

# WILLIAM ANDREWS CANADA MUSIC WEEK® AWARDS

Newmarket & Area Branch - Ontario



**T**he Newmarket & Area Branch is thrilled to be recipients of this year's William Andrews Canada Music Week® Award.

Our goal as a branch was to enlighten and inspire our young performers, teachers, and audience members to the uniqueness of Canadian Music and its composers. Our students and teachers rose to the occasion! Sixty five performers for piano, voice, and violin showcased the music of notable composers such as Boris Berlin, Anne Crosby, David Duke, Violet Archer, Clifford Crawley, Jean Coulthard and Debra Wanless. Newer composers, such as Andrew Harbridge, Janet Gieck, and Gordon Stobbe, were also featured, including our two guest composers and speakers, Katya Pine and Jana Skarecky.

It was a pleasure to have Jana and Katya join us in our CMW celebration, since both women belong to the Association of Canadian Women Composers (AACWC/AFCC). Each composer showcased and discussed their latest compositions with our audience.

We were pleasantly surprised to learn from Jana, that, when invited to our recitals, she realized that most of her compositions were for older students. Being the creative artist that she is, and, finding inspiration in nature, Jana decided to compose a short piano solo entitled *Blackbirds* for one of our young students to perform. By recital day, ten more pieces had been added to

the collection to complete Jana's latest album of easy piano pieces entitled *Birds in the Hickory Tree*. Please visit Jana's website to view her compositions for piano, strings, voice, and more at [www.JanaSkarecky.com](http://www.JanaSkarecky.com).

Jana engaged our audience and performers by speaking briefly about the interesting titles and moods that our Canadian composers use when writing their music, and how these composers are reaching out to our young children.

Katya Pine spoke to our students about the directional change in music composition that composers like herself now face. She set the tone for her presentation by asking this question: "How many of you think that Boris Berlin, who lived in the early 1900's, was able to just go to his computer and type up his compositions?" She happily reported that because our technology is so advanced, composers have a much easier task at hand when creating their works, and getting them out to the publishers and public. Katya was able to keep our young ones focused in her presentation. She drew a comparison between the difficulties that composers faced right up until the eighties, when creating a composition from its initial stage to completion at the publishing house, to the ease of creating music today. Of course, our young audience just needed to hear words like, hand held devices, ipads, twitter, and facebook to stay engaged in the presentation!

Katya is also an accomplished composer with pieces published in the Canadian National Conservatory of Music publications. For a listing of Katya's works, please visit [www.pineproductions.ca](http://www.pineproductions.ca).

A portion of our afternoon concerts were dedicated to five young composers performing their own works. The pieces ranged in levels from elementary, right up to the ARCT grade, and included both voice and piano. What a treat to hear *The Dark Hall*, *Teapot Inventions*, *A Snowy Day*, *Silent Streams* and *Diffraction*. Hats off to Claire, Charissa, Janelle, Grace, Gillian, and Anthony, for this wonderful addition to our programmes!

The opportunity to take part in an all Canadian composer recital, is one of great education for our students. Not only did they have to learn their pieces, but, as well, many researched information about their composers. Who would have known that Calixa Lavallee, composer of our national anthem lived a very short life, and was a man! I for one always thought the opposite. Did you know that violin/piano composer Rhene Jaques was only a pseudonym for Marguerite Marie Alice Cartier, who later became Sister Jacques-René!



Our mix and match poster board entitled "So You Think You Know Your Canadian Composers" brought some of these discoveries into light!



Grace, Sneha, Alan, Nathanael and Maxim



Olivia, Madeline, Liana and Ryan

In closing, our CMW afternoon was a huge success: from the two hundred plus audience members that attended, including sixteen elderly seniors from a local retirement home, to the well planned receptions that followed each recital. A special thank you goes out to Betty and Nancy for baking over two hundred “Canadian” cupcakes, and for those teachers who volunteered their time to help!

Thank you also, to the twelve branch teachers who submitted students to this recital, for exposing them to such a wonderful event, and to Katya and Jana for helping to make it such a success!

I would finally like to say thank you to the CFMTA for your encouragement and support of our vast wealth of fine Canadian music and the Composers who inspire us. Your dedication is much admired!

Sheila McLean - CMW Convenor



**I**t was a great celebration in Kitchener-Waterloo on Sat., Nov. 24, as ninety students of KW-ORMTA teachers performed pieces by 35 Canadian composers in a day of master classes and a grand recital. Amber Morphy, Cambridge teacher, adjudicator and RCM examiner, worked enthusiastically with over fifty master class students of all levels from introductory to Gr. 10, inspiring them and helping them to grow in their skills and interpretation. Teachers and students gained insights into the performance of a variety of Canadian repertoire. A special feature of the day was the connection which students made with the composers of their pieces. Each made an effort to email or Google-search their composer to find out more about their lives and their motivation to compose. Many students were thrilled to receive personal email messages from their composers. To reinforce the learning experience both geographically and musically, teacher Ilva Gierman prepared a map of Canada for each student showing the location of each composer represented.

A festive all-Canadian student recital brought the day to an exciting close with almost forty students participating. The recital began with a stirring rendition of *O Canada* performed by Annie Hu, a new Canadian originally from Taiwan. Other notable performances included pieces by student composers Claris Lam, and Mick Redding, a CFMTA national winner. Kye Marshall's rhythmically driving piece,

*Tumbleweed Dance*, winner of the 2012 CFMTA Call for Compositions, was performed by student Michael Wong. Recital convener Carol Ditner-Wilson organized special touches such as Canadian memorabilia for each student, and cupcakes decorated with Canadian flags. Three lucky students were winners in a draw for which the prizes were collections of Canadian piano music by Joanne Bender. As a way of helping those around us during our CMW celebration, KW-ORMTA teachers donated new and used music books for students who are learning to play piano through a specially-funded program called The Community Music School of Waterloo Region.

KW-ORMTA teachers felt very grateful to receive the William Andrews award for their Canada Music Week<sup>®</sup> celebration. A story was featured in the Waterloo Chronicle, highlighting the importance of Canadian music in our society.

Congratulations to all the teachers, students and parents who participated to make the day a huge success!

Joanne Bender - KW - ORMTA

