



AIMTAC Advisor

Association of
Independent Music
Teachers at Alberta
College

Winter 2016

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AIMTAC EXECUTIVE

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Vice-President	Carol Mellors
Secretary	Emily Grieve
Treasurer	Keri-Lynn Zwicker
Directors-at-large	Simon-Marc de Freitas Frank Ho Robert Klakowich

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The editor welcomes your comments and suggestions. Please keep us informed of your newsworthy activity, both professional and personal, and feel free to submit short articles of interest to our faculty.

Editor's Corner

The 2015 AIMTAC Annual General Meeting last October went off well. Thanks to all who attended. As is often the case at such events, a new Executive is elected, and we recognize the valuable contribution of those stepping down who have donated their time to our noble cause.

Many bouquets go out to Elizabeth Raycroft and Laressa Pawlowski for sharing their wisdom and insights. Liane Gayler has devoted nearly a decade to AIMTAC as President, Vice-President and Secretary. Her passion, enthusiasm and attention to detail have been greatly appreciated, and will be sorely missed. Hence, we welcome Simon-Marc de Freitas, Emily Grieve and Frank Ho to the fold. We are your voice—use us well!

Among several interesting features in this issue are the latest on ensemble happenings in and out of the Conservatory—Emilio De Mercato and his Alberta Symphony Orchestra project, Dan Davis' A/B Trio who are on quite a roll, and some facts I'll bet you didn't know about double bass activity in the Conservatory, kindly provided by Ioan Tetel. And take a brief sneak peek at our up-and-coming scholarship concert. Happy reading!

Robert Klakowich

A New Orchestra for Alberta

Imagine the energy, passion and determination necessary to create, from nothing, a new symphony orchestra to represent an entire province!



Members of the new ASO

Emilio De Mercato is attempting exactly that! His idea was to initiate an Edmonton-based touring ensemble to bring classical music to both large and small communities. Its mandate also includes educational programs for schools and for people with disabilities. "What we do is for everyone. We're making sure all Albertans have a chance to appreciate a universal art form that people have adored for centuries – and will adore for years to come," says Emilio.

The ASO was founded about a year ago. Asked

about its progress so far, Emilio answered, "At this time we don't yet have a full orchestra. We're planning to build to about 20 players by the 2016-17 season. Much depends on the result of our fundraising campaign, which is starting soon." The ensemble did have a highly successful promotional tour in the fall with a string quintet as its core, hitting ten Alberta centres. Next up is a winter tour of five Canadian cities called "A Stradivarius for the People," in which pianist Emilio teams up with Matteo Fideli performing on a 1715 Strad. The Edmonton concert is at the Winspear on February 11.

It's an ambitious project, indeed, requiring much time, fortitude and stick-to-itiveness-- not to mention the all-important financial backing, both private and public. (The Alberta Symphony Orchestra Society is now a registered charity.) Much success in this worthy endeavour! If Emilio's dream is realized, it will surely advance Alberta's status as a national leader in the performing arts.

www.albertasymphony.com

TAKE NOTE

Staff Meeting
February 11, 10:30 - noon
PCL Hall

A/B Trio Tops the Charts

Dan Davis' A/B Trio premiered at no. 1 on the *Jearshot* National Jazz Chart in February/March 2015 for their second CD release, *Out West*, featuring nine-time Juno Award winning saxophonist Mike Murley. CMJ, a New York-based college radio network, rated the disc at no. 28 at its peak, rare for a Canadian group. Congratulations!

Of their first release, *Take No Prisoners*, Tommy Banks (and he would know!) remarked that their music was "mature and solidly crafted." How's that for high praise? These boys perform regularly in Edmonton. Read all about them at www.abtrio.com.



A/B Trio

Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming Concerts at Muttart Hall

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE
John McCormick, Director
Sunday, March 6
2 pm

**MIDDAY CONCERTS
IN MUTTART HALL**
12:10 – 12:55 pm

Thursday, January 21
Thursday, February 25
Thursday, March 24

EDMONTON RECITAL SOCIETY
Donna Brown (soprano), Jane
Coop (piano), Aaron Au (viola)
Sunday, January 24
7:30 pm

**CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
FACULTY RECITAL**
Sunday, May 15
2 pm

AIMTAC ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT CONCERT

Sunday, March 13
2 pm

The Double Bass Recital

by Ioan Tetel

The Double Bass Recital is a yearly event at the Conservatory of Music, where I teach Double Bass. It is like a “double bass show,” as someone said, where all my students past and present are invited to participate. They are typically well prepared for this event after much technical work like scales, arpeggios and etudes. The music is drawn from a wide variety of styles from Baroque to modern, including music by Bach, Dragonetti, Dittersdorf, and modern works such as those by Hindemith and Bartok. Preparing them for the annual recital is a way to motivate them to practice. For further motivation, I usually recommend them to play in the Fall Festival or the Kiwanis Festival, and as a result they are also prepared to audition for the Edmonton Intermediate or Senior Youth Orchestra. The double bass section of these orchestras tend to contain only my students. Two of my former students were accepted to the National Youth Orchestra, and this of course makes me very proud.

Adult students are also very much in demand



to play in several community or chamber orchestras around the city. Another former student just played the Tubin Concerto as a soloist with the Kitchener Symphony Orchestra.

After spending thirty years with the ESO, and a further twenty years in Romania as a member of the George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as Professor of Double Bass at the university there, I enjoy every

minute spent with my students here. It invigorates me to help them discover the beauty of the double bass, just as I did.



Pictured: The Double Bass Recital, June 13, 2015.



Ear Training for Conservatory Students

by Robert Klakowich



Most of us recognize that ear training and the development of aural skills is an important component of music instruction that is often neglected in private music lessons. Virtually all music education curricula include ear training as a fundamental branch of study, and no musician young or old can function without well-developed aural perception.

When I was a student at the Royal Academy of Music in London, one of the first things that took me aback about British students was how proficient they were as musicians away from the score. It became obvious that skills such as pitch, rhythm and chord recognition, and even improvisation, formed a significant part of their training at an early age, and it manifested itself in their musicianly approach to performance that made me feel I had some catching up to do.

Many, if not most, of our students here take national performance exams such as RCM in which their aural skills are tested. Without sufficient instruction in gaining these skills, this portion of their exam often represents a demonstrated weakness, largely due to the lack of attention given by their teachers. This undoubtedly is the result of the understandable, yet perhaps over-rated emphasis placed on the acquisition of technique and the performance of pieces.

When I arrived at the Conservatory, there was no program specifically devoted to musicianship. Realizing that students are typically motivated by the prospect of learning alongside their peers, I suggested that ear training is best taught in a classroom environment, and I requested an opportunity to offer a ten-week course in ear training every term. These classes can accommodate

students at any age or level. We devote some time to group work which focusses on sight singing and rhythm. Then, for those taking exams, I concentrate on the specific exam requirements of their grade individually while other students observe, trying to solve the puzzles silently, until it is their turn. Many non-exam students use these classes as a starting point for their music instruction. Classes are geared towards students' needs.

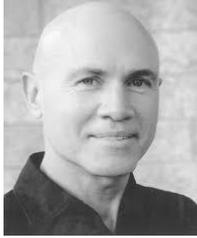
I am sometimes baffled by the fact that in these classes students from outside the Conservatory often outnumber Conservatory students. Here is a chance for our students to supplement their practical training at a very low cost--without leaving the building. Why not encourage your students to take advantage? They can register now for the next class, **ten Saturday mornings beginning March 19**, and then watch for positive results!

From the Water Cooler

Vocal Music Headlines Benefit Concert



Svetlana Sech



Jeremy Spurgeon

Much of the square footage of the Muttart Hall stage will be occupied on March 13 with **Clint Hagel's** Schola Cantorum Women's Choir. The power of the human voice is also amply represented with arias by Verdi and Puccini, performed by **Svetlana Sech** and the one and only **Jeremy Spurgeon**. **Elizabeth Grigaitis** adds an edge of German

Romanticism with a group of songs by Richard Strauss, teaming with pianist **Ariane Lowrey**. And not to worry, you will hear plenty of instrumental music as well from the likes of **Russell Whitehead**, **Clayton Leung**, and **Simon-Marc de Freitas**, but we can't give too much away right now, can we? Watch for posters, and we'll see you on March 13!



Elizabeth Grigaitis

Condolences

At this time, our heartfelt thoughts are with **Marina Stolyar**, whose little grandson, **Zaiden Laron Stevenson**, recently passed away at the Stollery Children's Hospital. AIMTAC intends to make a donation to the hospital's Foundation in **Zaiden's** memory.

Busy Season for Frank Ho

Last fall, our violinist colleague **Frank Ho** performed two recitals with fellow faculty member **David Tutt**, premiering a Suite for Violin and Piano which Frank commissioned from Calgary composer and former Conservatory faculty member, **Peter Janciewicz**. In December, Frank performed with the newly formed Metropolitan Orchestra and conductor **Danielle Lisboa**. Future recitals include those with faculty member **Bianca Baciu** in January and February, and a special concert of movie music by **Ennio Morricone** in March at Festival Place. A busy season indeed!



Frank Ho

Winter Courses and Ensembles at the Conservatory

We here are fortunate to be able to offer group instruction and ensembles for our students. Choose from a variety of learning opportunities listed below, taught by our top-notch faculty, that benefit Conservatory students and those in greater Edmonton. Details and registration at **780-633-3725**.

**SCHOLA CANTORUM
WOMEN'S CHOIR**
Clint Hagel, Director
Mondays, 7:15 – 9:15 pm
January 4 – April 11

MUSIC IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
Elizabeth Grigaitis, Instructor
Saturdays, January 9 – April 9
Tuesdays, January 12 - April 5
Age 3: 9:30 – 10:20 am or 2 – 2:50 pm
Age 4: 10:30 – 11:20 am or 3 – 3:50 pm
Age 5-8: 11:30 am – 12:20 pm or 4 – 4:50 pm

SAXOPHONE QUARTET
Charles Stolte, Director
Saturdays, 10 – 11:15 am
January 16 – March 5

IMPROV CLASSES
Dan Davis, Instructor
Saturdays, January 16 – March 5
Improv I: 11:30 am – 12:45 pm
Improv II: 10:15 – 11:30 am

STRING QUARTET WORKSHOP
Vaughan String Quartet, Facilitators
Fridays, 5 – 6 pm
January 29 – March 18

**ALBERTA COLLEGE
CELLO ENSEMBLE**
Ian Woodman, Director
Sundays, 2 – 3:30 pm
Junior and Senior Ensemble bi-weekly:
January 31 – May 29

**CONFIDENCE BUILDING AND
STAGE PRESENCE WORKSHOP**
Faye Stollery, Facilitator
Saturday, March 5, 10 am – 12 pm

EAR TRAINING
Robert Klakowich, Instructor
Saturdays, 11 am – 12 pm
March 19 – June 4

**ALBERTA COLLEGE
STRING ENSEMBLE**
Sarah Woodman, Director
Sundays, January 31 – May 29
Junior Ensemble: 1:15 – 2:45 pm
Senior Ensemble: 2:45 – 4:45 pm