

## *'True North Strong & Free'*

### 2009 Canada Music Week Report – ORMTA



ORMTA members all across Ontario spent this year's Canada Music Week celebrating our country's music and composers. Countless recitals, workshops, competitions, and special presentations were presented throughout the province by a dedicated band of teachers, composers, students and volunteers. Here are some of the highlights:

The **Belleville** Branch held its annual Junior Recital and Tea to celebrate CMW. This Recital gave younger students a chance to perform for parents and friends in a friendly atmosphere. Fifty students performed various piano and vocal pieces, many of which were written by Canadian composers. The event was kicked off by a 10 to 15 member children's choir.

The **Cambridge** Branch held their annual Awards Recital during Canada Music Week. There were 10 awards given out to students for achieving First Class Honours in their Piano Exams. Also, a Theory Award was given for the highest mark in Advanced Rudiments. The recital featured works by Canadian composers performed by many of the twenty-one students.

The **Central Toronto** Branch held its annual Fall Scholarship Recitals as part of CMW. Many students performed works by Canadian composers. In recognition of outstanding performances of Canadian works, the branch awarded their Sir Ernest MacMillan Scholarships at both the junior and senior levels. Branch members were also involved in organizing Contemporary Showcase Toronto; a non-competitive festival where students perform works by Canadian composers. Their line-up of distinguished adjudicators included Leslie Kinton and composer Stella terHart.

Members of **Chatham-Kent** Branch were instrumental in organizing their inaugural Contemporary Showcase Festival. The event featured over 80 students!

**Etobicoke-Mississauga** members encourage their students to enter "Contemporary Showcase Mississauga". Adjudicators, Elisabeth Pomes (voice), and Wendy Potter (piano), worked with the students in a Master class format after they performed. Awards for outstanding and most interpretive performances are presented at the annual concert, which takes place in December 2009. Branch member, Jill Kelman, held a party for her students where they performed Canadian works and played games related to the pieces and composers they had performed. Jill also provided seasonal goodies afterwards for her students. Virginia Taylor presented each of her students who participated in Contemporary showcase with a commemorative pencil. She also talked with her students about the composers that they were performing.

**Kingston** Branch held a Canada Music Week Recital on Saturday, November 21st. The students, mostly pianists and one singer, performed works by Linda Niamath, Beverly Porter, Martha Hill Duncan, Nancy Telfer, Boris Berlin, Lorna Paterson, Stephen Fiess, and Pierre Gallant. Most exciting was the fact that all but one of the composers represented are living composers, and two (Beverly Porter and Martha Hill Duncan) are local composers. Also interesting was the large number of women composers. Before each piece Branch President, Meg Freer provided the audience with some interesting facts about each composer.

The **Kitchener Waterloo** Branch held their Canada Music Week activities a week early this year, with much enthusiasm. Frank Horvat conducted master classes for about 30 students performing Canadian repertoire at Mt. Zion Church in Waterloo. The students enjoyed receiving both positive and constructive feedback. The Branch would like to thank Joanne Bender and Ilva Giermann for coordinating these master classes. Later that evening, Kitchener Waterloo Branch held its annual CMW Recital. Inspired by the 2008 CMW Recital presented by Oshawa Branch, Kitchener Waterloo Branch presented an Aleatoric Recital where the order of performance was determined by chance. The students enjoyed this variation on the standard recital format. A list of performers and their pieces in alphabetical order was provided to the audience members. Sixteen students performed pieces by Canadian composers and one student composer, Daniel Deng, performed his prize-winning composition. The audience had a chance to participate as well by answering quiz questions for prizes. Each performer received a Canada Flag notepad as a memento of the evening.

The **Newmarket & Area** Branch successfully celebrated Canada Music Week by holding a recital entitled “A Celebration of Canadian Composers and Their Music” at Trinity Anglican Church in Aurora. Well-known composers such as Nancy Telfer, Linda Niamath, Marguerite Spencer, Court Stone, Stephan Chatman, and Sophia Eckhardt-Gramatte were well represented. Students also enjoyed exploring music from the next generation of Canadian composers, including Christine Donkin, John Sandy, and Fishel Pustilnik. The branch was also delighted to feature two of their own young composers. Eight-year old Janelle Rodriguez performed her lovely piece, “A Rainy Day”. Seventeen-year old Chardan Howe wowed the audience with his composition, “Uncertainty Of Heart”. To conclude the afternoon, performers, teachers, and parents were invited to take part in “So You Think You Know Your Canadian Composers?”; a mix and match photo display. In keeping with the Canadian theme, Tim Horton’s Timbits and refreshments were enjoyed by all!



*Students enjoying Canada Music Week festivities organized by ORMTA Newmarket & Area Branch*

During CMW, the **North Bay** Branch held its annual Honours Recital; an event where students who achieved marks of honours or higher are invited to play at a special concert. Each student was awarded with a certificate of recognition.

The **North York/ York Region** Branch celebrated Canada Music Week during its November Auditions by awarding special trophies to students who earned the highest marks for their performances of pieces by Canadian composers. For piano, trophies went to Marco Wong, Joshua Wu & Jamie Yu, students of Anita Chan; Eric Wu and Michael Lam, students of Viktorya Gimelshtein. For voice, trophies were awarded to Julian Fung, Destiny Best, Tiya Mistry, Danielle Fradley-Davis and Matthew Timmermans students of Carolynne Godin. These students were all invited to perform at the branch's December Recitals.

Many members of **Ottawa Region** Branch were instrumental in organizing two festivals that celebrated Canadian music in their community: Canadian Music Showcase & Contemporary Showcase. Students, teachers, and parents enjoyed two weekends of creative music exploration and fun!

**Thunder Bay** Branch held a Canadian Highlights Recital at Lakehead University. Young composers were encouraged to perform their own works along with other Canadian compositions.

Congratulations to all the ORMTA branches and the countless CMW conveners and volunteers that presented Canada Music Week celebrations in their communities. Other than producing a superb cultural and educational event, you also promoted the quality of music being composed by our talented Canadian musicians. Thank you to all the students, teachers and parents for recognizing the importance of maintaining our Canadian heritage!

*Compiled by Frank Horvat*