

THE CANADIAN MUSIC TEACHER
LE PROFESSEUR DE MUSIQUE CANADIEN

2025



A Year in Review / Un an en revue



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Greetings from the CFMTA President Salutations de la Présidente de la FCAPM

Marlaine Osgood

Greetings fellow CFMTA members.

This year we celebrated the CFMTA's 90th anniversary. Everyone loves a concert, so we subsidized the Young Artist Tours and paused the requirement that branches submit their concert revenue. A record number of branches held Young Artist Tours to help prepare their provincial piano competitors. With the popular response, these initiatives will be carried into the 2026-2027 season.

Leading up to the Montreal CFMTA conference, the Program Funding and Grants committee ran the 90/90 fundraising drive, in honor of CFMTA presidents. This initiative built in excitement through weekly Facebook posts leading to lively discussion during the conference. The board will find a proper use for the funds raised.

Montreal hosted the CFMTA conference at the historic l'Ecole de musique Vincent-d'Indy. The venue set the tone for a more intimate and social conference. Many delegates commented on the beautiful concert hall which housed the piano competition.

Over the past 90 years, the CFMTA has expanded to include not only a practical competition, but two composer competitions, a poster competition, and an essay competition. Professional development has grown to include not only the biennial in-person conference, but a concentrated set of summer professional development sessions and monthly sessions.

The membership should be proud of the work and engagement they have established over the past 90 years. Well done. The next 90 years are ours to explore.

Enjoy browsing the 2025 Year in Review.

Salutations à tous les membres de la CFMTA,

Cette année, nous avons célébré le 90^e anniversaire de la FCAPM. Devant le vif intérêt suscité par les concerts, nous avons subventionné les tournées Jeunes artistes et suspendu l'obligation pour les filiales de verser les recettes de leurs concerts. Les filiales ont participé en nombre record à l'organisation de tournées Jeunes artistes afin de mieux préparer leurs concurrents au concours de piano. L'enthousiasme est tel que les nouvelles mesures seront reconduites pour la saison 2026-2027.

En amont du congrès de la FCAPM à Montréal, le comité du Financement des programmes et des subventions a lancé la campagne de financement 90/90, en l'honneur des présidentes et présidents de la FCAPM. Cette initiative a fait monter l'enthousiasme, les publications hebdomadaires sur Facebook favorisant les échanges pendant le congrès. Le conseil d'administration veillera à l'utilisation appropriée des fonds recueillis.

Montréal a accueilli le congrès de la CFMTA à la prestigieuse école de musique Vincent-d'Indy, un cadre doté d'une atmosphère intime et conviviale. Plusieurs délégués ont souligné la beauté de la salle de concert qui a hébergé le concours de piano.

Au cours des 90 dernières années, la CFMTA a élargi son champ d'activités : au concours d'interprétation se sont ajoutés deux concours de composition, un concours de design d'affiche et un concours d'essai littéraire. Le perfectionnement professionnel, qui reposait principalement sur le congrès biennial en présentiel, s'est lui aussi enrichi d'une série concentrée de sessions estivales ainsi que de rencontres mensuelles.

Les membres peuvent être fiers de leur travail et de l'engagement dont ils ont fait preuve au cours des 90 dernières années. Bravo. Les 90 prochaines années s'ouvrent devant nous.

Bonne lecture du bilan de l'année 2025.





Officers, Provincial Delegates, and Chairs Bi-Annual EM 2025 - **February**



1st Row Left to Right:

Laura Gray *Past President*, Marlane Osgood *President*, Barbara Siemens *1st Vice President*, Lois Kerr *Treasurer*,
Heather Fyffe *CFMTA office admin*

2nd Row Left to Right:

Lee-Ann Brodeur *Administrative Program Assistant*, Dina Pollock *Communications Coordinator*, Rosemarie Horne *ARMTA*,
Annette Bradley *ARMTA*, Joyce Janzen *BCRMTA*

3rd Row Left to Right:

Maureen Baird *MRMTA*, Laura Liu *MRMTA & Professional Development*, Rita Raymond-Milliet *NBRMTA*,
Catherine Fitch Barlett *NBRMTA & Essay Competition*, Krissy Keech *NSRMTA*

4th Row Left to Right:

Susan Shantora *NWT-MTA*, Cindy Thong *NSRMTA*, Joyce Hein *PEIRMTA*, David Côté *QMTA & Translation*, David Potvin *QMTA*

5th Row Left to Right:

Laurel Teichroeb *SRMTA*, Kim Engen *SRMTA*, Ellen Thompson *YRMTA & Social Media*, Carol Ditner-Wilson *Canada Music Week*,
Rebekah Maxner *Student Composer Competition*

6th Row Left to Right:

Alde Calongcagong *Awards & Competitions*, Carolyn Garritano *Meeting Admin & Conference Resource Person*



Officers, Provincial Delegates, and Chairs Annual EM 2025 - **July**



1st Row - Left to Right:

Laura Liu *MRMTA & Professional Development*, Kim Engen *SRMTA*, Carolyn Garritano *Meeting Admin & Conference Resource Person*,
Laura Gray *Past President*, Krissy Keech *NSRMTA*, Rosemarie Horne *ARMTA*

2nd Row - Left to Right

Magdalena Von Eccher *PEIRMTA*, Lois Kerr *Treasurer*, Laurel Teichroeb *SRMTA*, Elisa Rolston *BCRMTA*, Marlane Osgood *President*,
Lee-Ann Brodeur *Administrative Program Assistant*, Cindy Co *ORMTA*, Rita Raymond-Milliett *NBRMTA*

3rd Row - Left to Right

Tania Granata *ORMTA*, Carol Ditner-Wilson *Canada Music Week*, Annette Bradley *ARMTA*, Joyce Janzen *BCRMTA*, Connie Penner *YRMTA*
Ellen Thompson *YRMTA & Social Media*, Catherine Fitch Barlett *NBRMTA & Essay Competition*, Cindy Thong *NSRMTA*,
Dina Pollock *Communications Coordinator*

4th Row - Left to Right

Joyce Hein *PEIRMTA*, Susan Shantora *NWT-MTA*, Barbara Siemens *1st Vice President*, Maureen Baird *MRMTA*,
Heather Fyffe *CFMTA office admin*, Alde Calongcagong *Awards & Competitions*,





Meet our new Honorary President

Peggy L'Hoir



Peggy L'Hoir is an enthusiastic and innovative teacher, clinician, collaborative artist, examiner, and composer. At the local, provincial and national level, her priorities and passions are based upon connection, community, and collaboration.

For over five decades, Peggy has shared her joy of music with students. A firm believer in lifelong learning, she embraces every opportunity to discover more about the art of teaching, performing, and composing.

Peggy believes music can be enjoyed by everyone. This belief has led her in many directions, including: choral/orchestral directing local musicals, keyboard playing in pop/jazz ensembles, composing, and spearheading many community and provincial projects such as From Prairie to Pine – Piano Solos by Saskatchewan Composers, CNCM Summer Sizzle Keyboard Kamp and Pedagogy Symposium – Biggar, West Central Contemporary Showcase, and Heart of the City Piano Program.

She has served various organizations including the Sask Arts Board, Biggar Music Festival, Biggar Majestic Theatre, West Central Registered Music Teachers, Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects. Peggy is past president of the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers and the Saskatchewan Registered Music Teachers Associations.

With much gratitude to her many colleagues and mentors, over the years Peggy has received the following awards: RCM 40 Years of Dedicated Service Award (2019), SMFA Adjudicating Excellence Award (2022), CFMTA Hugheen Fergusson Distinguished Teaching Award (2024), and presently, is appreciative and humbled to serve as the CFMTA Honorary President.

Favorite pastimes include music making, reading, fishing, crafting and spending time with her extended family and friends.





Meet our new 2nd Vice President

Laura Liu



We are pleased to announce that **Laura Liu** has been elected as the 2nd Vice President of the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Associations (CFMTA). A Certified Advanced Piano Teacher of The Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM). Laura has over 30 years of teaching experience in China and Canada. Since 2015, she has been a contracted piano instructor in the Preparatory Studies Division of the Desautels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba and has been an active member of the Manitoba Registered Music Teachers' Association (MRMTA).

Laura currently serves as President of the Manitoba Registered Music Teachers' Association and Chair of the CFMTA Professional Development Committee. She participates in music conferences nationally and internationally, bringing fresh insights to her teaching and leadership. Her contributions to the music community include work as an adjudicator, founding scholarships, and organizing community concerts. She looks forward to learning from and working with CFMTA colleagues from coast to coast.





Meet our **new** Chairpersons

Connecting Canada - Laura Gray

Program Funding and Grants - Nadine Martin

Connecting Canada

Laura Gray



Laura Gray has been teaching piano in Harriston for over 25 years. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Music, Associate Diploma in Piano Pedagogy with CNCM, Primary-Elementary Pedagogy Diploma with CNCM, training in MYC, and was appointed to the Board of Examiners for Piano.

Laura is an active member of the Hanover-Walkerton ORMTA Branch, was honoured to join ORMTA Provincial Council in 2015, and was elected as Provincial President from 2020-2022. Laura also held the CFMTA Presidency from 2021-2024. She currently serves on the Board as Chair of Connecting Canada, and is active on several committees which gives her the opportunity to connect with music teachers across Canada and beyond. Laura enjoys exploring ways to enrich private music education for teachers and students from coast to coast to coast.

Laura runs a successful home studio and works as a church organist. She is the volunteer convener of the Palmerston Canada Music Week Festival, and has enjoyed volunteering in her community in many capacities.

In her spare time Laura enjoys playing the piano, curling, swimming, hiking, reading, and yoga.

Program Funding and Grants

Nadine Martin



Nadine Martin began her career as a professional pianist, ensemble director, and collaborative pianist at the age of 11 in Summerside, Prince Edward Island. Since then, she has studied at the Conservatoire de Québec à Chicoutimi, Dalhousie University, and McGill University. She was the collaborative pianist for Dalhousie University's string department, and has collaborated with orchestras, choirs, musicals, symphonic wind ensembles, as both a pianist and a horn player, and also played for various rock, reggae, jazz, and pop bands. She has competed in, and won, many local, provincial, national, and international competitions.

She studied orchestral and jazz horn at McGill University, and has performed with diverse ensembles, ranging from orchestral to jazz. She now lives in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Nadine collaborates and performs regularly as a pianist and she is a music teacher at Ecole Sainte-Anne.





Meet our **new** Chairpersons

Strategic Planning - Laurel Teichroeb / Kim Engen

Strategic Planning Laurel Teichroeb



Laurel Teichroeb grew up in a musically enriched community in rural Saskatchewan. At age 15, she began teaching piano with her goal being to always be passionate about music, and to allow her students to find the joy of music at all levels of learning.

Laurel has taught Kindermusik, studied pipe organ and her love for music history has taken her to Classical Music Festival in Eisenstadt, Austria. Being exposed to where Haydn spent his thirty-year career has richly enhanced her musical enthusiasm and deepened her love for historic performance. Her current studies include Music Learning Theory, which is the process of how children learn music when learning music. She enjoys collaborating with vocalists and instrumentalists. She especially loves enjoying a good cup of strong coffee, being outdoors walking and biking and spending time with family.

Strategic Planning Kim Engen



Kim Engen is a passionate and innovative music educator who has taught piano and theory in Saskatchewan for 35 years. Kim holds a Bachelor of Education from the University of Regina and completed an ARCT in Piano Pedagogy in 2010 studying with Janice Elliott-Denike.

Kim has served on the SRMTA Regina Branch as President for two terms and as Treasurer for an extended time. She is currently Vice-President and the Student Composer Competition Convenor for the SRMTA. In 2019, Kim co-founded the Da Capo Music Masterclass, a non-competitive music festival for piano in Regina.

In her spare time Kim stays active biking, cross country skiing and practising yoga. She also loves spending time outdoors hiking and tenting, and curling up with a good book in the evening..



CFMTA Call for **Compositions** 2025

Appel à **compositions** 2025 de la FCAPM

CFMTA holds a Call for Compositions each year to celebrate Canada Music Week. CFMTA invites submissions of new unpublished pieces for students studying at the specified conservatory grade level. Selected compositions are available to be downloaded for all to enjoy at www.cfmta.org.

The following works were selected for the 2025 Call for Compositions. Congratulations and thank you to the composers for sharing their works with us.

Instrumental with Accompaniment Grade 3-4

No entry

Instrumental with Accompaniment Grade 5-6

Winner

Golden Snow Dragon

Gloria Chu, Calgary AB

Piano/Harp Grade 3-4

Winner

Snow Day

Kathleen Feenstra, Chilliwack BC

Honourable Mentions

An Old Poem

Joyce Janzen, Abbotsford BC

Racoons On Ice

Amber Chow, Markham ON

Snowman/Bonhomme de neige

Alice Dearden, Toronto ON

Two Pups

Neva Tesolin, St.Catharines, ON

Piano/Harp Grade 5-6

Winner

À l'horizon, la cime

Christian Pacaud, Quebec QC

Honourable Mentions

Dehibernation

Raul Mendoza Azpiri, Victoria BC

Shadows in the Snow

Gloria Chu, Calgary AB

Misteriosa

Valérie Carreau, Montréal QC

Snow Angels in the Starlight

Owen Bloomfield, Cambridge ON

Vocal with Accompaniment Grade 3-4

Winner

The Rain Stomp

Joyce Janzen, Abbotsford BC

Vocal with Accompaniment Grade 5-6

Winner

Best Friends

Gloria Chu, Calgary AB

Chaque année, la FCAPM lance un Appel à compositions pour célébrer la Semaine de la musique canadienne. La FCAPM accepte la soumission de nouvelles œuvres qui n'ont pas encore été publiées et composées par des élèves étudiant au niveau de conservatoire spécifié. Les compositions sélectionnées peuvent ensuite être téléchargées sur le site www.cfmta.org pour que tous puissent en bénéficier.

Les œuvres suivantes furent sélectionnées pour l'Appel à compositions 2025. Toutes nos félicitations aux compositeurs. Nous les remercions d'avoir partagé leurs œuvres avec nous.





CFMTA Call for **Compositions** 2025

Appel à **compositions** 2025 de la FCAPM

Instrumental with accompaniment / Compositions instrumentales avec accompagnement

Level / Niveaux 5 - 6

Golden Snow Dragon – Gloria Chu

Gloria Chu is a dedicated composer, pedagogue and performer. She is a multi-award winning composer of chamber, violin, cello, and piano works. Her compositions have been praised to “transport [the audience] into a heavenly world” by International Youth Music Competitions. Several of her pedagogical works have been featured in the Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects Contemporary Showcase syllabus. Her awards and recognitions include six Winning Awards from Alberta Piano Teachers Association Creative Music Writing Competition, Canadian Folk Song Arrangement Prize, First Place at the USA Modern and Contemporary Competition and First Place in Provincial Alberta Registered Music Teachers’ Association Student Composition. Gloria holds two Master’s degrees: MA in Piano (Ottawa) and MA in Strings (Chichester). She is currently working on her third Masters in Voice Pedagogy (Wales). She has been recognized by Steinway & Sons with a Top Teacher Award and is the recipient of the Royal Conservatory of Music Teacher of Distinction Award for her leadership as a music educator. Gloria has given presentations at city, provincial and national conferences on music learning topics. Her innovative teaching methods and pedagogy compositions motivate students to develop confidence in expressing their unique voice in both music and life. www.gloriachumusic.com.*



Golden Snow Dragon

Gloria Chu

Violoncello

$\text{♩} = 100$

f marcato

Piano

f



CFMTA Call for **Compositions** 2025

Appel à **compositions** 2025 de la FCAPM

Piano / Harp

Level / Niveaux 3 -4

Snow Day – Kathleen Feenstra

Kathleen Feenstra has been teaching piano and theory in BC's Fraser Valley since 2001. Accredited by The Royal Conservatory of Music with an ARCT in Piano Performance (2010) and also an ARCT in Piano Pedagogy (2019), Kathleen is a member of the British Columbia Registered Music Teachers Association, the Association of Canadian Women Composers, and is an Associate Composer of the Canada Music Center. She enjoys teaching, composing, and arranging, and is passionate about seeing her students succeed in their musical studies. As a composer, Kathleen specializes in creating works that are pedagogical in nature. She has created more than 100 pedagogical works for piano. Recordings of her music are available on all major platforms. Kathleen has published five books of piano repertoire with 80 Days Publishing, featuring music for all levels of students. She has also made numerous arrangements of popular pieces for her students. ✱



Snow Day

Video Link:



Kathleen Feenstra

Playfully ♩ = 126

A tempo

(School's closed, it's a snow day!) *Ped.* *(Walking to the park)*



CFMTA Call for **Compositions** 2025

Appel à **compositions** 2025 de la FCAPM

Piano / piano

Level / Niveaux 5 - 6

À l'horizon, la cime - Christian Pacaud

Christian Pacaud is a composer, electric bass player and sound designer from Quebec City, Quebec. Most of his professional career has been spent working in collaboration with other composers on video game productions, designing and implementing interactive music systems. In 2016, he presented a talk at the Games Developers Conference alongside composer Austin Wintory, presenting their collaborative work on the interactive musical score for Ubisoft's Assassin's Creed Syndicate. He is currently working as a composer and audio designer for Gearbox Software on Borderlands 4. As a musician, he has toured and played with various bands in genres ranging from jazz to extreme metal. You can find out more about his creative work at <https://www.christianpacaud.com/>. ✱



À l'horizon, la cime.

Christian Pacaud
(2025)

Contemplatif ♩ = 56

Piano

mp

con pedale

8.....:



CFMTA Call for **Compositions** 2025

Appel à **compositions** 2025 de la FCAPM

Vocal with Accompaniment

Level / Niveaux 3 -4

The Rain Stomp - Joyce Janzen

Joyce Janzen teaches piano, theory, history, written and keyboard harmony, and analysis from her studio in Abbotsford, BC. She enjoys the challenge of relating to each student as an individual. Her love of theory in all its forms motivates her in passing on its riches. Joyce is active in music in her studio, her church and her community as well as being registrar for BCRMTA. In addition to scoring and editing Keyboard Harmony workbooks, Joyce has developed self study workbooks for history courses. ✱



The Rain Stomp

Notes with an 'x' can be sung, or spoken on pitch

Joyce Janzen

$\text{♩} = 100$

Voice

Piano

The musical score is for a piece titled 'The Rain Stomp' by Joyce Janzen. It is written for Voice and Piano. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 100. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 6/8. The voice part consists of a single line of music with lyrics: 'Ca na di an win-ters are - oft-en quite cold with snow sports like ski-ing and'. The piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and single notes. The lyrics are written below the voice staff.



CFMTA Call for **Compositions** 2024

Appel à **compositions** 2024 de la FCAPM

Vocal with accompaniment

Level / Niveaux 5 - 6

Best Friends - Gloria Chu

Gloria Chu is a dedicated composer, pedagogue and performer. She is a multi-award winning composer of chamber, violin, cello, and piano works. Her compositions have been praised to “transport [the audience] into a heavenly world” by International Youth Music Competitions. Several of her pedagogical works have been featured in the Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects Contemporary Showcase syllabus. Her awards and recognitions include six Winning Awards from Alberta Piano Teachers Association Creative Music Writing Competition, Canadian Folk Song Arrangement Prize, First Place at the USA Modern and Contemporary Competition and First Place in Provincial Alberta Registered Music Teachers’ Association Student Composition. Gloria holds two Master’s degrees: MA in Piano (Ottawa) and MA in Strings (Chichester). She is currently working on her third Masters in Voice Pedagogy (Wales). She has been recognized by Steinway & Sons with a Top Teacher Award and is the recipient of the Royal Conservatory of Music Teacher of Distinction Award for her leadership as a music educator. Gloria has given presentations at city, provincial and national conferences on music learning topics. Her innovative teaching methods and pedagogy compositions motivate students to develop confidence in expressing their unique voice in both music and life. www.gloriachumusic.com.✱



Best Friends

Gloria Chu

♩ = 132-140
With Excitement

Voice

Piano

f

mf

Al - ways there, al - ways care,



CFMTA Call for **Compositions** Panelists

Dr. Rick Covey



Dr. Richard Covey is an active composer, collaborative pianist, theorist and educator. After completing studies in piano with Jamie Parker, and composition with Glenn Buhr, Richard completed his MMus and DMA degrees at the University of British Columbia. There, he studied with accomplished composers Stephen Chatman, Keith Hamel, and Dorothy Chang. Richard is a sessional instructor in Composition and Aural Skills at the University of Prince Edward Island, where he directs and encourages music creation of all kinds by students year-round. He strongly believes this to be a crucial component of music education. As a Canadian composer, Richard's works have been performed across Canada and abroad by ensembles such as the Gryphon Trio, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra, PEI Symphony Orchestra, UPEI Wind Symphony, and several premiere performances by members of the PEI new music ensemble, eklektikos. In addition to writing for professionals, Richard enjoys composing educational music for community ensembles, student choirs and bands..✻

Nadine Martin



Nadine Martin began her career as a professional pianist, ensemble director, and collaborative pianist at the age of 11 in Summerside, Prince Edward Island. Since then, she has studied at the Conservatoire de Québec à Chicoutimi, Dalhousie University, and McGill University. She was the collaborative pianist for Dalhousie University's string department, and has collaborated with orchestras, choirs, musicals, symphonic wind ensembles, as both a pianist and a horn player, and also played for various rock, reggae, jazz, and pop bands. She has competed in, and won, many local, provincial, national, and international competitions. She studied orchestral and jazz horn at McGill University, and has performed with diverse ensembles, ranging from orchestral to jazz. She now lives in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Nadine collaborates and performs regularly as a pianist and she is a music teacher at École Sainte-Anne. ✻

Wade Tarling



Wade Tarling is an award-winning Canadian pianist whose music has captivated audiences across North America, South America, and Europe for over two decades. A graduate of Capilano University with a Bachelor of Music and a Jazz Diploma, Wade has honed his craft alongside some of the most renowned musicians in the industry, including John Medeski, Chris Wood, and Billy Martin (of Medeski, Martin & Wood), as well as Grammy-nominated pianist Rachel Eckroth.

Now based in St. John's, NL, Wade is a vibrant force in the local music scene. While he primarily shines as a solo pianist, he also tours extensively with the celebrated group, The Ennis Sisters. His talent extends beyond performance—he has recorded multiple albums of original compositions with the award-winning band Hip Waders and has released two solo piano albums, including *Strength*, nominated for a MusicNL Award, and *Winter Songs*, which earned him a MusicNL Award win.

With an artistry that blends technical brilliance and deep emotional expression, Wade Tarling continues to leave an indelible mark on the world of music. ✻





CFMTA **Student** Composer Competition

Concours de la FCAPM pour élèves compositeurs

The CFMTA/FCAPM Student Composer Competition is a national competition for winners of Provincial composition competitions. Entries are submitted by Provincial Canada Music Week Coordinators for Canada-wide judging before June 1 each year. Scholarships are awarded to winners in each category, and the Helen Dahlstrom Award is given annually to the best national composition as selected by the adjudicator. Helen Dahlstrom was the founder of Canada Music Week. 🌟

Le Concours de composition pour élèves de la FCAPM/CFMTA est un concours national réservé aux lauréats des concours de composition provinciaux. Les œuvres sont soumises à un jury pancanadien par les coordonnateurs provinciaux de la Semaine de la musique canadienne avant le 1er juin de chaque an. Des bourses d'études sont remises aux lauréats de chacune des catégories et le prix Helen Dahlstrom est remis annuellement pour la meilleure composition nationale sélectionnée par le juge. Helen Dahlstrom est la fondatrice de la Semaine de la musique canadienne. 🌟



CFMTA congratulates the following winners of the 2025 Student Composer Competition:
La FCAPM félicite les lauréats suivants du Concours pour élèves compositeurs 2025 :





CFMTA **Student** Composer Competition

Concours de la FCAPM pour élèves compositeurs

PREPARATORY LEVEL / NIVEAU PRÉPARATOIRE

8 years and under / 8 ans et moins

CLASS 1 / CATÉGORIE 1

Composition for solo instrument/Composition pour instrument solo

First place - \$75

Kayley Lu (ON)

A Sunny Trip

Second place

Sylvie Hay (SK)

Cotton Candy Clouds

Third Place

Amaru Rojas-Chan (MB)

Bouncy

CLASS 2 / CATÉGORIE 2

Composition for voice/Composition pour voix

First place - \$75

Marianna Sutherland (ON)

I'm Nobody! Who Are You?

Second place

Emily Dietrich (AB)

Stars

Third Place

Timisire Falode (NS)

What's in the Sky?

CATEGORY A / NIVEAU A

11 years and under / 11 ans et moins

CLASS 1 / CATÉGORIE 1

Composition for solo instrument/Composition pour instrument solo

First place - \$150

Nathan Syyong (BC)

Don't Ever Underestimate the Smallest Elephant

Second place

Jia He Andy Zhang (QC)

12 contes

Third Place

Sarah Wolfe (ON)

Octopus Song

Honourable Mention

Ian Turcotte (YT)

Memories of a Blue House

CLASS 2 / CATÉGORIE 2

Composition for voice/Composition pour voix

First place - \$150

Valerie Anyigwe (NS)

Doggie, Doggie, Doggie

Second place

Olivia Chung (AB)

Always Family

Third Place

Nathaniel Mercer (MB)

Dreamin' in My Memories





CFMTA **Student** Composer Competition

Concours de la FCAPM pour élèves compositeurs

CATEGORY B / NIVEAU B

15 years and under - 15 ans et moins

CLASS 1 / CATÉGORIE 1

Composition for solo instrument/Composition pour instrument solo

First place - \$225

Will Zhu (BC)

Aeris

Second place

Gaoyuan Cheng (MB)

A Snowy Stroll

Third Place

Liv Makarenko (PE)

Pegasus

CLASS 2 / CATÉGORIE 2

Composition for voice/Composition pour voix

First Place - \$225

Harley Spencer-Lowe (NS)

Hide & Seek

Second place

Kalyse Hemsing (AB)

Harder

CATEGORY C / NIVEAU C

19 years and under/19 ans et moins

First place - \$350

Eason Fan (SK)

Musique de Danse

Second place

Anders Currah (AB)

The Roads not Taken

Third Place

Louis Duffayet (QC)

Quatre miniatures

CATEGORY D / NIVEAU D

Open/Ouvert

First place - \$400

Sarah Mercer (MB)

Easy as Cake

Second place

Kurt Stenner (AB)

Avro Arrow

Third Place

Max Francis (BC)

Quartet op. 6

HELEN DAHLSTROM AWARD / PRIX HELEN DAHLSTROM - \$250

Will Zhu (BC)

Aeris





PREPARATORY LEVEL / NIVEAU PRÉPARATOIRE

8 years and under - 8 ans et moins

CLASS 1 / CATÉGORIE 1 *Composition for solo instrument*

First place

Kayley Lu (ON)

A Sunny Trip

Kayley is a 7-year-old girl living in Kingston, Ontario. She grew up hearing her older brother playing piano and started playing herself at the age of 4. She composed her first song when she was 6 years old. She enjoys going for trips with her family, playing with her friends, drawing, and improvising music. She went to San Francisco with her family on Christmas, which inspired her composition, *A Sunny Trip*. With family and friends, she is never afraid of adventures. ✨



A Sunny Trip

1. Never be afraid

Kayley Lu

Moderato

Piano

mp

mf

p



PREPARATORY LEVEL / NIVEAU PRÉPARATOIRE

8 years and under - 8 ans et moins

CLASS 2 / CATÉGORIE 2 Composition for voice

First place Marianna Sutherland (ON) *I'm Nobody! Who Are You?*

Marianna, age 7, has been playing piano since age 2½ when she started playing her four-year-old brother's music! She is a graduate of the Music for Young Children program, is currently working at the Grade 4 piano level, and has perfect pitch. Marianna's mother is her music teacher and her father is an accomplished pianist and amateur composer. She has been shadowing her mother's MYC classes for years and enjoys teaching her own music class to some of her younger siblings. Marianna is homeschooled and has many interests besides music, including reading, dancing, and soccer. ✨



I'm Nobody! Who Are You?

Words by Emily Dickinson

Marianna Sutherland

Allegretto

Voice

p
I'm No-bod - y! Who are you?

Piano

mp *pp*

6

Vo.

mf
Are you No-bod - y too? Then there's a pair of us! Don't tell!

Pno.

mp

10

Vo.

ff *mp*
They'd ban - ish us you know! How drear - y to be

Pno.

f *p*



CATEGORY A / NIVEAU A

11 years and under - 11 ans et moins

CLASS 1 / CATÉGORIE 1 *Composition for solo instrument*

First place

Nathan Sy Yong (BC)

Don't Ever Underestimate the Smallest Elephant

My name is Nathan and I have been playing piano for 7 years. I study at the Victoria Conservatory of Music. I began composing music two years ago under the guidance of Christine Donkin. The idea for this song began when I watched a documentary on elephants and I wanted to create a tune that fits with the personality of an elephant calf. The twist in my composition is to highlight an energetic elephant who is trying its hardest to be like the adults and to be noticed, by getting into mischief. ✨



Don't Ever Underestimate the Smallest Elephant!

Nathan Sy Yong

With Expression ♩ = 92

5

9

16

24



CATEGORY A / NIVEAU A

11 years and under - 11 ans et moins

CLASS 2 / CATÉGORIE 2 *Composition for voice*

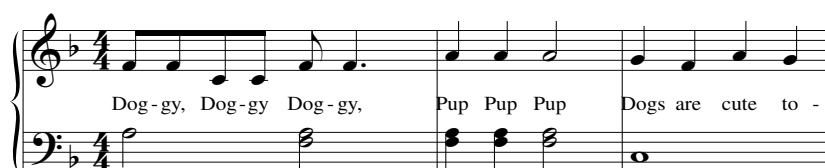
First place Valerie Anyigwe (NS) *Doggy, Doggy, Doggy*

My name is Valerie Anyigwe. I am Nigerian-Canadian. I live in Halifax, Nova Scotia with my family. ✱



Doggy Doggy, Doggy

Valerie Anyigwe





CFMTA **Student** Composer Competition - cont.
Concours de la FCAPM pour élèves compositeurs - suite

Winner
Helen
Dahlstrom
Award

CATEGORY B / NIVEAU B

15 years and under - 15 ans et moi

CLASS 1 / CATÉGORIE 1 *Composition for solo instrument*

First place Will Zhu (BC) *Aeris*

Will is a 15-year-old student and composer based in Vancouver, BC. Passionate about music, he enjoys playing the piano, singing, and composing both electronic and classical pieces. He works with DAWs to create unique soundscapes, blending his love for modern production with traditional composition. Outside of music, Will is an avid skier, golfer, and swimmer. ✨



Aeris

Will Zhu

Piano

$\text{♩} = 110$

4

6

8



CATEGORY B / NIVEAU B

15 years and under - 15 ans et moi

CLASS 2 / CATÉGORIE 2 Composition for voice

First place

Harley Spencer-Lowe (NS)

Hide & Seek

Harley was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 2011. She always loved music ever since she was very young. At the age of five, she started taking piano lessons with Laura Arce. Harley very quickly fell in love with playing music. She kept doing piano lessons until she was 9 and then, she switched to singing and piano. She loved singing for fun when she was very young but she wanted to learn more about how to advance in her singing. In 2022, Harley won first place in Nova Scotia for her composition *Nowhere To Hide* and an honorable mention in CFMTA. Now, she loves playing guitar, piano, and singing and will always try to learn a new song. 🌟



Hide&Seek

Harley Spencer-Lowe

Verse

mp G D Am Em G

As the clouds dis - app - ear and the truth it all comes cl - ear I - ve known it from

6 Pre-Chorus

D Am Em G *mf* D Am C

the start but you ne - ver seem to love like me no no no no I've fall - en

12 Chorus

G D Am C G D

no no no I can feel it chase chase chase down the ha - ll way down the

18 Am C G D Am

ha - ll - way out there fight flight freeze I choose mo - ur ning I've known it all for weeks but don't

23 C *mp* G D Am Em

care As the truth it un - folds and I've rea - l - ized that I'm the one

28 *mp* G D Am Em G *mf* D

to blame the woman in the wind - ow's seen me once and sees me a - gain no no no

33 Am C G D Am C

she's seen it no no no I can feel it

39 Chorus

G D Am C G

chase chase chase down the ha - ll - way down the ha - ll - way out there fight flight freeze I choose



CATEGORY C / NIVEAU C

19 years and under - 19 ans et moins

First place

Eason Fan (SK)

Musique de Danse

A Grade 12 student with a passion for composition and classical music, especially Baroque and early 20th-century styles. I play the piano and enjoy blending traditional and modern elements to tell stories through melody and emotion. ✱



Musique de Danse

Allegro moderato ♩ = 120 PRELUDE Eason Fan

mp

Red. * Red. * Red.

4

(Red.) * Red. * Red. * Red. * Red.

7

(Red.) * Red. * Red. * Red. * Red.

10

ral . . len . . tan . . do . . poco . . a . . poco . .

pp

(Red.) *



CFMTA **Student** Composer Competition - cont.

Concours de la FCAPM pour élèves compositeurs - suite

CATEGORY D / NIVEAU D

Open - Ouvert

First place

Sarah Mercer (MB)

Easy as Cake

Sarah Mercer is studying voice with Shoshana Goldenberg, and is a recent graduate of the Village Conservatory for Music Theatre in Winnipeg. Sarah loves to compose vocal works for which she writes her own text. As a 2024 Art Song Lab poet participant, Sarah gained collaborative experience by writing lyrics for a composer other than herself. 🌸

Photo by Kristen Sawatzky



Easy as Cake

Mezzo-Soprano Solo with Piano

Sarah Mercer

Patetico, Swing ♩ = 100

Am E7/G# Am/C B7/D# F#m7b5 E7/G#

Mezzo

Piano *mp*

A1

3 Am E7/G# Am/C B7/D# B7 Am/C B7/D#

I can't

mf *mp*



OUR ADJUDICATOR - Corie Rose Soumah



Corie Rose Soumah is a Canadian composer (QC) currently based in New York. She is interested in shaping fractured and reconstructed sound components through hypercollages and visceral physical gestures. Her approach is characterized by a keen interest in the interweaving of multiple aesthetic and sonic elements from the perspective of Afro-diasporic geologies. She explores these textures through the overlay of different acoustic mediums as well as electronic and analog technologies. Recent and upcoming collaborations include ensembles such as the International Contemporary Ensemble, Longleash, Instruments of Happiness, Hypercube, Ekmeles, Paramirabo, pinknoise, Sixtrum, Contemporary Insight, New Music Concerts, Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (NEM) and Wet Ink. She is currently pursuing a Doctoral degree in composition at Columbia University (US). She completed a BMus degree in composition from the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal (CAD). Her mentors include Zosha Di Castri, George Lewis, Marcos Balter, Georg Frederich Haas, Annie Gosfield, Michel Tétreault, Nicolas Gilbert and Jimmie Leblanc. ✿



National **Essay** Competition 2025

Concours national d'essai **littéraire** 2025

The National CFMTA Essay Competition invites submissions of essays on any research topic related to music teaching, pedagogy or performance practice. This competition is open to all Canadian residents currently studying at the high school, undergraduate, masters and doctoral university levels.

CFMTA is pleased to congratulate the winners of the 2025 National Essay Competition.

Le Concours national d'essai littéraire de la CFMTA/FCAPM vous invite à soumettre un essai ayant pour thème une recherche sur l'enseignement de la musique, la pédagogie ou l'interprétation musicale. Le concours est ouvert à tous les résidents du Canada qui sont en cours de formation académique aux niveaux secondaire, collégial, ou universitaire.

La FCAPM a le plaisir de féliciter les gagnants du concours d'essai littéraire de 2025.

University Doctoral Level / Niveau universitaire doctoral

1st place / 1^{re} place (\$1000.00) - Sponsored by CFMTA/FCAPM in honour of founder Dr. Lorna Wanzel
Jenna Richards, University of Ottawa, Ontario
*Reimagining the Undergraduate-to-Career Pipeline in Music Performance:
An Autoethnography from the Perspective of a Portfolio Careerist.*

University Graduate Level / Niveau universitaire – deuxième cycle

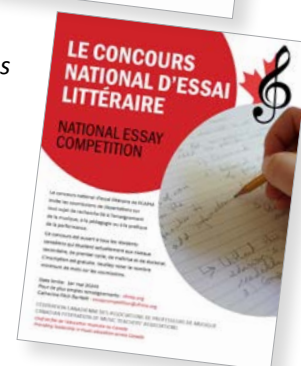
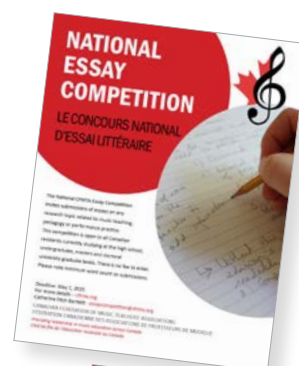
1st place / 1^{re} place (\$750.00) - Sponsored by Dr. Margaret Fitch
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On Teaching Musical Perfectionism: An Outlook on the Adversities of Systematic Teaching and its Ideologies

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Nicola Cameron, Ambrose University, Calgary, Alberta
World Music and Cultural Intelligence in the Classroom

High School / Élèves du secondaire

1st place / 1^{re} place (\$250.00) - Sponsored by Dr. Bronwyn Schuman, Dr. Emily Logan, Kathy Normandeau
Amy Pham, Michael Power St. Joseph High School/Business and Arts International Baccalaureate, Toronto, Ontario
Examining the influence of Romantic Style on Classical Form in Johannes Brahms' Piano Compositions: Adapting Sonata Form, Scherzo and Rondo Form to Romantic Era Style in Piano Sonata No.3 in F Minor Op.5



* Essays are available for download on the website - Winning Essays will be included in The Year in Review 2025

* Les essais peuvent être téléchargés sur le site Web – Les essais gagnants seront publiés dans la Rétrospective de l'année 2025

Our adjudicators for the 2025 competition were / Nos juges pour le concours 2025 étaient :

Dr. Terence Dawson - Dr. Emily Logan - Dr. Lori Lynn Penny - Dr. Bronwyn Schuman
Olivia Adams - Susan Shantora - Kathy Normandeau





Examining the influence of Romantic Style on Classical Form in Johannes Brahms' Piano Compositions: Adapting Sonata Form, Scherzo and Rondo Form to Romantic Era Style in Piano Sonata No.3 in F Minor Op.5

Amy Pham, Michael Power St. Joseph High School, Toronto, Ontario



Examining the Influence of Romantic Era Style on Classical Form in Johannes Brahms' Piano Compositions

To what extent did Johannes Brahms adapt sonata form, scherzo, and rondo forms to romantic era style in his *Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5*?

Amy Pham



I am a grade 12 student studying in Toronto. I grew up playing piano from the age of 7 while living all over the world. I've studied piano in Singapore, Vietnam and Canada, training under many well-known piano mentors. I completed RCM level 8 two years ago and now pursue my own musical endeavors like self-composition. Music is a source of healing for me. It provides me energy for good days and bad. I listen to a diverse selection of music like classical, jazz, hip hop and asian pop. I chose to research this topic as Johannes Brahms has greatly inspired me not just as a composer but as a person. I hope to further analyze compositional techniques and musicians in the future to develop my understanding of music. ✨



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Examining the Influence of Romantic Era Style on Classical Form in Johannes Brahms’ Piano Compositions

Johannes Brahms was a romantic-era composer who adapted classical forms to the style of the romantic era in his compositions. This set him apart from other romantic-era composers who endeavoured to innovate new forms instead of making innovations within existing frameworks like Brahms did (Swafford, 1997). Many attempted to discourage Brahms from keeping to old traditions yet he would disregard their advice, following his own path. His dedication to and mastery of classical form was inspired by his piano instructor Eduard Marxen who made sure Brahms was thoroughly educated in them (Swafford, 1997). The public began to recognize Brahms’s unique talent for combining these forms with romantic-era styles, and it led Brahms to become one of the most performed composers of the romantic-era.

This paper will analyze Brahms’ Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 as an example of how he combined classical form with romantic style. Much scholarly research has supported that this piece strongly demonstrates Brahms’ skills in adapting these forms—specifically sonata form, scherzo, and rondo form—to the emotional styles of the romantic era. Therefore, this piece will be suitable to study Brahms’s unique technique.



Investigation and Methodology

The classical forms that will be identified in Brahms' Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 are the sonata form, scherzo, and rondo form found in the first, third, and final movement. The second and fourth movements fully embody romantic style and are irrelevant to the research question: "How did Johannes Brahms adapt the sonata form, scherzo and rondo form in his Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 to the styles of the romantic era?"

The research in this essay will come from a personal analysis of the sonata using primary sources including the first edition score¹ of the piece hosted online by the International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP). This platform allows access to real, original scores like the one chosen for this analysis (Rosen, 2011). An audio recording of Wilhelm Kempff's 1969 performance of the piece² will accompany the analysis to help aurally identify elements of the sonata. Each figure will provide timestamps from this recording. Secondary sources include academic journals and books that provide background analysis to Brahms and his music such as Jan Swafford's "Johannes Brahms: A Biography."

¹ Brahms, J. (1854). *Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5* [Sheet music]. Bartholf Senff. IMSLP. <https://imslp.org/wiki/Special:ImagefromIndex/22820/pnbanes> See Appendix for full annotated score.

² PianoJFAudioSheet. (9 February 2021). *Brahms - Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 (Audio+Sheet) [Kempff]* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/TUP2kP4tUOM?si=vxgkEwaMK6eOhNHu>



Background

Classical Era Forms

Ernest Newman defined the classical era as the period of popular western music from 1735-1820 (as cited in Churgin, 1982). Classical form is the umbrella term for musical structures commonly shown in the pieces of this era such as the sonata form, scherzo, and rondo form.

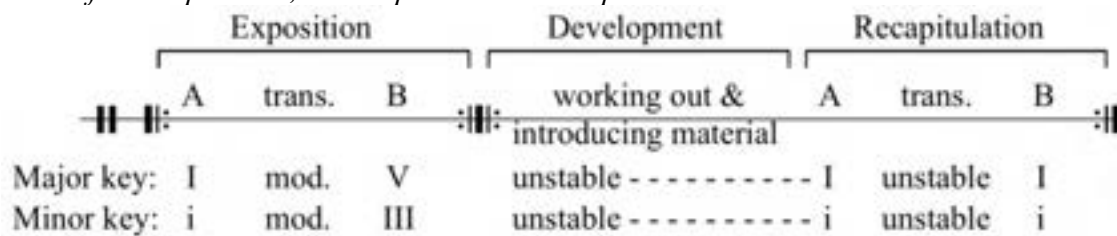
Sonata form

Sonata form is typically used for the first movement of a sonata, symphony or string quartet which are common musical genres during the classical era. It consists of three parts: the exposition, development and recapitulation as seen in figure 1 (Jacobson, 2024).

A sonata form has two contrasting themes in the exposition with a transition theme to bridge the two together. The first theme or theme group is in the tonic key and typically the transition theme modulates to the dominant or relative major key if the tonic is minor. The second theme or theme group of the exposition is in this new key. The development section explores variations of the introduced themes in different keys, working out material from the exposition. The recapitulation repeats exposition themes, reworking the transition to stay in the tonic. As a result, the second theme and the piece itself ends on the tonic. Composers may also add introductory or coda (ending) sections.

Figure 1

Depiction of the Exposition, Development and Recapitulation Sections in Sonata Form



Note. From *Tonal Harmony* (3rd ed., p. 346), by Benjamin et al., 2003, Thomson Schirmer. ISBN 0495500542.

Scherzo

A scherzo is commonly alight, energetic, dance-like musical structure frequently found in the third movement of a symphony, sonata, or string quartet. It is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time and includes elements of surprise in dynamics and orchestration. The scherzo structure in the classical era is simple ternary form, containing an ABA format where B represents a contrasting section called the trio.

Rondo Form

Similar to a sonata, a rondo incorporates different sections. It begins with a main section referred to as A, which then alternates with contrasting episodes referred to as B, C, etc. (Jarvis, 2023). Section A is repeated with abbreviations or embellishments but always remains in the same tonic key. Rondo form may be formatted as ABACA.

The Romantic Era

The Romantic era is defined by a more emotionally expressive approach to composing that developed around the years 1830 to 1890 (Dunnet, 2024). Composers rejected the structural restraints of the classical era, and expanded their use of metric and tonal variations. Elements that show metric development in romantic era pieces are syncopation, where notes are played offbeat; and irregular groupings, where grouped notes are momentarily played in a different time signature. Chromaticism, where notes outside the tonic key are used, and harmonic ambiguity are other romantic era elements that expand on tonality.

Some other compositional elements that were common in the romantic style are: common tone modulations, false starts for returning sections, finishing a piece that was in a minor key on the tonic major to signal a story from dark to light and using previous material in new sections.



Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5

Brahms's Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 was composed in 1853 when he was only 19 during his career breakthrough (Musgrave, 2001). It displays his masterful ability to take the rigid structures of classical forms and add the chromaticism, intense dynamics, and emotional depth of the romantic era to those forms. This sonata is also his largest piano composition and one well-known for its difficulty. Described by music critic Malcolm McDonald (as cited in DuBose, 2009), as “one of the three greatest piano sonatas of the mid-nineteenth century,” this piece was a crucial step for Brahms career.

Much reliable scholarship supports that this piece offers profound exploration of Brahms' skills in adapting classical forms—specifically sonata form, scherzo, and rondo form—to the emotional styles of the romantic era. These reasons support why the Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 will be a suitable piece to analyze Brahms' romantic innovations with classical era forms.



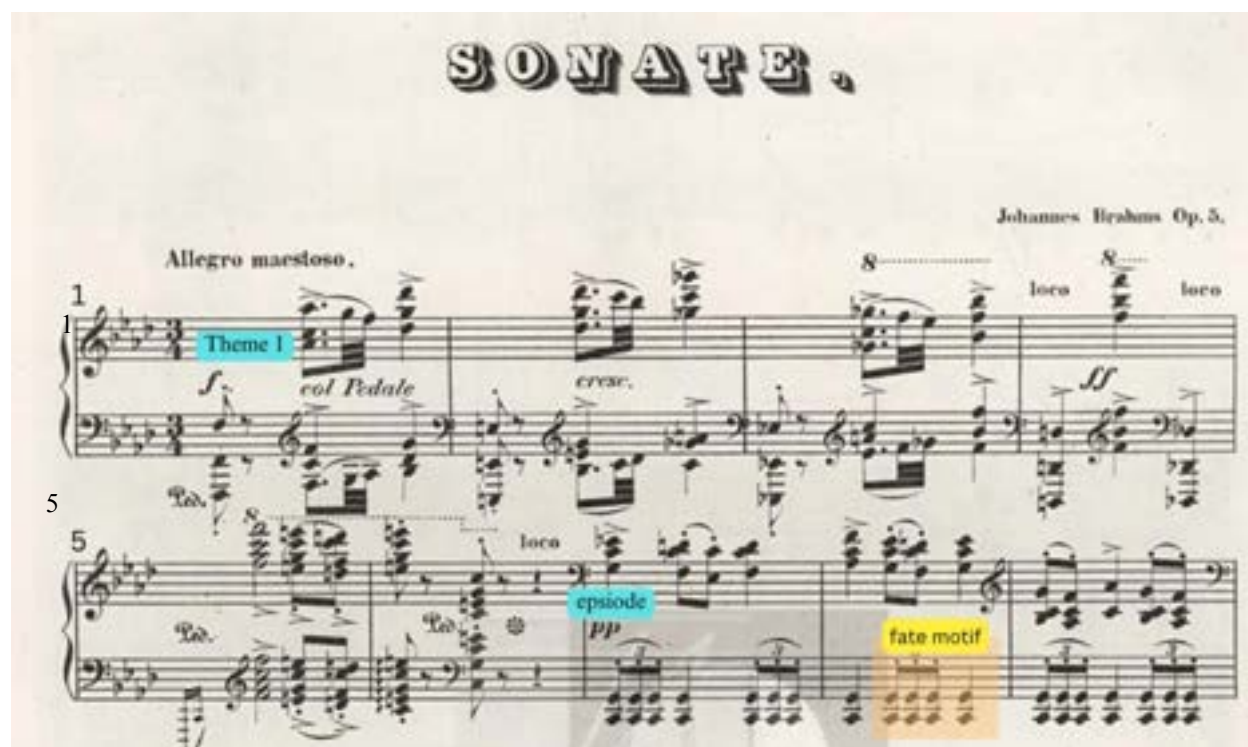
Research Analysis

Movement 1: Sonata Form

Exposition

Figure 2

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Measures 1-9, 0:00-0:19 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



The exposition begins in the tonic key of F minor. In measure 1 the first theme, introduces a motif where a descending long-short-short rhythm with contrary motion between the hands ends with a loud chord on the third beat. This motif repeats in ascending harmonic shifts. In measure 7, a slow, mysterious episode begins in c minor accompanied by a left-hand triplet rhythm similar to Beethoven's "fate" motif from Symphony No. 5 (McNaughton, 2021). It is played in the dominant minor which was uncommon and sounds like the transition to theme 2. However, jagged octaves lead listeners into a repeat of theme 1 in measure 17, where the right hand replies to the left hand, both in parallel motion.



Common tone modulation was a hallmark of Romantic era style and Brahms used it directly modulate from the C major chord at the end of theme 1 to the key to A-flat major, which begins the real transition comprised of a mixture of material from theme 1 and the ensuing fate motif episode.

Figure 3

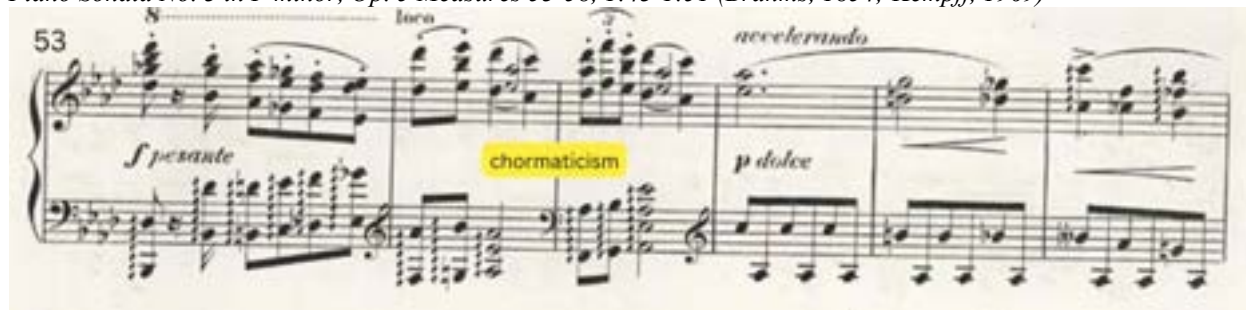
Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Measures 28-46, 0:48-1:21 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Theme 2 begins in measure 39, featuring wide left-hand arpeggios and a soft, fairy-tale-like melody in the right hand. An intense crescendo climaxes in measure 53. Brahms uses chromaticism (Figure 4) to lead to a repeat of the theme that ends in measure 71 on D-flat major, when the exposition should end in A flat major, the key in which it started.

Figure 4

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 Measures 53-58, 1:43-1:51 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



The jagged octaves return to modulate back to F minor for a repeat of the exposition. After the repeat, the jagged octaves now use common tone modulation to modulate to C-sharp minor, the tonic minor of D-flat major which ended theme 2.

Figure 5

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 Measures 64-79, 2:02-2:13/ 4:20-4:28 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)

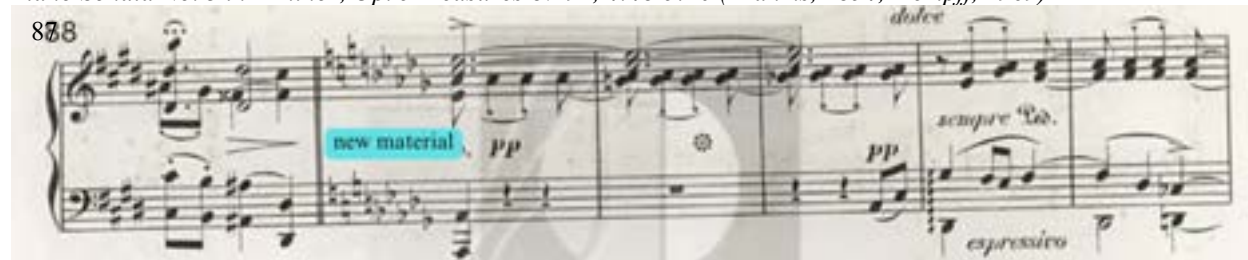


Development

The development, from measures 72-37, shifts to 4/4 (measures 72-73) and 5/4 time (measure 74), creating a sense of rhythmic disorientation. The exposition's material is worked out in different keys. Unusually, new material is introduced in D-flat major in measure 88, featuring a syncopated rhythm in and modal mixture in D-flat major minor (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5 Measures 87-92, 4:48-5:10 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



It sounds like the recapitulation begins in measure 124 but it is still the development working out material from the exposition. Brahms even combines the fate motif from the episode with chord progressions of theme 1 in measures 130-142.

Recapitulation

The recapitulation repeats similarly to the exposition though the first theme is shorter as the first statement of theme 1 and the episode and are removed. The transition begins immediately in F major, which is also the key of theme 2. Brahms then includes a lengthy coda with three parts to secure the F major ending. He brings back all the material he introduced throughout the sonata form such as the syncopated rhythms and fate motif. This movement ends with four grand F major chords spanning over six bars which create a dramatic, orchestral effect (Figure 7).

Figure 7

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Coda, Measures 206-222, 8:43-8:55 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Evaluation of Brahms' Sonata Form

In this sonata, Brahms follows typical sonata form structure with an exposition that has a first theme, a transition to the relative major key, and a second theme in the new key.

Afterwards, there is a development section where the material is worked out. A recapitulation section repeats the first theme and second theme.

There are also subversive romantic style elements that such as chromaticism and contrasting dynamics which increase the movement's dramatic effect. Brahms also changes the time signature from 3/4 to 4/4, 5/4, and 6/4, and uses syncopation adding complex metric variety. He uses common-tone modulations and false starts to following sections too. Brahms ends the movement in F major instead of the minor tonic, symbolizing a shift from darkness to light. Last, he mixes introduced material to make different sections.

Brahms uses these romantic style complexities to create varying dramatic expressions for each passage. Theme 1's energetic character contrasts with the mysteriousness of the episode. Their tension contrast theme 2's dreamy quality. The development introduces new, extra syncopated material to add a contrasting eerie and unstable feeling to the piece. Then, the recapitulation conquers the darkness of the beginning, mirroring the emotional arc of the Romantic style. In summary, Brahms skilfully blends romantic and classical era elements in the Sonata's first movement.



Movement 3: Scherzo

Scherzo

Figure 8

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 1-11, 19:20-19:32 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



This scherzo, which spans measures 1-100, is characterized by a distinctive long-short rhythm, interrupted by rests, and introduces a lively energy, and destabilizing harmonic ambiguity. The first theme (1A) opens the movement with an ascending dissonant arpeggio figure. Theme 1A repeats in measure 8 before a softer passage (measures 14–16) transitions to theme 1B (Figure 9).



Figure 9

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 12-26, 19:32-19:44 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Theme 1B begins in measure 17 and resembles theme 1A with the left hand playing the thematic rhythm, creating a march like feel. Theme 1B repeats.

Figure 10

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 34-26, 19:51-19:57 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Theme 2 begins in measure 36 with descending right-hand arpeggios and slow long-short rhythms in the left as seen in figure 10. A crescendo intensifies this playful theme and a diminuendo returns the feeling of mystery (Figure 11).

Figure 11

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 48-59, 20:04-20:12 (Brahms, 1854)



An offbeat short-long half-step episode (measure 66-69) build anticipation as it transitions to an altered repeat of theme 1A (Figure 12).

Figure 12

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 66-7, 20:18-20:27 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Repeated staccato F minor plagal cadences (figure 13) and two silent measures signify the scherzo's end.



Figure 13

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 86-106, 20:33-20:51 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Trio

The trio (measures 101-210) sharply contrast the scherzo. Its theme features a slow, warm, arching legato melody (figure 14) that is repeated. This theme was also in the second and fourth movement. A dark episode follows, incorporating the fate motive in the left hand (figure 14). This section repeats.

Figure 14

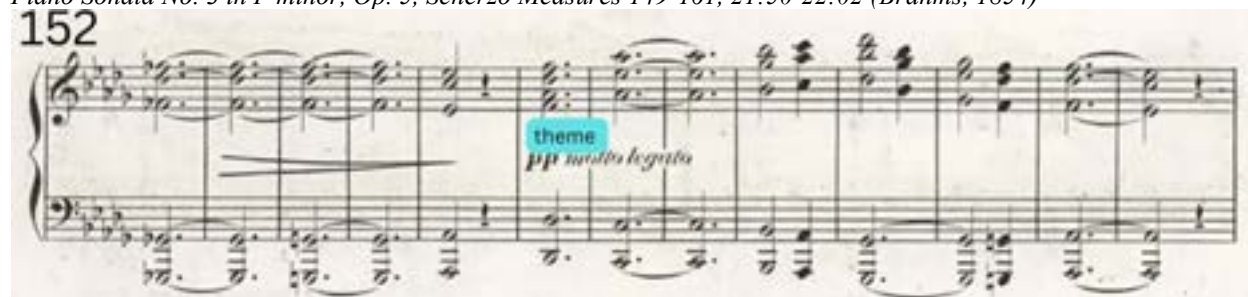
Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 118-127, 20:59-21:09 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Next, an eerie variation of the theme is presented in E-flat minor. The half-cadence ending is replayed thrice, creating an unsettling feeling.

Figure 15

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 149-161, 21:50-22:02 (Brahms, 1854)



In measure 157, the theme reappears and leads into a crescendo. The climax of octaves rings with an arching motion (figure 16). The crescendo continues in chromatic motion until measure 201. The transition of arpeggios (measure 203) hints at the returning scherzo, which repeats verbatim.

Figure 16

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Scherzo Measures 174-201, 22:11-22:28 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)

Evaluation of Brahms' Scherzo

Brahms fulfills all typical characteristics of a scherzo in this movement: it is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time and has an energetic theme. There is a clear ternary ABA format including a distinguishable trio section.

However, Brahms also expands the form, adapting it with romantic era complexity and intensity. Brahms writes intricate chromatic progressions and bold modulations from the dark C minor scherzo to the lyrically bright D-flat major trio. The diminished chords and abundance of octaves evoke the stormy grandeur of an orchestra, adding romantic-style dramatic weight. Brahms expands the usual scherzo trio form by adding an episode. This episode incorporates the fate motive. The trio also uses material from movement two.

Overall, Brahms improves the traditional scherzo by adding complex layers of emotion and drama, akin to the romantic style.



Finale: Rondo Form

Main Section (A)

This movement begins with a dark, galloping F minor theme. Syncopated responses characterized by a long-short swing and a clipped dotted rhythm are merged with the theme. This call and response material repeats with variations in pianissimo and forte (Figure 17).

Figure 17

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 1-12, 27:13-27:32 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



In measure 25, a transition of fast, jagged descending arpeggios in the right hand begins and repeats (figure 18). It slows and becomes softer, and the left hand plays descending octaves in the syncopated rhythm (measure 33-38). Suddenly, it modulates to F-major leading into the first episode.

Figure 18

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 27-35, 27:53-28:06 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



First Episode (B)

From measures 39-70 a long, beautiful theme is played in F-major with murmuring thirds in the left hand. The melody is repeated twice on different notes. The last repeat is extended with an arching rhythm in measure 63 (Figure 19).

Figure 19

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 58-67, 28:32-28:46 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Re-transition

Rapid arching figures move the material back to the minor key. The main galloping theme is repeated consistently in high notes with varying bass octaves from measures 78-100 in pianissimo, creating an unsettling feeling (Figure 20). In measure 103, the re-transition ends and the main section (A) begins but it is subdued in ethereal chords in the piano's high register.

Figure 20

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 74-84, 29:00-29:13 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Second Episode (C)

A new theme in D-flat major consists of a melody with four descending chords played in three waves that ends on a rounding figure (Figure 21). The long beats, legato chorale texture and pianissimo nature of the melody add to its feeling of royalty. It is repeated (Figure 21). The descending A-flat-G-F gesture mirrors the same gesture hidden at the opening of the first movement.



Figure 21

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 140-157, 30:30-30:55 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)

Then in measure 165, the theme repeats as a canon –the right hand copying after the left hand (Figure 22).

Figure 22

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 159-175, 31:03-31:13 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)

Re-transition

In measure 176, the right hand plays dissonant diminished and dominant triads while the left-hand plays ostinato figures resembling the fate motive (Figure 23).

Figure 23

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 176-181, 31:17-31:25 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Main Section (A)

The galloping theme returns in measure 195. It is repeated as a canon in measure 199. Notes from section C reappear, creating a short phrase. A new variation of the theme is played in measure 209. Its ending phrase is chromatic. Then the theme's syncopated response is repeated but the chromaticism is replaced with an expansion and diversion that is less intense. Jagged arpeggios reappear in measure 226 which become increasingly challenging. (Figure 24).

Figure 24

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 218-220, 32:30-32:34 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



The movement reaches F major in measure 236. Now it is in quadruplets. A dissonant C-sharp ends the irregular grouping. In measure 242, there is conflict between the keys until F major conquers again. The right-hand ascends near the highest point on the piano, before dramatically plunging downwards in measure 248 to introduce the coda (Figure 25).

Figure 25

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 242-252, 32:46-32:56 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Coda

Similar to the ending of the first movement, Brahms adds a lengthy difficult coda with three sections. It begins *piu mosso* (faster) and increases in tempo. In the first coda, the left-hand accompaniment repeats the descending three note gesture, A-G-F, quickly while the right hand plays it slower (the A flat is changed to A to reflect the new major mode of F major). This showcases Brahms' composing talent (Figure 26).

Figure 26

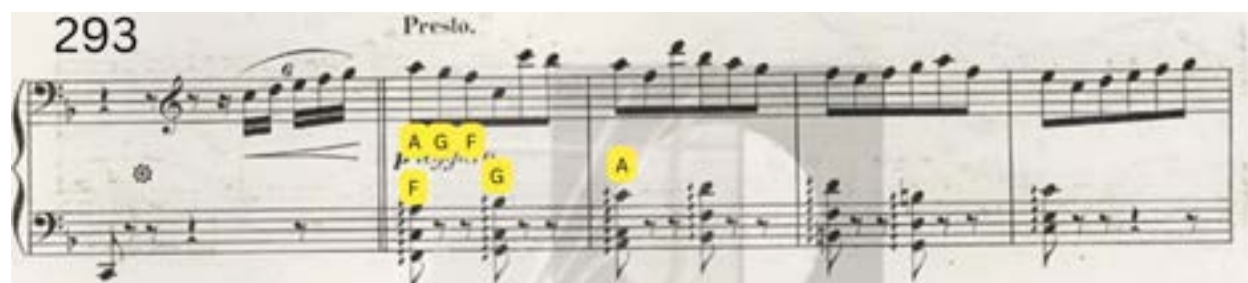
Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 253-258, 32:56-33:02 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



The second coda is a wild presto (very fast phrase) with scale figures. The A-G-F notes from section C reappear in measure 293, the right hand playing it faster and the left playing an inverted F-G-A gesture at the base of its chords more slowly. (Figure 27).

Figure 27

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 293-297, 33:29-33:33 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



The main galloping theme and fate motif reappears in the third coda. The piece then ends with five dramatic F major chords spanning 6 bars, similar to the ending of the first movement (Figure 28).

Figure 28

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5, Finale Measures 358-366, 34:21-34:33 (Brahms, 1854; Kempff, 1969)



Evaluation of Brahms' Rondo

Brahms' rondo has a main section and two episodes, following typical ABACA structure. However, before each return to the main section, Brahms incorporated re-transition sections instead of direct returns. The coda is also overly extensive and complex for a rondo, balancing the extended main material before it. With these extra elements, Brahms builds dramatic suspense.

Brahms also uses chromaticism, syncopation, and irregular rhythmic groupings. He also changes the A section key from F minor to A-flat major where it would usually stay in the same key, and incorporates themes from section C within section A. Each theme is also more diverse, developed, and expressive than a typical rondo: with an ominous galloping theme in section A, a heartfelt theme in episode B and a theme of royalty in section C. The emotional intensity in these sections differ from the simple rondo themes of the classical era.

Overall, Brahms touches makes more superficial use of classical structure in this movement, adding more romantic era elements to create an impactful finale for his sonata.



Conclusion

An analysis of Brahms' Piano Sonata No. 3, Op. 5, effectively identifies his unique compositional characteristics.. Specifically, an analysis of the first movement, third movement and finale, finds that references to the sonata form, scherzo and rondo forms typical of the classical era have been injected with clear romantic era stylistic elements.

Notable romantic style elements that Brahms displays in the movements are chromaticism, syncopation, harmonic ambiguity, and common tone modulations. He also begins the piece in the F minor key but ends in F major, creating a story where dark conquers light.

Most significantly, he develops new material using previous material throughout the whole piece. For example, the trio and fourth movement incorporates material from the second movement. The fate motive is also repeated throughout the piece in different ways. Lastly, he uses the first three notes of the piece A-flat-G-F to create varying rhythms throughout section C of the finale and its coda, uniting the ending with the beginning. While fulfilling characteristics for each classical form, Brahms shows mastery of these romantic era compositional elements.

However, the extent to which Johannes Brahms adapted each form to romantic era style varies. The third movement remains the most similar to typical scherzo form. Then, the sonata form in the first movement incorporates more romantic era elements, varying from the usual structure slightly more. The finale's has romantic style elements to a large extent within the rondo form—there is a main section and episodes but also uncommon transition sections and extensive codas among other elements, creating dramatic suspense.

Future papers may evaluate more pieces by Brahms as only one piece by him was analyzed in this paper, which was also a piece composed early in his career. However, scholars agree that this piece exemplifies Brahms' style and laid the foundation of his compositional



practice that would develop over the span of his career. Thus, this analysis of the Piano Sonata No. 3 Op. 5 asserts that it is exemplary of how Brahms adapts classical era compositional forms with romantic elements while maintaining most of the traditional form's characteristics.



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Appendix

Link to fully annotated score on Canva: https://www.canva.com/design/DAGW-R-wz38/OzUd-KJRhbIaexpf3v3-ew/edit?utm_content=DAGW-R-wz38&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton



World Music and Cultural Intelligence in the Classroom

Nicola Cameron, Ambrose University, Calgary, Alberta

University
Undergraduate
1st place

World Music and Cultural Intelligence in the Classroom

Common Practice Music and World Music are both vital to fostering cultural intelligence in Calgary (and Canadian) classrooms.

Teachers meet the challenges of teaching World Music with ingenuity and passion.

Nicola Cameron - Ambrose University. Major: Musicology



Africa calls me her child, Europe her nomad, and Canada her settler. I have taught music for over 30 years and now get to upgrade my learning with the rising generation of musicians. I write, narrate and produce audiobooks, and everything I touch turns to art. ✱



In a Calgary school, Liyana rushes to pick up two tī rākau sticks from the instrument basket. She and a friend sing the stick-game song they learned in the last music class, which reminds them of their friend who visited New Zealand over Christmas, a Polynesia neighbour, and the movie about a girl learning to paddle a Hawaiian outrigger canoe. A ringing tone fills the classroom from a brass bowl their teacher holds in her hands. As she circles the bowl with a wooden stick, Liyana and her classmates respectfully place the tī rākau sticks in the basket and gather around. What does Miss Deborah have for them today?

Miss Deborah represents Calgary school teachers¹ introducing their students to World Music beyond the Common Practice, beyond playing “foreign” music over the speakers or singing a folk song in the choir for the “winter” assembly. These teachers recognise the benefits of exposing students during their impressionable years to a wide variety of musical styles, languages, and transmission methods.

These teachers are responding to challenges, like limited exposure during their accreditation training, limited and scattered resources, and prejudiced student attitudes with ingenious solutions. Their passion for developing cultural intelligence in their students spurs creativity and more importantly, the growth of globally minded citizens.

What is World Music? What is the Common Practice period? What is cultural intelligence?

Why are globally minded students vital to the 21st Century? Clearly defining these concepts

¹ Melissa Cain and Jennifer Walden. “Musical Diversity in the Classroom: Ingenuity and Integrity in Sound Exploration.” Cambridge University Press 13 June 2018. Pp 1.



will facilitate the discussion about the growing World Music movement in Calgary classrooms.

World Music is a combination of sonic events, sociocultural contexts, geographical origins, performance practices, and teaching methods². Humans are infinitely adaptable, and music is a fundamental way of expressing this. The reasons music is made, the places, the tools, the way it is passed down from generation to generation as well as the way it changes from generation to generation all contribute to the disciplines of ethnomusicology and World Music pedagogy. Technology has expanded our access to music from all around the planet. We are more aware of each other, and we need to grow cultural intelligence to get along on our small chunk of rock perfectly positioned in the Solar System.

Cultural Intelligence is defined as an individual's capability to function effectively in situations characterised by cultural diversity.³ For instance, in Southeast Asia, I would be careful not to step over any musical instruments⁴. I would be observant and respectful of local customs.

Therefore, cultural intelligence grows empathy and curiosity and leads to more ready acceptance of others, but it must be taught early to be most effective. Though infants at 6 months of age show no encoding for one rhythmic system, by the age of 12 months they

² This is my own definition combining all I learned from my research.

³ Soon Ang and Linn Van Dyne. *Handbook of Cultural Intelligence, Theory, Measurement, and Applications*. Routledge London and New York, 2015. Pg xv.

⁴ Dr. Jennifer Walden (World Pedagogy instructor for Smithsonian Folkways) in discussion with the author. November 13, 2024.



do.⁵ This “enculturation”⁶ can be reversed in two weeks at that age, but children entering the classroom at age 5 years bring less malleable preferences for the music they have heard at home⁷. In Calgary those preferences often are based in Common Practice music.

Common Practice, the dominant music system taught in North American schools, refers to music composed in European countries and their colonies between 1700-1900 using a diatonic system and syntax⁸. It is important to state that Common Practice is vital and should never be thought of as detrimental to children or culture. It simply has neighbours who are equally vital, logical, beautiful, and cultivating of highest human potential. “It is all music, and it is all people⁹,” Dr. Jennifer Walden stated in an interview. Making distinctions and leaving out one system or the other based on ignorance or prejudice is detrimentally limiting. Knowledge of the music and people of the globe is a growing necessity in the 21st century.

Globally adroit citizens are steeped in “21st Century skills”: multicultural literacy; humanitarianism; civic, ethic, and social justice; oral and written multilingual

⁵ Erin E. Hannon and Laurel J. Trainor. “Music Acquisition: Effects of Enculturation and Formal Training on Development.” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 11, no. 11 (2007): <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2007.08.008>. 469.

⁶ The process by which individuals acquire culture specific knowledge about the structure of music through everyday exposure. Hannon and Trainor. 466.

⁷ Gaye Soley, and Erin E. Hannon. “Infants Prefer the Musical Meter of Their Own Culture: A Cross-Cultural Comparison.” *Developmental Psychology* 46, no. 1 (2010): 286–92. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017555>. 290.

⁸ Justin London. “Building a Representative Corpus of Classical Music.” *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 31, no. 1 (2013): 68–90. <https://doi.org/10.1525/mp.2013.31.1.68>.

⁹ Walden in discussion with the author.



communication; public speaking; and listening to understand¹⁰. They actively seek a more connected world, peaceful existence between nations, widespread prosperity, and dignity for as many as possible. Students from Calgary are gaining these skills in their classrooms partially by engaging in music from around the world. But first they need trained teachers to provide the lessons.

In the teacher certification programs of Alberta universities, there are options to concentrate in teaching music. However, of the 60 music courses offered by the University of Lethbridge¹¹ and the 17 offered by the University of Calgary¹² for a music education minor, few cover World Music. No course on World Music is required for school music teacher accreditation. Instead, potential teachers learn conducting and arranging for western based music.

Walden and Talbot agree that a high priority is placed on concert band and choir as optimal for school music programs¹³. Only students who are familiar with western notation are admitted to music education programs¹⁴. Education from other traditions is seen as inadequate and possibly a threat to the quality of music¹⁵ even though students from these

¹⁰ J. Christopher Roberts and Amy C. Beegle. *World Music Pedagogy Vol 2 Elementary Music Education*. Routledge World Music Pedagogy series. New York NY. 2018. 11.

¹¹ University of Lethbridge. "Music Education Minor Course List." Undergraduate calendar (2024/2025), 2024. https://www.ulethbridge.ca/sites/ross/calendar/ug/topic.htm#t=Topics%2FFaculty_of_Education-Education_Minors.htm%23XREF_Music_Education.

¹² University of, Calgary. "Music Education Minor Course List." The University of Calgary, 2024. <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/archives/2023/music-education.html>.

¹³ Jennifer Walden. "What We have Works....Doesn't it? Cultural Diversity in the Canadian Music Curricula and Resistance to Change." *The Canadian Music Educator*, Edmonton Vol 56. Iss 2 Winter 2014: pg. 9.

¹⁴ Brent C., Talbot. ed. *Marginalized Voices in Music Education*. 1st ed. New York; Routledge, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315225401.pg.4>.

¹⁵ Walden. 2014 pg. 10



traditions are the most able to introduce non-western ways of teaching and learning to diversify student experiences.

The government-issued Alberta school curriculum¹⁶ states that music is fundamental to complete an individual, should begin at an early age, and continue throughout life. The curriculum lists concepts, skills and an attitude of lasting delight as its goals. Wording around music from sources other than the Common Practice expresses feelings about holidays, country, and cultural heritage¹⁷. The government hopes students will be “aware” of “ethnic” music¹⁸. The different styles listed for teachers to explore with their students are blues, jazz, rock, reggae, country and western, and classical¹⁹. There is no mention of Peking Opera, Bachata, Gamalan, Zimbabwe Marimba, Bollywood, or any other world styles.

Teachers with a passion for World Music must educate themselves. Reyes notes that teachers are often intimidated by something they are not familiar with; they struggle with lyrics in languages other than their own; they find it easier to quantify progress in western music since it is based on notation; and they are intimidated by the issue of authenticity²⁰.

¹⁶Alberta Government. “Subject Guides: Teaching Music: Alberta Curriculum.” Alberta Curriculum - Teaching Music - Subject Guides at University of Alberta Libraries, 1989. <https://guides.library.ualberta.ca/teaching-music/alberta-curriculum>. Pg. 1.

¹⁷ Ibid. pg. 6.

¹⁸ Ibid. pg. 7.

¹⁹ Ibid. pg. 6

²⁰ Francisco Reyes. “Multicultural Music Education in North America: Achievements and Obstacles,” *The Canadian Music Educator*; Edmonton Vol. 59, Iss. 2 (Winter 2018): pg. 14.



Walden suggests recontextualization is a better approach than authenticity²¹. She encourages teachers to see music as a living art, changing and growing according to its immediate context. Abril quotes ethnomusicologist Bonnie Wade as saying authenticity lies within the perceptions of the individual²². Abril argues that music is always authentic to its performer of the moment. Creating an environment where the music is only performed by members of the original culture, with original instruments and languages is impossible and impractical in the classroom²³. If the music is not diluted, or modified to deride another culture its inclusion in the curriculum can build the lasting delight recommended by the Alberta curriculum, and the cultural intelligence desirable for making the world more harmonious.

Authenticity remains an issue once a teacher has educated themselves through private lessons, engaged in courses like the Smithsonian's Folkways World Pedagogy Course²⁴, and/or attended conference workshops that present aspects of World Music. To teach World Music in their classrooms, teachers must search out the best instruments, scores, culture bearers, and representative performances often using teachers' personal time and funds. Resources are not catalogued and concentrated in one place, therefore teachers arrange, interpret, and apply their research to create practical lesson plans²⁵.

²¹ Walden. 2014. pg.12

²² Carlos R. Abril. Selecting Music with Integrity. *Music Educator's Journal* Vol 93 No. 1 Sept 2006; pp 8.

²³ Ibid. pp. 9.

²⁴ Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. "World Pedagogy Course." Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 2024. <https://folkways.si.edu/world-music-pedagogy-courses>.

²⁵ William M. Anderson, and Patricia Shehan Campbell. *Multicultural Perspectives in Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham: R&L Education, 2011. pg. 1.



Talbot argues that diversifying the lesson plan content is not enough to make World Music an equal partner with Common Practice in the classroom²⁶. Teachers must balance systems of learning: the informal with formal, notation with aural, holistic with analytical, and tangible with non-tangible²⁷. Most non-western music is transmitted aurally²⁸: a teacher plays, and the student imitates. The teacher comments on the student's effort and the student makes corrections. This is costly in time and attention. In a classroom of twenty to thirty students peer mentors become important. Students who are culture bearers are leaders and gain status for their identities as well as their knowledge²⁹.

Culture bearers can be found in the school community or brought in from the wider community³⁰. Putting the word out and then interviewing people to validate their possible contribution would all be done on the teacher's own time. Once a culture bearer is found, teachers try to retain this resource as long as possible.

Administrators who see the value of a multicultural music program allocate funds for training, scores, equipment, and for culture bearers to enter the classroom. Room in the school schedule for ensemble practice and performance is a sign of support. Other teachers can provide parallel units to study aspects of the cultural origin of the music the students are playing. This cross-curricular approach helps students overcome their prejudice with curiosity because they see the greater context of the music.

²⁶ Talbot. Pg. 5.

²⁷ Walden, 2014. Pg.11.

²⁸ Ibid. pg. 9.

²⁹ Sara E. Delgado. What Can Music Education Teach Children about Cultural Diversity? The Canadian Music Educator; Edmonton Vol 62 Iss 4 2021: pg. 50.

³⁰ Abril. Pp. 24.



With a passion-inspired research-directed lesson plan, scores, instruments, culture bearers, and colleague support behind them, teachers who wish to introduce World Music into their classrooms must win the hearts of their students. Calgary now has a diverse population. We are impoverished, affluent, indigenous, multigenerational Canadian, first generation Canadian, immigrant, expat, etc. Some children encounter in their Calgary classroom classmates whose nation is on the other side of wars in their home countries. Their parents teach them to reject the “enemy” music. Some are raised with prejudice against certain music styles based on socio-economic biases³¹. Most bring a cultural experience with music based on what their parents listen to³². They form strong opinions unless their parents have purposefully brought variety into their environments. A teacher must work to foster interest, curiosity, attention, optimism, and passion for different sounds³³. They must consider student age, development levels such as skill with reading and manipulating instruments, and what students are accustomed to³⁴. Abril recommends growing tolerance through sensitivity to where students begin their experience with World Music and gradually expanding their repertoire³⁵.

The five dimensions of World Music pedagogy³⁶ gradually lead students through listening attentively to a piece of music, participating, recreating, composing in the style of, and finally integrating the music into greater knowledge of the culture. It helps to incorporate

³¹ Walden in discussion with the author.

³² Soley and Hannon. Pg. 290.

³³ Cain and Walden 2018. Pp. 1.

³⁴ Abril. Pp. 38.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Roberts and Beegle. Pg. 3



new sounds into familiar settings and activities before branching out³⁷. Teachers should take advantage of the human preference for a fast, consistent beat and stable tonality³⁸ and then slowly expand the class's acceptance of the unfamiliar. However, sometimes the familiar is too influential. The most pervasive obstacle to students engaging with World Music may not be home influence but the commercial music industry.

Music education is the combined effort of the interlocking values of families, governments, and increasingly, marketing strategists³⁹. Performers and presenters on the screens and speakers at home and school want dedicated attention which leads to narrowed cultural experiences⁴⁰. Children are taught to be consumers instead of seeing music as a way of knowing the world or as an art available to all⁴¹. They come into the classroom plugged into their earbuds and grow resistant to group participation. They are taught by industry to demand that music be fun, sensational, simple, new, constantly changing yet the same, fast, easy, loud, and listener centred⁴². How can a teacher compete?

Cain and Walden interviewed three Calgary school music teachers succeeding at making World Music an integral part of their classroom experience⁴³. They found seasoned teachers who made allowances for their students' needs, preferences, prior knowledge,

³⁷ M. Cain, S. Lindblom, and J Walden. (Initiate, Create, Activate: practical solutions for making culturally diverse music education a reality. Australian Journal of Music Education. (2). 2013). pg. 88

³⁸ Roberts and Beegle. Pg. 18.

³⁹ Richard Colwell and Carol Richardson, editors. The New Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning – A Project of the Music Educators National Conference. Oxford University Press New York. 2002 Pg 5.

⁴⁰ Ibid. pg 13.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid. pg 9.

⁴³ Cain and Walden. 2018



and tastes⁴⁴. They gave their students choices and got them asking questions⁴⁵. They created their own notation⁴⁶, brought cultural artifacts from home and from their travels⁴⁷, and gave opportunities for students to create their own interpretations instead of imposing a static representation of the music⁴⁸. Rehearsal was not only a time to “do what the composer says,” but a time for discussion, listening, experimentation, and improvisation⁴⁹.

These teachers and their colleagues are overcoming the challenges of their training, the difficulties of resource management, and student prejudice to teach both World Music and Common Practice music in Calgary classrooms. Their passion and resourcefulness are propelling students like Liyana into cultural environments in music that mirror the environments they encounter in everyday life.

⁴⁴ Cain and Walden. Pp. 11.

⁴⁵ Ibid. pp. 25.

⁴⁶ Ibid. pp. 15.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid. pp. 9.

⁴⁹ Ibid. pp. 18.



World Music in Calgary Classrooms: Challenges and Opportunities.

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December 5th, 2024

MU309

Dr. A. Michaud

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On Teaching Musical Perfectionism: An Outlook on the Adversities of Systematic Teaching and its Ideologies

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On Teaching Musical Perfectionism: An outlook on the adversities of systematic teaching and its ideologies



Franco-Ontarian mezzo-soprano and composer **Anika-France Forget** has been noted for her passionate scores, lush harmonies, emotional questioning, and deeply felt synergy. Most recently, she completed an Intensive Profile Masters in Composition with a full Arts Merit Scholarship from the University of Ottawa, under the tutelage of Canadian composer Kelly-Marie Murphy. Anika-France's compositions have been performed throughout Canada, the United States, France, and the UK. In October 2024, she was invited as featured composer in the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra's New Generation Composer's Program. Her composition will be released on an SPO commercial album in May 2025. Her love for the community has led her to organize "Salon-Concert" composer concerts in her hometown with premieres and performances delivered by the students of the University of Ottawa. Next up, Anika-France's music will be performed at the upcoming MusCan Conference in May 2025 at the University of Waterloo. ✨



ABSTRACT

This paper challenges how music institutions, whether university, conservatoire, or summer program, constrain creativity in performance training. Three principles will be discussed: 1) **performance as failure**, 2) the **power relations** within the private music studio, and 3) **stereotypes and objectification**, specifically of students completing a voice performance degree. This research will be based on my own experiences and observations as a voice major, as well as the findings of scholars including, but is not limited to, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, Kim Burwell, Raluca Matei and Jane Ginsborg, Nicole Denise Jordan, and Dianna T. Kenny. Issues such as mental illnesses diagnosed in university music students such as anxiety disorders and the negative social division of specific groups of students will be discussed. Sensitive topics including the marketability and degradation of music students, especially those studying voice, experienced within an educational setting will also be considered. Methods of analysis will include Kim Burwell's system of power dynamics (power to, power over, power with), Barlow's "model of anxiety", and field interviews. These methods will help confirm the existence of these creative boundaries within larger educational institutions. Ultimately, this research seeks to clarify the challenges facing these institutions and its student body. Several solutions will be offered to alleviate the repercussions felt by young musicians. These suggestions include the incorporation of courses focusing on interpretation, in-house counsellors geared towards performance students, and the integration of a pass-fail grading system.



On Teaching Musical Perfectionism: An outlook on the adversities of systematic teaching and its ideologies.

“Do it again, but do it better.”

– University Voice Professor

Over the course of my musical studies, I have often questioned why my peers and myself have at times resented music and its performing facet. From a very young age, with my little feet dangling from the piano bench, I remember finding comfort and joy when performing, whether it was through showcasing my own compositions or participating in my local music festival. Yet later, when I began my university studies, I noticed that many of my colleagues were attending counselling on a regular basis in order to assist them in their musical and educational paths. For a long time, I wondered why this was the case. At times, I also carried the sentiment of failing my art, and thus myself, to the point where I started questioning my own career path as a performing artist. In truth, these uncertainties largely developed when I began my masters in voice performance in the UK, studying with well-respected artists and mentors. One could say that I had been quickly introduced to the business of music, shining light on all its angles. In this research paper, I wish to bring these doubts back to the surface and reflect on their possible origins. I will argue that a certain amount of reputable conservatoires and universities have been and continue to implement creative boundaries and stereotypes whilst adopting three dominant behaviours and practices 1) **treating performance as failure**, 2) **power relations** within the private music studio, and 3) the division of Musicians and Singers through **stereotyping and objectification**. Keeping these issues in mind, I pose the following question: at what point do these principles cross the line – when do they no longer cultivate the creative interpreter, and begin negatively influencing her? There is already a significant discussion in the literature that tackles these matters: through the lens of performance anxiety and stage fright (e.g. Patston 2014; Kenny 2006), the power relations in



private music studios (e.g. Fernández-Morante 2018; Burwell 2023), or the classical singer's body image and identity (e.g. Smeltzer 2017; Jordan 2010). By reflecting on my own experiences and those of my peers in relation to this literature, this essay exposes these social principles and will help uncover in which way these beliefs may unconsciously or nonchalantly be employed within music education programs. My goal is not to criticize every musical institution and their methods of teaching, but to help clarify and alleviate doubts which may have at one point impeded the creative voice of musicians who have completed their studies through major institutions.

Daniel-Leech Wilkinson refers to the culture of classical music performance as a failure. He states: "The notion that to perform is always to fail".² To help his claim, he alludes to Theodor W. Adorno's *Towards a Theory of Musical Reproduction* and paints an absolute picture of the ideal, unachievable performance us musicians are all craving to attain.³ In fact, with the evolution of video and audio recording technologies, this has allowed performers and teachers to build a repertoire of traditions and rules, creating the illusion of an idealistic performance, with its existence solely residing in one's creative mind. With each recording trying to outshine its previous one, Leech-Wilkinson clearly views these tools as an opportunity for comparison, a never-ending competition, and the pursuit of a perfected musical accuracy, making every performance close to an exact replication; leading us to the famous composer-performer stereotypical relationship, in which case the performer is viewed as a "slave" to the composer's notations, resembling a quasi-religious exchange.⁴ Leech-Wilkinson even goes on to say that certain musicians hum the same melody: "Composers are godlike in their genius; their instructions must be faithfully followed; performers are the composer's loyal servants; the composer's intended performance is the ideal

² Leech-Wilkinson, "Towards a Practice of Musical Performance Creativity," 89.

³ Leech-Wilkinson, 89.

⁴ Leech-Wilkinson, 92 & 88.



model for all and for ever [...]”.⁵ Furthermore, he addresses the popular opinion which regards performers and performances which do not follow this expectation as “Other”, intrusive, and out of place.⁶ In fact, the number of musicians that have challenged this belief and have succeeded in doing so can be counted on fingers. Surprisingly, many still believe that a performance cannot be respected if it is not faithful to the score; the untouchable *Werktreue*.⁷ Because of this assumption, musicians and artists are then propelled into a world of comparison; who can execute the most faithful interpretation?⁸ Being a singer at first, and then a composer, I understand this concept. However, I believe many contemporary composers would be able to see through its many faults. Having performed the works of many student composers throughout my undergraduate and master’s degrees, most were often open to contrasting interpretations. This is why I agree with Kim Burwell in her article “Power relations in the music studio”. Burwell mentions that the “Conception of students being “slaves to music” [...] is a bit outdated [...] but still there and ‘pervasive’”.⁹ Due to this constant search for the “unachievable performance” and its inevitable sense of failure, musicians are most prone to suffer from mental illnesses such as anxiety disorders, low self-esteem, and imposter syndrome. In reality, classical musicians are those who are most prone to suffer from mental illnesses, whether psychological or physical, when compared to musicians of other genres.¹⁰ Leech-Wilkinson specifies that it is due to the constant repetition of “simply sounding the system” and getting one’s artistry and identity questioned and lost along the process.¹¹ One may argue that these difficulties do not simply arise from the feeling of failure

⁵ Ibid, 94.

⁶ Ibid, 94.

⁷ Ibid, 94.

⁸ Ibid, 92.

⁹ Kim Burwell, “Power relations in the music studio,” *British Journal of Music Education* 40, no. 3 (2023): 352. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051723000220>.

¹⁰ Leech-Wilkinson, 92.

¹¹ Ibid, 93.



through performance; there is much more which contributes to these challenges. Raluca Matei and Jane Ginsborg elaborate on this point by stating that music involves many other facets other than its performance. It involves: 1) competition, 2) criticism, 3) suboptimal social support, 4) high job demands, and more.¹² Musical institutions also highly prioritize talent over academic success and mainly provide authoritarian teaching approaches.¹³ Interestingly, the number one reason for students seeking counselling in university programs is low self-esteem and confidence.¹⁴ In a study conducted by Matei and Ginsborg at a UK conservatoire, it was evident that students studying voice were the group most likely to attend counselling.¹⁵ One may assume the reason behind this particularity is the large focus on physicality imposed upon these students. This matter will be discussed in more detail in the penultimate paragraph of this essay. Another cause for such distress is the conception of “talent as a mysterious possession” associated with hysteria and artistic genius, according to Burwell.¹⁶ Quoting Harald Jørgensen, she establishes that performance anxiety is manifested by the narrow-mindedness of musicians and institutions, chiefly focusing on producing a singular outcome: “the performer of high quality”.¹⁷ Intriguingly, psychologist Dianna T. Kenny affirms that “High levels of self-reported performance anxiety were also related to lower levels of confidence”.¹⁸ Therefore, it is appropriate to assume that most music students seeking counselling for low self-esteem and low-confidence also experience a considerable amount of performance

¹² Raluca Matei and Jane Ginsborg, “Why Do Music Students Attend Counselling? A Longitudinal Study of Reasons in One UK Conservatoire,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 71, no. 4. (2023): 419. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00224294231168622>.

¹³ Matei and Ginsborg, “Why Do Music Students Attend Counselling? A Longitudinal Study of Reasons in One UK Conservatoire,” 419.

¹⁴ Matei and Ginsborg, 428.

¹⁵ Ibid, 429.

¹⁶ Burwell, “Power relations in the music studio,” 351.

¹⁷ Harald Jørgensen, *Research into Higher Music Education: An Overview from a Quality Improvement Perspective* (Novus, 2009), 179.

¹⁸ Dianna T. Kenny, “Music performance anxiety: Origins, Phenomenology, Assessment and Treatment,” *Journal of Music Research* (2006): 54.



anxiety. To fully understand the reasons behind the need for such counselling in a university setting, it is important to understand what these students are experiencing on a daily basis, whether physically or mentally. Kenny describes performance anxiety as a “general term for a group of disorders that affect individuals in a range of endeavours, from test-taking, mathematics performance, public speaking and sport, to the performing arts of dance, acting and music”.¹⁹ In addition to this, having experienced performance anxiety myself, I can attest that such bodily and mental distress can become debilitating. As adrenaline is pumping through the entire body 1) the diaphragm substantially stiffens, making the breath a laborious task for singers or wind instruments, 2) essential parts of the body become numb, cold, or sweaty, 3) one may experience “the shakes” as they are so-called, and 4) a most vigorous state of fight or flight is entrenched. This last symptom is often felt by many who suffer from anxiety disorders and not only by musicians. The fight or flight notion, which was firstly established by Walter B. Cannon is described by David K. Spierer et al.: “[...] a mechanism designed to get the body ‘ready.’ It is this branch (sympathetic) of the human nervous system, which greatly influences hormone levels in the blood to increase heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature, not to mention several other bodily functions.”²⁰ Nonetheless, few steps have been taken to address this issue as it has yet to be accepted and recognized by musicians and larger institutions.²¹ One solution I believe could greatly alleviate these feelings goes hand in hand with Daniel Leech-Wilkinson’s suggestion. Leech-Wilkinson believes the score should be considered as “material for interpretation”, where it is simply the starting point to generate an artistic experience.²² He also believes our focus should

¹⁹ Kenny, “Music performance anxiety: Origins, Phenomenology, Assessment and Treatment,” 52.

²⁰ David K. Spierer et al., “Fight or Flight Measuring and understanding human stress response in tactical situations,” *The Tactical Edge*, 2009, 30.

²¹ Leech-Wilkinson, 98.

²² *Ibid*, 96.



be geared towards a “sequence of feeling-experiences”.²³ Similarly, in his essay, “The Work of the Performer”, John Rink views the score as a “script” in order to produce a “reorientation of the relationship between notation and performance”.²⁴ Whilst students and teachers should approach each performance with regards to its effectiveness, I suggest offering an interpretation class offered through the institution where many audio and video recordings of the same piece would be presented. Students would then be asked to elaborate on what they enjoyed or disliked. This would allow and reinforce the student body to form opinions based on their initial reaction rather than with repertoire traditions in mind. Such a course could also help musicians step away from the score and focus on the performance itself and its multiple interpretation possibilities. Although, as mentioned by Leech-Wilkinson, it is evidently difficult to form an opinion when musicians have been trained through a specific set of beliefs from a very young age.²⁵ However, such a course could be the first step towards leading our focus towards a performance’s genuineness. A second solution could be to hire in-house counsellors which can help address the conservatoire’s social culture which Matei and Ginsborg characterize with “pressure, competition, socially prescribed perfectionism, and a celebration of “star” players [...]”.²⁶ When discussing this matter with a former high school classmate who attended a rigorous and demanding professional choral program, she said:

“After I graduated, my mom recommended I go to therapy. At first, I wasn’t sold because I thought, well I made it through and now I’m done. But she tried to explain to me that, no it wasn’t fine or a normal experience to go through, especially in high school. But I think,

²³ Ibid, 97.

²⁴ John Rink, “The work of the Performer,” in *Virtual Works – Actual Things*, ed. P. de Assis (Leuven University Press, 2018), 92.

²⁵ Leech-Wilkinson, 95.

²⁶ Matei and Ginsborg, 432.



deep down, I thought it would make me weak to seek out help and talk to someone about it. I ended up going and when I talked about my experience over six years of high school, it felt validating to have a licensed professional assure me that what I experienced was definitely not a normal high school experience. I'd say it also affected me physically, in a sense, since I was constantly sick, mostly from lack of sleep and not eating well and virtually no exercise. It felt like every month I'd lose my voice after having a sore throat.” Matei and Ginsborg reinforce this solution by firmly stating that universities should employ great pedagogues over famous performers.²⁷

The second concept often adopted by universities or musical institutions are the amplified authoritarian power relations found in the private music studio. As Kim Burwell has observed, many famous movies have been based on this very stereotype; she mentions movies such as *Whiplash* or *The Pianist* portray these extremes.²⁸ Although many movie directors have represented these power relations through a screen, not many institutions have tackled the elephant in the room.²⁹ Perhaps the reason behind this avoidance is the resulting consequence of a professor's concerns for their own egos and career advancements rather than focusing on benefiting the success of their own students.³⁰ When asking a former student of the Laurentian undergraduate music program if these power dynamics had affected her education, she responded:

“I have this thirst to impress and it kills me when I have a teacher who won't acknowledge when they're impressed or are just eternally unimpressed by things [...] I like seeing when professors are using that power to uplift students [...] I think when power dynamics are

²⁷ Matei and Ginsborg, 433.

²⁸ Burwell, 351.

²⁹ Ibid, 351.

³⁰ Ibid, 353.



working appropriately, a mentor [...] will make the effort to understand you, uplift you, and use their position of power to grant you power.”

Another high school choir student had a different approach to this question:

“He (choir director) was definitely on a power trip with us and used it as a fear factor to get his results. In retrospect, it definitely wasn’t healthy since I was always afraid of making him angry over the littlest of things (ex: missing class for any kind of appointment, being sick, prioritizing other classes versus this one). I would say that the power trip helped us be exceptional for performances, but at the cost of our mental health and well-being. I think if they treated us with a little more respect or could’ve been a little less harsh (after all, we were just kids at the end of the day), it would’ve made the experience a lot more enjoyable.”

In her research, Burwell speaks of three categories of power within the studio: 1) *power to*, 2) *power over*, and 3) *power with*.³¹ In my experience, the last two categories are those I find most prevalent within the music studio. When teachers are acting within the “power over” parameters, students often feel compelled to follow their authority in order to feel that they are progressing.³² Yet, more interestingly, Burwell often considers these power relationships as a two-way street. This is where “power with” comes in. She quotes author Monika Nerland: “Students who share the teacher’s way of thinking and are familiar with the dominant discourses (are) likely to benefit more easily from the teaching”.³³ In contrast, students may be demanding harsh criticism and discipline from their mentors. This may lead mentors to incorporate this strict method of teaching with all students, rather than a singular one. In response to this, Burwell offers a similar solution

³¹ Burwell, 354.

³² Ibid, 355.

³³ Monika Nerland, “One-to-one teaching as cultural practice: two case studies from an academy of music,” *Music Education Research* 9, no. 3 (2007): 413. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613800701587761>.



to the one provided by Leech-Wilkinson. She suggests “an element of negotiation where interpretation or expression is involved [...]”.³⁴ Yet, this does not exclude the challenges of comparison between peers and the sense of competition within one’s studio. Simply put, as Burwell states it: “The tradition of classical music draws on a network of hierarchies, including standard skills, attitudes of perfectionism, family trees from great figures of the past, performance subject to examination or professional criticism, and competition for performance platforms.”³⁵ Some may argue that comparison can often create healthy competition and help motivate students to work harder, achieve their goals, and instill discipline. However, the adverse effects of comparison in an educational institution can be detrimental. Inserting students in a non-realistic or uncommon performing scenario, such as the enforcement of a grading system, can be crucial to their self-confidence. Speaking from my own experience, I have performed in many non-realistic performance scenarios. For example, I have performed in large halls with only two panelists and a video camera, whilst each member of the jury meticulously followed the score without batting an eyelid, eagerly waiting to assign a number to the sound they have heard. One could argue that this setting would resemble the process of a professional audition. Yet, I would dispute that audition panelists are hoping and working towards finding a candidate to fill a position, leading to a potential future opportunity. In the case of a jury, it seems to be the most convenient grading setting, with no other outcome than the opinion-based number assigned to the student in question. I would be curious to know if this is why so many artists and performers despise the process of auditioning as it is not a natural environment for music-making, bound to inspire creativity, but it

³⁴ Burwell, 357.

³⁵ Burwell, 356.



is rather a game of comparison. When asking the same former Laurentian undergraduate if this was the case within her schooling, she responded:

“We were in situations all the time where, you’re number one, you’re number two, you have the highest grade, you have the scholarship, those kinds of things were very attainable if you were the best [...] I don’t think it was the performance’s fault that made us compare each other. I think it was the culture of criticism that was cultivated by the people in power.”

Such settings can lead to the constant search for perfection – a personality trait that has been, surprisingly, poorly evaluated in musicians according to Kenny.³⁶ In fact, many musicians do not aim for perfection, however, when asking the same colleagues to define what “perfectionism” represented, they all responded with a different definition. According to Joachim Stoeber and Julian H. Childs:

“Perfectionism is a personality disposition characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting excessively high standards for performance accompanied by tendencies for overly critical evaluations (Flett & Hewitt, 2002; Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990). It is a disposition that pervades all areas of life, particularly work and school, and may also affect one’s personal appearance and social relationships (Stoeber & Stoeber, 2009).”³⁷

Unfortunately, these types of events and scenarios have been proven to potentially trigger certain anxiety disorders within students attending a musical institution. In her essay, “Music performance anxiety: Origins, Phenomenology, Assessment, and Treatment”, Kenny emphasizes that performance anxiety is a learned behaviour. She explains that young children very rarely

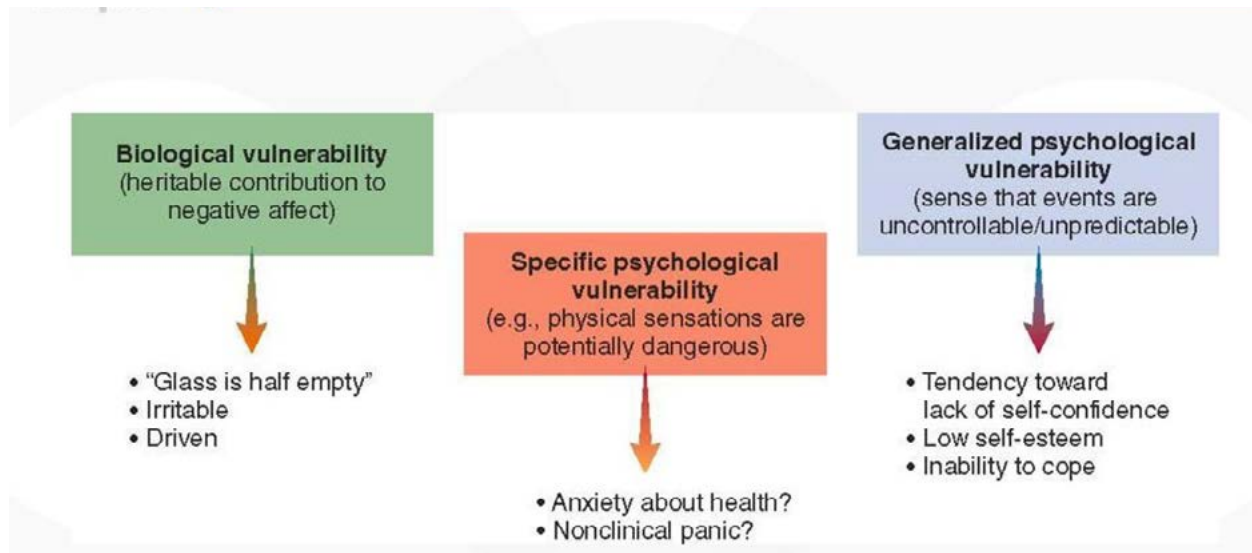
³⁶ Kenny, 55.

³⁷ Joachim Stoeber and Julian H. Childs, “Perfectionism.” *Encyclopedia of Adolescence* (2014): 2. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1695-2_279.



experience such type of anxiety and that it is commonly seen in older individuals having had triggering experiences.³⁸ David H. Barlow's "Model of Anxiety", also known as the "Triple Vulnerability Model", is helpful in understanding this issue.

Figure 1: David H. Barlow's "Triple Vulnerability Model"



Within his model, Barlow establishes three vulnerabilities: 1) biological vulnerability, 2) specific psychological vulnerability, and 3) generalized psychological vulnerability.³⁹ The third vulnerability, the one most relevant to the matter at hand, focuses on learned anxiety from a specific event or an accumulation of events. When describing this ultimate vulnerability, Kenny states: it is "a more specific psychological vulnerability whereby anxiety comes to be associated with certain environmental stimuli through learning processes such as respondent or vicarious conditioning".⁴⁰ A feasible solution, one that has in fact already been adopted by several educational systems, is the integration of a pass-fail grading system in place of a score grading

³⁸ Kenny, 52.

³⁹ David H. Barlow, *Anxiety and Its Disorders: The Nature and Treatment of Anxiety and Panic* (The Guilford Press, 2002), 252.

⁴⁰ Kenny, 53.

one. In fact, many will argue that “music” cannot and should not be graded. In reality what is being assessed is everything in its surroundings: expression, communication, musical technique, language, pronunciation, score accuracy, stage presence, overall presentation, audience engagement, etc. To grade “the music” would be to grade creativity and instill interpretive opinions and boundaries. Many music teachers’ approaches to their instructions are largely based on the way they have been taught.⁴¹ This is why I believe institutions hesitate towards the alteration of their ingrained marking scheme. In response to this proposition, one may ask in which way higher education institutions will discern which student is better suited and most deserving of financial help and scholarship. To be clear, my recommendation does not constitute the abolishment of all grading systems for all educational purposes. Rather, I hope to see this shift in assessment within performance classes exclusively, where one’s musicality, creativity, and expressivity is the subject being evaluated. When applying for a performance degree, whether at the undergraduate, masters, or doctorate level, each student is generally expected to undergo the process of a live or recorded audition in front of faculty members. It is in this instance that music schools and programs should base their decision, in lieu of founding their verdict on a biased, frequently meaningless numeral score. Evidently, grading systems and its logistics have been discussed by many scholars over the past decades. In a trial conducted at the Mayo Medical School in Rochester in 2006, a comparison of two groups of medical students, one with a 5-interval grading system and the other with a pass-fail one, were compared using the *Perceived Stress Scale*, *Profile on Mood States*, *Perceived Cohesion Scale*, and *Test Anxiety Inventory*. Results have shown that the group of students who

⁴¹ Scott D. Harrison, et al., “Making music or gaining grades? Assessment practices in tertiary music ensembles,” *British Journal of Music Education* 30, no. 1 (2012): 30. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051712000253>.



were evaluated using a pass-fail system had less perceived stress and greater group cohesion.⁴² Therefore, the pass-fail grading system could be applicable to fields requiring any sort of performance. Moreover, authors of this trial also believe a numbered system to be detrimental to the progress of students: “They specifically cite that 5-level, A through F, grading systems as creating a competitive environment that promotes anxiety and peer competition rather than collaborative learning.”⁴³ Many authors have discussed the importance of such appropriate grading systems within higher education institutions. “Assessment is the single most powerful influence on learning in formal courses and, if not designed well, can easily undermine the positive features of an important strategy in the repertoire of teaching and learning approaches” emphasizes David Boud et al.⁴⁴ Music students are also very often placed in group settings and their musicality is repeatedly assessed within these arrangements (e.g. choir, chamber ensembles, duos, etc.) Scott D. Harrison et al. are one of few who have discussed this matter at large in their article “Making music or gaining grades? Assessment practices in tertiary music ensembles”. One may wonder how students can be assessed when they are constantly in conversation, responding to the creativity and expressivity of others. Inevitably, they are reliant on one another, whether they intend it or not. Therefore, a numbered mark would nevertheless be influenced by one’s musical entourage.

Finally, considering my own background as a classically trained singer, I aim to address the Singer-Musician relationship and stereotypes that have been observed by myself and other scholars within a university setting. In her text, “Musical Identity of Classical Singers: Musical

⁴² Daniel E. Rohe et al., “The Benefits on Pass/Fail Grading on Stress, Mood, and Group Cohesion in Medical Students,” *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* 81, no. 11 (2006): 1443.

⁴³ Rohe et al., “The Benefits on Pass/Fail Grading on Stress, Mood, and Group Cohesion in Medical Students,” 1443.

⁴⁴ David Boud, et al., “Peer learning and assessment,” *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 24, no. 4 (1999): 413. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0260293990240405>.



labels, stereotypes, and behaviour”, Nicole Denise Jordan shares her own experience, having been a music undergraduate studying voice. She says:

“It occurred to me during my undergraduate years as a voice major, that singers were perceived negatively. [...] Instead of being an anonymous squeak in a huge sea of voices in the concert choir, I registered to join the concert band. The head of the department of music told me that it was ‘Very unusual for a singer to want to join in with the musicians.’ When I arrived at university I knew nothing of these stereotypes. I didn’t behave like a ‘typical singer’ because I didn’t know that such a thing existed. I learned what being a ‘singer’ meant during my time as an undergraduate”.⁴⁵

Most interestingly, in Jordan’s research and interviews of university music undergraduates, it became obvious that there were “negative attitudes and beliefs associated with the Singer label [...]”.⁴⁶ This was mostly due to the belief of the poor musical abilities related to being a singer.⁴⁷ This points towards Jordan’s idea of the self-fulfilling prophecy; singers may excuse their lack of studying and practicing due to this stereotype, therefore reinforcing the negative beliefs related to being a singer. When attending a choral conducting class at the university level, I have observed this self-fulfilling prophecy take place. As one of the sopranos was asked to identify the quality of a specific chord in the given music and was unable to do so, she justified this by expressing that singers only focus on one note at a time and explained that she should not be expected to know the chord quality by simply listening to it. In addition to this, it is often only the singers who are expected to enroll in “voice studies” classes which focus on stage presence, acting, storytelling,

⁴⁵ Nicole Denise Jordan, “Musical Identity of Classical Singers: Musical labels, stereotypes, and behaviour,” (PhD diss., University of Sheffield, 2009), 79, <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/14650/>.

⁴⁶ Jordan, “Musical Identity of Classical Singers: Musical labels, stereotypes, and behaviour,” 57.

⁴⁷ Jordan, 57.



costumes, stage attire, movement and dance classes which primarily focused on the body, making it obvious that much more importance is being attributed to the voice students' physique when compared to the instrumentalists' course requirements. This is very much the case with students studying operatic roles. Costumes, make-up, wigs are all a part of the preparation towards a successful performance. In addition to this, many universities and conservatoires resort to employing non-faculty stage directors, praised for their success in professional productions. Yet, when working with such acclaimed directors, some may tend to forget that they are interacting with young, inexperienced singers in the midst of being carefully sculpted. Having worked with many professional directors over the course of my schooling, I have experienced this situation when performing the role of Concepción in Ravel's scandalous *L'heure espagnole* as a course requirement for our operatic scenes. I knew the demands of her suggestive character and I was more than prepared to act out this feisty role. However, on the day of the performance, only a few hours before the opening of the curtain, the stage director asked for me to strip down my original costume, leaving me in a sheer nightgown. It was something I was unwilling to do in an educational setting and refused her request. When receiving her feedback, I was surprised to read her negative comments, having been penalised for refusing this suggestion and was said to be difficult to work with. In any case, the social separation between Singers and Musicians within the university context can certainly pose a hindrance to any student's self-confidence and contribute to elements of social anxiety. In my own experience, I was often told to wear knee high dresses and heels. I was told that if I did not wear nylon stockings during audition panels, I would automatically be turned away. I was told that I had not won a certain competition due to my dress not being revealing enough. I have attended masterclasses where the main focus was on the singer's weight and proportions. I have been graded on the color of my heels. Like Jordan, I also had not known what



it meant to be a “marketable singer” before entering my undergraduate studies. To reduce the emphasis of a singer’s physique, combat stereotypes, and decrease the separation between Singers and Musicians, I suggest the following: require all students, whether singers or instrumentalists, to attend classes where music performance is not the sole focus. All students should attend a public speaking class where attire, stage presence, and communication are discussed and workshopped. This would help lessen the physical focus merely imposed on voice majors and include all students in what I consider to be a course which teaches essential skills needed to establish a strong and meaningful musical career. It is important to note that perfectionist personality traits have been associated with a strong fear of public speaking. According to Roseanne Aiken, “Perfectionism is speculated to influence the severity of speech anxiety, given that those high on perfectionism may worry about falling short of some idealized standard of evaluation. [...] People striving for excessively high standards generally place exaggerated importance on mistakes, a basic feature of perfectionism.”⁴⁸ In addition to this, when speaking with instrumentalists or singers that have not attended a university or conservatoire in pursuit of a music degree, they have conveyed a bigger sense of performance anxiety during public speaking compared to the act of a musical performance. Many webinars and external tools on public speaking are offered to musicians, but I have yet to encounter a required class at the university or conservatoire level which encompasses these skills, involving all music students.

In the end, these points are only a few challenges that face faculty members and their institutions on a recurrent basis. Perhaps many of these issues have yet to be addressed due to them being unnoticed by the larger academic system or simply because of the strict adherence to

⁴⁸ Roseanne Aiken, “Perfectionism and Public Speaking Anxiety: Social Self-Efficacy and Proactive Coping as Mediators,” (M.A. Thesis, York University, 2008) 17-18.



tradition that follow many musicians in the same way many bow down to the notes on the page, the almighty *Werktreue*. These three principles: 1) performance as failure, 2) power dynamics within the studio, and 3) stereotypes and objectification of singers, have only been largely discussed by scholars within the last two decades, but are issues that have been encountered for a long time. Whether it is offering interpretation classes to all music students or implementing a pass-fail grading system, I believe these solutions can be applied to any style of teaching, whether through a university setting or a small locally owned music school. I am also convinced that if these propositions were to be applied towards students from an earlier age, a greater outcome would be perceived. It is crucial to begin addressing these issues within our higher education settings and implement solutions which will most likely not resolve the matter at hand, but certainly aid many of those who have felt or continue to feel the repercussions of these doctrines.



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Reimagining the Undergraduate-to-Career Pipeline in Music Performance: An Autoethnography from the Perspective of a Portfolio Careerist.

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University
Doctoral
1st place

Reimagining the Undergraduate-to-Career Pipeline in Music Performance: An Autoethnography from the Perspective of a Portfolio Careerist



Jenna Richards embraces a demanding schedule as a portfolio musician, including performance, public speaking, research, and arts programming. She has performed from Toronto to Salzburg, organized national research projects, been an invited speaker at Harvard, and programmed 1500+ musical events. Currently she is freelancing, serving as a Board member for Xenia Concerts and advisor for the Canadian Music Centre, finalizing her PhD on a SSHRC grant (Interdisciplinary Research in Music, University of Ottawa) and programming as Director of Artistic Planning and Community Engagement (Ottawa Chamberfest). Jenna's research interests include the relevancy of music performance curriculum to musician's careers and nontraditional forms of performance such as Adaptive Concerts, which reduce barriers to concert attendance for neurodiverse and disability communities. In her (little) downtime, Jenna enjoys studying Farsi and spending time travelling or in nature. ✨



Introduction

In recent years, the discourse surrounding music performance education has undergone significant scrutiny, particularly in response to the increasing complexity of musicians' career paths in the 21st century. The traditional conservatoire model – long centered on the development of elite solo or full-time performers within Western art music traditions¹ – has been repeatedly challenged for its limited alignment with the multifaceted, often precarious nature of professional musical life (Beckman 2005; Bennett 2008; Bartleet et al. 2012). Drawing from 19th-century European traditions and institutionalized in North American contexts by the mid-20th century, this model exemplifies assumptions about stable, linear career trajectories that no longer align with contemporary realities. Instruction is heavily weighted toward technical and historical mastery, with less emphasis placed on broader creative, entrepreneurial, or interdisciplinary competencies (Carey and Lebler 2012; Perkins 2013; Burland and Pitts 2014). While this focus has historically been regarded as essential to maintaining artistic standards, recent scholarship highlights the urgent need for performance education to respond more fully to portfolio careers², diverse artistic practices, and complex social realities, which characterize contemporary musical work (Bartleet et al. 2012; Perkins 2012; Bennett and Bridgstock 2015).

¹ Although “Western Classical Tradition” is the more commonly used term, the author considers its narrow focus to be problematic and unrepresentative of Western musics, and therefore the terminology of “Western art music traditions” (WAM) will be used throughout the study. This change acknowledges the diversity and historical breadth of musical practices in the West, including liturgical, courtly, symphonic, chamber, and experimental traditions, among others. The singular Western Classical Tradition language risks presenting a monolithic narrative that excludes the variety and evolution within these traditions, and tends to reinforce a narrow canon centered on Austro-German repertoire from the 18th to early 20th centuries. This usage follows the critical perspectives of scholars such as Taruskin (2005), who interrogates the ideological construction of the Western canon, Ramnarine (2011), who applies ethnomusicological critique to Western art music, and Katz (2009), who examines its self-referential development and cultural specificity. This more nuanced terminology better characterizes the complexity of the musical landscape in which conservatory and university curricula operate, and invites discussion of inclusion, canon formation, and professional relevance in music education.

² A portfolio career refers to a professional pathway where income and career fulfillment are achieved through a combination of multiple roles concurrently or at different times with potentially ranging importance, as opposed to a single job (Bennett 2012; Perkins 2012; Bartleet et al. 2019). The term was first explicitly presented in business literature in the 1990s (Handy 1994; Templer and Cawsey 1999).

The concept of the portfolio career, in which musicians sustain themselves through a diverse blend of roles including performing, teaching, community engagement, administration, and interdisciplinary work, has emerged as a key framework for understanding the lived experiences of contemporary artistic practice, beginning with leading area scholar Dawn Bennett's application in the late 1990s and through her formative works in the early 2000s (Bennett 2008; Coulson 2010). Today, many scholars³ focused on music career preparedness and curriculum recognize and advocate for the acceptance and encouragement of portfolio-style work from earlier in musicians' educational lives. This conceptual shift echoes broader patterns of "boundaryless" and "protean" careers observed across creative industries (Bridgstock 2005; Bennett 2008).

However, as researchers such as Bennett (2008), Bridgstock (2011), Duffy (2012), and Bartleet et al. (2019) have argued, this shift in professional expectations has not been matched by equivalent structural changes in most undergraduate music performances programs. Students continue to be trained in ways that implicitly value artistic purity over versatility, mastery of canonical repertoire over exploratory creativity, and individualized achievement over collaborative or community-based practice. Equally, diverse skill sets for work outside of performance, which nearly 100% of graduates who remain in the music industry will undertake, are routinely underrepresented and, in some cases, actively discouraged. As a result, many graduates experience a form of cultural and economic whiplash upon entering the professional world, often feeling unprepared for its demands, disconnected from its rhythms, or discouraged by its precarity. This "training-to-reality gap" is particularly acute in institutions where high

³ R. Rogers 2002; Bridgstock 2005; Polifonia 2005; Smilde 2007; Bennett 2008a; 2008b; 2012; Bartleet et al. 2012; Perkins 2012; Bridgstock 2013b; Teague and Smith 2015; Scharff 2018; Brook and Fostaty Young 2019; Bartleet et al. 2019; Latukefu and Ginsborg 2019; Tomlinson et al. 2020; Diane Scott 2023

prestige and artistic selectivity have functioned as gatekeeping mechanisms to uphold disciplinary purity at the expense of broader vocational preparedness (Beckman 2005; Perkins 2013).

This growing awareness has given rise to important research on the relationship between music training and graduate outcomes. Bennett (2016), for example, calls for a reconceptualization of music education that centers identity formation and sustainable career building, educating the “whole” musician. Similarly, Bartleet and colleagues (2012) propose a framework for training musicians as cultural leaders: individuals who are not only excellent performers but also capable facilitators, educators, and agents of social change. These contributions underscore the need for curriculum reform, pedagogical diversification, and the integration of entrepreneurship, wellness, and social engagement into the core of music programs (Dobson 2010; Tolmie 2014; Musgrave 2023). Such reforms are necessary not only for individual career success but for the broader resilience and adaptability of the music sector itself.

Yet, even as these reformist discourses gain traction, the field lacks a robust body of literature that centers personal, critically reflexive accounts of educational formation. As educators and researchers, we must not only analyze curricular design and institutional policies but also turn our gaze inward. Autoethnography, as a method that situates personal narrative within a broader socio-cultural and institutional context, offers a powerful means of examining how educational systems shape, enable, and constrain artistic identity and career formation (Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011; Chang 2008; Muncey 2010). In the context of music pedagogy, such accounts can illuminate the invisible mechanisms of inclusion, exclusion, encouragement, and resistance that structure students’ experiences – particularly those of students who challenge normative expectations or pursue divergent paths.

Despite the well-documented historical and contemporary status of portfolio careers that include teaching being the majority format of work for musicians, post-secondary music performance curricula often underprepare students for the pedagogical roles they are likely to assume. Several studies have observed that even at major conservatories and university programs, pedagogy training is either entirely absent or offered only as an elective, frequently limited to pianists (Doubek 2001; Mills 2004; Carey and Lebler 2012). Yet evidence suggests that approximately 80% of music graduates will engage in teaching at some point in their careers (often as a primary income source) regardless of their original intention to pursue solo or ensemble performance (Bennett 2008; Perkins 2012). This mismatch between curricular design and professional life results in significant gaps in graduates' readiness to enter the teaching workforce, requiring many to seek out mentorships, additional certifications, or learn pedagogical strategies through trial and error (Perkins 2013; Bennett and Bridgstock 2015). The lack of integration of pedagogical skills into undergraduate training illustrates a broader disjunction between educational structures and the professional fields students will actually navigate. Addressing this gap is critical not only for the employability of graduates but also for the health of the broader music ecosystem, which relies heavily on skilled teachers to cultivate the next generation of musicians.

This paper offers such a contribution. Written from the perspective of a musician whose undergraduate training took place in one of Canada's most known music programs, it explores the tensions between formal education and the realities of a portfolio career that spans performance, education, administration, and community-based work. The narrative is informed by, and in part a response to, a recently completed dissertation examining the training experiences of other undergraduate performance graduates. Through autoethnographic reflection,

this paper seeks not only to interrogate the structures and assumptions of elite music education, but also to model the kind of critical self-examination that can deepen our capacities as educators, mentors, and institutional actors. In a field where personal trajectories are often obscured by normative ideals, the act of telling one's story becomes a form of resistance, a declaration of support, and a means of pedagogical renewal. Such narrative inquiry reinforces the call for critical reflexivity in arts education and highlights the growing need for systemic transformation.

Why Autoethnography?

Autoethnography, as Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011, 1) define it, is “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience.” As a method, it bridges the personal and the political, blending memoir, cultural critique, and academic research to produce a layered account of personal and collective knowledge. The following narrative draws upon my journey as a classically trained musician, examining how my undergraduate music education shaped my professional identity, and detailing some of the tensions between the career I was trained for and the career I ultimately pursued. The autoethnography therefore emerges as a personal and scholarly response to my recently completed dissertation investigating the experiences of Canadian music performance undergraduates navigating professional life. While this larger study was based on qualitative data from hundreds of participants, this piece turns inward to examine how those same systemic patterns manifested in my own life. My aim is to contribute to a growing body of work that critically reviews music education, using the lens of personal experience to illuminate structural dynamics in training, identity formation, and career

development, and to underscore the value of reflexive scholarship in advancing transformative change within the field.

Methodology

This paper employs a layered analytical autoethnographic approach (Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011; Adams et al. 2022) to explore the intersection of undergraduate classical music performance training and the long-term formation of a portfolio music career. While it incorporates evocative and narrative elements (Ellis 2004), its primary aim is not to convey emotion, per se, but to analyze personal experience in dialogue with institutional and disciplinary structures. As such, this work sits at the confluence of analytical autoethnography (Anderson 2006), which maintains a dual commitment to scholarly analysis and insider subjectivity, and layered autoethnography, which recognizes the interwoven nature of self, memory, and the research process itself (Ronai 1995; Chang 2008).

Crucially, this autoethnography did not originate as a standalone inquiry. It emerged as a response to a multi-year doctoral study on undergraduate music performance education in Canada, which included a nationwide survey of over 200 music graduates and in-depth interviews with 12 participants applying inductive thematic analysis with the transformative lens (Braun and Clarke 2006; Mertens 2010; Sweetman et al. 2010). These interviews explored musicians' career pathways, curricular experiences, and evolving professional identities. The resonance of these findings with my own trajectory was profound. As I coded and thematically analyzed participants' reflections (Braun, Clarke, and Weate 2016), I found myself repeatedly drawn to the parallels, tensions, and dissonances with my own training and experience. This unanticipated self-engagement prompted the present autoethnographic inquiry as a necessary

complement to the initial empirical study which served as a means to situate my own experience within the same analytical frame I had applied to others, and to acknowledge participants' vulnerability by sharing my own.

In line with Chang's (2008) emphasis on multiple data sources in autoethnographic work, I draw on a constellation of materials: my own educational documents (transcripts, recital programs, emails, syllabi), curricular data and institutional descriptions scraped from postsecondary websites across Canada, national music and arts labour statistics, and internal writing produced over a twelve-year period in my role as a professional musician, educator, and arts administrator. These writings include unpublished efforts, fieldnotes from workshops I designed and delivered, and mentorship logs (both as mentor and mentee). I also revisit a digital archive of personal materials from my undergraduate studies and early career transitions, which now serve as memory prompts and analytical nodes (Ngunjiri, Hernandez, and Chang 2010).

This methodology is consistent with recent autoethnographic scholarship in music education and performance that positions personal experience as a legitimate site of inquiry and transformation (Bartleet 2009; Bartleet and Ellis 2009; de Bruin 2016). As Ellis and Bochner (2000) argue, autoethnography enables the researcher to "write the world differently," using situated personal knowledge to interrogate broader cultural logics and to envision more equitable, inclusive futures within and beyond disciplinary boundaries. The purpose here is not simply introspection, but the cultivation of a critical reflexivity that can challenge dominant narratives of success, prestige, and preparedness within elite conservatory environments.

Ethically, this paper respects the confidentiality and integrity of previous research participants by refraining from citing direct quotations from interviews conducted as part of the dissertation study. However, the thematic contours of their narratives regarding curriculum

rigidity (i.e., performance pressure and the tension between institutional training and lived professional realities) undoubtedly shaped the direction of this autoethnography. The process of writing this paper was itself iterative, involving cycles of reflection, dialogue with scholarly literature, and re-reading institutional data and participant insights through the lens of my own trajectory.

Following the tradition of first-person voice in autoethnography, this paper speaks from a reflexive “I,” allowing for narrative presence while embedding personal experience within the language and concerns of the academy (Adams et al. 2015). The intention is to make visible the unspoken norms, exclusions, and resistances embedded in my music education, and to model a form of critical self-inquiry that invites readers to similarly scrutinize the structures they have inherited or perpetuated as performers, educators, and cultural workers. In this way, the methodology aligns with the transformative potential of autoethnography as both a scholarly and pedagogical act (Spry 2001). It foregrounds the lived, contradictory, and affective textures of becoming a musician beyond the degree while insisting that these personal experiences matter in shaping how we imagine, teach, and sustain music careers today.

This approach also resonates with principles of social constructionism, which emphasizes that knowledge, identities, and norms are not fixed but are instead produced, maintained, and altered through social processes, language, and shared practices (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Burr 2003). By critically examining and challenging the implicit messages embedded in music education, it becomes possible to reconstruct more expansive understandings of what it means to be a musician. In particular, this paper embraces the view that fostering a holistic conception of musical practice, one that values performance alongside teaching, entrepreneurship, community engagement, and advocacy, is crucial for cultivating sustainable, resilient careers in today’s

cultural landscape (Bennett and Bridgstock 2015; Bartleet et al. 2012). The following section will situate my educational experience, setting the stage for the autoethnography.

Setting the Stage: Inside the Institution

I completed my undergraduate studies at a prestigious music performance program in Canada, an institution known nationally for its high standards, rigorous curriculum, and dominant classical music training. A piano major in the performance stream, I was among the top students in my cohort according to various markers (e.g., maintaining a near-perfect GPA, receiving numerous performance opportunities not extended to all, scholarships). From the outside, I appeared to be thriving, and in many ways, I was. I had a supportive private teacher, led my peers as co-president of our student government, and found joy in a wide variety of musical and leadership experiences. But beneath this surface success, I was already experiencing tensions that would shape the arc of my professional life. In fact, by second year I visited the registrar to discuss options around transferring out of performance because I felt it was restraining. Thankfully I did not transfer out, but I did have several other conversations of a similar nature over the next few years, and wrote my LSATs contemplating law school. At the time I could not understand how to reconcile my love of music (and performance) with other interests even within the arts as a path that included both was never presented to me. When I tried to explore other interests, my teachers often discouraged me, including my involvement in student government and several other experiences that have since proven invaluable to both my personal and professional growth.

Perhaps that's because the program's focus was clear: to produce exceptional classical performers. While electives in other musical styles were available, the core curriculum

emphasized traditional Western classical repertoire (mostly only within the canon at the time, too), solo recital preparation, and ensemble performance. Pedagogy was included only minimally, and only for piano students; other instrumentalists received no formal preparation for teaching. It was not discussed that 80% of performance graduates would teach, rendering the single requirement for pedagogy, even for pianists, as incomprehensive when compared to future career needs. Courses in entrepreneurship, arts administration, or community engagement were entirely absent. These omissions did not go unnoticed. I watched as peers quietly struggled with mental health issues, performance-related injuries, and uncertainty about their futures. The culture was one of unspoken competition, high expectations, and endurance.

The extreme focus on performance and traditional musicianship in my program (and others, as I have learned) created a tunnel vision that suggested there was one path to success, as if this was possible to attain and would be enough to guarantee a fulfilling career. As a young student, it was not easily recognizable as a flaw in the educational structure, after all, it was what I was told was needed to succeed by musical idols. However, in retrospect, I see that by ignoring the broader scope of being a musician, such as career sustainability, professional development, and the importance of skills beyond artistic excellence, the curriculum failed to equip students for the multifaceted nature of music careers. This narrow focus not only perpetuated competition but also pressured students to conform to a singular identity as a performer. I now realize that many of us were shaped to fit into a mold that no longer aligned with the diverse and evolving demands of the music industry.

Even as I benefited from the system's support, I found myself continually pushing at its edges. I requested exceptions to take electives that inspired me and some were granted, although I firmly believe that without extreme perseverance and a stellar track record, they would not have



been. I applied for interdisciplinary opportunities outside the performance stream. My final recital included non-canonical works and lesser-performed composers, a decision met with resistance by some faculty and surprise by my peers who were (practically forced into) performing Beethoven, Bach, and Brahms. My interests in musical theatre, community work, and student leadership were often treated as distractions from my “real” training. Yet these were the spaces where I felt alive, and where my musical identity was expanding, not narrowing.

Redefining the Path: New Understandings of My Musical Identity

Throughout my undergraduate years, I developed a growing awareness that I was being trained for a very narrow and rigid version of a musical career, one that emphasized solo performance at the highest technical level but overlooked the multifaceted and evolving challenges of working in the arts. My professors rarely discussed the economic, social, and professional conditions of music careers. In fact, throughout my studies discussions of careers were rare; in one notable instance a professor candidly stated to a group of pianists in a performance class that only one of the group would “make it,” without clarifying what “making it” meant, how it could be achieved, or what options remained for the rest of the group. There was almost no discussion of what came next, except for a tacit assumption that we would all pursue graduate studies. Those who deviated from this path were often perceived as having left the field, even if they remained professionally active in music in various capacities.

Simultaneously, my undergraduate lifespan was marked by genuinely fulfilling experiences. I loved performing, learning new repertoire, collaborating with peers, and immersing myself in an environment where music was a central focus of daily life. The opportunity to refine my craft, study under accomplished mentors, and experience the energy of a thriving artistic community

was exhilarating. There were moments of profound joy and inspiration that I still cherish. However, despite these enriching experiences, the positive moments co-existed alongside a growing unease about the future. While I found satisfaction in my immediate studies, I could not reconcile the narrow professional pathway being presented to me with the broader, more multidimensional career I hoped to build. This dissonance created an ongoing emotional conflict: I felt torn between my genuine love for the work I was doing and my concern that the training I was receiving did not adequately prepare me for the complexities and possibilities of a sustainable musical career beyond the university.

The friction became most evident when I understood that this projected path (solo, orchestral, or chamber music performance only) was not only likely unattainable for most, but also failed to encompass all my interests. The prevailing narrative also seemed to imply that such a career was the one we should aspire to, and I found this difficult. It was not the vision I had for my own future (e.g., being on the road, performing in high-pressure situations frequently, and, most importantly, neglecting other aspects of the music industry and beyond that I was very passionate about, such as arts administration, research, and nonprofit work dedicated to social change).

I chose not to apply to graduate performance programs, despite the pressure to do so. I watched as peers progress from bachelor's to master's to doctoral studies with minimal financial compensation and mounting uncertainty even as they neared graduation from these additional degrees. Although these further qualifications may have further solidified my colleagues' musical identities within the Western art music tradition, many of them have since left music entirely, or continue to struggle with precarity and the same sustainability issues I discovered after undergraduate training. While I, too, have faced struggles, I began carving out my own



version of a music career rooted in performance, yes, but also expanded into programming, community engagement, and arts administration. This transition was facilitated by a self-directed approach that deliberately expanded beyond the traditional music performance academic trajectory: pursuing a business master's degree and actively seeking mentorship and guidance from peers in positions I admired. I accepted opportunities that were not formally accredited within the academic framework and did not take "no" for an answer when it came to experiences I knew would help me grow, both musically and beyond. Similarly, many colleagues I respect carved out niches within or outside traditional music performance careers. These entrepreneurial individuals, who often had to create their own opportunities, seem to be the ones who have "made it," although likely not in the narrow sense that my former professor implied.

Upon reflection, I recognize an incredible injustice that was invisible to me at the time: entrepreneurial tendencies should not be assumed to emerge naturally in all students. Not all individuals possess the necessary resources, support systems, or personal qualities required to challenge the structures around them, nor should they have to challenge such structures. Moreover, it is unfair to expect young students, immersed in highly hierarchical training environments, to intuit the need to resist or supplement their education, especially when doing so might expose them to academic or professional consequences. Some students may not feel empowered or safe to push back while others might not even realize that anything is missing until well after graduation. Entrepreneurship, like pedagogy, is not an innate ability; it must be intentionally taught, modeled, and valued as an essential component of professional development. The assumption that students will independently uncover the need for entrepreneurship and acquire subsequent skills perpetuates inequity and leaves many graduates ill-equipped for the realities of sustaining a career in today's music industry.



For those who did resist the system, resistance took many forms: requesting course substitutions, challenging performance norms, seeking out interdisciplinary collaborations, and advocating for inclusive programming. These were not easy battles. My private teacher, while sometimes supportive of my broad interests, was politically isolated within the department. I learned quickly which faculty members were safe to approach and which were not, and had to navigate the politics of the department to avoid being oppressed by one “side” or the other. Overall, I maintained a public face of “excellence” while privately developing a version of musical identity that diverged significantly from the one I was being trained to embody. For instance, I learned solo and concerto repertoire demanded by my professors that I never intended to perform beyond the walls of the school, but simultaneously kept up my musical theatre interests independently and spent many hours collaborating with colleagues and friends on unofficial projects.

Looking back, I recognize that these early acts of entrepreneurship were not merely personal choices; they were independent acts of necessity caused by an educational model that excluded too many crucial career elements: business and pedagogical training, discussions of career sustainability, inclusive repertoire, mental health, and nontraditional career path experience. At the time, I lacked the language of systemic critique or arts entrepreneurship, but I knew instinctively that the norms I was being asked to accept did not align with my values or my aspirations. Only with hindsight have I been able to understand that what felt like personal friction was in fact the result of systemic gaps – gaps that must be addressed if future generations of musicians are to be efficiently and holistically served. My doctoral studies and my professional experience within the music industry have further confirmed that this is not an isolated experience but rather the dominant story for the majority of musicians. It is also likely

that some of those who ultimately left the field would have remained had the underlying rhetoric and structures been more inclusive of broader career possibilities. This sense of dissonance planted the seeds for the research and advocacy I am pursuing now and forms the foundation for the autoethnographic self-examination that follows.

Entering the “Real World”

Although I did pursue graduate studies after completing my undergraduate degree, I did not follow the expected path of a performance-based Master’s degree. Instead, I chose to broaden my focus, pursuing areas that aligned more directly with the evolving actualities of music work. I remained deeply entrenched in music, always, continuing to perform, collaborate, and contribute to my community artistically. Even though I was academically assigned to a public policy and business department, I engaged with coursework in the music department, too, and worked as a collaborative pianist in various capacities for the university and beyond. I was beginning to shape a career that required skills far beyond what my undergraduate education had equipped me for.

The career I built was, and continues to be, rooted in a portfolio model: part performer, part researcher/educator, part administrator/programmer, and part advocate. Bennett (2008) outlines how conservatory training often fails to prepare students for the multi-faceted realities of working musicians, despite the fact that most graduates construct "portfolio careers" comprising performance, teaching, administration, and more. Drawn from my training, I have worked with chamber ensembles, orchestras, and in various concert contexts. Beyond this training, I have worked with choirs and community organizations, created and supported concerts for neurodiverse audiences, managed artistic planning for a major Canadian music festival, and



taught in both formal and informal settings. None of the latter came automatically, and my training had not prepared me for any individual aspect, not the combination of the self-led career. To do this work, I had to seek out professional development that filled in the many gaps left by my post-secondary training. I earned a teaching certificate. I met with musicians and mentors working outside the mainstream. I trained in nonprofit management, arts administration, grant writing, and business practices, much of it while working full-time (or the equivalent given the piecemeal nature of freelance work). Alongside these efforts, there were countless hours spent practicing, rehearsing, preparing for performances, and managing the often-invisible personal administration that accompanies a freelance or portfolio career. Seeking out performance opportunities remained a near-constant task, one that demanded perseverance and strategic thinking and did not necessarily become easier with experience. Sustaining a career in music required not only artistic commitment but a continuous investment of time, energy, and self-direction beyond what was formally discussed during my undergraduate training.

While I am fulfilled by my work today, that fulfillment came only after years of effort to build the tools and language I needed to thrive. I faced, and continue to face, many people questioning my musician identity. I sometimes questioned it myself. I now accept that these doubts were not personal failures, but rather manifestations of broader systemic and social constructs that define what it means to be a musician. Institutions of higher education, where over 90% of professional musicians today receive at least some formal training, wield enormous power in shaping these definitions. By emphasizing narrow models of success (centered almost exclusively around Western art music traditions, technical excellence, and solo or ensemble performance) post-secondary programs not only dictate the projected career path of classical musicians but also implicitly suggest that those who deviate from this path are somehow

“lesser.” As Lucy Green (2017) argues, dominant pedagogical frameworks in music education often privilege formal, institutionally sanctioned learning, while devaluing the rich, situated learning that occurs in informal and community-based musical contexts. This hierarchy not only narrows the definition of musicianship but also reinforces inequities by dismissing the legitimacy of musical identities formed outside conservatory norms, impacting not only graduates who pursue portfolio careers, but also musicians in non-canonical traditions whose work is often unfairly devalued simply because it does not pass through these formalized institutional channels.

Musicians frequently experience identity crises when their professional lives do not align with the socially constructed ideals they have been trained to internalize. Within professional and social circles, individuals are often favoured, celebrated, or discounted based on how closely they appear to match established templates of “success.” These perceptions are largely influenced by what is projected (such as high-profile performances, competition wins, or association with prestigious institutions) rather than on the full scope of a musician’s tangible professional life. Many musicians feel pressure to publicly emphasize only the performance aspects of their careers (regardless of how much or little of their professional time is truly dedicated to performance), de-emphasizing other career components to maintain legitimacy in the eyes of peers, employers, and even themselves. In doing so, they inadvertently perpetuate the same narrow and unrealistic standard that led to these feelings of dissonance in the first place.

In reality, many musicians perform in a wide variety of contexts—not only in “elite” venues and situations music schools taught us to idealize, but also in community spaces, educational settings, multidisciplinary collaborations, and informal gatherings. Often, musicians find these contexts equally or even more fulfilling than traditional stage performances, yet such experiences



are seldom valorized in formal educational narratives. Some musicians maintain portfolios that include thirty or more concerts annually alongside substantial administrative, research, and teaching work, while others focus almost exclusively on performance. Despite this breadth and diversity, those who balance multiple roles are often perceived as “lesser” musicians compared to those who present a singular, performance-focused identity. I have faced such perceptions myself: at times labeled an “administrator” rather than a “real” musician, despite continuing to perform at a high level. It took me years to formalize my position around a blended model of activities and to begin actively advocating for this style of career development. I now work to normalize the portfolio career so that others might struggle less with the same transitions, decisions, and identity shifts that such a career often demands. These assumptions reinforce damaging hierarchies and obscure the fact that all these combinations are legitimate forms of being a musician.

I was once discussing my identity as a musician with a colleague from my undergraduate program. During our conversation, they eventually protested, “But you have a day job!” (referencing regular contract work as a programmer). Surprised, I first pointed out that musicians historically occupied diverse roles (think Schubert as school teacher, Liszt as headmaster and pedagogue, Schumann as newspaper editor, and so forth). This context did not shift their view. I then asked how many concerts they performed annually (though I do not personally believe performance quantity alone defines musicianship by any means). They responded, “About 25.” I noted that I performed as many, if not more, each year. Yet they still perceived our situations were fundamentally different. Their reaction revealed a deep-seated assumption: that a “real” musician must earn their entire livelihood through performance alone. My “day job,” though also within the music industry and far from a conventional 9-to-5, seemed to disqualify me in their

eyes. This perception was not based on actual artistic output or contributions, but on entrenched cultural narratives. These entrenched narratives may be rooted in romanticized ideals of the “starving artist” or the singularly devoted virtuoso, and they fail to represent the diverse, portfolio-based careers most contemporary musicians now pursue. This exchange underscores how socially constructed notions of legitimacy can solidify into rigid boundaries (e.g., who is granted recognition within a profession).

Each musician must ultimately find the balance of activities (e.g., performing, teaching, administering, creating, advocating) that best supports their artistic fulfillment, financial stability, and personal well-being. Not everyone has equal freedom to make these choices: systemic barriers related to class, race, gender, disability, geography, and other factors shape and constrain the paths available. As Wright (2010) notes, music education systems can serve as mechanisms of social exclusion, privileging those with access to particular forms of cultural capital while marginalizing others. The structures that define “success” in music are often inaccessible to those from underrepresented communities, further entrenching inequities in both training and professional outcomes. Still, within and against these constraints, musicians continuously negotiate and define what a sustainable and meaningful career looks like for themselves. Recognizing this diversity is essential if we are to move beyond outdated models of success and support a healthier, more inclusive musical ecosystem.

Developing my understanding of what it means to be a musician demanded more than artistic excellence; it required critical thinking, communication, leadership, self-advocacy, and a deep sensitivity to the needs and contexts of my communities. These were not competencies I encountered or was taught to value during my undergraduate degree, yet they now form the foundation of my professional life. I did not stop being a musician when I moved away from the

narrowly defined performance track. Rather, I redefined and expanded the term for myself and, in doing so, found a more sustainable and representative version of a musical life that aligns with the profession today.

My training gave me a powerful base in music-making, but offered little guidance on how to live a musical life. The choices I made post-graduation, such as choosing an alternative graduate path, cultivating skills across disciplines, and embracing flexibility, enabled me to stay in music and build a career I love. However, my career has been the result of self-advocacy, adaptation, resourcefulness, and a willingness to resist the limiting narratives of what a musician should be according to some institutional and societal rhetoric. This autoethnography is a call to imagine what music education could look like if it supported not just “artistic excellence” (which is itself a highly problematic term), but sustainability, imagination, and diversity in musical careers.

Synthesis and Conclusion: From Story to Structure

This autoethnography emerged in dialogue with my doctoral research: a broad, qualitative study of Canadian undergraduate music performance graduates and their career pathways. In that work, I documented the systemic misalignments between training and the realities of contemporary music careers. Many participants expressed gratitude for the musical rigour and relationships cultivated in their programs, but they also articulated feelings of unpreparedness, isolation, and dismay at the necessity of independently navigating their professional path after graduation. Their stories echoed and affirmed my own experiences and together we constructed a deeper understanding of what it means to be a musician. It was through analyzing their accounts, layered with my own, that the impulse to turn inward emerged, to trace a personal story of the life of a musician living a portfolio career in an open and vulnerable manner for others to see.

Autoethnography, as Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) describe, is “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience.” In that spirit, this project makes visible the often-unspoken dimensions of music career development: the internal pressures, the quiet resistances, the creative problem-solving, and the emotionally charged recalibrations of identity that mark the journey from student to professional. Autoethnography allows us to sit within that complexity, not to generalize from it, but to expand our knowledge around how training cultures shape, limit, or support professional possibility.

As Muncey (2010) and Chang (2008) argue, autoethnography is particularly powerful when situated within a broader social or institutional context. My account is not exceptional; it is illustrative. It invites readers, particularly educators, policymakers, and institutional leaders, to consider how dominant training models continue to marginalize valuable competencies like pedagogy, entrepreneurship, community engagement, and cross-sector collaboration. Adding to the field of critical music pedagogy, this work also contributes to the literature on music education reform by offering an embodied perspective: not just a critique of curricula, but a lived response to it, situated in professional practice.

In terms of contributions to practice, this autoethnography provides an example of how reflective, critical self-narration can bridge the gap between personal insight and systemic analysis. It demonstrates how artistic careers are actively shaped by, and in tension with, educational paradigms. For future research, autoethnography offers a valuable methodological tool to explore the multiplicity of music career trajectories, particularly among those who remain in the field but outside of its traditional pathways. Autoethnography can also serve as a practical means of disseminating personal reflections, reactions, and understandings from researchers

embedded within a field, especially when such insights do not neatly align with the methodologies or research questions of broader studies. This approach is particularly well suited to music, where professional identity is often forged at the intersection of institutional knowledge, embodied practice, and cultural discourse.

More first-person, critically situated accounts are needed to diversify our interpretation of what it means to be a musician today. Ultimately, evolving the ways we document and appreciate musicians' lived experiences is essential if we hope to build a more inclusive, sustainable, and truthful vision of the musical professions. In telling my story, I hope to affirm that diverse, evolving pathways in music are not only valid but vital to the future of our artistic communities.

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FCAPM-CFMTA 2025 Montréal www.montreal2025.ca

The CFMTA 2025 National Conference held on July 3 and 4 at École de musique Vincent-d'Indy and July 5 at the Delta Hotel, downtown location, was very successful.

With nineteen guest speakers, six student speakers, four promotional presentations, twelve exhibitors part of the Trade Show and our keynote speaker, Claude Webster, at the Delta Hotel, all attendees were enchanted with the quality of the presentations and with the beautiful venue. The city bus tour was also greatly appreciated and we had the pleasure of serving truly delicious meals.

Congratulations to the winners of the Piano Competition who offered us dazzling performances at the concert finals. We extend a wholehearted thank you to our judges for their participation at the event and for providing us with beneficial masterclasses.

I would like to thank the Directors and staff of École de musique Vincent-d'Indy for welcoming us, as well as all those who contributed financially to the event.

Sincere thanks also to all those who worked so hard to ensure the success of the Conference; we are all extremely grateful.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the 2027 Conference in Nova-Scotia!

David Côté - President QMTA
Chairman – CFMTA 2025 National Conference



This is only a small sample of the photos
Visit - <https://cfmta-fcapm.smugmug.com>
to see more and from past conferences



Le Congrès national de la FCAPM 2025 présenté le 3 et le 4 juillet à l'École de musique Vincent-d'Indy et le 5 juillet à l'Hôtel Delta Centre-ville a connu un franc succès.

Avec dix-neuf conférenciers, six conférenciers étudiants, quatre présentations promotionnelles, douze exposants au salon commercial et la rencontre avec notre conférencier principal, Claude Webster, tous ont été enchantés par la qualité des présentations et la beauté des lieux. Le tour de ville a également été très apprécié et nous avons eu le plaisir de servir des repas savoureux.

Félicitations aux gagnants du Concours de piano qui nous ont offert un spectacle éblouissant lors du concert final. Merci aux juges pour leur participation à l'évènement et pour les cours de maitres qu'ils ont donné. Ces séances ont été bénéfiques et enrichissantes pour tous et toutes.

Je tiens à remercier la direction et le personnel de l'École de musique Vincent-d'Indy pour leur accueil ainsi que tous ceux et celles qui ont contribué financièrement à l'évènement.

Sincères remerciements également à tous ceux et celles qui ont travaillé très fort afin d'assurer le succès du congrès, nous leur sommes extrêmement reconnaissants.

Au plaisir de vous voir tous au congrès 2027 en Nouvelle-Écosse !

David Côté - Président APMQ
 Coordonnateur – Congrès national de la FCAPM 2025





FCAPM-CFMTA 2025
Montréal
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*As always, attendees were invited to provide comments on any of the sessions they attended.
Below is the submission received.*

Dr. Cindy Thong

Exploring Cultural Perspectives on Musical Learning: Integrating Neuropsychology and Pedagogy

On Thursday July 3, it was my pleasure to attend a lecture delivered by Dr. Cindy Thong of Acadia University and the Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts. Dr. Thong was well versed on the topic of neuropsychology and it was interesting to hear how various concepts can be integrated into practical approaches for our studios. The focus was on optimizing the one hour we have with students out of 168 hours in the week, so little time with so much to do! She delved into how we can best impart ideas and habits so that they "stick" and are applied when the student is practicing alone. The trick is to fix not only the immediate issue but also to go deeper to understand why it's happening and how to avoid it in the future.

There were main three sections to the lecture. The first explored how the brain works to establish connections during practice time. This starts with "long term potentiation" which translates to "strengthen connections through repetition": telling the brain that something is important and should be remembered. The next step is "myelination" which translates to "protecting connections": establishing the connection long term through accurate repetition.

The second section demonstrated how the body builds musical skills. This entails working past the natural state (the body wants to remain as it is) to a state where practicing creates a temporarily unstable state which then becomes a new norm. During this process, the body recalibrates to match the

improved standard of skill. At the same time, the student must be taught to function as three people, the player, the listener, and the supportive critic. In doing so, the student develops the ability to determine if the sound they are producing is the effect they really want. If not, they must adjust, repeat, and continue to work forward.

Finally, the lecture pulled it all together to provide thoughts on effective practicing. To avoid the "auto pilot" mode, Dr. Thong suggested that practicing sessions have well defined and measurable goals. This means working out of the comfort zone by playing a little faster, softer, louder etc. than usual. Deliberate practice also involves working in reasonable chunks, first zeroing in on issues that are currently challenging, before they become manageable and finally mastered. Focus and self monitoring is important to obtain optimal results, but it also means that this state of heightened awareness will equal less practise time overall. More will be accomplished in a shorter time frame.

All in all, I found the hour thought provoking and I appreciated the new ideas as well the affirmation with regards to methods I already employ. This brief synopsis hardly does Dr. Thong's work justice, so if you have a chance to read more on the topic or attend a lecture in the future, I recommend you take the chance. It will be well worth your time.

Barbara Siemens - BCRMTA





Student Presentation Competition

Compétition de présentations étudiantes student

For the 2025 CFMTA conference in Montréal, David Potvin organized and launched the inaugural Student Presentation Competition to promote more participation from post secondary students. Students responded to the same call for proposals that was circulated to professionals, and indicated they would like to enter the competition. We invited six competitors, who received complimentary registration to all workshops, masterclasses, the trade show, and piano competition semi-finals. The Student Presentation Competition was held on Friday July 4th from 1:00 to 5:00pm. Each competitor gave a 30 minute presentation, and they were adjudicated by a panel of two judges, Cindy Thong and Thomas Green, who scored them on a rubric that was circulated to the competitors and jurors in advance. There was one prize of \$300 from the Quebec Music Teachers Association, which was awarded to **Dane Ko** for his presentation *A Journey Home: Revisiting Childhood Chinese Music as a Classical Pianist*.

The competition was a success both in terms of fostering more post-secondary engagement, and in enriching the conference. Competitors attended workshops and sessions on July 3rd and the morning of July 4th that they would not have if they had not come for the competition. This provided them with valuable professional development opportunities. The jury and audience members were impressed with the high level of research and the quality of the presentations, which contributed to the high standard of presentations at the conference overall.

The competition could have been better attended. It seemed like not all attendees of the conference were aware of what exactly the competition entailed, so it could have been better publicized. The organizers for the 2027 CFMTA conference in Wolfville indicated that they would like to have another edition of this competition, thus continuing it. Hopefully attendees of the 2027 CFMTA conference will be more aware of the Student Presentation Competition and avail themselves of the excellent research presented by these engaging minds of tomorrow.



L to R: Cindy Thong, Steven Zhai, Olivia Adams, Megan Dufrat, Anna Boyes, Dane Ko, Changchun Du, Thomas Green



Cindy Thong, Dane Ko, Thomas Green



National Piano Competition Competitors 2025

Concours national de piano concurrents (concurrentes) 2025

Competition to be held during the CFMTA/FCAPM National Conference in Montréal, Québec.

Dates:

Semi - Finals July 3, 2025

Finals July 4, 2025



Alberta

Jaydon Zijia Zhuang

Passionate, cheerful and easy-going, aspiring musician Zijia (Jaydon) Zhuang has been pursuing his dream of becoming a concert pianist, exploring the beauty of classical music and spreading the joy of it to the world.

Born in Edmonton, Alberta, Jaydon showed a great interest in music from a young age. He has studied with notable teachers in Alberta including Rosemarie Horne and, currently, Wolfram Linnebach and Zhenni Li-Cohen.

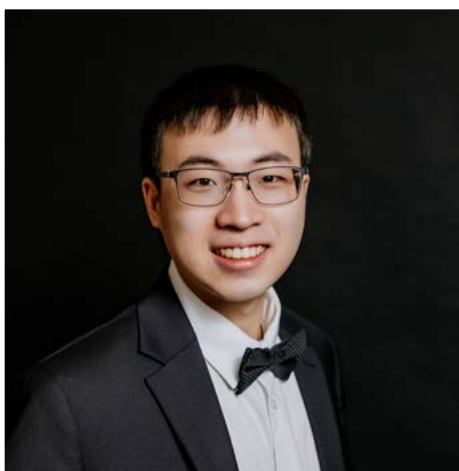
His growing accolades include winning the Grand Prize of the 2023 Canadian Music Competition in the 11-14 years old category and performing his debut concerto with orchestra with the Calgary Civic Symphony, 2nd place in the Canada West Performing Art Festival of 2023, 1st place at both the piano concerto and piano for ages 14 and under classes in the 2023 Alberta Provincial Music Festival, as well as multiple first prizes and scholarships in the Edmonton Music and Speech Arts Festival. Additionally, he won the Gold Award under the youth category of the Pacific Rim International Music Festival.

He has performed in masterclasses with pianists, including Angela Cheng, Katherine Chi, Stephane Lemelin, Benedetto Lupo, Charles Richard-Hamelin, Henry Kramer, Ian Parker, Ilya Poletaev, Shai Wosner, and Philip Chiu.

Beyond his piano studies, he co-founded non-profit society Music Semplice, where he organizes Edmonton Young Artists and regularly performs young artist events for Edmonton's senior communities.

Outside of music, Jaydon enjoys teaching, reading and cooking. 🌸





British Columbia

Hamilton Lau

Named by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) as one of "30 Hot Canadian Classical Musicians Under 30," Hamilton Lau is establishing himself as a promising, energetic, and dedicated musician. Born and raised in Vancouver, British Columbia, he began his piano studies at the age of four, and he currently studies at the University of British Columbia with Corey Hamm.

He has achieved awards from numerous competitions at the international, national, and provincial level. He won the Canadian Music Competition and the Performing Arts BC Provincial Festival, received the Silver Medal from the Vancouver International Music Competition, and earned Second Prize at the Shean National Piano Competition. Hamilton has performed concertos, solo recitals, and chamber concerts in Canada, the United States, and Europe, and has attended summer festivals such as the Sarasota Music Festival and Orford Musique. In 2025, he will embark on a solo recital tour of British Columbia, Canada. ✨



Manitoba

Bogdan Shunkov

Bogdan Shunkov is a passionate and dedicated young pianist with five years of music education and performance experience in both Russia and Canada. He began piano studies at the age of seven at a specialized music school in St. Petersburg before continuing training in Winnipeg. Bogdan actively participates in local and international competitions, continually developing technical skills and musical artistry. He is driven by a deep love for music and a commitment to lifelong learning, striving toward the goal of becoming a professional pianist. ✨



New Brunswick

Blake Shepherd

Blake Shepherd is a performing musician from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, specializing in organ and piano. Currently a Bachelor of Music student at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick, Blake is dedicated to refining his abilities across multiple keyboard instruments. He actively participates in the University's Symphonic Band, demonstrating his versatility as a performer. In November of 2024, Blake won the Mount Allison Concerto Competition, performing the first movement of Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A minor*. Beyond his academic studies, Blake frequently performs in both local and regional festival competitions, playing with a variety of ensembles, including community concert bands, orchestras and youth ensembles. Blake has also done a substantial amount of work as a collaborative pianist and teacher, working with singers and teaching piano at Mount Allison. Blake's passion shines through in every performance, and he is excited to further his studies and continue communicating with audiences through music. ✨



Nova Scotia

Jenny Chen

Fourteen-year-old Jenny Chen started her piano study in 2015 and has been the recipient of many awards including the Nova Scotia Talent Trust Scholarship, the Nova Scotia Registered Music Teacher Association Scholarship, and the Royal Conservatory of Music Gold Medal in Piano. She has been the Senior Piano prize winner at the Nova Scotia Provincial Finals in the years of 2024, as well as the Junior Piano prize winner of the year 2023 and 2022. Jenny Chen was chosen to represent Nova Scotia at the 2023 Federation of Canadian Music Festival's National Competition where she was awarded the First Prize in the Developing Artist Stream. At age 11, Jenny won their concerto competition and appeared as the soloist to perform with Chebucto Symphony Orchestra. Jenny was the youngest pianist to be accepted as a scholarship student to the 2023 Orford Summer Music Academy where she studied with Andre Laplante and John Perry and was invited to perform at Gilles-Lefebvre Concert Hall. When not playing piano, Jenny enjoys swimming, reading, and bird watching. 🌸



Ontario

Adam Zheng

Ottawa-born pianist Adam Zheng is a Grade 10 student at Merivale High School whose piano journey began at the age of six. Adam holds an RCM Licentiate Diploma (LRCM) in Piano Performance and is studying piano under Dr. Chunson Park.

Since 2018, Adam has received awards at multiple regional and provincial piano competitions. He has reached multiple milestones, such as debuting as a piano soloist with the Divertimento Orchestra at age ten, winning the International Henle Piano Competition at age twelve, and receiving the RCM National Diploma Gold Medals for achieving the highest LRCM and ARCT piano exam marks in Canada during 2023-24 and 2021-22. In Summer 2024, Adam received first place at ORMTA Provincial Young Artist Competition and has delivered a Young Artist piano concert tour across Ontario.

Adam regularly delivers piano performances in public music events. Beyond his solo career, Adam performs chamber music with violinists. 🌸





Prince Edward Island

Shing Chun Luk

Timothy Luk is currently studying piano at the University of Prince Edward Island. He has participated in competitions including the FCMF National Music Festival, where he received the Chopin Award, the Dr. Frances Gray Performance Competition, where he was awarded the first prize, and the Atlantic Young Artist Competition.

Timothy performed in venues such as the Government House of Prince Edward Island. He has been collaborating and performing with the choral ensembles Island Choral Society and Luminos Ensemble, both directed by Margot Rejskind. 🌸



Québec

Julien Gagné

Élève de Richard Raymond au Conservatoire de musique de Montréal, Julien Gagné s'est illustré dans plusieurs compétitions. En effet, il obtient une première place à Cégeps en Concert, le grand prix 15-18 ans au concours Classival, le deuxième grand prix au Festival-concours de musique de Sherbrooke et deux premières places au Concours de musique du Canada. Il se produit également avec l'Orchestre symphonique des jeunes de Sherbrooke (2022), avec l'Orchestre de l'Université de Sherbrooke (2023) et avec la Sinfonia de Lanaudière (2024). En 2023, au Concours de musique de la Capitale, il obtient une première place dans la catégorie piano défi et en piano concerto de même que le prix de la fondation des Violons du Roy qui lui a permis de se produire avec le célèbre orchestre en mars 2024. En outre, il a pu se perfectionner en classe de maître avec André Laplante, Benedetto Lupo, Charles-Richard Hamelin, Henry Kramer, Jean Saulnier et Éric Lesage. Il a également étudié auprès de Line Villeneuve et Tristan Longval-Gagné. 🌸



Saskatchewan

Esther Zhu

Esther Zhu (ARCT, Piano Perf.) is an accomplished 18 year old pianist from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Previously taught by Adrienne Bank, Michelle Aalders, and Bonnie Nicholson, Esther currently studies with Kathleen Solose at the University of Saskatchewan.

Since age 3, Esther has been a frequent performer and volunteer, locally and multi-provincially, in the music festival community. She has received prestigious competitive awards including the top Senior Kinsmen Piano Award in Saskatoon (2024), the Garth Beckett/Gustin House Senior Piano award in Saskatchewan (2024) and second place in the Can-West Multi – Provincial Competition (Edmonton, 2023). Esther has also won numerous ACNMP National awards for her performances of Canadian works by Louie, Coulthard and David L. McIntyre (2022-2024).

In Saskatoon, Esther accompanies the Saskatoon Strings Youth Orchestra, is an active chamber musician and piano teacher. Esther gives the glory to God and is proud to represent Saskatchewan at the 2025 CFMTA Piano Competition. 🌸





National Piano Competition 2025 - Results

Concours national de piano 2025

Our 2025 CFMTA National Piano Competition was held in Montréal, Quebec at the École de musique Vincent-d'Indy with adjudicators:

- Dr. Michael Angelucci - Baltimore, Maryland, USA
- Jimmy Brière - Montreal, Québec
- Dr. Janet Lopinski - Toronto, Ontario

CFMTA is grateful for their expertise and kindness that they provided in their adjudications and their masterclasses.

Our nine competitors (teacher's name in parentheses) were:

Alberta

Zijia Zhuang (Wolfram Linnebach)

British Columbia

Hamilton Lau (Dr. Corey Hamm)

Manitoba

Bogdan Shunkov (Dr. David Moroz)

New Brunswick

Blake Shepherd (Dr. Stephen Runge)

Nova Scotia

Jenny Chen (Lynn Stodola)

Ontario

Adam Zheng (Dr. Chunson Park)

Prince Edward Island

Timothy Luk (Dr. Magdalena von Eccher)

Quebec

Julien Gagné (Richard Raymond)

Saskatchewan

Esther Zhu (Kathleen Solose)

The following awards were presented at the end of the final round of the competition:



First Prize \$5000 - Julien Gagné (Quebec)

Sponsored by the CFMTA/FCAPM

Presented by Marlane Osgood - President CFMTA/FCAPM



Second Prize \$3000 - Hamilton Lau (British Columbia)

Sponsored by the CFMTA/FCAPM

Presented by Dr. Michael Angelucci



Third Prize \$2000 - Adam Zheng (Ontario)
Sponsored by the CFMTA/FCAPM
Presented by Jimmy Brière



The Canadian Chopin Competition Award \$500
Adam Zheng (Ontario)
For the best performance of a Chopin Composition
(generously donated by the Canadian Chopin Society)
Presented by Kimberly Sundell



Ernst Schneider Canadian Music Award \$1000
Hamilton Lau (British Columbia)
For the best performance of a Canadian Composition
(generously donated by Ernst Schneider)
Presented by Dr. Janet Lopinski



Prix de la Fondation québécoise pour l'éducation musical
Quebec Musical Education Foundation Award \$1000
Zijia Zhuang (Alberta)
For the most promising artist
(generously donated by the Fondation québécoise pour
l'éducation musicale)
Presented by Lynne Gagné

Bravo to all of the competitors, your dedication, professionalism, and commitment to your art is to be commended.
Bravo to all of the teachers and families for your support and encouragement.

A big thank you to the CFMTA Conference Planning Committee for the amazing conference, venue and to the CFMTA Executive, CFMTA Delegates and Volunteers. Your experience, kindness willingness to help was greatly appreciated.

See you all in Nova Scotia 2027!





Hugheen Ferguson Distinguished Teacher Award Virginia Heinrichs - Susan Blyth-Schofield



*MRMTA President Laura Liu, Hugheen Ferguson Distinguished Teacher Award
recipient Virginia Heinrichs, Past President Maureen Baird*

Mrs. Virginia Heinrichs has been a long-time Manitoba music teacher and has continued throughout her years of teaching to support other Manitoba music teachers and their students. She has also been active in MRMTA, CFMTA and the local Winnipeg music teacher's community. Her contributions to music education over her career have been exemplary.



Hugheen Ferguson Distinguished Teacher Award

Virginia Heinrichs - Susan Blyth-Schofield



ORMTA President Tania Granata presenting the CFMTA Hugheen Ferguson award to Susan Blyth-Schofield on Thursday August 7th, 2025 at the In Sync event in Niagara Falls, Ontario

Susan Blyth-Schofield is an exceptional music educator whose influence is unmeasurable to the community and many organizations.

Through her private vocal studio, she has nurtured many students - from professional classical and musical theatre performers to emerging high school talents and passionate amateurs. Her teaching is marked by a combination of technical mastery, artistic insight, and deep personal commitment to each student's growth.

Since joining Carleton University's Music program in 2002, Susan has played a pivotal role as both a performance instructor and academic leader. She lectures in the History of Musical Theatre and directs the University's Musical Theatre Ensemble, where her visionary approach and dedication continue to inspire the next generation of performers.

Beyond the classroom, Susan's contribution to the arts community is profound. A long-standing member of ORMTA, she devotes countless hours to the Ottawa Region Branch and currently serves—once again—on the ORMTA Provincial Council. Her leadership, mentorship, and advocacy have left a lasting impact on both local and provincial levels.

Susan's exemplary teaching career, her unwavering service to ORMTA and CFMTA, and her transformative impact on students and the community make her a truly deserving recipient of the Hugheen Ferguson Distinguished Teacher Award.



Connecting Canada Year Round

Free Professional Development for All Members

Du perfectionnement professionnel tout à fait gratuit pour tous les membres!

Join CFMTA Connecting Canada Year-Round as we host 50-minute, guided, member-led, virtual gatherings.

Each chat will focus on one pedagogical topic, and/or one studio business topic. Guest presenters will share their experiences and tips, and attendees will have the opportunity to share ideas and ask questions.

Prenez part toute l'année aux ateliers de perfectionnement professionnel organisés par la FCAPM, des rencontres virtuelles de 50 minutes animées par et pour les membres.

Chaque discussion traitera d'un sujet relatif à la pédagogie ou à l'exploitation d'un studio de musique. Les présentateurs invités transmettront leur savoir, leur expérience et leurs astuces, et les participants pourront intervenir à leur tour avec leurs idées et questions.

January 23 - Speech Arts - presented by Heather Macnab

Pedagogy Section - Level 4 - *When the Planets Are Aligned* - Nancy Telfer

February 20 - Fun with Music History Part 2 - presented by Barbara Levenson

March 20 - Studio Policies - group discussion

Pedagogy Section – Level 5 – *Little March* - Talivaldis Kenins

April 17 - Level up your online music studio - presented by Dina Pollock

Pedagogy Section - Level 6 - *Dancing Scales* - Dr. John Burge

May 15 - Keyboard Harmony - presented by Joyce Janzen

Pedagogy Section - Level 7 - *Mischievous Mouse* - Vincet Ho

June - July - Summer break

August 21 - The Goldilocks Studio - presented by Barbara Levenson

Pedagogy - *Lemonade Through a Straw* - Nancy Telfer

September 18 - Digital Resources - presented by Dina Pollock

Pedagogy - *Bat's Night Out* - Andrew Dow

October 24 - Canadian Composer from Call for Compositions

Gloria Chu - Kathleen Feenstra - Joyce Janzen - Christian Pacaud

November 20 - Let's Talk about Leveling - presented by Barbara Levenson

Pedagogy Section - *November in Toronto* - Fishel Pustilnik

December - Holiday Break





Choose Your Own Adventure Collaborons dans les arts et au-delà



The 2024 - 2025 Branching Out initiative, **Choose Your Own Adventure**.

Raise awareness of your local music teachers' Branch by:

- Creating an event unique to your location
- Participating in existing community events to include a musical element
- Sharing your music, your way
- Using your imagination and resources

Events may be live in-person, live-streamed, or pre-recorded

Le programme de rayonnement « On se rassemble 2022-2023 : **Collaborons dans les arts et au-delà** » propose aux filiales d'accueillir des événements qui relie la musique avec les arts visuels, le théâtre, la danse et autres. Lorsque la musique fusionne avec un autre domaine, les deux sont enrichis et inspirés par l'échange d'idées, de points de vue et de concepts innovants. On peut organiser les événements en personne, en direct (en streaming) ou préenregistrés pour une diffusion ultérieure à la discrétion des filiales et des participants.



Events hosted in 2025

Alberta

- Calgary (included in Year in Review 2024)
- Lethbridge

British Columbia

- Richmond

Ontario

- Hanover-Walkerton
- Ottawa

Nova Scotia

- Halifax





**Event: Branching Out Event, Composing Workshop
with Lynette Sawatsky**

Date: November 23, 2024

The Hanover-Walkerton Branch of ORMTA held a workshop for teachers during Canada Music Week. Guest clinician and Canadian composer, Lynette Sawatsky visited from Saskatoon and presented a workshop full of engaging and inspiring ideas for teachers to get students composing.

The workshop was held at the Millbank Heritage Society in a collaboration to reach teachers from that area who do not belong to an ORMTA Branch. Five members from the Hanover-Walkerton Branch attended the workshop, along with eight other teachers from the area. We started with a social coffee time, then enjoyed learning strategies for teaching composition and engaging students in this fun and important skill. Lynette shared ideas for getting started for students of all ages, as well as how to tie it into other lesson components. She also brought along a beautiful studio book project. We ended our morning with a delicious lunch at the famous Anna Mae's Restaurant in Millbank.

Teachers were excited to meet some new colleagues and share ideas. We hope that this event will lead to more collaboration and outreach for our tiny ORMTA Branch!

Laura Gray





Event: Winter Wonderland

Date: November 30, 2024

On November 30, 2024, the Richmond Branch participated in the City of Richmond's Winter Wonderland celebration, taking place at Richmond City Hall. We had sixteen students from eleven teachers playing solo piano works ranging from Level 2 up to ARCT.

This festival is run by the Rotary Club of Richmond and we are thrilled to have collaborated with them yet again on this amazing experience for our students.

Our branch was asked to submit \$100 to help cover the cost of hosting such a function.

We would be grateful to be considered for the CFMTA Branching Out grant to help us cover the cost of participating in this fabulous event.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rowena Bridson



Participating students, their teachers and Victoria Warfield, our Branch President.



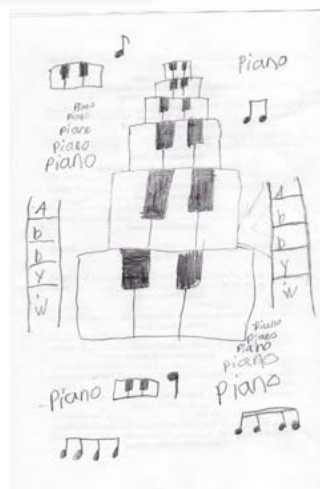
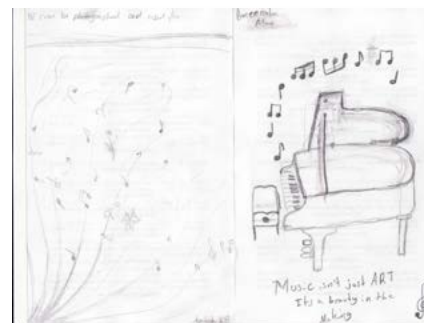


Event: An afternoon of Student Performances

Date: January 26, 2025

On January 26, 2025, the Halifax Chapter of the NSRMTA held another concert in the Paul O'Regan Hall of the Central Library. There were twenty-four student performers, including violin and piano soloists and one duet pair. More than one hundred people attended. This is our third public concert at this venue, but this time we added a little feature that seemed to suit the "Choose Your Own Adventure" idea. We purposely left the back of our program blank and offered audience members of all ages pencils for sketching while listening to musical performances. We also asked that anyone prepared to have us send their artwork off to CMFTA for our report sign their names and return their programs to us on their way out. We've included just some of the artwork received that was inspired by the afternoon's young performers. Beautifully creative sketches, don't you agree?

Christine Mader





**Event: Junior Adventurers Piano Masterclass:
Theme "Try Something New"**

Date: February 8, 2025

The first Junior Adventurers Masterclass was held on Saturday February 8th 2025 at the Carleton University music department. Due to high levels of interest in the event it was a challenging one for the clinicians, Dr. Elaine Keillor and Steve Boudreau, both of whom rose to the occasion with insightful comments and suggestions.

Thirty performances by children aged 7 through 13 were split across two sessions. Within each session there were three 'mini-recitals' of about 5 performers each followed by comments and feedback. Each mini-recital group contained a mix of ages, levels, and musical styles.

Feedback topics varied from composer backgrounds and stylistic traits to executing swing eighths and playing with a drum track.

Our goals:

- To make the day as stress free as possible for younger students. The use of mini-recitals rather than individual performances and feedback helped with this.
- To minimize competitiveness.
- To support students playing classical and non-classical music side by side (enabled by having two expert clinicians on hand, one primarily for classical and one for jazz and popular styles).

Debra Glass



Clinicians Dr. Elaine Keillor and Steve Boudreau with participating students.



Event: Harpsichord Adventure

Date: February 15, 2025

On Saturday, February 15th, 2025, the Lethbridge Branch held a "Harpsichord Adventure." Students prepared Baroque pieces and explored playing them on a 2-manual harpsichord with guidance from the harpsichord's owner. Students experimented with stylistic elements such as ornaments and rolled chords,

as well as different manuals, registrations, and stops. Thirteen students ranging from elementary school age to adult from Level 2 to Level 10 participated. Teachers attended as observers.

Christina Rogers





Music Making a Difference La musique qui fait une différence



With so much need and want in our world these days, it is especially important for our students to feel empowered to be game changers. The **Music Making A Difference** Branching Out initiative will encourage music students across the country to raise money by playing concerts to benefit a local need. Events may be live (in-person), live-streamed, or pre-recorded.

Dans un monde où les besoins et les désirs nous bombardent de partout, nos élèves ont tout particulièrement besoin de sentir qu'ils ont le pouvoir de changer les choses. L'initiative « **La musique qui fait une différence** » de On se rassemble encouragera les élèves musiciens partout au pays à collecter des fonds en présentant des concerts-bénéfice pour aider à répondre à un besoin local. Les événements peuvent avoir lieu (en personne), en streaming, ou en séance préenregistrée.

Events hosted in 2025:

Alberta

- Lethbridge



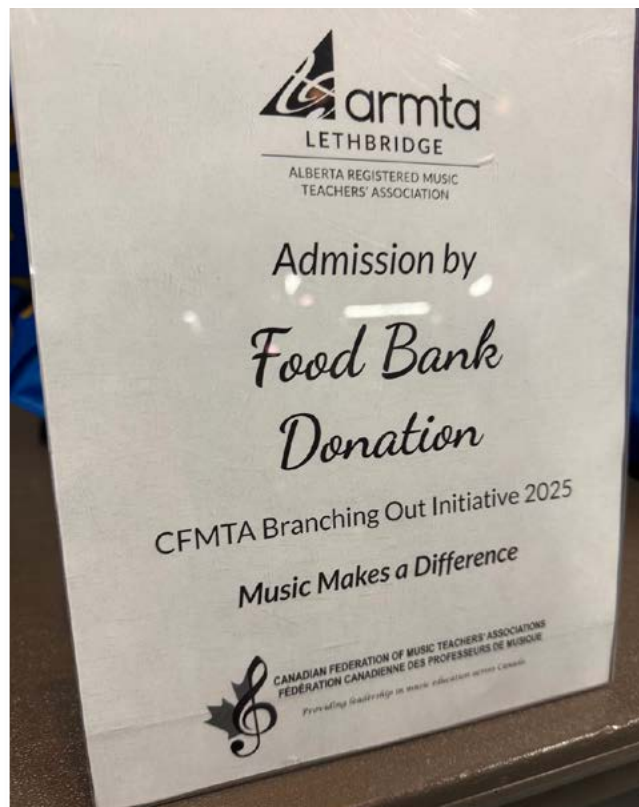


Lethbridge - ARMTA

November 22, 2025

Application for 2025-2026 Branching Out Initiative, Music Makes a Difference. In conjunction with our Lethbridge Branch annual Canada Music Week Recital and Annual Awards Presentation on Saturday November 22nd, 2025 we collected food for our local food bank. 80 lbs of food was collected and along with the silver collection, the donation was worth just over \$350. We have included a second photograph with the submission since we did not need a release form.

Christine Rogers



Food collected for local food bank



Online **Video** Resource Library

Bibliothèque ressources **vidéo** en ligne

This is a collaborative project with all the provinces and territory of CFMTA. Each province/territories will select content from their annual programming, record it and submit it to the CFMTA. These videos will be accessible through the website and password protected. Topics will deal with all aspects of teaching music.

Il s'agit d'un projet collaboratif réunissant l'ensemble des provinces et territoires de la FCAPM/CFMTA. Chaque province et territoire sélectionnera du contenu à partir de sa programmation annuelle, en fera l'enregistrement et le soumettra à la FCAPM. Ces vidéos seront disponibles sur le site Web et protégées par mot de passe. Les sujets abordés toucheront tous les aspects de l'enseignement de la musique.

Videos added to the Library in 2025:

Piano Masterclass Part 1 - Dr. Jarred Dunn

BCRMTA and The Valley Concert Society (Abbotsford)

Piano Masterclass Part 2 - Dr. Jarred Dunn

BCRMTA and The Valley Concert Society (Abbotsford)

Level up your online studio - Dina Pollock

CFMTA

Fresh Take on Teaching Piano Technique - Linda & Sue Gould

Connecting Canada





Articles included in the CMT Magazine

Winter 2025

Preparing Music Students for Critical Feedback

Amy Boyes

Spring 2025

The "Chill Out" Concert: Sowing Seeds for Lifelong Music Making

Dr. Merlin B. Thompson

Fall 2025

No articles were included





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



Here are the Canada Music Week reports from:

- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- New Brunswick
- Nova Scotia
- Ontario
- Québec
- Saskatchewan

Unfortunately no reports were submitted by:

- Newfoundland & Labrador
- Northwest Territories
- Prince Edward Island
- Yukon





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



ALBERTA REGISTERED MUSIC
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Alberta Celebrates Canada Music Week 2025: Celebrating Canadian Voices and Legacies. Canada Music Week 2025 unfolded across Alberta with vibrant celebrations that highlighted Canadian artistry, honoured musical legacies, and showcased the achievements of students and educators alike.

Calgary hosted ARCHERFEST 2025—a two-day event commemorating composer Violet Archer, the 45th anniversary of the Canadian Music Centre (CMC) Prairie Region, and the inaugural Violet Archer Lifetime Achievement Awards. Hosted at Calgary's National Music Centre, ARCHERFEST offered engaging, family-friendly programming. On November 22, author Léa Ploudre-Archer, Violet Archer's grandniece, presented her illustrated children's book on Archer, accompanied by live performances of Archer's piano music by ARMTA Calgary Chair Sandra Joy Friesen. A composer-in-residence session followed, featuring six Prairie composers whose works were workshoped and performed by members of the Kensington Sinfonia. The celebration continued on November 23 with *In Violet Light*, a recital showcasing Archer's piano works performed by Sandra Joy Friesen, paired with evocative songs by Archer and Jean Coulthard sung by mezzo-soprano Camryn Dewar. The presence of Archer's relatives made the event especially meaningful. Calgary also hosted a Contemporary Showcase festival from November 20-22. 🌟

In **Lethbridge**, the ARMTA Branch held its Canada Music Week recital on November 22 at Casa, where eighteen students performed pieces by a diverse range of Canadian composers—including Christine Donkin, John Burge, Rebekah Maxner, and Alexina Louie.

Guest pianist Brad Parker offered a highlight performance of Lavinia Kell Parker's *Frozen Fractals* for prepared piano. The recital concluded with recognition of forty-five student exam award recipients, with nearly \$2,500 distributed for outstanding practical and theory results. Six students earned ARMTA Recognition Fund Student Awards for achieving First-Class Honours in both areas. The Branch also honoured the memory of beloved teacher Doreen Laing through dedicated piano awards, funded by the sale of her donated music. Additionally, longtime member Marilyn Sinclair was presented with an ARMTA Honorary Life Membership for over 50 years of service. As part of the CFMTA Branching Out Initiative, 80 lbs of food was collected for the local food bank.

Various other centres across the province hosted other Canada Music Week events, including a teacher-organized concert and gallery in **Medicine Hat**, and a Contemporary Showcase festival celebrating Canadian composers with a special feature on Alexina Louie, George Andrix, and David Duke in **Edmonton** from November 21-23.

Together, these events underscored the enduring vibrancy of Canadian music and the educators who champion it. 🌟





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



ALBERTA REGISTERED MUSIC
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

ARMTA **Medicine Hat** proudly celebrated Canada Music Week with a concert, reception and small gallery of children's art at the Medicine Hat Public Library theatre on November 22nd, 2025. Eleven of the seventeen members of the Medicine Hat chapter had twenty-six students perform along with two choirs conducted by ARMTA teachers. The Medicine Hat College Girls choir opened with *O Canada* and *Warrior* by Kym Baryluk and the Tar Tones closed the concert with *We Rise Again* by Leon Dubinsky, choral arrangement by Stephen Smith. We were honoured to have Annette Bradley, president of ARMTA in attendance as well as local dignitaries. We had a full house with standing room only. Besides the two choirs, we had singers, pianists, classical guitar and a cello trio participate. All music was written by Canadian composers and students shared some composer history with the audience. Parents and audience members said the 85 minute concert was always interesting with a variety of pieces, a variety of instruments and performers were age 8 and up!



All ARMTA students gave great performances! Some highlights were Emily Dietrich, nine years old performing her CFMTA and ARMTA winning composition, *Stars*. Also Musical theatre songs from *The Painters Dream* by Medicine Hatter, Richard Link were performed. Link was born and raised in Medicine Hat and is now teaching composition at the London College of Music in London, England. Students and teachers were proud to perform compositions by current and past Medicine Hat College Conservatory piano teachers: Constantine Shandro, Lorna Paterson and Peter Jancewicz. We greatly appreciated our ARMTA piano teachers assisting in piano accompaniment for singers!



A Year in Review - 2025





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



ALBERTA REGISTERED MUSIC
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

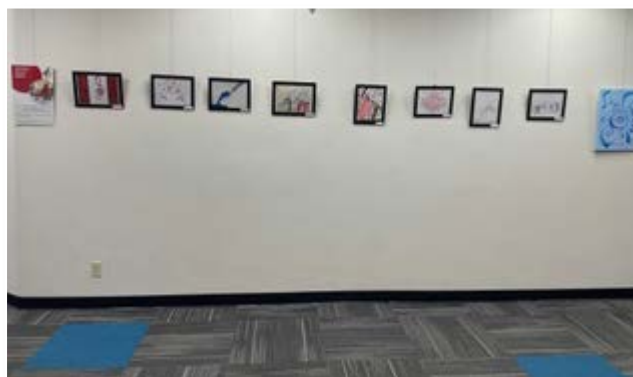
Medicine Hat cont. - Three lucky attendees went home with Evangelos Music gift cards donated by music store owner James Evangelos.

The small gallery leading to the theatre showcased some music inspired art by ARMTA students past and present. We hope to see some entries into the 2027 poster competition as the deadline had passed for 2026.

A reception followed where performers, families and the public were treated to coffee, tea donuts and cupcakes, all donated. Three information tables included music memorabilia, information on ARMTA, and original copies of Canadian compositions to peruse.

The event was well received by teachers, families and audience members with all looking forward to the 2026 Canada Music Week Celebration! 🌟 *Patricia Swan*

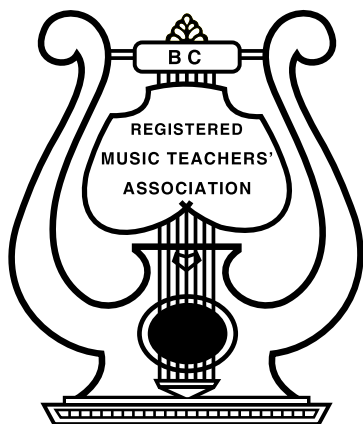
CMW Coordinator - Josina Leder-Sears





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



The **Abbotsford** branch held our Canada Music Week recital and award presentation on November 22nd, 2025 at Calvin Presbyterian Church.

We opened with Betty Suderman playing *O Canada*, this was followed by performances by twenty-two students representing seven members. The program included pieces by Canadian composers, as well as a wide variety of composers from different eras. It was great to see a large audience attend and enjoy the concert. We are slowly going back to the number of attendees we had attend pre-Covid.

Every year we acknowledge all the students who achieved over 80% on both theory and practical subjects. At the end of the concert a video was viewed by the audience, showcasing the students who received the highest marks in all levels.

Thank you to all the members that helped with organizing our event. 🌟 *Dina Pollock*

The **Chilliwack** branch of the BCRMTA held the Canada Music Week Recital on November 21st, 2025 at Sardis Community Church.

Over 30 students participated. We heard amazing Canadian content performed in a variety of styles, on the piano, violin, voice, and even a bass clarinet. There was a string quartet that led the audience in the singing of *O Canada*. We had a number of compositions written by a local composer and member of the Chilliwack Chapter, Kathleen Feenstra, and it was exciting to hear her pieces performed. We also had talented accompanists that played for the violin, voice, and bass clarinet students.

Our M.C. for the recital was Sharie Atley, and Karin Fehlauer. Our president, presented bursaries to the students who completed exams with the highest marks this past year. It was great to see teachers involved and supporting this event. We ended with taking professional photos of all the students and teachers as well.

It was a great evening celebrating Canadian music through the talents of many local students who put tremendous effort into learning their pieces to present to a respectful audience. 🌟 *Christine Millar*

On Sunday, November 23rd, the **Coquitlam/Maple Ridge** branch hosted a Canada Music Week recital at Place des Arts in Coquitlam. This year we were pleased to have Christine Donkin join our recital and present a wonderful workshop for students within our branch. We also acknowledged student achievements with trophies for the highest exam marks. During the recital, many students performed compositions by Christine Donkin. Christine noted that this was the first time so many of her pieces had been performed in one concert.

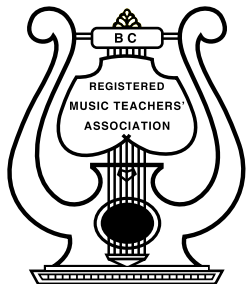
During the workshop Christine worked briefly with fourteen students giving them another chance to perform their piece with one or two insights to think about. This was such a great opportunity for students! Christine also answered student questions about her process and





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



inspiration as a composer. As a special highlight one of the last questions asked was what was Christine Donkin's favourite piece that she has composed. This piece was performed by Christine and guest violinist Reg Quiring. It was a beautiful ending to our Canada Music Week Recital! ✱ Rosemary O'Connor and Karen Wood
CMW Recital coordinators

East Kootenay - As part of a general move to link and overlap activities between our regional centres, two Canada Music Week recitals were held. Creston hosted a Canada Plus event on Saturday November 22nd; Cranbrook presented its annual Canada Music Week recital on Sunday the 23rd. Dozens of Canadian works at varied levels - plus a few other selections in Creston - were performed for happy audiences.

Three students presented their own compositions. Creston listeners heard *Rainforest Melody*, an ethereal piece by junior student Maya Delcaro, and the gripping *Finality* by teen composer Riaan Gerber. Jonathan Talbot, a longtime composer and arranger now 17, presented his profound two-piano *Variations on a Theme By Chopin* (the *C minor Prelude, Op. 28 #20*) with duet partner Arne Sahlén in both Creston and Cranbrook. At both recitals, awards were presented to students who had earned high exam marks in 2024-25.

The further-flung town of Golden had hosted a Canada Plus concert a few years ago. Plans are afoot to co-ordinate future Canada Music Week events, in part to build up promotion and public enthusiasm for our student performers as well as the dazzling array of music by Canadian composers. ✱ Arne Sahlén

This fall term we hosted the Second Annual - **Kamloops Branch BCRMTA - "Elevator Music Event"**

We invited a group of students of various ages and levels to perform background music. The event was held in the Bruce Dunn Theatre in the upper level of the Kelson Hall; the lower level is the KSO Music School, which will be connected to the new Arts Centre being built now. We brought in large round tables and set them with comfortable chairs. The tables were set with board games such as *Chess*, *Shut The Box*, *Uno* and others. Two long tables were set with coffee, tea, juice, snacks, baked treats, homemade tabouli and Christmas oranges. Friends and families visited, ate and played games while listening to the music.

As we are all well aware, piano playing and learning to read music involves the practice at home, the lesson at the piano studio, the piano recital and sometimes festivals and competitions. As a collective group of teachers we feel this event adds another experience for our students, another skill building tool. I'm not sure which they enjoyed more - the piano playing or the chess matches!

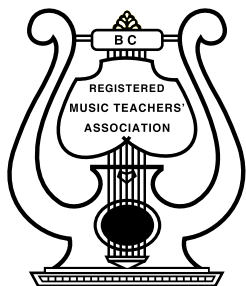
We will do it again next fall, and remember to take some photos. ✱ Deborah Miles





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



Canada Music Week 2025 was celebrated by the BCRMTA **Kelowna** Branch. Each teacher who participated shared Canadian music with their students. Our workshop in June by Conservatory Canada introduced us to several new Canadian compositions in their new Mosaic Series. Some studios had Canadian Music Concerts and/or encouraged students to compose compositions in honor of CMW. ✨ *Marla Mesenbrink*



The **North Island** Branch celebrated Canada Music Week with a student recital at Courtenay's Stan Hagen Theatre on November 23rd. The program was organized according to the home Province of each composer. The largest contingent was (of course!) BC composers, with works by Alexina Louie, Christine Donkin, Linda Niamath, Andrew Dow, Irene Voros and Teresa Richert. Though we didn't have many prairie-province composers represented this year, we did have a lovely performance of *Shimmer* by Alberta composer Heather Schmidt. Our Ontario group had some diverse repertoire; from *An Army of Ants* by Beverly Porter and *Rainforest* by Joanne Bender to *Sonatina in D Minor* by John Burge. Other Ontario composers featured were Christopher Norton, Clifford Poole and Boris Berlin. The 3rd largest group was Nova Scotia, with works mostly by Anne Crosby Gaudet and Rebekah Maxner. Interspersed between the Provincial groups, several students performed their own compositions. There were more than a hundred-fifty people in attendance, and everyone really enjoyed the concert. We'll do it again next year! ✨ *Jocie Brooks*

The **Prince George** Branch held a Recital during Canada Music Week that was well attended and very enjoyable. Piano, violin, and cello students performed a wide variety of selections from Suzuki to ARCT levels. Pieces by Canadian composers Linda Niamath and Teresa Richert were performed. As well, RMT Dustin Anderson talked about the career and compositions of Heather Schmidt, then performed her well-known piece *Shimmer*. The MC for the event was RMT Louise Phillips. Refreshments were served and everyone enjoyed meeting one another and visiting. ✨ *Lori Elder*

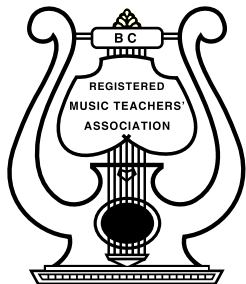


We had a lovely day full of music at the **Richmond** Branch Canada Music Week Recitals. We hosted two recitals on November 16th, both about an hour long. We had a total of sixty-four students from twenty-four different teachers performing piano and vocal works. There were nine Canadian composers whose music was performed and living composers were invited to attend our recital. They were very grateful to have received a personal invitation to attend, although unable to join us. We are all looking forward to our CMW event next year. ✨ *Rowena Silver Bridson*



Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



South Fraser - The number of performers gathered for the annual Canada Music Week Celebration may have been smaller this year, but it was huge with enthusiasm. All the pianists exuded delight in their “recital piece” and the opportunity to share it. Many audience members caught the students’ eagerness and returned positive appreciation. The program featured primary grades through senior level. Each piece was different.

A pre-concert chat with the students focussed on Nova Scotia composer, Anne Crosby Gaudet. This inventive composer was clearly a favourite! Her musical descriptions of Kangaroos, Bears, Belugas, Stormy Seas, Dreamcatchers, and Periwinkle Twinkle prompted the performers to chat excitedly about the images that inspired them.

The performance concluded with a draw for a door prize for a bookstore gift card, photos and a very yummy Celebratory Cake! ✱
Maureen Hollins

Our **South Okanagan** Branch celebrated both our 70th Branch Anniversary and Canada Music Week in style! Our recital featured diverse selections from many B.C. composers from Linda Niamath, Stephen Chatman to our own local composers, Anita Perry and Ernst Schneider, and a young student composer Rio Stevensen!

The forefront of the stage had our Canada Music Week banner, plus many Canadian flags all around. At the end, deserving students were presented with over one thousand dollars worth of scholarships. We are most grateful for the continued financial support of the Schneider family with the Colleen Schneider Award, the Sunshine Rotary, and Madame Janisch families. Students, families and composers were able to hobnob while digesting a most beautiful and delicious Happy 70th Birthday South Okanagan BCRMTA cupcakes.

We are very fortunate to share this vibrant Canadian music that is currently being locally composed and celebrated with our music students and families. ✱ *Marlene Bartsch*

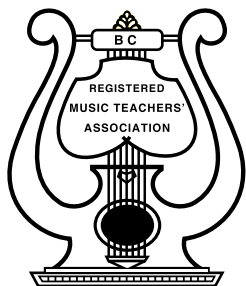


The **Sunshine Coast** RMTA held its Canada Music Week Recital at St. Hilda’s Anglican Church in Sechelt, BC, on November 22nd. This year, the organizing committee decided to invite the registered teachers to display their talents too, as an addition to the typical program of student performances. The chosen music could be either a composition by a known Canadian composer or, if the teacher wished and was inclined to compose, a composition that they wrote themselves. The audience was treated to a recital of performers of various ages, experience, styles, levels, and disciplines - voice, flute and recorder combined with piano as well as solo piano.



Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



Sunshine Coast cont. - The event combined a 75-minute recital with a reception and book sale (by-donation) that followed. Music-related books had been collected from instructors and the community, from previous book sales together with new items. Several teachers shared their baked goods, including cupcakes decorated with Canadian flags. This tied together the Canadian music theme from sanctuary (performance area) to reception hall.

Students' primary and intermediate levels selections included works by Linda Niamath, Teresa Richert, Clifford Poole and Boris Berlin. Advanced level pieces included composers Anne Southam, Alexina Louie and Martha Hill Duncan. Students' 'own-composition' titles included *Wind Blowing* and *Jellyfish*. Performers were well-prepared - some introduced their pieces by speaking about their composers, while others began and ended with a simple bow.



The five teacher performances were interspersed between the children's pieces, which proved to be quite effective, holding the attention of even the youngest of the audience members. Music included the following: *Phobos and Deimos*, *Circling*, by Jocelyn Morlock, (piano), *The Sound of Moosick*, by Cameron Wilson (piano, flute and recorders) and *Blue Sky I and II*, by Alexina Louie (piano). A recently-graduated voice major performed with his accompanist, *Everyone Sang* by Clifford Crawley. Another member presented her own composition for flute and piano entitled *Before We Meet Again*. The event was a celebration of Canadian music in a fun and entertaining way - sharing with the community a few glimpses of Canadian sentiment and talent.

✧ Serah Strandberg/Patricia Greenfield



On November 22 and 23, 2025, the **Vancouver/Burnaby** Branch held its seventh annual Canada Music Week Festival at the Canadian Music Centre in downtown Vancouver. This year, adjudicator Dr. Jane Hayes of White Rock, BC heard sixty students from preparatory to ARCT level; we even had two students brought in their own compositions! Tom Lee Music generously donated 1st and 2nd place gift cards for each class and the Branch presented 1st and 2nd place scholarships for the Elementary, Junior, Intermediate and Senior divisions. The CMW Festival Committee, Joanna Yeh, and Emily Ko appreciated the support and enthusiasm of the students, the teachers, the Branch and especially Jane Hayes! ✧ Hailey Wong

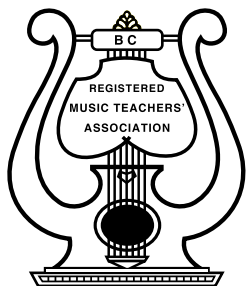


The **Trail/Castlegar** Branch held two very successful events in celebration of Canada Music Week in the Muriel Griffiths Room of the Bailey Theatre in Trail. On Saturday, November 22nd, Duet Fest, a free duet workshop with Branch member Anna King, was attended by four pairs of pianists and their teachers. Students performed Canadian duets, and together explored the joys and challenges of ensemble



Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



Trail/Castlegar cont. - playing in close proximity. Such fun was had, that a request was made to do it again next year.

The following day, Sunday, November 23rd, we hosted a branch recital, *A Celebration of Canadian Music*, in which students performed a program of twenty-eight Canadian works. It was a wonderfully varied program of piano (solos & duets), voice, and violin pieces in a wide range of genres, performed by students of all ages. One of the many highlights was an original composition sung by an adult voice student. This recital was followed by an awards & scholarships presentation to those students who received the highest marks on exams within our Branch. The event was very well attended.

It was a most exciting & joyful weekend filled with lots of learning & fun. ✱ Anna King

The **Victoria** Branch usually hosts two events for the Annual Canada Music Week celebrations. This year they were:

1. The Canada Music Week Breakfast Meeting

Friday, 21 November 2025: The Banquet Room of the Lakes Restaurant & Bar, Holiday Inn: ably organised by Social Chair, Nanako Dufleit and Past President, Evelyn Deschênes-Godbold. Thank you both. We also thank Long & McQuade and Tapestry Music for sponsoring the door prizes, and Nanako for sponsoring the beautiful flower pot giveaways.

2. Canada Music Week Concert

Saturday, 22 November 2025: Grace Lutheran Church, that included performances by the winners of our Annual Murray Adaskin Composition Competition. Grateful thanks to our Concert Chair and Canada Music Week Coordinator, Joe Hatherill, assisted by Carolyn Powell.

Our **Canada Music Week Breakfast Meeting** opened with a welcome to all and to Featured Composer for Canada Music Week 2025 and Adjudicator of our Murray Adaskin Composition Competition, Stephen Brown. There were twenty-three attendees.

The morning began with a hearty breakfast and the Branch's General Meeting, during which the following members were congratulated:

- Joanne Dalisay (25 year pin)
- Wendy Maggiora (50 year pin)
- Paloma de la Guerra (60 year pin)

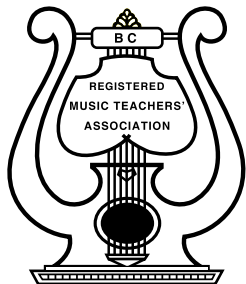
The meeting was then followed by an engaging presentation by Stephen Brown, who gave us some insight into his creative process through his topic: *Influences, Techniques, and Stuff to Use*.





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



Stephen Brown & President Rafael Oei

The next day, our Annual **Canada Music Week Concert** was hosted by Master of Ceremony, Linda Low. She opened the program by leading in the singing of *O Canada* from the piano. Featured Composer and Adjudicator, Stephen Brown, then explained the intricacies of the musical form in compositions and illustrated this to the audience by having them participate using the rhyme *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*.

The awards for the Murray Adaskin Composition Competition were then presented:

- **1st Place – Junior Category:**
Hope Syyong for *Centipede*
- **1st Place – Intermediate Category:**
Jakob Constible for *A Day at the Beach*
- **Honourable Mentions**
Intermediate: Bodi Minardi for *Sonata in D Major, 1*
Nathan Syyong for *Raindrops*

Thank you, Tom Lee Music, for sponsoring the Murray Adaskin Competition prizes.

The concert segment then opened with Hope Syyong and Jakob Constible performing their winning compositions. In all there were twenty-three performers who came together to honour and celebrate the music of Canadian composers. Apart from the piano, students performed on the cello, violin, flute, and alto-saxophone. Local composer, Nicholas Fairbank, who was also in attendance, had his composition *Sidney Island Swing* performed by Sophie Buckley. Nicholas took a round of applause as the audience acknowledged his presence. Students also paid tribute to our Featured Composer by performing three of his compositions. The concert fittingly ended with Stephen's composition, *Extremities*, performed by Rosalia Carlson. ✱ Rafael Oei





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



Canada Music Week in Manitoba

Winnipeg celebrated Canada Music Week with an afternoon recital at St. Mark's Lutheran Church on November 22nd. Students of many levels shared selections by Canadian composers including Vincent Ho, Mary Gardiner, Alexina Louie, and John Burge. Students went the extra kilometer by introducing themselves, their pieces, and providing some background on the significance of their chosen composer.

Additionally, we heard four of our 2025 Student Composer Competition winners. Among these composers was Emiliya Vasylyeva who performed her moving piano composition *The Victory March* – dedicated to all fallen and alive Ukrainian soldiers who fight for the freedom of my homeland. Sarah Mercer performed her light-

hearted vocal composition *Easy as Cake* with Melissa Gingrich at the piano. This composition won first place in the Open category of the Manitoba competition, earning the \$250 award, as well as first place at the national level, earning the \$400 prize.

Crowning our event was a presentation by our guest presenter, Ari Hooker. Recognized on CBC's 2025 - 30 *Classical Musicians under 30 list*, Ari is a local composer and concert pianist who is rapidly making a name for himself. He spoke about finding a special connection with the piano at a young age, being nurtured by supportive musical parents and instructors including Darryl Friesen and Professor David Moroz at University of Manitoba's Desautels Faculty of Music, and producing compositions and recordings. He exploded onto the concert scene by performing his Piano Concerto and Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra recently and treated us to a taste of his compositional style and performing abilities by performing his *Seven Simple Sketches, Op. 14* to close the recital. 🌟

CMW Coordinator - Melissa Gingrich





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



It was my pleasure to welcome students, families, and guests to the **Brandon–Westman** Canada Music Week celebration, hosted by the Brandon and Westman Registered Music Teachers' Association at the School of Music, Brandon University, on November 22nd. The event ran smoothly thanks to our excellent team of executive members: Maureen Baird, Dianna Neufeld, Lara Mason, Alla Turbanova, and Marla Winters, whose dedication ensured a professional and inspiring experience.

The concert featured students from beginners to advanced levels, each announcing their name and the title of their piece, allowing the music to speak for itself.



A special highlight was Riav Sewram, student of Dr. Daniel Tselyakov, who performed his own original composition, *Dread Before Dawn*. The piece revealed notable creativity, expressive depth, and structural sophistication—an impressive accomplishment for a young composer and performer.

The program included works by Canadian composers such as Martha Hill Duncan, Vincent Ho, Craig Cassils, Dianna Neufeld, Andrea Carlson, and Talivaldis Kenins, showcasing the diversity of Canadian repertoire.

The atmosphere was warm, supportive, and festive, with refreshments kindly provided by the Brandon–Westman Branch executive team. Thanks to all the teachers and performers, whose preparation made the event memorable. Events like this inspire young musicians and promote the importance of Canadian music in education. 🌟
Alla Turbanova





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique **canadienne**



The **Fredericton** Music Teachers combined their Canada Music Week recital with a celebration of the annual Original Works Composition contest. Eighteen students submitted compositions, and several of them performed their pieces at the recital. Richard Covey, who teaches at UPEI and UNB, was the adjudicator, and he came to the recital to present awards and to pose for pictures with the students. The recital was held at Christ Church Parish Church, where the FMTA Yamaha grand piano lives. Thanks to Nadine Martin and Ross Simonds, who coordinated the recital and the composition competition. 🌸 *Jane Bowden*

Moncton was proud to present some of their students in recital during Canada Music Week at Mount Royal United Church in Moncton, NB. There were thirty-six piano performances, ranging from Primer to RCM Level 7. Included was a duet by a student and her grandmother who was visiting from Ukraine. Although performances of music written by Canadian composers were encouraged, we welcomed the presentations of a variety of composer's works.

To further celebrate Canada Music Week, we asked our students to create a poster or poem about the theme, "My Favorite Thing About Music". Some of their work was displayed during the reception, following our recital. 🌸

CMW Coordinator - Doris Sabeau



NBRMTA - Moncton



Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



nova scotia
registered
music teachers
association

The **Valley** Chapter of NSRMTA held two recitals on Sunday afternoon, November 16 at 2:00 and 4:00 at the Kentville Baptist Church. Forty students as well as members of the Acadia Regional Youth Orchestra Fiddle Group gave us a wonderful afternoon of music. Most of the repertoire was composed by Canadians including Joanne Bender, Boris Berlin, Kenneth Bray, Maria Case, Anne Crosby Gaudet, Christine Donkin, Linda Fletcher, Jennifer MacLean, David McIntyre, Jason Noble, Charles Peerson, Clifford Poole, Teresa Richert, and Nancy Telfer. It was exciting to hear performances ranging from elementary to senior levels. Brian Johnstone's performance of *O Canada* arranged for piano by Melody Bober was a highlight at the conclusion of each recital. 🌟 *Heather Pineo Regan*

The **Halifax** Chapter of NSRMTA hosted a Canada Music Week recital on Sunday, November 23 at the Lilian Piercey Concert Hall in the Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts. We also hosted chosen performers from the Atlantic Contemporary Showcase Festival. All performers played music by Canadian composers or their own compositions. Our special guest artist was India Gailey, cellist, who performed two of her own compositions for solo cello.

India is also a composer and improviser who won an East Coast Music Award his year and was nominated for a Juno.

Our program began with a group of eighteen instrumentalists and vocalists performing Oh Canada, led by their teacher, Skippy Mardon. There were twenty-eight solo or duet performers and four students who performed their own award winning compositions during this inspiring afternoon. We are very fortunate to have so many students celebrating the wealth of Canadian music!

🌟 *CMW Coordinator - Diana Torbert*





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



ORMTA's November Canada Music Week gatherings inspired participants with creativity, happiness, and a great sense of pride in Canadian music!

The **Brantford** Branch celebrated Canada Music Week by hearing music from twenty-seven local students, and clinician Amber Morphy offered helpful feedback on each performance. This was celebrated at the home of Amy Hall, where the students were able to listen to each other's pieces and glean knowledge from all of the comments offered. A teacher's lunch and refreshments for students and parents were offered as a part of the celebration. It was a great event! ✨

Over forty students performed the music of twenty-five Canadian composers at the **Hamilton-Halton** Branch's Canada Music Week concert, Canada from Sea to Sea to Sea. The audience of one hundred at the Burlington Performing Arts Centre was treated to brief biographies of the various composers featured. It was a great opportunity for students to perform in a professional setting. It was a wonderful evening. ✨



The **Kitchener-Waterloo** ORMTA branch hosted a great celebration for Canada Music Week on November 22nd, 2025 with guest adjudicator Dr. Christine Tithecott, seasoned pedagogue, collaborative pianist, and performer.

Hosted at the Laurier Academy of Music and Arts by donation, the branch saw nearly thirty participants of piano, violin, and voice perform selections by Canadian composers such as Anne Crosby Gaudet, Teresa Richert, and Christopher Norton. Each student participated in a masterclass adjudicated by Dr. Tithecott, and received one-on-one instruction and encouraging feedback.

Students also participated in a visual arts portion where they were encouraged to create a musical mosaic inspired by their chosen performance piece. While some students chose to create their projects out of modelling clay, we also saw mixed-media collages, decorated cards for loved ones, and even Lego creations!

The day culminated in a wonderful student recital for new and seasoned performers, also (of course!) featuring Canadian composers. Our November Canada Music Week gathering continued to uplift participants with creativity, happiness, and a renewed sense of pride in Canadian music. ✨ *Jessica Khan*





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



Newmarket and Area Branch took great pleasure in celebrating Canada Music Week, with their annual recital Canadian Composers And Their Music. A small, but mighty group of performers celebrated the music of David MacIntyre, John Burge, Maria Case, Sky Yang, Christine Donkin, and several others. Many thanks to those teachers who participated! ✨

The **Ottawa** Region Branch celebrated Canada Music Week with a recital held on November 22nd at Bethany Baptist Church in Ottawa. The program showcased nineteen Canadian composers, including a couple Ottawa teachers' compositions/arrangements. A Canadian Composers' Quiz, midway through the program, helped to highlight this special week. Certificates and treats were given to each performer. The twenty-nine students (including pianists and vocalists) were from 10 teachers' studios.

The **Peterborough** Branch celebrated Canada Music Week with a church-based recital, with approximately twenty students. ✨

CMW Coordinator - Kirsten Carlson





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



À l'occasion de la Semaine de la musique canadienne 2025 (SMC), l'Association des professeurs de musique du Québec (APMQ) a invité ses professeurs membres à inscrire leurs élèves à une série de trois récitals qui ont eu lieu le dimanche 16 novembre au cégep Saint-Laurent.

Ces récitals ont mis en lumière le talent de nombreux jeunes musiciens qui ont interprété des œuvres de compositeurs canadiens, contribuant ainsi à faire rayonner notre patrimoine musical. Chaque participant s'est vu remettre un certificat de participation en reconnaissance de son engagement et de la qualité de sa prestation.

Mme Catherine Leroux, juge invitée, a eu la délicate tâche de sélectionner ses coups de cœur parmi les nombreuses performances remarquables. Les élèves choisis ont ensuite été conviés à se produire de nouveau au gala de clôture de la SMC.

Ce concert-gala, point culminant de la semaine, a connu un franc succès. Il a procuré un moment inoubliable autant aux musiciens qu'à l'ensemble de l'auditoire. Les jeunes artistes y ont reçu un prix en argent, gracieusement offert par la Fondation québécoise pour l'éducation musicale, en reconnaissance de leur excellence.

Ces jeunes interprètes, véritables ambassadeurs de la musique canadienne, incarnent une relève prometteuse et inspirante pour l'avenir musical de notre pays.

Remerciements

Je tiens à exprimer ma profonde gratitude à celles et ceux qui ont contribué au succès de cette édition de la Semaine de la musique canadienne :

- **Solange Bellemare**, coordonnatrice-adjointe de la SMC, pour son soutien constant et son efficacité remarquable.
- **Patrycia Meunier**, trésorière de l'APMQ, pour sa rigueur et son engagement dans la gestion des ressources.
- **Danielle Langevin**, registraire et coordonnatrice Web, dont la compétence et la générosité de son temps ont été précieuses tout au long de l'organisation.
- **David Potvin**, président de l'APMQ, pour son discours inspirant et motivant, adressé aux jeunes musiciens, aux professeurs, aux parents et à l'ensemble du public. Ses mots ont su toucher et mobiliser notre communauté musicale.

To celebrate 2025 Canada Music Week (CMW), the Québec Music Teachers' Association (QMTA) invited its member teachers to register their students for a series of three recitals, held on Sunday, November 16 at Cégep Saint-Laurent.

These recitals showcased the talents of many young musicians who performed works by Canadian composers, helping to promote and celebrate our musical heritage. Each participant received a certificate of participation in recognition of their dedication and performance.

Our guest adjudicator, Ms. Catherine Leroux, had the delicate task of selecting her favourites among the many high-quality performances. The selected students were invited to perform again at the Canada Music Week closing gala.

This Gala Concert, the highlight of the week, was a resounding success. It offered a memorable experience for both the performers and the audience. The young artists received a cash prize generously offered by the Québec Musical Education Foundation in recognition of their excellence.

These young performers, true ambassadors of Canadian music, represent a promising and inspiring new generation for the future of our country's musical landscape.

Special Thanks

I extend my heartfelt thanks to those who contributed to the success of this year's Canada Music Week:

- **Solange Bellemare**, CMW Assistant Coordinator, for her unwavering support and remarkable efficiency.
- **Patrycia Meunier**, QMTA Treasurer, for her diligence and commitment in managing our resources.
- **Danielle Langevin**, Registrar and Web Coordinator, whose competence and generous dedication of time were invaluable throughout the organization of the event.
- **David Potvin**, QMTA President, for his inspiring and motivating speech addressed to the young musicians, teachers, parents, and the entire audience. His words truly resonated with and energized our musical community.

Coordonnatrice de la SMC / CMW Coordinator
Christiane Claude 🌟



Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



Saskatoon Branch members are always very active participants in Contemporary Showcase, held this year on November 21st and 22nd at Redeemer Lutheran Church. We enjoyed the strong performances of the eighty-one pianists registered who presented a wide diversity of Canadian music; composers hailed from all over Canada including Saskatchewan and Saskatoon itself. We were fortunate to have Alyssa Layfield as adjudicator. She brought a wealth of experience and enthusiasm with her! Hats off to Hannah Marple and her committee members, Jhena Dela Cruz and Willette Neijmeijer, as well as the many volunteers who made this festival such a success!

Saskatoon Branch traditionally holds a recital with a special focus on Canadian composers in Canada Music Week. Taking place at Emmanuel Anglican Church, November 23rd at 2:30 pm, the recital consisted of seventeen piano solos ranging from junior to advanced levels. The composers were almost exclusively Canadian. Nine studios were represented in all, and the standard of performance was uniformly high. We thank Anastasia Winterhalt for her excellent work as organizer and Laurien Gibson for her assistance. 🌟 *Lynn Ewing*

West Central hosted another Canadian Music Showcase on November 21st - 22nd in Rosetown. This event continues to grow to include voice, violin, cello, as well as piano, with students from Biggar, Plenty, Dodsland, Handel, Elrose, Kindersley, Eatonia, Kerrobert, and Rosetown. We even had the Biggar adult choir Prairie Notes join in, making it a inter-generational event. We were fortunate to acquire the adjudicator services of Dianne Gryba, who gave wonderful positive energy, with musical suggestions and technical tips in all disciplines, and a printed joke for each student, along with her abundant encouragement. In conjunction, we ran a speech arts workshop lead by the one and only Heather Macnab, who guided the students through a variety of activities to explore the world of spoken word and acting. The teachers also gained some insights with Dianne and Heather. Dianne, who is now President of the SMFA, reflected on the merits and effects of the music festival experience, and the recent expansion and redefinition of the syllabus.

Several students were recommended to the competition for national awards. Kudos to Mariah Bakanec, Rebecca Nunweiler, Eliana Bakanec, and Mya Nickel. Biggar hosted a concert of Canadian music on November 12, with soloists, school groups, and adult ensembles contributing from a variety of sources. It was well received by an enthusiastic audience, in the beautiful Majestic Theatre. 🌟 *Clayton Braybrook*





Canada Music Week - Reports & Photos

Semaine de la musique canadienne



The **Yorkton** Registered Music Teachers held a Canadian Showcase November 14th and 15th, 2025 at the beautifully decorated Alliance Church in Yorkton. Picture an array of Christmas trees all lit up enjoying some lovely Canadian music. This non-competitive event is always a great way to start the teaching year. Students performed Canadian compositions many of which were from composers in our very own province of Saskatchewan. Adjudicator and composer Dianna Neufeld graced everyone with her compositions following student's performances. Encouraging artistic expression and storytelling Dianna inspired our young musicians. There were forty-two participants in total with students from six studios of teachers in our area. Teachers also got together for a workshop with Dianna prior to the non-competitive event and heard some of her music. She also discussed new ways to use imagery to make their pieces come to life. Exploring colour and visual depictions Dianna showed many ways to influence students to use their own artistic expression in their performances. A wonderful time was had by all. 🌟 *Gillian Rice*



Canada Music Week **Poster Competition** Results

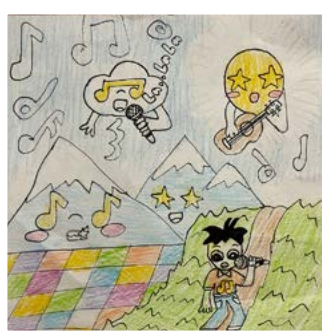
The members of the Canada Music Week Committee were delighted to receive thirteen entries for the poster competition

The theme **A Musical Mosaic** was interpreted with lots of imagination. Congratulations to all of you, well done!

Submitted by Carol Ditner-Wilson and the CMW Team



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Canada Music Week Poster Competition Results - cont.

1. Zoe Rivera - 12 - BC

2. Shuxin Zhang - 10 - SK

3. Olivia Ovington - 17 - BC

4. Joanna Mahima Kakumani - 10 - QC

5. Chun Ki Wong - 18 - BC

6. Doan Lai - age 16 - BC

7. Lily Yuen - 13 - BC

8. Olivia Dong - 11 - BC

9. Heliz Pham - 11 - QC

10. Audrey Chui - 8 - SK

11. Kate Florentino - 11 - ON

12. Theodor Playda - 10 - AB

13. Lorelle Mermigas - 14 - ON

1st Place - Lily Yuen BC - student of Lillian Chan



2nd Place - tied

#6 Doan Lai BC - student of Lillian Chan

#13 Lorelle Mermigas ON - student of Diane Jongerden



3rd Place

#4 Joanna Mahima Kakumani QC - student of Dianne Briscoe



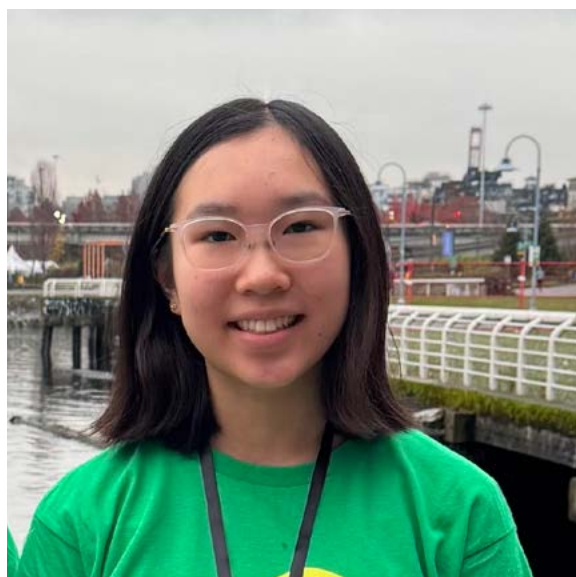
Honourable Mention

#9 Helix Pham QC, student of Christiane Claude

#1 Zoe Rivera BC - student of Lillian Chan



The winning design
Lily Yuen, BC
13 years old



Lily Yuen is a grade 8 student from Richmond, BC. She started learning Theory from Ms Lillian Chan one year ago and flute with Ms Jessica McLaughlin four years ago. Currently she is pursuing her level eight flute certificate and also expanding her musical horizon by learning to play a second instrument, clarinet.

Lily plays flute in her school's Grade 8 band and the Marcato Youth Community Band. She has been a part of Long & McQuade's spring, summer and winter recitals for the past few years, and continues to share her love for music by performing at school, senior homes and private and public venues.

In her free time, Lily enjoys baking, DIY projects and playing volleyball.





Thank you to all program volunteers

Awards & Competitions

Thank you to Lynne Gagne for all your help.

Alde Calongcagong

Conference 2025 - Montréal, Québec

Nous souhaitons remercier tous ceux et celles qui ont travaillé très fort afin d'assurer le succès du congrès, nous leur sommes extrêmement reconnaissants.



Here is a list of the committee members:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| • David Côté | president and venue coordinator |
| • David Potvin | vice-president, secretary, workshop coordinator |
| • Alexandra Delgado | advertising |
| • Danielle Langevin | registrar and website coordinator |
| • Renee Chan | hospitality and catering |
| • Patricia Meunier | treasurer |
| • Gayle Colebrook | graphic design and program |
| • Carolyn Garritano | conference resource person |
| • Lynne Gagné | competition coordinator |
| • Line Prévost | volunteer coordinator |
| • Laura Gray | CFMTA |
| • Marlaire Osgood | CFMTA |
| • Lee-Ann Brodeur | CFMTA |
| • Hélène Lord | advisor |
| • Benjamin Chapman | co-treasurer |

To the venue:

Thank you to the board of Directors of École de musique Vincent-d'Indy / La direction de l'École de musique Vincent-d'Indy.

David Côté & David Potvin

Conference Resource Person

I would like to give a huge congratulations to the organizers of the 2025 National Conference in Montréal, Québec. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of these APMQMTA members, this event was a resounding success!

Carolyn Garritano

Canada Music Week

The Canada Music Week committee consists of **Ellen Thompson (YRMTA)**, **Rita Raymond (NSRMTA)**, and **Jacqueline Huffman-Krisza (ORMTA)**. They are a great team who support the spirit of Canada Music Week all year long.

Carol Ditner-Wilson





Thank you to all program volunteers

Connecting Canada Professional Development

Laura Liu (CFMTA & MRMTA), **Carolyn Garritano (ARMTA)** and **Cindy Thong (NSRMTA)** are the members of the Connecting Canada 2026 committee. We are very excited to be bringing this virtual professional development program to our members and beyond for another summer.

Laura Gray

Connecting Canada Year Round

Laura Gray (ORMTA) and **Barbara Levenson (SRMTA)**, thank you for all your help, your ideas, and your resourcefulness, and your dedication, I could not make this program run.

Dina Pollock

Essay Competition

Thank you to my committee of - **Susan Shantora (NWTRMTA)**, **Kathy Normandeau (ORMTA)** and **Ian Green (ORMTA)**.

Catherine Finch Barlett

Finance Committee

As Chair of the Finance Committee, I would like to thank a number of individuals for their contributions in 2025.

First and foremost is our esteemed **Treasurer, Lois Kerr**. Lois has been a valued resource, and her advice has continued to be dependable as well as carefully considered. Next is **President Marlaine Osgood**, she is a calming and supportive presence on the committee. **Program Administrative Assistant Lee-Ann Brodeur** and **Past President Laura Grey** also participated in Finance Committee meetings in the first half of 2025 and I am grateful for their expertise and their time. Finally, I would like to acknowledge our external advisors, **Erik Horne** and **Renee Chan**. After many years, Erik stepped back from this role in July, and he was replaced by Renee in August. These two volunteers helped us maintain transparency and provide a broader perspective to the discussions throughout the year. To each of the above dedicated professionals, on behalf of the CFMTA I warmly thank you for all your efforts.

Barbara Siemens

Professional Development

Chris Foley (ORMTA), **Barbara Byczko (ORMTA)**, **Ani Essegulian (ORMTA)** - Thank you for your dedication and contributions to support our RMTs' professional development over the years!

Laura Liu

Student Composer Competition (SCC)

The SCC committee is currently comprised of **Joyce Hein (PEIRMTA)**, **Christian Berube (NBRMTA)** and myself, Rebekah Maxner (chair, NSRMTA). As the coordinator of the competition, I'd like to send out my sincere thanks to Joyce and Christian for their thoughtful input throughout the entire process.

Rebekah Maxner



2024 / 2025

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By-Laws, Policies and Procedures	Lee-Ann Brodeur	Professional Development & Research	Laura Liu
Canada Music Week	Carol Ditner-Wilson	Program Funding & Grant Application	Nadine Martin
Canadian Music Teacher Magazine	Dina Pollock	Public Relations & Marketing	Amy Boyes
Conference Resource Person	Carolyn Garritano	Social Media	Ellen Thompson
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CANADA MUSIC WEEK
SEMAINE DE LA MUSIQUE DU CANADIENNE

Alberta <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Josina Leder-Sears Christine Rogers	Nova Scotia <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Diana Torbert Skippy Mardon
British Columbia <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Leah Lifton Leah Lifton	Ontario <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Kirsten Carlson Dawn Toombs
Manitoba <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Melissa Gingrich Melissa Gingrich	Prince Edward Island <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Sharon Makarenko
New Brunswick <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Christian Berube	Québec <i>Semaine de la musique du canadienne</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Christiane Claude Benoit Côté
Newfoundland <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Marie Cahill	Saskatchewan <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Gillian Rice Kim Engen
Northwest Territories <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Susan Shantora	Yukon <i>Canada Music Week</i> <i>Student Composer Competition</i>	Ellen Thompson Andrea McColeman

YOUNG ARTIST
JEUNE ARTISTE

National Chairperson	Louisa Lu
Alberta Tour	Louisa Lu
British Columbia Tour	Maureen Hollins
Western Tour	Evangelina Keeley
Ontario Tour	Tania Granata
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Atlantic Tour	Lynn Johnson



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