



# AIMTAC Advisor

Association of  
Independent Music  
Teachers at Alberta  
College

Fall 2017

IN THIS ISSUE

## Editor's Corner

As leaves tumble to the ground and temperatures begin to plummet, it must mean a new academic year is upon us, and the music studios of Alberta College happily resonate once again! AIMTAC is ever present, acting on your behalf and in support of our students. It thrives on your membership--the larger the numbers the stronger its voice!

Please attend the upcoming AGM (see next column). The terms of some of the current officers are coming due soon, and fresh perspectives are needed. If you are relatively new to the faculty, you are in fact an asset to the Executive, so do consider standing for a position--now or in the near future. Here's your chance to have a say in enhancing our teaching experience at the Conservatory.

The feature article in this issue comes from **Beth Raycroft**, and deals with the serious question of teaching voice to transgender students. We also have reports on summer activities of our faculty, including one on the Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago. Thanks to all for your contributions. These endeavours are a testament to the industry and innovation of our colleagues at home and abroad! And take note of upcoming fall events--concerts, programs, PD--all here to stimulate the mind and the senses!

Robert Klakowich  
[klakowich@macewan.ca](mailto:klakowich@macewan.ca)

## Important Dates

### CONSERVATORY STAFF MEETING

*Tuesday, Sept 26, 1 pm*

**PCL HALL**  
Followed by

### AIMTAC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Tuesday, Sept 26, 2:10 pm*

**PCL HALL**

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Teaching Mindfulness in  
Performance*  
Presented by **Bianca Baciu**  
*Tuesday, Oct 24, 1 pm*  
Room TBA

### AIMTAC CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

*Monday, Dec 18, 11:30 am*  
**BISTRO PRAHA**

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Don't forget the meetings and PD workshop with **Bianca**, not to mention our Christmas social!

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Opportunities aplenty for students' musical development and peer learning.

# Teaching Transgender Students

by Elizabeth Raycroft (edited by Ruth Ann Raycroft)

This past August, I had the privilege to attend the International Congress of Voice Teachers in Stockholm, Sweden. During the conference, there were two sessions on teaching students who have changed their gender identification, or are in transition. The first was a round-table discussion led by Brian Kremer, Liz Jackson Hearn, Loraine Sims and Rachel Inselman. Most of the discussion centered on creating a safe environment, and also dealt with medical, psychological and physical changes in transgender students. In the second session, Loraine Sims of Louisiana State University presented her experiences working with a female-to-male transgender voice student.

The subject of gender identity and expression has garnered recent interest locally because of the case involving the Edmonton Catholic School District. With that in mind, I thought there might be some value in sharing the information I received at ICVT 2017.

In each of the two presentations, the speakers began by introducing themselves and identifying their gender identity and preferred pronouns. For example: "My name is Beth. I am a cisgendered female and prefer her/she." This simply means that I was born female and identify as female.

Here are some of the terms we should be aware of:

- **Cisgender** – the gender one identifies with matches the gender at birth
- **Gender non-conforming/non-binary** – a person who identifies as neither male nor female exclusively
- **Gender dysphoria** – anxiety and/or discomfort regarding one's sex assigned at birth
- **Transgender** – a person whose gender identity is different from their biological gender at birth
- **Gender identity** – the gender one knows themselves to be
- **Gender expression** – the outward expression of one's gender through clothing, makeup, voice, gestures, etc.
- **Gender perception** – the way one wishes to be perceived through the use of pronouns, names, attitudes, etc.

Respect for a person's sexual identity and choice of expression is crucial in a society that wishes to be open. The arts community is often considered the most liberal section of society, and therefore more welcoming to all people. Providing a safe and encouraging learning environment is the most important thing we as teachers can do for people who are struggling with gender identification. Using the preferred pronoun and name, and respecting one's privacy, is the first step. Allowing students to be open and honest about their personal growth will also help you identify their musical needs. However, asking questions about their physical state (for example, questions about genitalia) are unrelated to their musical education, and should be avoided. However, for voice lessons, it may be necessary to open a dialogue on the progress of their hormone treatments, but always giving the impression that they don't have to answer if they feel uncomfortable.

The first three to six months of a person's sexual transition can often be the most challenging, with changes in complexion, body odour and hair length/oiliness. The speaking voice may change; which may cause a bit of an identity crisis. This can complicate the person's gender identity and expression, and there may be depression and anxiety associated with their speaking voice and what they would like it to be. Often, the voice will not align with the identity the student is trying to express.

For those transitioning from male to female, the voice will not change at all. For those transitioning from female to male, the voice will change very little—usually dropping about a minor third. The folds will thicken slightly due to testosterone therapy, but will not change length.

In vocal training, the transgendered male voice may only drop about a third. Thus the student may wish to continue training as a tenor if possible, or even continue as a female voice. As the male-to-female voice will not change physically, options are limited to (1) training as a countertenor, or (2) continue to use the cisgender voice. I have included a link below to an article on Lucia Lucas, a baritone performing in Europe who has transitioned to female but continues to perform professionally as a baritone.

Here are some online resources for both teachers and students:

[albertatrans.org/](http://albertatrans.org/)

Launched in 2007 as a volunteer-run project

[pridecentreofedmonton.org/](http://pridecentreofedmonton.org/)

A resource for Edmonton's GLBT communities. Includes news, resources and programs offered

[www.tesaonline.org/](http://www.tesaonline.org/)

Trans Equality Society of Alberta, whose mission is to be a witness and a voice for matters concerning trans-identified Albertans

[groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/AlbertaTransPeerSupportNetwork/info](http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/AlbertaTransPeerSupportNetwork/info)

Alberta Trans Peer Support Network

[www.transstudent.org/](http://www.transstudent.org/)

Trans Student Educational Resources is a youth-led organization dedicated to changing the educational environment for transgender students

[therapists.psychologytoday.com/rms/prof\\_res ults.php?sid=1505085130.3292\\_29622&state=AB&spec=187](http://therapists.psychologytoday.com/rms/prof_res ults.php?sid=1505085130.3292_29622&state=AB&spec=187)

A resource for therapists, psychologists and transgender counsellors in Edmonton

[www.insightpsychological.ca/sexuality/transgender-and-transexual-counselling/](http://www.insightpsychological.ca/sexuality/transgender-and-transexual-counselling/)

Insight Psychological

[www.independent.ie/entertainment/theatre-arts/i-used-to-go-to-bed-praying-that-id-wake-up-as-a-girl-35441636.html](http://www.independent.ie/entertainment/theatre-arts/i-used-to-go-to-bed-praying-that-id-wake-up-as-a-girl-35441636.html)

Lucia Lucas

## Student Parking Discounts

Here's the process:

1. Download app [Honk Mobile](#) and create an account before arriving to the first lesson
2. Enter Zone ID: **MACSOM**
3. Select 1 hour or 2.5 hours
4. Add Promo code (received on registration)
5. Pay and park: \$1.40 for one hour; \$2.40 for two hours.

**If students or parents do not have a mobile device, please direct them to the Conservatory office for alternative parking options.**

## News from Hither and Yon

### Puccini Festival 2017

by Emilio De Mercato



It has been thrilling for me to return to Torre del Lago, this time to perform at the 63rd annual Puccini Festival last August. That is one of most renowned summer opera festivals in the world, and it was such a privilege for me to be featured for a piano recital between stunning productions of Puccini's masterworks.

Torre del Lago is a beautiful town on Lake Massaciuccoli, Tuscany, where Puccini's house (pictured) and grave are located, right next to a massive amphitheater. The Puccini Festival is nowadays a large event which includes performances of operas, concerts, ballets and recitals, but also conferences and exhibitions. Puccini titles featured this year were *Turandot*, *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly* and *La Rondine*. The last mentioned celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its first performance in 1917.

The Festival's theme was France, a tribute to the country and culture that was so close to

the Maestro's heart. Accordingly, my recital program, "Colours of France," reflected that meaningful connection, although with some poetic licence, as I performed works by Chopin (Scherzo No.1 and Ballade No.1) and Mussorgsky (*Pictures at an Exhibition*) as well as Debussy's suite, *Estampes*. *Pictures*, of course, has a French association because of the well-known orchestral arrangement by Maurice Ravel.

The Puccini Festival consistently establishes partnerships with other theatres and orchestras around the world. Nice Opera Theatre, Novaya Opera Theatre of Moscow and China National Opera House of Beijing were guest orchestras this year. This was, in fact, one of the topics during my conversation with the President of the Puccini Festival Foundation, Alberto Veronesi, whom I had the pleasure to meet after my concert. Together with the festival's Artistic Director, Angelo Taddeo, who had visited us in Edmonton last year, we further discussed a potential partnership with the Alberta Symphony Orchestra to create the first Puccini Festival in Canada. We are hoping to see this incredible dream becoming true in the near future.

Performing at the beautiful Enrico Caruso Auditorium in front of an enthusiastic audience on a splendid Steinway D, surrounded by historic and meaningful scenery, was a great experience. My much awaited trip back to my native country gave me the precious opportunity also to enjoy food, sun, vacation and a memorable time with my family amid a hot Italian summer.

Information on next year's Puccini Festival may be found at [www.puccinifestival.it](http://www.puccinifestival.it).

### Student Highlight

Conservatory violin student Jacques Forestier (son of **Marie** and **Michel**) was invited this summer by Pinchas Zukerman to attend the Young Artists Program in Ottawa. Jacques went on to participate in "Morningside Music Bridge" at the New England Conservatory in Boston. There he studied with Ida Kavafian, Midori Gotō and several others. On September 3, the 12-year-old appeared as soloist with the ESO at Symphony-under-the-sky.



Jacques Forestier

### I Pagliacci Splendidi!

Congratulations to Pop Goes the Opera for bringing Leoncavallo's masterpiece to the Fringe this summer. **Ron Long** struck a magnificent Silvio, while **Elizabeth Grigaitis** was radiant in the chorus. Sold out performances and enthusiastic audiences for opera! No, not at La Scala--at the Edmonton Fringe!

### Welcome to Our World

After a stint at the now-empty CAC campus, **Tyson Kerr** (jazz piano), **Mitch Zorich** (guitar) and **Carol-Lynne Quinn** (voice) have joined us to teach within the friendly confines of our Alberta College studios. See you at the water cooler!

And we bid a fond farewell, and many blessings, to **Jeannette Comeau**, **Julia Dolman** and **Tami Cooper**.

## Fall Concerts at the Conservatory

See posters or Conservatory website for further details

#### AT MUTTART HALL

Sunday Oct 15, 2 pm: CANADA 150 CONCERT

Saturday Nov 18, 2 pm: COLLEGIUM CONCERT

Sunday Nov 19, 2 pm: CHILDREN'S SING-A-LONG

Saturday Dec 2, 2 pm: FALL FESTIVAL GALA CONCERT

Thursday, Dec 21, Time TBA: CONSERVATORY STRING ORCHESTRA

#### MIDDAY IN THE CAFETERIA

Friday, Dec 1, 12 noon  
WHITE CATS CHRISTMAS

# Fall Courses and Ensembles

[Macewan.ca/Conservatory](http://Macewan.ca/Conservatory) contains full details on the following. It updates information in the SCE 2017-18 Guide, and is more reliable. All programs are at the Alberta College campus. Register at 780-633-3725.

## MUSIC IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Elizabeth Grigaitis, Instructor

Saturdays, September 9 – December 9  
(no classes October 7, November 11)

Age 3: 9:30 – 10:20 am

Age 5/6: 10:30 – 11:20 am

Age 4: 11:30 am – 12:20 pm

Tuition: \$195

## SCHOLA CANTORUM WOMEN'S CHOIR

Clint Hagel, Director

Mondays, 7:15 – 9:15 pm

September 11, 2017 – April 23, 2018

Fee: \$425 (half-price for students registered for 20 or more private lessons)

## CONSERVATORY BIG BAND

Jeff Bryant, Director

Tuesdays, 7:15 – 9:15 pm

September 12, 2017 – May 28, 2018

Fee: \$345

## CONSERVATORY ORCHESTRA

Age 9+

Mathias Silveira, Director

Thursdays, 6 – 8 pm

September 14, 2017 – May 28, 2018

Fee: \$325

## COMPLETE MUSIC RUDIMENTS

Robert Klakowich, Instructor

Tuesdays, 5 – 6 pm

October 3, 2017 - May 8, 2018

plus Thursday, May 10, 2018

(no class December 26, January 2, March 27)

Tuition: \$450

## FALL EAR TRAINING

For all levels

Robert Klakowich, Instructor

Tuesdays, 6 – 7 pm

October 3 – December 5

Tuition: \$180

## JAZZ IMPROV CLASSES

Dan Davis, Instructor

Saturdays, various times

October 14 – December 9

Tuition: \$140 per class

Full details at

[Macewan.ca/Conservatory](http://Macewan.ca/Conservatory)

## BEGINNING KEYBOARD CLASSES

Reinhard Berg, Instructor

Adults: Fridays, 6 - 7 pm

October 13 – December 15

Children: Saturdays, 2 – 3 pm

October 14 – December 16

(no class Nov 11)

Tuition: \$195 per class

## WAGNER'S RING: STUDY OF THEMES

Reinhard Berg, Instructor

Fridays, 7 – 8 pm

October 13, 27; November 17; December 1

Tuition: \$80

## WHAT MAKES MUSIC TICK?

Reinhard Berg, Instructor

Saturdays, 9 – 10 am

October 14, 28; November 18; December 2

Tuition: \$80

## ALSO AVAILABLE IN FALL

SAXOPHONE QUARTET

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

And other programs

Enquire at the Conservatory office

## AIMTAC BENEFIT CONCERT Sunday, March 4, 2018

You are invited to perform in support of our scholarships.

If you would like to submit a program, please request an entry form from Dan Davis at [danjdav@gmail.com](mailto:danjdav@gmail.com)



### AIMTAC EXECUTIVE

President	Dan Davis
Vice-President	Carol Mellors
Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Keri-Lynn Zwicker
Advisor Editor	Robert Klakowich
Directors-at-large	Emily Grieve Elizabeth Grigaitis

### CONTACT INFORMATION

AIMTAC President [danjdav@gmail.com](mailto:danjdav@gmail.com)

Editor [klakowichr@macewan.ca](mailto:klakowichr@macewan.ca)

AIMTAC Advisor is published approximately three times a year, and is distributed electronically to faculty and staff of the Conservatory of Music, Alberta College Campus, MacEwan University. Submission deadline for the winter issue is January 13, 2018.

Every effort is made to provide accurate information in this newsletter. AIMTAC apologizes for any errors or omissions.