarlis' as his professional name, and Marcel Meilleur, who played with DeJarlis for many years as his harmony fiddler, recounted that DeJarlis had changed the spelling so that radio station announcers would not mispronounce it.<sup>17</sup> In 1971, he legally amended his name to Andrew Joseph Patrick Ephreme DeJarlis, likely for copyright purposes.<sup>18</sup> On his albums and tune books, he described his fiddle style as 'Red River Valley' and made no direct references to his own Métis heritage. Perhaps he concealed this aspect of his identity as a necessity, especially early in his career when the stigma of having such a heritage remained high.

As I discuss at length in my dissertation, many Métis people have hidden or were not fully aware of their Métis heritage – some up until quite recently, consciously, and others only because their parents had hidden or denied this aspect of their heritage in order to shield them from the negativity that they or their own parents had faced.<sup>19</sup> Watson's brief account of Andy DeJarlis's life indicates that at least by 1970, he did not shy away from acknowledging his heritage, and 'some of the proceeds from his playing were given to the Winnipeg Friendship and Métis Centre'.<sup>20</sup> Still, Mel Bedard was the first to directly allude to this heritage with his album *Métis Fiddler* in 1980; and Bedard told me in an informal conversation that the reason no one had done this before him was that they were still ashamed. Furthermore, the related stigma coming from the perception of what is and is not 'proper' rhythm in fiddling could have played a part in DeJarlis not acknowledging this heritage. As mentioned above, traditional Métis fiddling is known for its asymmetric phrases, which to fiddlers coming from more mainstream Canadian fiddling backgrounds sounds as if beats are added or dropped. DeJarlis can be seen as having created a more commercially-marketable style, or as John Arcand described it 'a modernised version of Métis fiddling', that downplays some qualities now associated with the older style of Métis fiddling.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, some of DeJarlis's tunes provide fodder of a different kind. Many reference particular places and people, some closely tied to DeJarlis's personal experiences.<sup>22</sup> Others can be seen as historical indexes to fur trading, Métis heritage, or even Indianness; and the reels 'Road to Batoche', 'Louis Riel', and 'Coureur de Bois', the 'Fort Gary Jig', the 'Fort Ellice Waltz', as well as the 'Red River Cart' (polka) are all obvious pointers by their names alone. With the inclusion of hunting and trapping lifestyles in this scope, so too are 'Lucky Trapper's Reel', 'Bull Moose' (reel), 'Caribou Reel', 'Pemmican Reel', 'Buckskin Reel', and 'Buffalo Chase'. 'Moccasin Reel', 'Totem Pole Reel', 'Sitting Bull', 'Wigwam Polka', and 'Flaming Arrow' (reel) have Indian-themed titles that, as in some of the other tunes, could be dually interpreted

as Métis *and* Indian themes. This list designates tunes that are mostly quick and upbeat and generally exhibit the ‘jumpy’ feel that Mel Bedard alluded to for the Red River Valley style above.

Many of these tunes have additional sound signatures: the fast tunes – with the exception of ‘The Lucky Trapper’s Reel’ and ‘Red River Cart’ (polka) – are all either in minor keys, relatively rare in the repertoire, or they make use of non-major modes or minor phrases. The fiddlers I worked with generally recognise tunes as having a certain key and speak in terms of ‘major’ and ‘minor’ keys. They also recognise shifts in the tonal structure within tunes and speak to their accompanists (piano or guitar) in terms of minor and major chords. Shifting from a major to a minor key or a different tonality (mode) is actually quite common in the older repertoire, a feature often attributed to Scottish tunes. For example, the traditional ‘Wind that Turns the Mill’, a tune that Andy DeJarlis recorded as a breakdown on one of his square-dance albums, shifts in and out of modal phrases in the second part; and ‘Caber Feigh’, an old Scottish tune that Anne Lederman found in a few fiddlers’ repertoires for quadrille accompaniment, also shifts between modes in its first part. DeJarlis utilised this shifting tonality in many of the tunes he created (or refashioned) such as in ‘Woodridge Breakdown’, ‘Stern Wheeler’, ‘Surveyor’s Reel’, ‘The Merry Scotchman Breakdown’, ‘Blueberry Jig’, ‘Pierre’s Special’, and many others.

Still, I suggest that in some tunes DeJarlis’s use of these keys and phrases signified more than a nod to traditional melodic qualities in (Scottish) fiddling, but also the widespread tradition of marking exotic and primitive ‘others’ in Western classical and popular music. As musicologist Michael Pisani has mapped out in *Imagining Native America in Music*, the bag of tricks available for representing ‘others’ in European music was transferred to the musical sounds of ‘the Indian’ emerging during the nineteenth century into what he calls ‘the war dance trope’ in classical and popular music. By DeJarlis’s time, ‘the Indian’ had been conventionalised into a small but potent set of musical cues – indexes to ‘tom-tom’ drumming through percussion or pulsing instrumental fifths (the first of four beats always heavily accented), the use of minor modes or gapped scales (a holdover from exoticism in European music), recurring rhythmic or ornamental motifs, and the use of descending phrases. These sounds of ‘the Indian’ were prevalent in popular musicals and films early in the twentieth century into the 1960s and beyond.<sup>23</sup> Pisani explains the various threads contributing to these set of conventions: European exoticism (representing nearby peasants as well as more distant easterners) combined with military marches as well as ethnographic and more exhibition-style representations/performances of American Indian instruments and music. Although Pisani did not include North American fiddling as a part of his musical analysis, the marking of ‘Indian Other’ is evident in several tunes with ‘Indian’ or ‘squaw’ in their titles across many North American traditions. Furthermore, some of these stereotypical musical qualities have some basis in Native musical practice (such as the use of descending phrases); besides Lederman, Alan Jabbour has argued Amerindian influences are evident in the cascading melodies in the fiddling traditions of the Upper South.<sup>24</sup>

The most obvious instance of DeJarlis using the war-dance trope comes with his recording of 'Sitting Bull' on *Red River Echoes* recorded sometime in the early 1960s.<sup>25</sup> Before the reel begins, we hear a man state, 'Me ... Big Chief ... Sitting Bull' in stilted, Hollywood Indian talk followed immediately by bass drums beating the familiar tom-tom rhythm. The fiddle then launches into a very quick and catchy A-minor reel with descending phrases in the first section, and lower rhythmic fifths in the second section. After the fiddle ends, we hear the piano play three notes (two low, shorter 'As' and then a longer, higher 'E' – again a fifth) before the recurring tom-toms again sound and fade away.

Other examples appear on *Swing Your Partners* and *Travelling West*, albums that DeJarlis recorded at least a decade later.<sup>26</sup> *Swing Your Partners* includes 'Road to Batoche', an E-minor tune that again makes use of the prelude and fading postlude of tom-toms; while *Travelling West* features the reels 'Louis Riel' and 'Flaming Arrow'. 'Louis Riel' is also in E-minor (with three parts instead of the ubiquitous two), and features many of the same motifs as 'Road to Batoche,' which makes sense considering their titles. Unlike 'Sitting Bull' and 'Road to Batoche,' only three beats (short-short-long) played alongside an accordion's E-minor chord sound before the fiddling starts, but following the fiddling at the end the familiar tom-toms fade away. The tune itself is quite dramatic: its first section starting on the lower strings, the shorter middle section moves into higher pitches, until the pinnacle effect of the final section that introduces the highest tones, double stops, and the most variation in phrasing, to finally end in descent back to where the tune began.

The recording of 'Flaming Arrow' strays from the other tunes in that it lacks tom-toms and overall the tune is not in a minor key. However, minor (or non-major) phrases appear at opportune moments: after starting out in D-major, the tune moves into an E-minor interlude; in the second section a similar melodic shift occurs, but this time it is a shorter and even more shocking inclusion of a five-note (possibly D-minor) phrase. The jarring effect of these phrases (especially the second) and the title of the tune lead me to believe DeJarlis was again creating more Indian imagery with their inclusion. Appendix 1 presents all DeJarlis's tunes with Indian or Métis imagery suggested in their titles, of which I am aware, and that make use of minor keys or other non-major modes. Because I do not have access to all of DeJarlis's recordings, in some cases my analysis was based on his published tune books or other fiddlers' recordings or versions.

Until closely listening to DeJarlis's recorded version of 'Sitting Bull', I did not consider that DeJarlis (and/or members of his band) may also have been incorporating the popular and stereotypical sonic markings of Indians and Western themes into his tunes. Rather, I had conceptualised many of them as a group alongside other more recent compositions by John Arcand (as I believe many familiar with these tunes do). As Pisani related in the concluding pages of *Imagining Native America in Music*, the indexical properties of musical stereotypes do not emanate on the basis of (ethnocentric) ideologies alone but also on their affective qualities, or as he

wrote, the 'pleasure in musical sounds and the recognition of recurring tropes and ideological patterns'.<sup>27</sup>

I believe contemporary fiddlers' appreciation of these particular DeJarlis tunes have more to do with the uniqueness of these tunes rather than the stereotypical imagery these kinds of musical tropes were perhaps meant, at one time, to evoke. Rather, I would argue that these tunes are interesting and influential fusions of musical allusions; and in contemporary practice, these tunes have become unmoored from their most blatantly stereotypical contexts (the tom-tom frame) and continue to be played and recorded by Métis and First Nations fiddlers (and others). Further, the affect that DeJarlis (and his band-mates) were trying to convey with these recordings is rather difficult to fully establish without the full context of their performance(s) and intentions. For example, the minor key as well as the overall dramatic build up in 'Louis Riel' reel suggests that DeJarlis was also trying to convey the sombre and dramatic events of Louis Riel's life; and a similar interpretation could be applied to the evocative properties of 'Road to Batoche', which could include an additional layer of meaning, referencing DeJarlis's own travels to this highly charged location in Métis cultural memory.

### **John Arcand**

John Arcand is now well recognised in Western Canada for his promotion of traditional Métis fiddling as well as for his own fiddle compositions. I first met John Arcand as a student in his class at the Emma Lake Fiddle Camp in northern Saskatchewan in 2000, which I also attended in 2001 and 2002.<sup>28</sup> In 2000, I attended his third annual Fiddle Fest near Saskatoon; I have attended every year since, except in 2006.<sup>29</sup> As with DeJarlis, I will briefly characterise John Arcand's fiddling career before discussing his compositions.

Born over a generation later than DeJarlis in 1942, near the Debden-Big River region of northwestern Saskatchewan, John Arcand began fiddling at a young age – mimicking his uncles, father, and grandfather's playing at house parties. He recalled he and his brothers pulling down a particularly rough fiddle off the wall with a broom handle so that he could practice; and by the age of twelve, Arcand had begun to play for dances as well. Although he continued to be an active player at dances and other venues such as at 'Back to Batoche' during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, his primary income came from working in the logging industry, and it was only recently that he has been able to dedicate his career to fiddling. Early turning points in his career came with his first solo recording, which references a DeJarlis tune (*Road to Batoche: Centennial Year 1985*),<sup>30</sup> as well as being hired as one of the first fiddle instructors at the Emma Lake Fiddle Camp in Saskatchewan in 1988. During this period he also began to compose tunes, and to date he has composed over 300 and has recorded fourteen solo albums.<sup>31</sup> Besides recording his and others' fiddle compositions, Arcand's recordings also feature tunes he remembers his father and grandfather playing, and other traditional dance tunes; and his last eight recordings include a version of the 'Red River Jig'.

Arcand's fiddling career really took off during the late 1990s, when he also began to step up his efforts in fiddle and dance preservation. While living in Greencourt, Alberta, in 1997, he began his first fiddle festival as a part of these efforts. He continued the festival annually when he moved back to Saskatchewan in 1998, the event growing each year. In 1999, he instigated what became the *Drops of Brandy* project through the auspices of the Gabriel Dumont Institute in Saskatchewan. Also in 1999, he was invited to the Fiddles of the World Conference in Halifax to represent Western Canada and in 2001 he travelled to Dublin as a 'delegate in an Irish/Métis Cultural Exchange'. At this stage in his career, he regularly travels to several fiddle contests, fiddle camps, workshop and festival settings as a performer, judge, and teacher, in Canada and in the United States. Recently, his efforts have been recognised through several awards such as the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Arts and Culture and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Grand Masters' fiddle championship, both given to him in 2003; in 2005 he was given a Saskatchewan Centennial Medal, and in 2008 he received the Order of Canada.<sup>32</sup> Probably his most well-known tunes are 'Big Bear' and 'Grey Owl', two tunes similar to the above grouping of upbeat DeJarlis compositions. 'Grey Owl' and other Arcand tunes have been featured in his own tune books as well as in *Canadian Fiddle Music*.<sup>33</sup>

John Arcand's respect for DeJarlis's compositions can be seen in his recording of several DeJarlis's tunes over the years (see Appendix 1 for some of these), as well as his inclusion of a DeJarlis-specific fiddle tune contest at his Fiddle Fest in 2005, the contest requiring fiddlers to play two DeJarlis tunes, a waltz and a tune of choice. In 2008 and 2009, a group emulating the old recordings of Andy DeJarlis performed as 'the Red River Mates' from Manitoba for one of the nightly old-time dances. DeJarlis has also been an inspiration to Arcand as a composer, since many of Arcand's compositions have a similar sound to DeJarlis's tunes in their use of minors and related rhythmic patterns: he has also taken up DeJarlis's manner of signalling Aboriginal themes through his tune titles. Thus, one of the affective (as well as iconic and indexical) qualities of these tunes is their likeness to DeJarlis's earlier works.

Appendix 2 presents the set of Arcand's tunes I have identified as featuring similar thematic and musical qualities as DeJarlis's tunes presented in Appendix 1. However, some distinctions exist between these two sets of compositions. For one, Arcand's tune titles tend to be more context-specific. All except 'Distance Drums' relate to a place, event, or person(s), or a combination of these kinds of references, whereas many of DeJarlis tune titles ('Moccasin Reel', 'Totem Pole Reel', 'Wigwam Polka', and so on) have more generalised connotations. Furthermore, Arcand's recent recording of 'Distant Drums', composed in 1993, includes a traditional Cree Drum song for the introductory

and postlude frames, a definite move away from the stereotypical tom-toms found in Dejarlis's earlier recordings.<sup>34</sup>

Probably because of his own background, Arcand's historical tune references are often Saskatchewan-based. For example, 'Big Bear' references the nineteenth-century Cree leader who refused to sign Treaty 6 in 1876 and was later unfairly implicated in the 1885 North-West Rebellion, and 'Cut Knife Hill' refers to the site of a battle, east of current day Battleford, Saskatchewan, during the North-West Rebellion, where the Canadian military attacked a Cree group by surprise.<sup>35</sup> In addition to the tunes listed above, several other Arcand tunes in major keys point to historic themes, Métis cultural icons, or Métis leaders through their titles. For example, 'Northcote Reel' refers to the famous steamboat used for munitions against the Métis fighters during the 1885 'rebellion' (some Métis refer to this as a resistance) that in 1886 ended up beached near Cumberland House. Besides the appendix-listed 'Yvon Dumont', a well-known Manitoba Métis leader, who also became Manitoba's Lieutenant-Governor, Arcand has composed 'Vitale Morin's Reel', 'Medric McDougall's Jig', and 'Harry Daniels' – all based on leaders who have been active in Métis political organizations. In addition, 'Les Michif' points to both the language and term sometimes also used to identify Métis peoples, and 'The Stolen Bell of Batoche' refers to the bell from the church at Batoche that ended up in Ontario because some Canadian soldiers took it as battle-pickings after the 1885 rebellion.

I asked John Arcand about the creative process of composing and titling tunes, and he had difficulty in explaining this process as a set schema of events.<sup>36</sup> In response to whether the tune came first and then later a title, he said that 'sometimes the tune is first, sometimes the person or place is in [...] mind before the tune'. He also emphasised that these types of tunes (those with historical/ personal names) very definitely have a story or some sort of personal significance to him, pointing to many of the tunes on his newly released *Les Michif* in 2006 named for particular people. *Les Michif* features 'Gerald White's Memorial Duck Dance', 'Harry Daniels', 'Blaine's Breakdown', 'Rene Gaudreault', all tribute tunes to these individuals.<sup>37</sup> Harry Daniels was a well-known Métis activist and political leader, who played a part in Canada's constitutional recognition of Métis through the Native Council of Canada. Daniels passed away in 2004, and Arcand said of Daniels and his passing, 'he was a great friend and a true Canadian Métis leader', and that 'he felt compelled to somehow capture [...] in a tune in his honour'. Arcand was working from his own respect of and experiences with Harry Daniels to create a tribute tune: and the fact that Daniels had a lively personality and would kick up his heels to jig from time to time also comes through in this tune.

In other cases in titling, tunes have remained nameless until particular circumstances lent themselves to a title. For example, Arcand had been playing a newly-composed tune around the time that two young Montana fiddlers and their father (a guitar player) visited for a week to study with him as a Métis fiddling mentor. The tune is primarily in E minor, similar to a number of Arcand's tunes

listed in Appendix 2 that these young fiddlers were already playing. Thus, naming the tune 'Fox Family Reel', after this enthusiastic family of musicians, made sense as well as marked the occasion of their visit.<sup>38</sup>

These tunes are recent examples of the many tunes Arcand has composed referencing people and places significant to him, and looking at his compositions over time, it is possible to get a sense of his travels, and the places, people, and events he has interacted with by the titles alone. Colin Quigley examined the creative process associated with composing fiddle tunes through his intense study of Newfoundland fiddler Emile Benoit, and he found that, like Arcand, Benoit's titles pointed to 'the places, communities, roads, and natural landmarks that framed his life; the people he wished to entertain are memorialised in the titles of the tunes they enjoyed; and crucial experiences that exemplify his values and beliefs are recalled by tunes named for them.'<sup>39</sup> Quigley argued that although tune titling is an understudied aspect of fiddle traditions, it is 'an important meaning-giving act through which the musician and the audience connect the musical experience of the fiddle tune with their other individual and shared worlds of experience.'<sup>40</sup> Arcand and, I believe, most fiddler-composers title many of their tunes to connect to specific people, events, times, and places based on personal experiences. Yet, in the case of the Métis-themed or Aboriginal-themed titles based on historical events, Arcand did not personally experience these events, although he does have familial and commemorative experiences that provide connections to these historic events.

### **The evolving legacies of DeJarlis and Arcand**

Métis fiddling can be seen as a tradition that has undergone several levels of mixing, and as having undergone several transformations. In its beginning phases, this musical form combined both indigenous and European musical influences in a syncretic fiddle and dance practice. Additional layers of music and dance influences were added to this mix over time, and eventually certain aspects of past fiddling practices were negated because of outside influences, as certain fiddlers broadened their audience base. Aspects of Andy DeJarlis's career exemplified this phase. However, as Métis fiddling (and Aboriginal fiddling more generally) has become valued as a distinct tradition, the stigma of playing tunes the old way or 'out of metre' has receded and is now embraced. Furthermore, some of DeJarlis's compositions as well as his recording of traditional tunes indicate he was not completely accommodating to the down-east style associated with more mainstream Canadian fiddling. Indeed, DeJarlis's career (and others after him) can be seen as creating new fusions of fiddle practice combining local and more mainstream stylistics. Fiddlers have not ignored DeJarlis's compositions because of some of his accommodations to mainstream Canadian fiddling; rather, fiddlers continue to play DeJarlis tunes, tunes from other Métis fiddlers who emulated DeJarlis's career, as well as other popular tunes coming from outside the local, traditional nexus.

However, now that there is some momentum for the old ways to be celebrated and continued, new fusions are taking place. John Arcand's career can be seen as

a more conscious acknowledgement of these various influences in Métis fiddling. Arcand has recorded Andy Dejarlis, Marcel Meilleur, Reg Bouvette, and other commercially-successful fiddlers' tunes; and he has also composed in this more mainstream style. Nevertheless, he has also recorded many 'crooked' traditional tunes that he learned from his father, uncles, and other fiddlers he has known personally; and lately he has used the older traditional aesthetics in Métis fiddling as models, in that he has begun composing tunes based on non-standard tunings and asymmetric phrasings. For example, his fourteenth album *Meeeyashin* includes 'Le Bonhomme', an upbeat tune with many overlapping phrases, definitely not in the standard 16-bar mode; and in the album notes Arcand wrote that when he 'composed "Le Bonhomme" it really sounded like a good ole Métis tune and made me think of my father and grandfather, so the title seemed fitting'.<sup>41</sup>

The world that Arcand links to in composing and naming fiddle tunes includes an expansive view of a past beyond his own lifetime: they provide an additional *affect*, another layer of meaning for fiddlers/listeners to contemplate with their performance. With these particular titles, Arcand evokes the significance of these past people, places, and events, and I believe relates to his way of marking out both a significant fiddling heritage and a significant Métis heritage. His compositions create social worlds manifesting his own historical consciousness of Métis and First Nations heritage.

## Appendix 1 Aboriginal themes and non-major modes in DeJarlis tunes

### DeJarlis tunes mostly in a Minor key \*also recorded by John Arcand

Sitting Bull	A minor with some G Major in both parts ( <i>Red River Echoes</i> , vol. II, [n.d.], London Records of Canada, EB 5, circa early1960s)
Caribou Reel*	E minor ( <i>Andy De Jarlis' Canadian Fiddle Tunes from the Red River Valley</i> 1958, Toronto, Ont.: BMI Canada, p. 5)
Road to Batoche*	E minor ( <i>Swing Your Partners</i> n.d., London Records of Canada, EBX 4174, circa early 1970s)
Totem Pole Reel	fluctuates between D Maj and E min (DeJarlis <i>Good Old Time Music</i> [n.d.], London Records of Canada, EBX 4109, circa late-1960s)
Bull Moose*	fluctuates between D Major and E minor ( <i>The Happy Old Days</i> 1974D, London Records of Canada, EBX 4190)
Louis Riel*	E minor ( <i>Travelling West</i> 1974D, London Records of Canada, EBX 4185)

### DeJarlis tunes with non-major parts

Wigwam Polka	B minor first part; D Major second part ( <i>Canadian Fiddle Tunes</i> 1961)
Coureur de Bois	Fluctuates between E Major and F# minor in first part / D Major second part ( <i>Andy De Jarlis' Canadian Fiddle Tunes from the Red River Valley</i> 1961, Toronto, Ontario: BMI Canada, p. 12)
Moccasin Reel*	D Major with E minor phrases in both parts ( <i>Andy De Jarlis' Canadian Fiddle Tunes from the Red River Valley</i> 1958, Toronto, Ont.: BMI Canada, p. 19)
Buckskin Reel	D Major with brief non-major phase in second part ( <i>Early Settlers Old Time Tunes</i> [n.d.], London Records of Canada, EBX 4185, circa early to mid-1960s)
Buffalo Chase	F Major with G minor (or other non-major) shadings in first part ( <i>Jolly Old Time Music</i> [n.d.], London Records of Canada, EB102, circa mid-1960s)
Pemmican Reel	D Major with brief non-major phrase in second part ( <i>Andy's Centennial Album</i> [n.d.], London Records of Canada, EB108 circa 1967)
Flaming Arrow	D Major with E minor phrase in first part and brief phrase in second part ( <i>Travelling West</i> 1974D, London Records of Canada, EBX 4185)

\*also in *John Arcand: Métis and Old Tyme Fiddle Tunes*, vols 1–41 (1996)

## Appendix 2 Arcand tunes that use Aboriginal themes as well as minor keys or phrasings

Batoche Centennial Reel	G major with A minor phrasings ( <i>John Arcand Metis and Old tyme fiddle tunes, vol. 4</i> 1996, Alberta, CA: Maritime Publishers, p. 12)
Battle of Batoche	G major with A minor phrasings ( <i>John Arcand Metis and Old tyme fiddle tunes, vol. 4</i> 1996, Alberta, CA: Maritime Publishers, p. 10)
Big Bear	E minor with D major phrases ( <i>Traditionally Yours</i> 2001, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Right Tracks Studio, JA-007)
Grey Owl	fluctuates between D major, E minor and B minor ( <i>Traditionally Yours</i> 2001, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Right Tracks Studio, JA-007)
Distant Drums	E minor with D major and B minor phrases ( <i>Original and Traditional</i> 2004, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Right Tracks Studio, JA-010)
Yvon Dumont	E minor with D major phrases ( <i>Vicki and Me</i> 2005, Hague, Saskatchewan: Keyteck Studios, JA-012)
La Reel de Grande Baptiste	G major first part, E minor second part ( <i>John Arcand Metis and Old tyme fiddle tunes, vol. 4</i> 1996, Alberta, CA: Maritime Publishers, p. 12)
Cut Knife Hill	E minor ( <i>Original and Traditional</i> 2004, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Right Tracks Studio, JA-010)
Fox Family Reel	E minor 1st part, G Major 2 <sup>nd</sup> part ( <i>Thru the Years</i> 2005, Hague, Saskatchewan: Keyteck Studios, JA-011)
Les Moccasin	G major with D minor phrases ( <i>Meeyashin</i> 2007, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Desmond Lagace Studios, JA-014)

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Sarah Quick, 'Performing Heritage: Métis Music, Dance and Identity in a Multicultural State' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, 2009), pp. 131–41. The research that went into this paper would not have been possible without the generosity of Vicki and John Arcand, as well as access to a number of Andy DeJarlis records through Phil Katz, who gave me access to the Cleven collection of DeJarlis LPs in the Washington Old Time Fiddlers' Association archives.

<sup>2</sup> Roy W. Gibbons, *Folk Fiddling in Canada, a Sampling* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Anne Lederman, 'Old Native and Métis Fiddling in Two Manitoba Communities: Camperville and Ebb and Flow' (unpublished master's thesis, York University, 1986); Anne Lederman, 'Indian and Métis Fiddling in Manitoba: Origins, Structure, and the Question of Syncretism,' *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 8, no. 2 (1988), 205–30; Anne Lederman,

'Native and Métis Fiddling: Portrait of a People,' *Fiddler Magazine*, Winter issue (2001/2002), 3–10.

<sup>4</sup> Nicolas Vrooman, *Plains Chippewa/Métis Music from Turtle Mountain* (Smithsonian Folkways, SF40411, 1992); Lynn Whidden, *Métis Songs: Visiting was the Métis Way* (Regina, Saskatchewan: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 1993); Leah Dorion-Paquin and others, *Drops of Brandy: An Anthology of Métis Music* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2002); Byron Dueck, 'Public and Intimate Sociability in First Nations and Métis Fiddling,' *Ethnomusicology*, 51, no. 1 (2007), 30–63; Quick, 'Performing Heritage'; Anne Lederman, 'Aboriginal Fiddling in the North: Two Traditions,' in this volume; Craig Mishler, *The Crooked Stovepipe: Athapaskan Fiddle Music and Square Dancing in Northeast Alaska and Northwest Canada* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> Mark Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move: Exploring the Klezmer World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 95.

<sup>6</sup> Reverend Franceene Watson, 'Red River Valley Fiddler Andy De Jarlis: His Musical Legacy Touched by New Dimensions,' *Canadian Folk Music Bulletin*, 33, no. 2 (1997), 16–22 (p. 20).

<sup>7</sup> Marcel Meilleur, 'Fond Recollections of Fiddling Great Andy DeJarlis,' in *Red River Echoes: the Life and Music of Marcel Meilleur*, ed. by David Dandeneau (Manitoba: Pemmican Publications, 2003), pp. 41–50 (p. 43); Watson (1997), p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> Meilleur (2003), pp. 45, 47; Watson (1997), pp. 17–18.

<sup>9</sup> Although every biographical account mentions that DeJarlis first recorded for Quality records, I have not been able to find the titles of any of these recordings.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Green, 'DeJarlis, Andy,' in *The Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, [www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/emc/index-e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/emc/index-e.html) [accessed 28 February 2009]; Watson (1997), p. 18.

<sup>11</sup> Anne Lederman, *Old Native and Métis Fiddling in Western Manitoba*, Falcon Productions CD387, 2003. This collection is a commercial re-release of Lederman's 1986 field recordings.

<sup>12</sup> Don Messer, *A Tribute to Manitoba's Golden Boy: Andy De Jarlis*, MCA Records, MCA 7014, Willowdale, Ontario, [n.d.].

<sup>13</sup> Green, 'DeJarlis, Andy'.

<sup>14</sup> Lederman, 'Native and Métis Fiddling: Portrait of a People', p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Melbard Bedard, interview by Herb Lafferty for Gabriel Dumont Institute, 9 August 2001 [www.metismuseum.ca/media/document.php/06745.pdf](http://www.metismuseum.ca/media/document.php/06745.pdf) [accessed 28 February 2009].

<sup>16</sup> Green, 'DeJarlis, Andy'; for research on Desjarlais ancestry, see Heather Devine, *The People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660–1900* (Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary Press, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> Meilleur (2003), p. 43.

<sup>18</sup> Green, 'DeJarlis, Andy'.

<sup>19</sup> Sarah Quick, 'Performing Heritage', pp. 108–11.

<sup>20</sup> Watson (1997), p. 21.

<sup>21</sup> John Arcand, interviewed by author, telephone interview, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan/Columbia, South Carolina, 20 March 2005.

<sup>22</sup> Watson (1997), p. 19.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2005); see also Philip Deloria, 'The Hills Are Alive with the Sounds of Indian Music,' in *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004), pp. 183–223.

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<sup>24</sup> Lederman, 'Indian and Métis Fiddling in Manitoba', pp. 205–30; Alan Jabbour, 'Fiddle Tunes of the Old Frontier,' in *Driving the Bow: Fiddle and Dance Studies from around the North Atlantic 2*, ed. Ian Russell and Mary Anne Alburger (Aberdeen, Scotland: Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, 2008), pp. 4–13.

<sup>25</sup> There is no date on this LP; however, according to Meilleur (2003, p. 37), the album was recorded between 1961 and 1962.

<sup>26</sup> Andy Dejarlis, *Swing Your Partners*, London Records of Canada, EBX 4174 [n.d.]. Andy Dejarlis, *Travelling West*. London Records of Canada, EBX 4185, 1974.

<sup>27</sup> Pisani (2005), p. 331.

<sup>28</sup> The Saskatchewan Cultural Exchange Society, which sponsored the Emma Lake Fiddle Camp since 1987, moved the camp to a new location in 2006 in order to save costs, and as of 2009 this camp was no longer operating either.

<sup>29</sup> See [www.johnarcandfiddlefest.com/](http://www.johnarcandfiddlefest.com/) [accessed 28 February 2009].

<sup>30</sup> John Arcand, *Road to Batoche: Centennial 85* (North Battleford, Saskatchewan: Cana Song Recording, 1985).

<sup>31</sup> John Arcand, interviewed by author, Emma Lake, Saskatchewan, 28 June 2000; Maria Campbell also highlighted the Arcand family of fiddlers in her biographical account, see *Halfreed* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), p. 25.

<sup>32</sup> 'John Arcand, "Master of the Métis Fiddle,"' [www.johnarcand.com/bio.html](http://www.johnarcand.com/bio.html) [accessed 23 February 2009].

<sup>33</sup> John Arcand, *John Arcand Metis and Old tyme fiddle tunes, vol.1- 4* (Alberta, CA: Maritime Publishers, 1996); Edward Whitcomb, *Canadian Fiddle Music* (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Publications, 2000).

<sup>34</sup> Arcand (1996), p. 16; John Arcand, *Original and Traditional*, Right Tracks Studio, JA-010, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 2004.

<sup>35</sup> For a reconstruction of this surprise attack see Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser, *Loyal Till Death: Indians and the North-West Rebellion* (Calgary, Alberta: Fifth House Publishers, 1997), pp. 126, 140–42.

<sup>36</sup> This communication took place via e-mail and phone conversation through the help of Arcand's wife Vicki since at the time John was teaching at a fiddle camp. She asked him questions (over the phone) that I had given her via e-mail; she then typed his answers, and sent them back to me via e-mail. All quotes in this paragraph stem from the e-mail on 5 July 2006.

<sup>37</sup> John Arcand, *Les Michif*, Desmond Lagace Studios, JA-013, 2006.

<sup>38</sup> This Fox family visit occurred in Spring 2004, but the earlier visit was noted in my summer fieldnotes for 2004 when I later visited John and Vicki Arcand during the Fiddle Fest.

<sup>39</sup> Colin Quigley, *Music from the Heart: Compositions of a Folk Fiddler* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1995), p. 95.

<sup>40</sup> Quigley (1995), p. 97.

<sup>41</sup> John Arcand, *Meeyashin*, Desmond Lagace Studios, JA-014, 2007.