

# Musical Setting Creation for a Yeats Poem: An Autoethnographic Irish-Canadian Experience



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## The Researcher

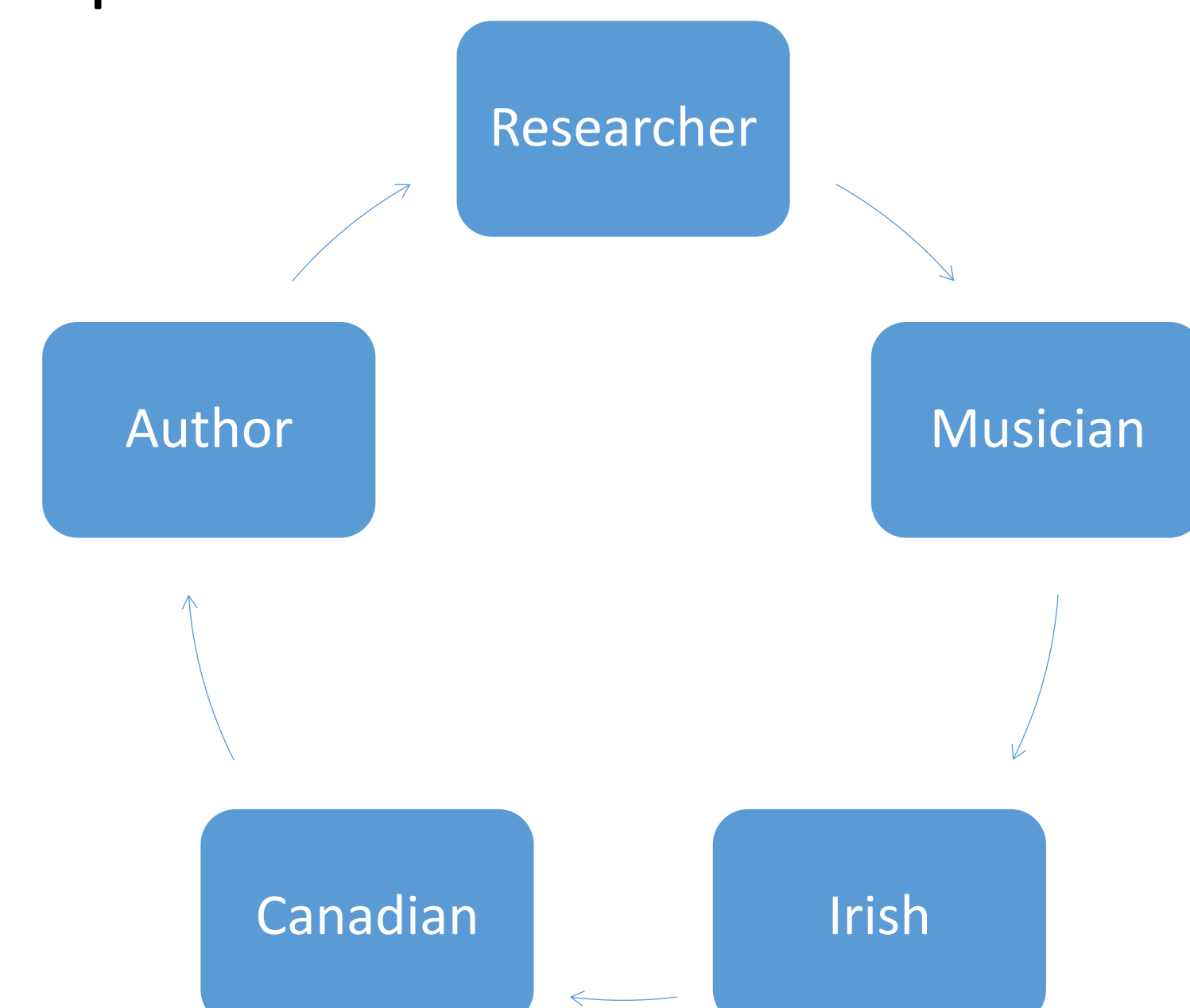
Kevin Michael Stevenson, PhD: primary autoethnographic researcher and musician. Member of Phonographic Performance Ireland, Irish Music Rights Organisation and Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, living in Limerick City. Debut 2024 musical album 'Errantricity'.



## Irish-Canadian or Canadian-Irish?

## Purpose

The project aims to explore 'what it is like' to create a musical setting for a poem written by WB Yeats as a Canadian born musician of paternal Irish heritage. Exploring the significance of this creative process is to assist in its cultural analysis through autoethnography. The process of creating and releasing a musical setting in Ireland for a poem that has personal and cultural importance for the researcher is explored whilst considering if there are therapeutic and educational benefits.



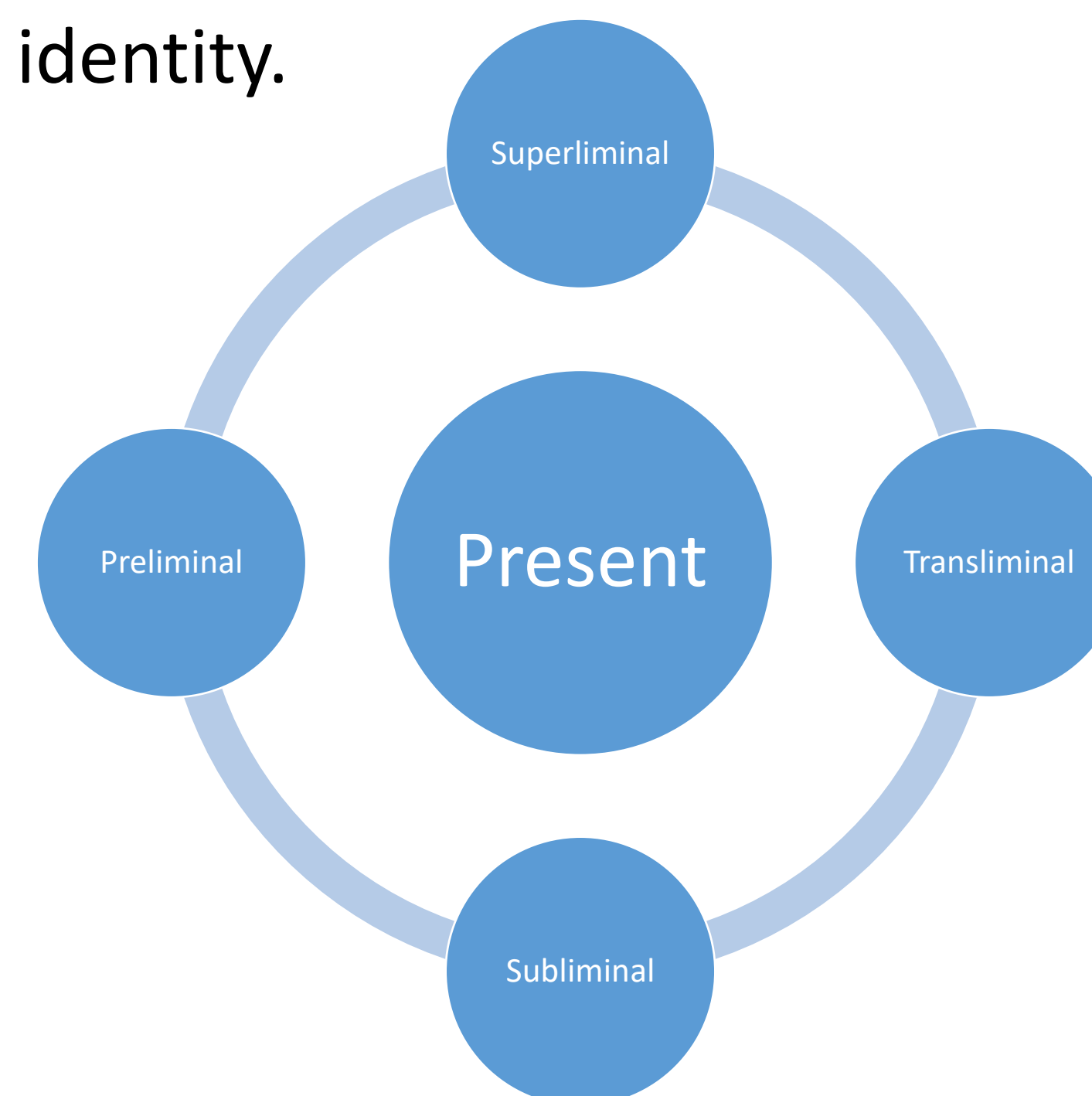
## Methods & Methodology

Memory reflections dating from 2010 onward analyzed in conjunction with recording the musical setting for the poem online between Limerick and Burlington, Ontario (completed July 10, 2024). Emotion coding extracted from the data based on memory reflections, highlighting emotional-based themes (Ellis & Adams, 2011) made possible from the experience of being an Irish-Canadian recording artist and researcher.

### Outline of Methods and Methodology

- Emotive-Coding
- Emic and Etic points of view
- Verisimilitude for readers of the work
- Systematic & Analytical (Butz, 2009)

The project examined the feelings derived from memories that were activated throughout the process of the creation of the setting's recording. Emotion coding was then applied on the journal entries for these memories providing a confessional-emotive style of autoethnography (Chang, 2008) to address the facets of researcher identity.



The analysis was synthesized with the Propeller Model Approach® where the archetypes of the PMA served as characters for the researcher's self-narrative. Consideration of the poem, 'The Song of Wandering Aengus', serving as a cultural artifact to bridge the cultures of the researcher was maintained.

## Findings

The autoethnography allowed for the scrutiny, reflection, publication, and reworking of the researcher's self-understanding (Butz, 2009). This allowed for potential readers of the research to grasp 'what it is like' to be a member of the musical recording industry as an Irish-Canadian and how setting creation can lead to process challenges.

### The themes derived from the reflections:

- Accent of the artist in the song (oscillation)
  - Manifesting the cultural heritage in an artform
  - Homage to Irish family roots (pressure)
  - Worldly phenomena of memorizing and recording
  - Therapeutics of the autoethnography
  - New World (Canada) & Old World (Europe)
  - Connection to themes of the poem (errantry)
- \*Full Autoethnographic Report (forthcoming)

## Results: Rethinking Resources

Cross- Cultural Memberships

Artistic Outlets of Expression

Genealogy and Grief Services

## Acknowledgements

- Richard Wallace (A Serious Happening) produced the musical setting for 'The Song of Wandering Aengus'.
- The Yeats International Summer School 2006 attended by the researcher for cultural and educational engagement.
- Limerick City provided an artistic space for academic and creative growth to conduct the research and recording.

### References:

- Chang, H. (2008). Autoethnography as method. Left Coast Press.
- Butz D. & Besio K. (2009). Autoethnography. Geography Compass Vol 3, Issue 5 pp 1660-1674
- Ellis, C., Adams, TE. & Bochner, AP. (2010). Autoethnography: An Overview. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 12(1), Art.10.