

The Great Fur Opera
(Hudson's Bay Suite, 1670-)



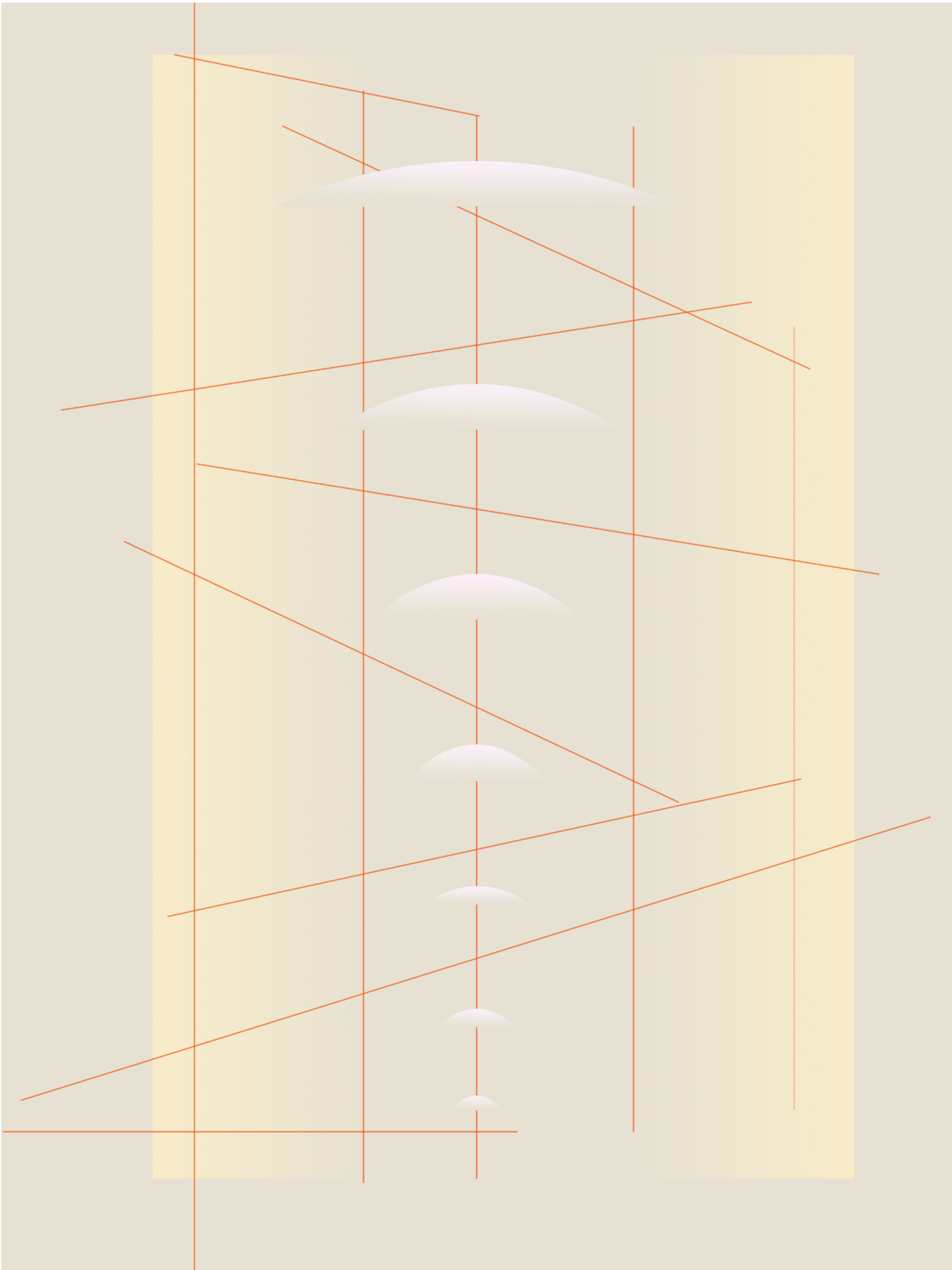
To All To Whom
Our Presentes
Shall Come Greeting:

Our Will and Pleasure is
To Have, Hold, Possess and Enjoy
All Lands and Territories,
Discovered as Not Discovered

For Our Heirs,
and Successors,
and Their Successors,
and Their Successors

Really and Fully Forever

PRO PELLE CUTEM





at all times hereafter
from time to time
for the time being
for the time being

from time to time
for the time being
from time to time
for the time being

from time to time
and at all times hereafter
from time to time
for the time being

for the time being
for the time being
for the time being
from time to time

time being
time to time
time to time
time hereafter

time to time
time being
time being
time being

at any time
for the time being
a convenient time
from time to time

time being
at any time
time being
time being

time being
time after
time being
time being

time to time
time being
time to time
time being

time being
time to time
time being
time then

time after
time to time
all time
time to time

The 1670 charter of the Hudson's Bay Company played a foundational role in the early development of Canada. The charter granted exclusive extractive and trading rights to the Hudson's Bay Company, establishing corporate/colonial rule in the centre of what would become Canada. Though the Hudson's Bay Company ceded control of its rights and territory in 1869-70, the charter had established a precedent of extraction that continues to inform settler-colonial relationships to the land that makes up Canada today.

The Great Fur Opera (Hudson's Bay Suite 1670-) is named for a satirical libretto (The Great Fur Opera, Annals of the Hudson's Bay Company), written by Kildare Dobbs and commissioned by the Hudson's Bay Company to celebrate the company's 300th birthday. In this iteration The Great Fur Opera reflects on the language and legacy of the Hudson's Bay Charter by sounding the results of present day extraction in Canada. This libretto contains two graphic scores and two text scores which notate the sites and methods of extraction: through the language the charter itself, (To Those to Whom Our Presents Shall Come Greeting), through sounding the open pits of mineral extraction (To Have Hold Possesse and Enjoy), through a study of the watershed of Hudson's Bay, the original routes of extraction, (All Lands and Territories Discovered as Not Discovered), and by notating each instance of time recorded in the original charter, (Really and Fully Forever).

Each of the opera's acts have been performed and recorded around Winnipeg, (in a nearby abandoned quarry, in a vacant warehouse building, in a large scale retailer on the outskirts of the city), and then installed on a provisional stage in the basement of The Aldous Building, an old storage building and distribution centre for manufactured goods. Sound echoes in the empty space of this once busy building, itself remains of what has left the city. The Great Fur Opera offers a reflection of what has been extracted by resonating the spaces that are left behind.

Lou Sheppard

Performed by
Pamela Hart (Voice)
Ken MacDonald (French Horn)

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