

2017 Commemorative Conference

March 18 - 22, 2017

by Pat Frehlich - Conference Chair



The 2017 Commemorative Conference was held in Baltimore, Maryland, USA from March 18 to 22, once again bringing together members of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA), the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Associations (CFMTA/FCAPM).

The Commemorative Conference celebrated the 10th anniversary of the first joint conference between our organizations, the 2007 Collaborative Conference, which was hosted by the Canadians and held in Toronto, Canada, March 23-27.

CFMTA/FCAPM should take pride in knowing that the vision for such collaborations came from a former CFMTA/FCAPM president, Hugheen Ferguson of Kingston, Ontario.

Aside from numerous workshops, lectures and masterclasses, attendees were treated to a most entertaining opening event by Igudesman and Joo, and a very memorable recital by

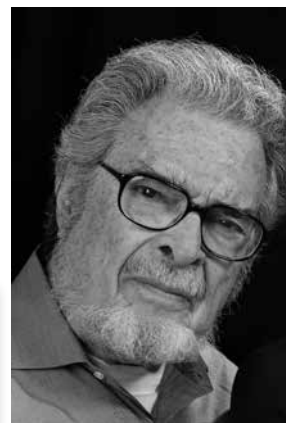
internationally renowned pianists, Leon Fleisher and Katherine Jacobson.

A spectacular digital book of original Canadian compositions and artwork was compiled and presented to MTNA members for a free download as our gift to them, in celebration of Canada's 150th Anniversary of Confederation. It will also be made available to CFMTA/FCAPM members through our website at cfmta.org - we hope you enjoy it!

Special thanks to Po Yeh and her committee for their work in compiling this beautiful memento.

The provincial round winners all traveled to Baltimore to compete in the CFMTA/FCAPM National Piano Competition which was held there as part of the Commemorative Conference. Thanks to Sue Jones for coordinating this event.

My thanks is also extended to the conference committee: Tiffany Wilson, Barbara Long, Po Yeh and Sue Jones and Cindy Taylor (ex officio) for your assistance in so many ways.





Review of: Workshops - Masterclasses - Concerts

Dr Julie Knerr and Katherine Fisher

Rote learning is generally associated with thoughtless and low level skills. Dr. Julie Knerr and Katherine Fisher have discovered many benefits to using rote pieces alongside systematic instruction in reading using landmarks and intervals. Rote teaching pieces are selected for easy to understand and remembering patterns, such as are found in pieces like Kabalevsky's *A Porcupine Dance (Children's Adventures Op 89 #8)* and Crosby Gaudet's *Celebration (In My Dreams)*. They are of greater musical interest but beyond the reading capability of the beginning student and used to prepare learning to read more complex rhythms and explore the whole instrument.

10 benefits of learning by rote:

- Motivation
- Concentration: longer pieces than the reading pieces, more variations and repeats
- Confidence
- Keyboard orientation
- Pattern recognition, understanding form in music
- Learning rhythm and meter: students can play dotted and syncopated patterns before reading
- Technique: focus on gesture without distraction of reading from page
- Reading; going from sound to symbol (a Kodaly concept). Students develop physical skill and then focus on reading skill (decoding symbols)
- Artistry: provides tools and musical elements to improvise and compose
- Creativity: students feel free to experiment with rote patterns and are not tied to what is written

Beth Olver - Alberta

Congrès de Baltimore

D'abord le Congrès de Baltimore fut pour moi une expérience très enrichissante, tant au point de vue musical qu'humain. Le concert de Leon Fleisher et de son épouse Katherine Jacobson était formidable et inoubliable ainsi que la leçon de maître de M. Fleisher. Le concert spectacle d'Igudesman et Joo réunissant deux excellents interprètes est venu touché et divertir l'auditoire.

J'ai beaucoup apprécié l'ouverture de nos collègues américains et leur cordialité. Il y avait une panoplie d'ateliers à voir, beaucoup de matériel disponible. La journée pédagogique du samedi donnait un élan à ce congrès. Il y a quatre ateliers en particulier qui m'ont touché de plus près.

Le 1er Neil Rutman a publié un livre intitulé "Stories, Images, and Magic from the Piano Literature" et dans celui-ci on retrouve des histoires, des images qui nous permettent de mieux interpréter l'œuvre de chaque compositeur. Très intéressant de voir ce qui a inspiré ou ce que l'on peut déduire de l'œuvre de Bach par exemple. Un livre acheté....

Le 2e touchait l'improvisation selon Forrest Kinney. C'est un sujet un peu oublié dans nos studios de musique et qui est un excellent moyen de motiver nos élèves. Nous avons assisté à une démonstration avec de jeunes musiciens et c'était excellent.

Le 3e et 4e point touchait respectivement la mémorisation et l'auto guérison. Encore là au niveau de la mémorisation se sont des moyens que l'on connaît mais il y a toujours un petit quelque chose que l'on peut rajouter. Nous avons tous le même objectif et ce que l'on veut pour nos élèves, c'est la même chose d'un pays à l'autre. L'auto guérison est un point qui devient de plus en plus sensible de nos jours. Si on le pratique soi-même on se doit de l'appliquer dans notre enseignement. La relaxation et la méditation doivent faire partis de nos vies et de notre enseignement.

Pour conclure le Congrès de Baltimore m'a apporté beaucoup.

Merci aux organisateurs et au CFMTA

Patrycia Meunier - Québec



Review of: Workshops - Masterclasses - Concerts



Concert Igudesman and Joo

Aleksey Igudesman and Richard Hyung-ki Joo are a duo combining comedy with classical music. They provided an evening of laughter intertwined with incredible musical performances. Igudesman poses as an unpolished violinist, surprising the audience with incredible glimpses of talent and skill, while Joo plays the sophisticated, and impatient, piano virtuoso. Combine this with topical comments, and you have the recipe for an evening of awesome talent and frequent laughter. I would encourage people to Google Igudesman and Joo on Youtube for samples of their entertaining escapades.

It was simply the best concert I have attended in a very long time!

Charline Farrell - Ontario

Sasha Starcevich: Establishing the Connection Between Mind, Body and Soul at the Piano

This workshop, though broad in title, was very specific, and filled with great ideas. Sasha worked with a student to demonstrate, and focused on the wrist as the “producer of sound”. The five positions; neutral, high, low, to the right, to the left, each activate a sound colour. A locked wrist has no access to the rest of the body. He also worked on staccato as activated from the finger, not the wrist. Sasha spent time on establishing voicings, especially inner note voicing, as a very active part of music making. He also delved into storytelling inside the mind as a way to reach inside the music. He reminded us all that the Russian word for practice is “repeat”, a tip for us all to remember.

Annie Avery - Yukon

Lightning Talks: Innovative Teaching in the USA and Canada

It was particularly exciting to present with the MTNA/CFMTA panel North American Lightning Talks: Innovative Teaching in the USA and Canada, with Vanessa Cornett, Amy Immerman, Pat Frehlich and Leslie Linton. I shared on Independent Music Teachers Conducting Collaborative Practitioner Inquiry, a new paradigm for IMTs. Leslie shared on the importance of having a teaching philosophy and what this meant. Vanessa spoke about Performance anxiety management in the new millennial music studio. Amy spoke on making music accessible to everyone through recreational music teaching. Pat shared how CFMTA focuses on research and disseminates new knowledge to IMTs. It was a privilege to work with these ladies and collaborate with colleagues from across North America. They shared excellent ideas and allowed questions and gave answers and suggestions to those sitting in the audience.

Lorna Wanzel - Nova Scotia



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See www.marcandrepepin.com in the « Scores » page for excerpts.



Review of: Workshops - Masterclasses - Concerts

Leon Fleisher

Teacher, Extraordinary Musician, Inspiration to Others

While in Baltimore, Maryland at the MTNA/CFMTA/FCAPM Commemorative Conference I had the very special opportunity to hear and be in the presence of the legendary pianist Leon Fleisher. The experience filled me with admiration and awe.

"He continues to impart his life affirming artistry throughout the world, thriving in a sustained career as conductor, soloist, recitalist, chamber music artist, and masterclass mentor".

There were three special events presented by Leon Fleisher.

- *Learning from and Overcoming Obstacles: A Conversation with Leon and Leah Fleisher.*
- *Advanced Piano Masterclass*
- *Closing Concert*

Conversation with Leon and Leah Fleisher

This informative session began with Mr. Fleisher sharing his journey as a musician and his life long experience with **Focal Dystonia**, a neurological movement disorder. In 1963 he noticed that the

4th and 5th fingers of his right hand were fatiguing and within the next ten months his fingers curled under. He was unable to play the piano with two hands.

"Rather than end his career he began to focus on repertoire for the left hand only, conducting, and teaching. Not until some 40 years later was he able to return to playing with both hands after undergoing experimental treatments using a regimen of rolfing and botulism toxin injections".

Mr. Fleisher explained that he can play music with chord patterns through manipulation of his hand however, the majority of keyboard repertoire is not accessible to him. He has since stopped the Botox treatments because they are no longer working.

Physiotherapist and daughter Leah Fleisher talked about the importance of general health for musicians. She encouraged teachers to be aware of their student's physical wellbeing explaining that the overuse of small muscles is the principle factor in injury. The book *Play Less Hurt* by Janice Horvath was recommended as a wonderful tool. It contains suggestions for all instruments in

terms of minimizing the neutral position of the joints.

Neurologist, Dr. Alexander Pantelyat shared his knowledge of **Focal Dystonia**, and the work and research that the John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore is doing in this area. There is an entire wing of the hospital devoted to musician's injuries.

Through this journey, Leon Fleisher has realized that he *isn't specifically a piano player. He has options. He has valid musical content and valid musical ideas. The greatest things in life are shared.*

Leon Fleisher Masterclass

Mr. Fleisher shared with the audience that he studied with Arthur Schnabel. Many of the comments made during his teaching made me realize that I was in the presence of a true artist and master.

- *The use of the syllable "Pa Pa Pa" for rhythm patterns develops excitement.*
- *If you start from no sound you will discover that you can play softer than if you start louder and bring the sound down.*
- *Think of sixteenth notes as railroad tracks. Railroad tracks that move and flow around the changing of directions.*
- *Fermatas – think of them as suspensions in time.*
- *Don't worry about the speed. It's the consistency of the pulse that creates the excitement.*



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Review of: Workshops - Masterclasses - Concerts



Une semaine hyperactive qui marquera ma carrière en tant que musicienne et professeure de piano

- *You are worshipping one and one is a false God.*
- *Let everything you do at the piano be intentional. No accidents. As you learn more, alter your intention.*

Throughout the masterclass, Mr. Fleisher treated each student with respect and gentleness while inspiring not only the student but also the audience with his knowledge and witty humour.

Closing Concert

The husband and wife piano duo of Leon Fleisher and Katherine Jacobson presented a concert of duet music to the delight and enjoyment of conference attendees. Mr. Fleisher shared a very special and rare gift with the audience that was an experience I will cherish in my heart. He played two solo works with both of his hands. Debussy's *Clair de Lune*, and Chopin's *Nocturne in D^b major*. His exquisite control of the quiet range of his playing and the beautiful long melodic lines of his melodies touched the souls of many who heard this very special performance.

I will forever cherish in my heart the experiences of these three events. For me, it was the highlight of the entire conference to have seen and heard in person such a great and humble man who is truly a great musical legend.

Cynthia (Cindy) Taylor - British Columbia

Au mois de mars dernier, j'ai été déléguée pour l'APMQMTA lors du Congrès national 2017 réunissant les deux grandes associations de professeurs de musique d'Amérique du Nord; la MTNA des États-Unis et la CFMTA/FCAPM du Canada. Des centaines de conférenciers, de professeurs de musique et de musiciens étaient présents dans ce lieu pittoresque au bord de l'eau avec une magnifique vue sur cette superbe ville de Baltimore dans l'État du Maryland.

Plus de 150 événements se sont déroulés dans une parfaite harmonie; conférences, classes de maîtres, concerts, spectacles, expositions, démonstrations et compétitions nationales de haut niveau. Nous y avons tenu notre compétition nationale biannuelle pour piano, qui a été sensationnelle! Ces moments forts ont pu témoigner de la passion pour la musique qui règne dans notre coin du monde, allant de son enseignement à sa propagation en passant par sa création.

Le congrès a ouvert comme un gros BigBang lors du populaire samedi « Saturday Pedagogy » durant lequel on nous proposait plus de 30 conférences aussi solidement présentées les unes que les autres sous cinq grands thèmes: *Musician Wellness, Teaching Artistry And Technique, Young Professionals, Technology, Recreational Music Making*.

Le soir même, nous avons eu le grand plaisir d'assister au spectacle des artistes *Igudesman and Joo*. Deux heures de délire musicale et d'humour absurde! Absolument génial!

Les quatre jours qui ont suivi cette ouverture fracassante ont maintenu la cadence. Le soir, nous devions faire une feuille de route pour planifier la journée qui suivait. Les pauses étaient bien méritées tout en étant elles aussi remplies de réflexions, de discussions et de nouvelles rencontres.

Afin que nous ayons toujours quelques astuces à découvrir et informations à recueillir, un immense salon des exposants **a été tenu. À toute heure de la journée**, nous pouvions y rencontrer divers joueurs importants de l'industrie tels que facteurs de pianos, **éditeurs** de partitions, écoles nationales de musique, producteurs indépendants de logiciels d'apprentissage, et j'en passe.

Lors de la dernière soirée, nous avons été bercés **au son de la merveilleuse** performance du pianiste *Leon Fleisher* et du duo *Fleisher-Jacobson*. Un grand moment de paix intérieure qui nous a connectés à un sentiment de pureté et d'éternité! Les mots sont faibles!

Félicitations aux organisateurs de ce grand événement! Je suis ravie que la CFMTA-FCAPM se soit jointe à la MTNA pour ce partage de connaissances et de savoir faire. J'ai bien hâte au prochain rendez-vous avec nos voisins du Sud! Le dernier était en 2007; le prochain aura-t-il lieu avant 2027? Je l'espère bien!

Marybelle Frappier - Québec



Review of: Workshops - Masterclasses - Concerts

Ah, Listening.....

A First Time Conference Goer in Baltimore

As president of our MRMTA, I had the privilege of attending the joint conference in Baltimore this past March. It was quite the event with a massive trade show and a great selection of presentations. We were so proud of our 6 Canadian competitors who traveled to Maryland to compete, and I must say that sitting with eyes closed listening to their beautiful (and difficult) repertoire was indeed a highlight for me. It was amazing to sit still and just listen. I didn't have to rush home and teach; making dinner for my family was not a "Leanne problem", and when we weren't on door duty, it was our privilege to sit back and listen.

And listen we did. Check out Igudesman and Joo on youtube; we heard and watched this musical comedy duo live. We listened to Leon Fleicher lead a master class and heard him play an exquisite *Claire de lune*. It was all so inspiring ("oh the vast amount of gorgeous music left to learn") and motivating ("I think I could play that!"). Even just to dream of putting that many hours back into playing was a wonderful fantasy for 5 days! And who knows what I may do over the summer! 8 weeks divided by 32 sonatas..... well maybe not, but fun to entertain the idea!

One phrase I remember from the presentations was to "be straight with yourself". The presenter, Sondra Tammam was telling us about the Taubman Approach, discussing the awkward angles at which pianists can place their hands/wrists/shoulders etc.

when trying to be straight with the keys and not themselves. For example if you are playing at the extreme edges of the keyboard, your hand will not be centered at a 90 degree angle to the keys. If you do this you may just end up looking like you are flapping your wings like a chicken. Instead keep your elbows at a natural angle and perhaps your 2nd finger will be deep in the black keys with your pinky closer to the edge. Thinking through the angles of one's arms and hands was a good reminder for me that hand position is so fluid depending on what part of the keyboard we are playing on. Be straight with yourself- it makes a lot of sense, and a good way to explain it to students.

The title of Ms. Tammam's presentation was "The Choreography Of Subtle In and Out Movements At the Keyboard with the Taubman Approach". She discussed the "ins and outs" of playing, explaining how some fingers go toward the fall board as you play and others pull away. A simple pentascale can be described as a smiley face with fingers 1 and 5 being "in" notes and fingers 2, 3 and 4 being "out" notes. Also, going from white to black notes can be thought of as going from "out to in", and "lower to higher" and if we watch carefully we can help our students play with more ease. "What was Chopin's favorite key?" she asked us. It's B Major, which lets us play with an easy hand. It might take some work to convince our students that 5 sharps is easy, but you can really see the natural hand when you get a beginner to play on the black keys.

Keys are not just played laterally, but vertically, and in and out as well. There are so many angles, but so many beautiful sounds possible on this great instrument, described by Kevin Olson as "the colour machine"! This well-known composer and pianist gave a talk entitled: "The Accompanist's Toolbox; Five Foundations to Artistic Accompanying".

Another highlight from Baltimore comes from my confession that I kind of got hooked on a video game at the trade show. My kids are so proud! Never mind that it's a sight reading game that assesses your right and wrong notes then scores you after playing. I must have spent an hour at this booth and am seriously considering purchasing it for my studio. The high score was out of my reach, but I did get to observe someone who did achieve the high score for the day, and he sight-read Bach fugues at an amazing pace!

What a joy to be immersed in music with other music lovers on the continent. It was wonderful to meet the other Canadian delegates, to spread the news of our upcoming 2019 conference in Winnipeg, and just sit and listen!

Leanne Hiebert - Manitoba

Be sure to book your flight for the 2019 CFMTA/FCAPM Conference "A Century of Sound Connections" in Winnipeg JULY 3-6, 2019. Good times for all, guaranteed!





- 1 - Cindy Taylor - opening address
- 2 - Paul Williamson, Charline Farrell
- 3 - Lorna Wanzel, Leslie Linton, Vanessa Corlett, Pat Frelich, Amy Immermon
- 4 - Igudesman and Joo
- 5 - Paul Williamson, Laureen Kells
- 6 - Call for Composition Book
- 7 - Dale Wheeler
- 8 - Leon Fleicher
- 9 - Paul Williamson, Tiffany Wilson
- 10 - Louisa Lu, Markus Masaites, Christine Pan, Paul Williamson, Andrew Fu, Sue Jones
- 11 - Louisa Lu, Charline Farrell
- 12 - Pat Frelich, Tiffany Wilson, Gary Ingles and Cindy Taylor

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