



Music Inspires - Gala

- 1 - Janina Fialkowska
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- 4 - Leanne Aucoin & Jesse Lewis
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Music Inspires - CFMTA/FCAPM Convention 2013

Takeaways from the Halifax Convention - and it's NOT the hotel towels!

Lori Elder, M.Mus., B.Mus., ARCT, - British Columbia

Music Inspires – From the opening strains of the bagpipes to the closing banquet and farewells this Convention was interesting, fun, uplifting and... inspiring!

The Opening Ceremonies: Nova Scotia Cultural Gala was at the Pier-21 Kenneth C. Rowe Heritage Hall on the scenic Halifax waterfront. The eclectic and entertaining program featured our piano and voice adjudicators plus top-notch local performers.

Where else can you hear Scarlatti, Chopin and Scotland the Brave all in one night?

What a great way to start!

The Workshops/Presentations were run in three rooms simultaneously. Sometimes it was hard to choose, but on the other hand, you were certainly never bored. The excellent variety and the high quality of the presentations made them thought provoking and inspiring. Extra handouts were usually available for the sessions you couldn't attend, so all in all, it was a cornucopia of pedagogy information.

Sitting in on the Piano Competition was a total pleasure. All eight candidates were at a very high level of technical and musical accomplishment. They were very expressive, polished and well-prepared, and a wide range of repertoire was presented. Particularly outstanding were the performances of the Canadian works. Imagination, colour, individuality and commitment were fully evident in each performance.

After a full morning of workshops and competitions the Inspiration Luncheon was next. The delicious catered meal was followed by speeches and awards. Gary Ingle, Executive Director and CEO of the Music Teachers' National Association informed us about this organization. The winner of the 2013 Tech Teacher of the Year, Rhona-Mae Arca, was certainly very deserving. Rhona-Mae uses technology in all aspects of the lesson and in the students practice assignments (see page 47). Also presented were the **Hughean Ferguson Distinguished Teacher Awards** for Lifetime Achievement and Service (see page 46). Joanne Loughheed, Convention

Chair for 2015, then invited everyone to Vancouver for the next National Convention. A video by Dina Pollock showcased the many recreational and cultural attractions in the area.

A change is as good as a rest they say, so that evening we trooped off to the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo. No, this isn't a tattoo you wear on yourself. This was a splashy array of bagpipe bands, military bands, choirs, acrobats, cannons, flags and you name it. It was entertaining from beginning to end and was a complete diversion from the focus on all things piano at the Convention.

The piano and voice masterclasses were an excellent opportunity to see the adjudicators in action. They were all very insightful, knowledgeable and gracious as they worked with the young musicians. Janina Fialkowska was engaging and animated as she sought to enhance the rubato in Paul Williamson's rousing and stylistic performance of the Chopin Polonaise in A^b.

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The Trade Show had an interesting mix of booths. Many such as Long and McQuade and Conservatory Canada were music specific, while others were career/lifestyle oriented. Everything from studio technology to new publications to retirement planning was available to browse. And you really can't go wrong with free chocolates can you?

The Piano Finals were outstanding. The Rebecca Cohn Hall at Dalhousie University was comfortable and the acoustics were excellent. Sooyoun Shin, the Nova Scotia candidate (third place), played the Debussy Images Book II with the exquisite light texture of a fine French pastry. Maria Fuller, the Saskatchewan candidate (second place), dazzled us with her warm personality and big technique. Finishing in first place with an outstanding performance of the Liszt Rhapsodie Espagnole was Xiaoyu Liu of Quebec. Numerous other awards were presented as we welcomed all eight candidates back to the stage for a well-deserved round of applause.

On Saturday morning it was time for the Keynote Speaker, Marvin Blickenstaff. After two days of inspiring workshops, performances and presentations how could he possibly top that? But he did! Mr. Blickenstaff's focus was on the "Power of One" (see page 50). You, me, anyone, can be the One Person to change lives. Through talent, vision, energy and a passion to serve, each of us teaching music can accomplish great things. He challenged us to always seek beauty in piano music, and to "write messages on our students' lives". With his sincere and impassioned delivery, and the wisdom of an elder statesman, Marvin Blickenstaff took the inspiration of the event to a whole new level.

The Closing Banquet was a wonderful opportunity to honour all the Past Presidents who have given so much of their time, energy and commitment to the CFMTA/FCAPM.

Congratulations to Rémi Lefebvre and Lorna Wanzel, and to each and every committee member and volunteer for hosting this marvelous event. It truly lived up to its name – *Music Inspires!*



From Top to bottom:

Past Presidents - Barbara Clarke, Victoria Warwick, Pat Frehlich, Lorna Wanzel, Helen Dahlstrom, Ernst Schneider, Carol Mellors, Darlene Brigidear

Piano Masterclass - André Laplante with Peter Krejcar

Piano Masterclass - Timothy Brennan with Katherine Chi

Vocal Masterclass - Isabel Bayrakdarian with Saige Carlson

At the Trade show

Rémi Lefebvre - Convention Chair

Gary Ingle - Executive Director and CEO of MTNA

Photos by Mark Wanzel

Music Inspires

"Hats off to the organizers of the Halifax convention. Many stimulating presentations, many great performances and extremely well-run - as smooth as a steadily-ticking metronome! A special thanks for the 'taste of Nova Scotia' at the opening gala - what a wide variety of musical experience and all of it enthralling."

all best,

Alan Fraser - Presenter ✿

Congratulations to the NSRMTA on a convention that, as a string teacher, exceeded my expectations. Music teaching can be a complex endeavour, and the sessions I attended had useful ideas in so many different areas, such as practicing, performing, motivation, artistry, and theory.

As a recent iPad owner I was pleased with the number of sessions that have helped me with using technology in my teaching, and in the organization of my studio. It was great to have a hands-on experience at the session, and bring good information home.

My first CFMTA/FCAPM convention was a wonderful opportunity to meet teachers from all over the country, hear beautiful performances, and pick up some new ideas and materials. I know that the other PEIRMTA members also found the week very worthwhile.

Sue Irvine - PEIRMTA President ✿

The highlight of the conference for me was the keynote address by Marvin Blickenstaff. He truly did inspire me.

Sandra Stobbe - Saskatchewan ✿

I thoroughly enjoyed attending the CFMTA/FCAPM Convention in Halifax. The opening evening's concert was absolutely amazing...probably one of the best concerts I ever had the pleasure of attending. It was nice to have choice in which workshops to attend on such a wide array of topics pertinent to a music teacher. The performances from the students in the voice and piano competitions was top notch...I was in awe in how talented and expressive these youngsters are. Above all this though, I appreciated that this national convention gave me an opportunity to visit with colleagues and meet new friends from all across Canada. Thank you so much to the NSRMTA for all their efforts to make this a memorable event.

Frank Horvat - Ontario ✿

I certainly enjoyed the conference. It was an enriching experience as a presenter and as an attendee. I was so impressed with the opening ceremonies and performances at Pier I. It gave us all a wonderful insight into life in Halifax and the East coast!

I also enjoyed the presentation by Christopher Norton. The information he gave will be of great use in teaching my students and my student teachers. The final concert of the piano competition was also most enjoyable with such high quality performances.

I would like to thank everyone who helped to make the conference, "Music Inspires", such a great success!

Eleanore McLeod - Manitoba ✿

I very much enjoyed the finals of the piano and vocal competitions, Marvin Blickenstaff's excellent Keynote Address as well as the early Saturday morning feature on the evolution of the piano. The Past Presidents' Banquet was of course a highlight and extremely well done - truly a gala affair - I'm glad I attended.

One other item - Peggy Harrison was most helpful and even had her husband meet me at the airport! All much appreciated.

Ernst Schneider - Past President CFMTA ✿

The "Music Inspires" committee is to be congratulated on creating a conference that was all-inclusive in its choice of workshops and lectures plus the added bonus of some very fine handouts that were informational and also very practical in that one could use them immediately (Interpreting Chopin, Special Needs, Concertos, and dealing with performance anxiety and related problems). The final address by Marvin Blickenstaff was truly inspirational. However, I must admit that receiving the Distinguished Teacher of the Year award was a major moment in my life and I am still amazed. The conference also gave me the opportunity to renew old acquaintances and catch up on our lives. Thank You!

Mary Tickner - British Columbia ✿

This was my first CFMTA/FCAPM as a presenter (Inspiring Adults to Play Piano). I thought I would share a few tips I learned for future 1st time presenters.

1. Join Toastmasters and get lots of great support and feedback about how to make a good presentation
2. Meet the 'tech' team the day before the presentation to test out your PowerPoint presentation. (The Halifax tech team were very professional and helpful!)
3. Smile lots and enjoy talking about your favorite subject... your presentation.

It was a wonderful opportunity to speak to fellow RMT's and inspirational to listen to the other presenters. The icing on the cake was the hot summer weather so we could take in the sites of beautiful Halifax!

Regards,

Linda Gould - Presenter

www.PlayPianoChordsToday.com ❀

Thank – You Nova Scotia RMTA

The BCRMTA would like to heartily thank Rémi Lefebvre and the Nova Scotia Registered Music Teachers' Association for their hours of work and dedication that they gave to create a memorable experience for all who attended the Music Inspires Convention in Halifax. The Opening Ceremonies Concert was a fabulous mixture of professional, inspiring performances by the fabulous adjudicators interspersed with the musical culture of Nova Scotia. The array of events, workshops

and masterclasses offered many choices for all to participate in.

A few of the highlights for me were; the workshop on Marmontel and Debussy: The Subtle Imprint of a Master Pedagogue presented by Thomas Green. This was fascinating!

The Keynote Address given by Marvin Blickenstaff. I am very grateful that Mr. Blickenstaff agreed to have his address printed in this edition of the "Canadian Music Teacher" so that we can read it and again be inspired by his wisdom and teaching experience.

The closing banquet was elegant and a wonderful encounter for the senses.

I know that I came home with wonderful memories of: Music and Knowledge, Friendships and Experiences, and Admiration and Gratitude for all of the people who so diligently and passionately gave of their time and abilities to make the Halifax Convention such a success.

Thank- you again, Rémi, for your tireless energy and how generously you share your talents with all of us. You have set the bar high and we in B.C. are working hard to maintain the standard of excellence you have given us in Halifax. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in Vancouver in 2015 for our conference *Pathways to . . .*

Cindy Taylor President of BCRMTA ❀

Andre Laplante: Some Words of Wisdom from a Master Class

Each player from the Piano Competition who did not place was entitled to a master class with André Laplante, Janina Fialkowska, or Katherine Chi. These words of wisdom are from the dynamic André Laplante, who worked with two gifted young men who both played Liszt, the *Rhapsody No. 11* and the *Mephisto Waltz*.

- Practise in character; put the piece in a frame. Count carefully, perhaps more slowly, to start this process
- Take the time to learn in the right way, so that something is built. Then there is joy in the playing.
- Music is all about expression, character. But first you have to organize it, starting from scratch.
- Put your energy into the rhythm of the piece, not in playing LOUD. Too much fast and loud just feeds the ego.
- The metronome gives us a *beat* that leads to a *pulse*, a cycle that includes action and reaction, and then to the *phrase*. See the music horizontally; put it together with a *swing*.
- To play accents effectively, *throw the ball*, don't play *down*.

Janet Leffek - British Columbia ❀

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Music Inspires

After coming back from the CFMTA/FCAPM Conference in Halifax and listening to master pedagogues like Jennifer Snow speak about effective, imaginative teaching, I am full of new ideas and motivated to reach every student in their own unique way. Dr. Snow, in her presentation “Connecting the Head to the Heart”, developed the term **imagination gardener** which I instantly fell in love with. It speaks of the openness of a garden patch compared to the vastness of a student’s mind, the chance to plant anything you want in it - from beets to Bach, the growth potential of each plant and each student, and the cultivation process which results in beautiful ingredients or beautiful sounds. The question for each garden patch and plant, or rather each lesson and each student is, *how do I effectively achieve these results?* Our job in the time we are given is to identify the student’s learning style, see what motivates them, and connect their head, heart, and hands simultaneously to what they are learning. But as no two garden patches are the same, also no two students are the same.

Dr. Snow wondered what might happen if teachers cut out academic definitions of fortissimo, allegro, or staccato and communicated with students by



touch, action, breathing, or vision. What if we asked to our students to play a “lazer-beam look”, play a “sigh”, or to play a “velvet ribbon”?

At Dr. Snow’s suggestion, my post-conference project was to collect a bag of ribbons, cloth, and felt to do exactly

that. The ladies at Fabricland thought I was nuts as I explained that I want my students to both feel and play a variety of textures - from rainbow satin, to fine white lace, red ruffles, black sandpaper, bronze sequins, grey fur, gold brocade, and more. Can you imagine how a student would respond if you let them feel a smooth, sultry silk ribbon and then asked them to play that sound? Think of how effective it would be to touch the evenness of broadcloth to get an even, steady touch in King William’s March. Even if they are not a tactile learner, getting a student to see a string of sequins and then play the “shimmer of a falling star” in Chopin’s *Berceuse* will make that passage memorable.

The purpose of this exercise is to have students *own their pieces*. When their imaginations are set in motion, they pour themselves into the piece and the final result has the “it” factor: that memorable, refined, impressive sound that we want for all students. Dr. Snow challenges you to get students off the bench, into their hearts, and have them individualize their music.

Karen King, Calgary Branch ARMTA ❀

Dr. Lois Svarb: It’s All in Your Mind, motor imagery and the musician

This was one of the first lectures of the convention, presenting fascinating insights that Dr. Svarb has investigated over many years. She offered a reading list for those interested in learning more.

Motor imagery is the imaginary rehearsal of everything you do to make music without actual physical movement. As it relies on a strong auditory-motor connection in the brain,

it has been shown that it produces almost the same changes in the brain as actual physical practice, and five minutes’ mental practice will produce almost the same result as five minutes’ physical practice.

Practice makes *permanence!*

Motor imagery facilitates learning, reduces injury, helps with learning physically demanding music, encourages focus, and makes it possible to practise when an instrument is not available.

Janet Leffek - British Columbia ❀

I would like to mention a couple of workshops that I really enjoyed at the convention.

Pamela D. Pike’s presentation: The effect of pitch and rhythmic chunking on reading: Concrete strategies for teachers - which was very interesting and gave practical suggestions for helping to teach sight reading.

Also useful was Julia Brook and Joe Ferretti’s workshop the use of technology in the studio.

Dr. Melissa Martinros’ talk on Pedagogical Strategies for Children with Special Needs was particularly interesting and useful. Like other teachers I am dealing with teaching children with various disabilities, ADHD, and Aspergers Syndrome, and any help on that score is very welcome!

I thought the winning pianist at the competitions, Xiaouyu Liu, played particularly beautifully, with finesse and obvious technical mastery, a real delight to hear.

Margaret Macpherson - Ontario ❀

CANADIANA PIANO QUARTET

We: Katie Peters, Maria Peters, Alexis Gee, and Kathryn Fortune make up the “Canadiana Piano Quartet.” It started in late 2011 when our piano teacher, Joyce Klassen had us prepare Joanne Bender’s *Canadiana Suite* for the annual Rotary Music Festival in Whitehorse, Yukon. Joanne and Joyce befriended each other at the CFMTA Convention that year and were asked to do a joint presentation on ‘*The Joy of Ensemble Playing*’ at the upcoming 2013 convention in Halifax. Joyce asked our quartet to accompany her in presenting the workshop. We agreed and thus started the long road of practicing, planning, and fundraising for our journey.

The Canadiana Piano Quartet learned and perfected 4 quartets to present in the workshop. Heavy thinking went into costumes as we would be changing from balloon popping, to railroad workers, to patriotic Canadians, and finally to policewomen over the course of the workshop. Fundraising consisted of endless hours of grocery bagging, garbage picking, and grant applications. We were even spotted by CBC News one day out busking on Whitehorse’s Main Street!

Finally, after months of preparation, we were off to Halifax! And what an experience it was to be involved in the 2013 CFMTA/FCAPM Convention! From workshops on performance anxiety and playing Chopin, to joining Christopher Norton on some piano duets, to hearing the stunning young performers in the semi-finals and finals of the National Voice and Piano competitions, we had two extremely busy days at the convention!

And when the last workshop time slot arrived, it was our turn: *The Joy of Ensemble Playing*, presented by Joyce Klassen, Joanne Bender, and the Canadiana Piano Quartet! The two teachers explained the importance of playing in ensembles, and then demonstrated 4 essential aspects of quartets and how to teach them.



In the Workshop!
With Joyce Klassen and Joanne Bender

This is where we came in. For each example, we played one of our 4 prepared quartets, and they worked on the highlighted element with us. The first element was **rhythm**, and “*Balloon Pop Polka*” was the example quartet. The first time through, we clapped our hands instead of popping balloons as the music required, and the second time we used balloons. To highlight **melody**, we played “*Working on the Railroad*,” which demonstrated how the melody jumps around from part to part. The third quartet highlighted **tempo changes** using Joanne Bender’s “*Canadiana Suite*.” It was an amazing learning experience for us to work with the composer of this piece! And wow, what a fun piece it is to play! The final element was **articulation**, and to show this we used “*Marche Militaire*” by Schubert, demonstrating how articulation must be played the same when repeated by different players in different parts.

With rapid costume changes between quartets, a thoroughly-intrigued audience of teachers, and such a fun team to work with, the goal of the workshop -showing how much fun it can be to play music as an ensemble- was certainly achieved!

And to make the most of our trip across the country, we spent our final day in Nova Scotia touring across part of the coast. Exploring Lunenburg, seeing the Bluenose, swimming in the Atlantic Ocean, learning about the Halifax explosion at the Maritime Museum, and seeing the famous Peggy’s Cove lighthouse were a few exciting highlights! We ate fresh lobster, crispy fish & chips, and creamy Scotsburn ice cream as we wandered along the Halifax pier in the evenings. Meeting many friendly and welcoming people, such as the family who billeted us in their home during our stay, was yet another added bonus to our journey.

It was an incredible experience for us to take part in the 2013 CFMTA/FCAPM Convention, both in learning and in fun! And (to keep rooting for Joyce and Joanne) a huge JOY to play in the Canadiana Piano Quartet ensemble! 🌟



At Peggy’s Cove, Nova Scotia

CFMTA/FCAPM PIANO COMPETITION - 2013

Halifax Piano Competition a Success!

Eight competitors from across Canada played exciting classical music from morning till evening on July 4th, 2013 in Halifax at the National CFMTA/FCAPM convention. The world class judges included Katherine Chi, Janina Fialkowska and André Laplante. Four prizes were chosen from the semi final round of competition.

Dorothy Buckley Prize for Best Performance of a Canadian work

- Timothy Brennan, NL

Marek Jablonski Foundation Prize for Best Performance of a Chopin work

- Peter Krejcar, AB

Willard Schultz Prize for Best Performance of a Baroque work

- Xiaoyu Liu, QC

Willard Schultz Prize for Most Promising Performer

- Albert Chen, MB

The winners of the competition were:

1st Place **Xiaoyu Liu, QC**

2nd Place **Maria Fuller, SK**

3rd Place **Sooyoun Shin, NS**

A special thank you to the convention committee in Halifax for their excellent organization and vision in hosting such a wonderful convention.

Heather Blakley

Chair, Competitions and Awards

Photos by Mark Wanzel



2013 VOCAL COMPETITION

Nine inspiring singers from across Canada sang for our three highly esteemed adjudicators on July 4th, 2013. The Adjudicators were Isabel Bayrakdarian, Mary Lou Fallis, Richard Margison. Three singers advanced to the finals held on July 5th.

- Whitney Mather - Saskatchewan
- Brittney Cann - Nova Scotia
- Tzeitel Abrego - Ontario

1st Place **Whitney Mather, SK**

\$5000 donated by Shiela Piercy

2nd Place **Brittney Cann, NS**

\$3000 donated by Janet Leffek and Marjorie Foxall

3rd Place **Tzeitel Abrego, ON**

\$2000 donated by Dr. Lorna Wanzel and Edith Price

Best Opera Aria - Ariane Cossette QC
donated by Opera Nova Scotia

Each of the non-finalists recieved \$100.00 and a master class with an adjudicator. This was donated by

- Dr. Gary Brook
- Gillis and Carmel Carrigan
- Joan Cunningham-Bissett
- Helen Murray
- Carol Von Syberg
- Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts Association

Collaborative pianists were Jennifer King, Simon Docking and Mary Martell who worked very hard with the vocalists, teachers and committee.

BRAVO

Marilyn Harrison

Chair, Vocal Competition

Photos by Mark Wanzel

