

Canada Music Week Events – ORMTA

Central Toronto Branch

For Canada Music Week, Central Toronto Branch hosted our first ever (we think!) Composition Master Class, on Saturday, November 22. The event was graciously hosted at the home of branch president Eric Shaw. Eight composers, from teens to adults, had their works critiqued by Dr. Roger Bergs. One participant, as well as one of the auditors, was from another branch. As well, one of the (Toronto-based) adult composers was in Hong Kong, and one of the teenage composers participated by Skype from Thunder Bay, so the event had a truly broad outreach!



The works presented were for piano, choir, electronic instruments, and full orchestra. Dr. Bergs kept everyone engaged as he gave advice on dealing with issues of form, phrasing, notation, building energy levels, communicating with the audience, etc.

We are pleased with how the event turned out, and hope to have one involving younger composers in the future.

Alice Dearden, Central Toronto Branch Secretary

Hamilton-Halton Branch

The Hamilton-Halton Branch held its annual Canada Music Week recital at St. Matthew's Church in Burlington on Sunday, November 23 at 3:00 p.m. There were over 30 participants all performing music by Canadian composers. Convenors Leslie Polci and Natalie Spurrell ran a well-organized recital that featured 20 vocalists and only 10 pianists! President Janice Beninger brought greetings from the branch. One of our newest members, Keisha Bell-Kovacs, performed *Place St. Henri* by Oscar Peterson and several vocal students performed songs written and accompanied by their teacher, Linda Fletcher. One of the highlights of the program was a

performance of the Spurrell Studio Choir and Training Chorus, led by member Natalie Spurrell. These are the children who sang us out so beautifully at the 2012 ORMTA Provincial Convention in Burlington. Once again, they performed a stunning rendition of David McIntyre's *Ave Maria* and ended with a beautiful setting of Jack Layton's "To Young Canadians" set to music by James Wright. It was a moving and fitting end to the concert.

Afterwards, we all enjoyed a Canada Music Week cake, which was devoured by the hungry choristers, students and teachers alike.

The Hamilton-Halton ORMTA also co-runs the Burlington Rotary Music festival, which finished on November 15. As part of this festival, anyone wishing to win a scholarship must perform a Canadian composition. As a result, we have heard wonderful performance of Canadian music for the past several years in all disciplines at the festival and it has encouraged teachers to research new compositions.

Andrea Battista, Hamilton-Halton Branch Recital Convenor

Hanover-Walkerton Branch

This year to celebrate Canada Music Week the Hanover-Walkerton ORMTA branch started up a new and innovative initiative called Patriotic Performance Partners. We decided to match up students of similar age groups and have them share a video of themselves performing a Canadian piece. The hope of our teachers is that this initiative will continue throughout the year, or perhaps several years, allowing students to share more performances of their music and develop peer relationships – something like a musical pen pal of the 21st century.

Several of our branch members set to work on finding a user-friendly and secure site for the video sharing, which is now up and running. Students in our area are excited to "meet" other music students. With our large geographical area, the Hanover-Walkerton branch felt that it was time to develop another way for students to get together and share music in a supportive and motivating environment that today's students can relate to easily.

Teachers are finding new and exciting ways of using technology in their studios, and supporting our colleagues. As one teacher said, "Why wouldn't students participate in this great initiative? They (the students) get to give a performance without parents having to drive anywhere, spend any money, dress up, feel the pressure of a live audience, and in addition to the video they make, they will get to watch and learn to comment on other student's videos at their leisure. They will be exposed to various instruments and new music. How much easier does it get?"

Our branch submitted a proposal for the William Andrews Award, but did not receive the grant this year. We look forward to seeing the ideas of the recipients in the next CFMTA publication.

Laura Gray, Hamilton-Walkerton Branch President

Kingston Branch

The Canada Music Week Festival in Kingston went very well. Adjudicator Susan Griesdale heard students on Friday evening and Saturday and was very impressed with the level of teaching and performing here. She offered lovely and encouraging words to the students who participated. The love and care brought forward by the piano students in particular showed that contemporary Canadian music clearly resonates well with our youth (and young at heart) today. Such wonderful colours and interest for everyone in attendance!

We had a really good finale concert on Sunday. We also held a draw for tickets for Kingston Frontenacs hockey games. This opportunity to celebrate Canadian Music and our young Canadian musicians is so important in today's climate where there is so much distrust, fear and lack of communication. The power of music truly crosses all borders and creates happiness. Our teachers sent home lots of smiling students proud of their accomplishments.

Meg Freer, Kingston Branch President

Kitchener-Waterloo Branch

Nov. 22 was a wonderful celebration in Kitchener Waterloo! A full day of Canadian music was presented by 65 students from beginners to advanced at Wilfrid Laurier University. Master classes with clinician Dr. Marnie Van Weelden were fun and informal, and very helpful for students who had prepared Canadian pieces. The highlight was the Canada Music Week recital held at 5 pm. So many Canadian composers were represented! This event has become a tradition for our branch. It gives our students an opportunity to perform in a comfortable setting early in the school year, and to receive constructive feedback. Teachers appreciate the chance to hear new music and to learn new ways of teaching and interpretation. At the end of the day, we all feel proud of our branch and of the tremendous talent we have in our Canadian music scene! We look forward to our next celebration of Canada Music Week!

Joanne Bender, Kitchener-Waterloo Branch

London Branch

The London, Ont. ORMTA branch was thrilled to give the Young Artist Award Winner, Charissa Vandikas (student of Dr. Michael Esch) the Aeolian Hall performance experience and felt it was perfect to host it during the Canadian music week allowing students to hear and see what others their age were able to accomplish.



Four of Marion Miller's piano students, Hannah, Clara, Angela and Susannah Salamon, best summoned up the evening with the following:

"My sisters and I really enjoyed Charissa's performance. It was so inspiring and we learned so much from watching her. The ease and maturity with which she plays the most demanding piano repertoire is astonishing. Her performance made us want to go home and practice even harder!"

Debbie Talbot and Bev Barrett

Newmarket and Area Branch

The Newmarket & Area Branch got an early start to 2014 Canada Music Week events this year. Three separate events featuring teachers, clinicians, students and a general audience were the focus of our CMW activities:

Our initial celebration began at our final branch luncheon in **June**. Two of our branch members, **Paulette Popp** and **Dianne Hughes**, were invited to perform some of their own piano works. Paulette performed pieces for beginner students in solo and duet format from her beginner book *The Peter Linden Piano Course*, while Dianne showcased two of her own compositions entitled *Spanish Fantasy* and *The Ancient Dance*. As members of the **Association of Canadian Women Composers**, both were encouraged to look into having their works published!

Our teachers were also encouraged to get an early start on music selection for the CMW recitals in the Fall. On September 19, our branch hosted a workshop with Red Leaf Composers and clinicians **Susan Griesdale** and **Martha Hill Duncan**. We heard a variety of performances from several new Canadian composer collections; *Creatures Great and Small* by **Joanne Bender**, *Journey Through The Galaxy* by **Irene Voros**, *Precipitations* by **Martha Hill Duncan**, *Arctic*

Voices, by **Susan Griesdale**, and many others. Martha and Susan enjoyed performing both solos and duets!

Compositions for violin and flute were also made available to those in attendance.

The workshop was very well attended; 20 people, including both ORMTA and non-ORMTA teachers, as well as one student. It was inspiring and fun. We all had an opportunity to browse and/or purchase many composer collections after the workshop.

On **November 8th**, the branch hosted our annual **Recital of Canadian Composers and Their Music**. Eighty students took part in three back-to-back recitals featuring performances by piano, vocal, harp, cello, and flute students.



It has become a tradition at our recitals to include our “So You Think You Know Your Canadian Composers” matching game, and to serve Canadian cupcakes and refreshments after our recitals. All who attended had an enjoyable afternoon of performance and Canadian celebration!

Many thanks to those teachers who helped make this event a success. The \$300 that was raised will be awarded to students at the **Newmarket & Area Awards Festival** held each May.

Sheila McLean, Newmarket and Area Branch

North Bay Branch



The North Bay Branch of ORMTA celebrated Canada Music Week with an Honour Recital. All students who received honour marks in examinations throughout the year were invited to perform and students who received the highest marks in practical and theory examinations were presented with certificates and awards. The Mayor of North Bay presented us with a Proclamation and the Supreme Ruler of the Elks Lodge presented Gabriel Lavoie with the Grade Ten award in memory of Ernie Ervine (who was married to one of our members). I mention Gabriel, student of Doreen Bryer, as he received the award for both Grade Ten piano and ARCT as well as our ORMTA Advanced Theory award. What a busy year for him! We celebrated the efforts of all our students, memories of past teachers and Canadian composers.

Nancy Hughes, North Bay Branch President

North York/York Region Branch

Every year for Canada Music Week, the North York/York Region Branch gives a special trophy for the highest mark of the performance of a Canadian composition during the Fall Auditions (which fall during Canada Music Week). All levels are involved, and one performer of each Junior, Intermediate and Senior Piano and Voice will receive a special trophy. Thus six trophies are awarded.

Carolynne Godin, North York/York Region Branch President

Ottawa Region Branch

Wow, what a night! Orleans United Church was jam packed with supportive family and friends Sunday November 23rd for the 2014 Canada Music Week recital. The crowds were treated to the music performed by 39 young musicians ranging in age from 7 to 18 and featuring a variety of instruments: voice, harp and piano. We even had a few original compositions by Ottawa

composers Kelly-Marie Murphy, Colin Mack, Claudia Cashin-Mack, Anita Schlarb and young composer Abbey Sugars-Keen. They were all outstanding.



The last performers were voice student Cassidy Van Bavel and the amazing harpist Caroline Leonardelli performing Frozen Fire, an incredible piece written for Cassidy by her mother, Kelly-Marie Murphy – it was riveting! As a way of furthering our ONMC/ORMTA collaboration, pianist Catherine Donkin performed two pieces of Christine Donkin's to close the concert. It brought the crowd to their feet! We are definitely a city that exudes musical talent. President and Canada Music Week convener Tania Granata wants to thank all the volunteers who helped her organize the students, the reception, those who brought items for the reception and those who helped with cleanup. I am so grateful for your help! All the participants received a certificate of participation and ORMTA Voice teacher Misty Banyard helped hand out the "Obama" cookie to all the performers..it has become a small tradition!

Tania Granata , Ottawa Region Branch President

Owen Sound Branch

Our Canada Music Week recital on Friday November 21st was a complete success! We had about twenty students performing works by Canadian composers (including local composer Debra Wanless) and a fabulous audience turnout.



After the performance we had a draw for two paintings that were generously donated by composer Rémi Bouchard. The reception was a hit as always, due to the enormous celebratory cake and take-home Canadian souvenirs. We got to hear a great variety of Canadian music, and I think everyone in attendance enjoyed themselves and learned something new.

Jen Smith Lanthier, Owen Sound Branch Secretary