

## Meet Leah Lemm!

Leah K Lemm is a radio & podcast host/producer, singer/songwriter, and a member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Her work revolves around sound/music/voice and community story-sharing, with the mission to *Amplify Native Voices*. She currently lives in Grand Rapids, MN with her husband, young son, and country dog.

Leah received a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing/Poetry from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, NM.

Leah is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, MA where she holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics and a Minor in Writing.

She has a Professional Diploma in Music Production and Engineering from Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA, where her principle instrument was Voice. She also studied documentary-making at Duke Center for Documentary Studies. Leah is excited to begin a new adventure as a member of the Spring 2021 cohort in the Entrepreneurial Journalism Creators Program at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism.



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## Leah Lemm Talks about *Ruins*

<https://youtu.be/OY5D3iX4J4A> (This is a video of Leah talking about her work.)

**As you read below, underline (and number) three things Leah describes that you will look for in her music.**

“My name is Leah Lemm, and I’m a 2017-2018 Cedar Commissions Artist. My project is called *Ruins*, and it’s about how we currently live among ruins, without necessarily noticing it. So, we’re here where societies lived and continued to live that we don’t necessarily notice or pay attention to. And these societies, of which I am a part, have experienced this sort of end of days. Some of the inspirations I’m drawing off of, vaguely, are historical, familial, and personal trauma. There’s that, and, I am critical of religious and colonial institutions throughout the piece, even though I not only benefit from these institutions and also am hurt by them, which I view as being parallel to how assimilation is a form of genocide and a form of survival.

When I was first starting this project, I started to think where can I begin? What’s that piece I can hold on to and let everything come out of? And one day, randomly, the emergency sirens went off while I was standing in the driveway. And I heard these sirens – you know, one over here, one over [t]here, and all of these tension notes that went through. And I thought, how beautiful is that? And also, how scary at the same time? There’s this instance of knowing that something is happening. There’s some force that’s coming through and is going to change everything.

The instrumentation came together kind of around what I’m familiar with. So, usually when I write, I write vocal and piano. That’s the center focal point of what I normally write. And then, I just wanted to bring in the classic “rock band” sort of sound. What I’m also doing is adding in sound design, which we’re looking to mix in surround including sounds of distortion, sirens, metal, fire, wind, that help bring the listener into this immersive environment.

While writing this work, I reflected a lot on the delicate nature of life. The uncertainty of life, the shortness, the frailty. But also, the hope, and the beauty, and the strength throughout the generations, that have experienced trauma, that have survived so we can live.”



Songwriter/Composer: Leah Lemm  
 Performed by “Molecular Machine”  
 Lead Vocals/Keys: Leah Lemm  
 Vocals: Mariya Vyatkina  
 Guitar/Backup Vocals: Cole Premo  
 Bass/Backup Vocals: Evan Clark

*Ruins* by Molecular Machine (Leah Lemm) <https://molecularmachine.bandcamp.com/album/ruins>

Track	Description	Time
1	Intro	:32
2	Movement 1 – Rebeginning	5:35
3	Interlude 1	:18
4	Movement 2 – May We Rest	4:59
5	Interlude 2	:39
6	Movement 3 – Wayward Pine	6:05
7	Interlude 3	:47
8	Movement 4 – Earth	4:44
9	Interlude 4	:23
10	Movement 5 – Remembered	2:29
11	Interlude 5	:19
12	Movement 6 – Final Sun	7:39

Describe the sound of one odd-numbered track.

Track \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sounds/Instruments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Rhythm \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mood \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the sound of one even-numbered track.

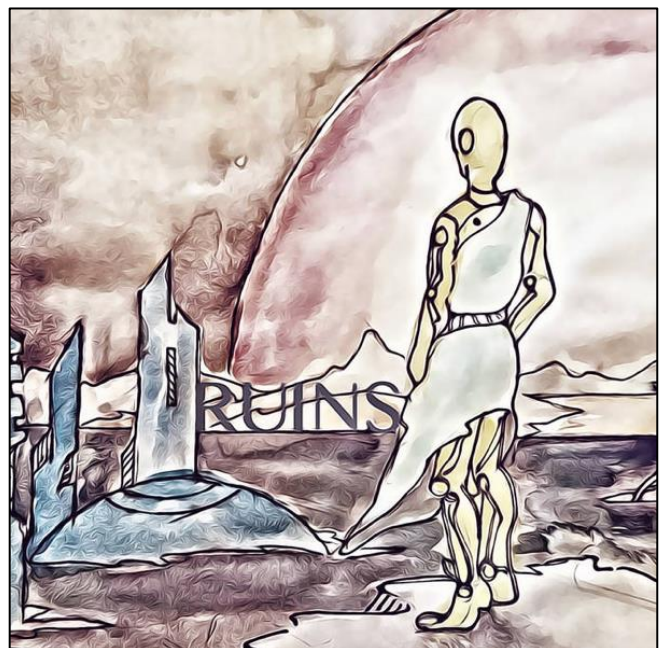
Track \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sounds/Instruments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Rhythm \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mood \_\_\_\_\_



**I can explain how music connects to personal, societal, and cultural contexts.**

At a minimum, listen to your choice of three consecutive tracks. Write about the three things Leah described in *Ruins* that you underlined and were planning to pay attention to as you listened. Did you hear each one? Use details in your writing including the timestamp.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_\_\_

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If you were to create a piece, what is one thing about your culture, yourself, or experiences you've had that you would incorporate into your music. Explain.

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