



VOLUME 13 - ISSUE 2
WINTER - DECEMBER 2016



Take Note . . .

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the President's Message



THE BRAG'N NAG!

So, another year bites the dust! Say goodbye to 2016 with a relaxing Coffee/Cookies and Computer event at my house on the 12th where we can socialize and put our profiles up on the website. I hope you will be there! Then the MRMTA dives into 2017 with a Scholarship Competition and Musicthon in February! Once we all survive festival season, some of us are off to Baltimore for the joint conference between the MTNA in the USA and the CFMTA/FCAPM. This will be the second ever joint conference between Canada and the United States. Then it will be spring! Go team.

TIME TO BRAG.....

A team is what we have going for us here in Manitoba! My kids often complain about group projects at school. You know the complaints, "So and so isn't pulling their weight; only 2 of us are doing all the work etc. etc." Well your team here at the MRMTA is all pulling their weight and then some! Gina Wedel is our registrar AND Musicthon organizer. Alanna keeps our books balanced, Betti Canning, our secretary, keeps us aware of our duties and we are so grateful to have two new members at large on our team: Viktoriya Tuz and Linda DePauw. Dianne Norris has stepped into the Communications

job, Bernadette Geras is consistently updating the website and Michele Leclerc's Pre-Diploma group is active and thriving. Finally, past president Tiffany Wilson is a huge help in guiding me through the learning curve of what it means to be MRMTA President. Thanks, everyone! And please look at the great pics from the AGM this past September.

The Canada Music Week Concert was something to brag about and you can read about that in this Take Note issue. Musicthon sign-up is ready and don't forget to sign up for a spot to perform in *Serata: An Evening of Musical Delights* in May by contacting Tiffany

Wilson. The Scholarship Gala concert is a great

way to spend an evening this February, and if you have time for a workshop as well, check out the calendar for those dates. The pre-diploma group always welcomes full members to their workshops. If your body is in pain, you may want to be at the workshop on January 15th.... you'll have to read the calendar to find out the topic!

HERE COMES THE NAG.... (don't stop reading!)

Have you heard about our conference and 100th anniversary in 2019? Well if you haven't, let's be honest, you

haven't been reading the emails we send you! It is going to be a great big celebration of musical relationships in Manitoba through 100 years. In honor of this occasion, a book is being written by Muriel Smith, who presented some of her ideas at the AGM in September. Research has begun and a motion has been passed to finance the first stage of this endeavor. If you have memories and/or photos, please gather them and watch for a 100th Anniversary/Conference button on our website so that you can contribute your knowledge in the new year. Our conference/celebration is being called :

🎵 A CENTURY OF SOUND CONNECTIONS! 🎵

We are, of course, still searching for someone to convene this event. We may have to hire someone outside of the MRMTA as no one has stepped forward. It's going to be a wonderful celebration; we are starting to brainstorm and need your input! A conference committee will be organized in the new year once a convenor has been found or hired.

All the best to you and yours over the holidays. Now go enable the making of music!

Leanne Hiebert
President, MRMTA



MRMTA EXECUTIVE 2016 - 2017

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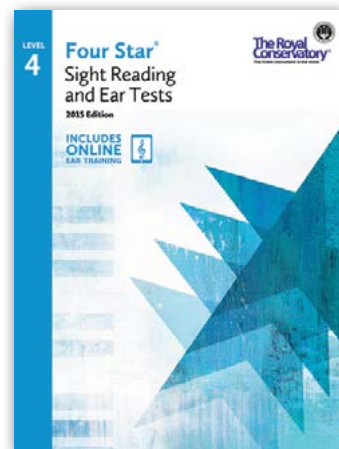
IMPORTANT DATES 2016/17

www.mrmmta.org

ph. 204-339-6768 or info@mrmmta.org

DATE & TIME	EVENT & PLACE	CONTACT
Monday Dec. 12th	Coffee, Cookies and Computers 56 Garnet Bay, home of Leanne Hiebert	Leanne Hiebert 204-284-8581 president@mrmmta.org
Monday Jan. 9th	MRMTA Scholarship Competition ADVANCED PIANO ONLY Sterling Mennonite Church (1008 Dakota)	Norinne Danzinger-Dueck 204-338-0571 scholarships@mrmmta.org
Sunday, January 15 2pm	Pre-Diploma Group Workshop <u>How to Prevent and Deal with Injuries</u> (with Julie Scarlett, Physiotherapist/hand therapist) 664 Nova Vista Dr.	Michele Leclerc 204-253-1310 prediplomagroup@mrmmta.org
Jan 30-Feb 1 (Mon-Wed)	Scholarship Competition Sterling Mennonite Church (1008 Dakota)	Norinne Danzinger-Dueck 204-338-0571 scholarships@mrmmta.org
Sunday Feb. 5th	Scholarship Gala Concert Sterling Mennonite Church (1008 Dakota)	As above- Norinne
February 10-12 (Fri-Sun)	Musicthon in support of Children's Variety Programs Kildonan Place Shopping Centre 1555 Regent Ave. W	Gina Wedel 204-284-8806 registrar@mrmmta.org
March 1st	Deadline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper Scholarship Applications 	Eleanor Lwiwski 204-255-3403 elwiwski@shaw.ca
March 1st (or Feb 14th for early bird draw eligibility)	Deadline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRMTA Membership renewal Be early! There will be an early bird prize draw at the workshop on April 6th! 	Gina Wedel 204-284-8806 registrar@mrmmta.org
Thursday, April 6th Time TBA	Pre-Diploma Masterclass with Janina Fialkowska Eckhardt-Gramatte Hall (U of W)	Michele Leclerc 204-253-1310 prediplomagroup@mrmmta.org
April 9th	Deadline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Composer Competition (see website for details) 	Jane Duerksen 204-371-2128 janeduerksen@gmail.com
May 1st	Take Note Magazine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring Issue submission deadline 	Dina Pollock editor@mrmmta.org
May 1st	Deadline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holtby Scholarship Application 	president@mrmmta.org
Sunday, May 7th 7pm	MRMTA Annual SERATA Gala Concert & Fundraiser for MRMTA's 100th Anniversary/CFMTA Convention St. Andrew's River Heights United Church 255 Oak St.	Tiffany Wilson 204-488-3325 tiffanyawilson@hotmail.com
Sunday June 25th	Annual end of year "Wine-up" Venue TBA	Leanne Hiebert 204-284-8581 president@mrmmta.org
August 1st	Take Note Magazine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall Issue submission deadline 	Dina Pollock editor@mrmmta.org

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MRMTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SEPTEMBER 25TH, 2016

The Annual General Meeting returned to the beautiful St. Charles' Country Club in Winnipeg this year. The lunch was delicious and desert was simply delightful! Attendance was relatively small but those who came were privy to a wonderful recital by Young Artist winner, Luis Ramirez on the grand piano in the grand hall.

Congratulations to Leanne Hiebert our new President elect. The executive comprises of many likeminded, young and enthusiastic music teachers who are willing to donate their time to make this organization a vital and important one here in the middle of our wonderful country.

Dr. Muriel Smith presented her new ideas for the book she has been contracted to write to commemorate our 100th birthday in 2019. She was asking for memories about the MRMTA that got members talking over lunch about favourite stories and anecdotes. Muriel will be contacting members in regards to this book and invites anyone to send in their memories.

President of the Pre-Diploma Group, Michele Leclerc also spoke of upcoming events. In particular she announced the workshop in collaboration with the Virtuosi Concert organization. This year that is to be Janina Fialkowska! The group is currently fundraising for this event by selling used music at all MRMTA events. Don't miss your chance to pick up some extra copies for festival and exam time!

Of course, the highlight of the AGM receiving Special Recognition for long time membership in our association. Congratulations to the following members who received certificates this year:

- **20 Years:** Rita Bergen, Miroslave Paches, Kenneth Tan
- **30 Years:** Alison McNeill-Hordern
- **40 Years:** Kenneth Adams, Marie Jones

Thank you to everyone who came out to volunteer and helped to make this event such a great success!

Tiffany A. Wilson
Past President, MRMTA



Past President Tiffany Wilson passing the traditional president's painting to newly elected president Leanne Hiebert



Past President Tiffany Wilson with member and former president Thelma Wilson and Young Artist winner Luis Ramirez



Hardworking volunteers at the AGM Alanna Courtney (our treasurer) and Mavis Green



TWO PIANO TORNADO STORMED INTO WINNIPEG!

by Tiffany Wilson

Two Piano Tornado is an unpredictable vortex that will pick the listener up and deposit them in another realm, surrounding them with swirling riffs improvised completely from what they hear in each other's playing. Never the same, always changing direction, and always spinning through both standard and original tunes, Annie Avery and Grant Simpson are a true force of nature.

A whirlwind tour by Annie Averie (YRMTA) and Grant Simpson started out in Manitoba and finished 3 weeks later, back in their hometown of Whitehorse, Yukon. Here in Winnipeg, their weekend started with a house concert chez Past President, Tiffany Wilson. In the intimate living room setting, MRMTA members, students and participants of the workshop were privy to a wild ride of stride playing, honky tonk, ragtime and blues. Every toe was tapping and head was bopping along to the witty improvisations of these two very talented artists. Teachers marvelled at their antics and thorough mastery of the two keyboards! The evening was perfectly delightful!

The following day saw two fabulous workshops:

- 4 Handed Piano Workshop for pianists
- Vocal Jazz Workshop for young singers.

Much was learned by the participants and a great time was had by all. The MRMTA thank everyone who participated, volunteered or attended these two inspiring workshops. We hope to see the Two Piano Tornado return and share their knowledge with us again. Thank you Annie and Grant!



Two Piano Tornado Annie Avery and Grant Simpson

FOUR HANDED FREEDOM PIANO WORKSHOP

by Dianne Norris

A piano improvisation workshop was held at Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship on Oct 16th, featuring Annie Avery and Grant Simpson who make up the piano duo Two Piano Tornado.

All participants chose partners and sat two per piano for the duration of the workshop. Grant and Annie were able to take the group through a variety of improv challenges beginning with simple two chord progressions. Next, they explored 12 bar blues, blues scales, walking bass, circle of 4^{ths}, and improvising. Grant and Annie's two-player approach made improvisation easy to think about for pianists who might otherwise find improv to be overwhelming. Using the two-player approach, parts were divided and performers were able to focus on one task at a time. The time flew by, and everyone learned a little more about improv piano.



Grant and Annie with the pianists from the Four Handed Freedom segment of the workshop

For more information check out their website:

<http://twopianotornado.com/>

TWO PIANO TORNADO STORMED INTO WINNIPEG! - CONT.

VOCAL JAZZ WORKSHOP FOR YOUNG SINGERS

by Margot Sim

It was so much fun to watch Grant and Annie work with the young singers on jazz basics. They don't try to be voice teachers and deal with vocal technique (said Grant) but they like to coach vocal style. Do you find the score overwhelming? Then make a CHART with just lyrics, rhythm and chord symbols so the verses and chorus repetitions are clear visually. The song they chose for teaching basics was "Centrepiece", a 12 bar Riff blues (riff blues is when the same riff occurs over and over). The four singers sang it together and then each sang it through as a solo. In this style, "swing time" (eighths as dotted figures or partial triplets) is inferred though not marked. Tap on beats 2 and 4 to feel the swing. The singers were encouraged to cut off the final beat (4 and...) not just as a release but as an accent (like a row of Big Band trumpets lifting their horns at the same time on a cut off). If you forget the words, no worries... just scat! The beginning of scatting is to just repeat the song words. For example, after "pretty baby", repeat "baby, baby, baby" or use the written words in a different order or just make some words up in sync with the theme. The first step of melody improv is to change a note or two like stepping down instead of up or vice versa. If your improv note doesn't seem to fit well, then just s-l-i-d-e to a better one. "Keep the groove" by snapping as you sing. Take away some of the strong beats and turn them into rests. After the silence, improvise a

different rhythm to catch up with the main beat. The young soloists were so brave to attempt improv for the first time in such a public setting! They got lots of encouragement from Grant and Annie and from those of us in the audience. It was fun to see the singers interact by learning to "pass it on" using musical ideas ("like the flu" said Annie). One would add an improv lyric "the more you make me want to laugh" and then that lyric transferred on down the line of singers with different kinds of 'laughing' lyrics. One singer began a lyric idea about loving the flowers she got and then variations of lyrics about flowers wove through from soloist to soloist. It was interesting to see and hear first hand how jazz improvisation is personalized by the soloist and then passes from soloist to instrumentalist and soloist to soloist within the combo.

After working with the group, each singer got excellent coaching on the song of their choice for the workshop. Grant and Annie then suggested specific jazz singers for each soloist to explore on YouTube as well as other repertoire suggestions. Advice to all of us? "Everybody should sing some Cole Porter!" For those of us wary of stepping outside the lines (literally and figuratively) of traditional musical scores, we were encouraged to "let it rip" by scatting at full volume in the privacy of our own homes. So.... here I go.....



The brave singers from the vocal segment of the workshop



Singers in actions with Grant and Annie



A fun active tornado duo



CANADA MUSIC WEEK® IN WINNIPEG NOVEMBER 2016

by Leanne Hiebert CMW Coordinator

What a fabulous turnout on November 20th for our concert celebrating Canadian composers! Our event was made even more special by a visit from our CFMTA president Cindy Taylor who attended and spoke at our concert. The 28 performers did a fabulous job playing pieces from a great variety of Canadian composers, some of whom were referenced in Cindy's speech and made the composers' names come to life.

The students all received special stickers and a pencil for performing and a coupon that they could redeem at our used music book sale sponsored by our Pre-Diploma program. The concert was about 80

minutes long and in order to provide a bit of a break and a stretch we played a little game at the halfway point. When a Canadian composer's name was called out, the audience had to either stand or sit, but wasn't to move when a non-Canadian composer's name was called. "Crosby" "Gretzky" "JS Bach" "Niamath" "Gershwin" "J. Bach" "Sidney Crosby"! Are you playing? We did our best to make everyone think!

After the concert, cake and juice was served and made for a wonderful end to a beautiful afternoon of music! Please enjoy the pictures and read through Cindy's speech. It was so informative and enjoyable and will be sure to inspire to promote our

Canadian talent. Thanks to all the teachers who participated and made it a special afternoon by sending students, volunteering and coming to hear the concert! Many thanks to Christina Hutton, Michele Leclerc, Tiffany Wilson, Eleanor Lwiwski, Jacqueline Ryz, Nadia Orlov, Julia Todd, Bernadette Geras, Jane Petroni, Gwen Allison, Virginia Heinrichs, Julianne Warkentin-Dick, Elsie Fehr, Vivian Klosse, Annie Koop, Audrey Belyea, Mary Jane Male, and Leora Loewen.

After 3 years of organizing this event, I now pass the torch to Lee Houghton Stewart who will do a fabulous job next year for MRMTA's Canada Music Week® 2017! It's been great, eh!



Students from the CMW Recital



The Singing of O Canada



CFMTA & MRMTA Presidents with door prize winner

MRMTA CANADA MUSIC WEEK CONCERT

2016 SPEECH FROM CYNTHIA (CINDY) TAYLOR - PRESIDENT CFMTA



Good afternoon I bring to all of you greetings from CFMTA, the Canadian Federation of Music Teacher's Associations and greetings from the BC Registered Music Teachers' Association. It is an honour and a privilege to be here today to visit my Manitoba friends and to make new connections with musicians and students within our organization. It is very exciting for me to be here because it is the first time that I have ever been to Manitoba!

Your province and mine, Manitoba and BC, have a very special historical bond in the history of CFMTA. Together in 1935, the music teacher associations from BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba helped to found the Federation of Music Teacher's Associations which was later called CFMTA.

Thank – you to the Manitoba Registered Music Teachers' Association for inviting me to share in your Canada Music Week® Celebrations. This special Canadian program is very near and dear to my heart. I was the BC Provincial Canada Music Week Coordinator for approximately eight years and for many years before that I helped organize numerous CMW concerts, like yours today, in my local North Island Registered Music Teachers' Branch.

Now for some Canada Music Week History and trivia.

Canada Music Week® was created in 1960 by the Canadian Federation of Music Teacher's Associations (CFMTA) to commemorate their 25th anniversary as an organization. Events all across Canada, Celebrating Canada Music Week, are held every year during the third week of November. Does anyone know why the third week in November was chosen to for our CMW program?

November 22nd is Saint Cecilia Day, the Patron Saint of Music. Canada Music Week® is held during the week in November, that contains November 22nd.

The aims of Canada Music Week® are to bring to the attention of the public, through various means, the importance of Canadian music; to support composers and performers of Canadian music; to introduce contemporary music to young Canadians and stimulate a keeper appreciation and understanding of this music; and to encourage music educators to widen their knowledge and experience of Canadian works.

Canada Music Week® is dedicated to music in its fullest sense but since 1967 particular focus has been on Canadian cultural content. Thousands of Canadians experience Canada Music Week festivities each year in their communities.

Through my experiences as BC's Provincial CMW coordinator and my experience as the President of

CFMTA, I have met a number of Canadian Composers and have also learned some interesting information about some Canadian composers that I have not met. I see that you have some of our BC composers on your program today.

- Our dear Linda Niamath – She lives in Richmond BC. Sometimes she could be seen shopping in Costco! Her pictures in her books were created by her children.
- Teresa Richert is a lovely lady also from BC. She was in my hometown of Campbell River on Vancouver Island a couple of years as our CMW workshop clinician. She is one of the Red Leaf Music Publishing company composers and so is Janet Gieck who is from Saskatchewan. Janet is often at music conferences giving presentations and making herself available to answer questions about her music.
- Alexina Louie is one of Vancouver's jewels. She doesn't live in Vancouver anymore but she was born there so we still claim her as one of our BC composers. Her website is impressive with a long list of musical works that she has composed.
- Anne Crosby Gaudet is another composer who has an interesting website with a lot of games and fun teaching resources for students. She lives and teaches in Nova Scotia.



MRMTA CANADA MUSIC WEEK CONCERT

2016 SPEECH FROM CYNTHIA (CINDY) TAYLOR - PRESIDENT CFMTA

- Clifford Poole has always interested me ever since I was a child when I was taking piano lessons like the students here. I was fascinated because he has three names. Clifford Poole is his real name but he also writes under the names of Charles Pearson and Ernst Marsden. I used to think he was one of the “old” Canadian composers until I realized that he is only a few years older than me!
- I have saved Boris Berlin for last. He is also a composer who used alias names when composing his music – He used the names Lawrence London and J. Bach. I suppose that after the Second World War, having the name Boris Berlin would make it difficult to sell music. Hence, the alias name Lawrence London.

Boris Berlin was a Royal Conservatory Examiner who happened to be my examiner when I did my ARCT Teacher’s exam. He failed me on the exam. For a long time I wouldn’t teach his ABC of Music method books because his picture was in the back and it upset me to look at it. Not to worry though. I really did pass my ARCT Teacher’s exam after that and also the AVCM Teacher’s exam from the Victoria Conservatory of Music.

All of the composers on your program today are real people like you and me. They all started composing like some of you who are performing your own compositions today.

I encourage each of you to try your imagination at composing. You have a wonderful opportunity to send your own music in to the MRMTA Student Composer Competition where a real composer will give you a written adjudication of your special work.

If your specialty is in writing with words rather than with music there is another program available to high school and university students. The CFMTA National Essay Competition. All of this information for these two programs can be found on the CFMTA website www.cfmta.org

Again I would like to thank Tiffany and the Manitoba Registered Music Teachers’ Association for inviting me here. I feel very honoured to be present at this concert and I am eager to hear each of you share your music with all of us today. Thank – you.

Cynthia (Cindy) Taylor
President of the CFMTA/FCAPM



Photo taken by Michael Koch-Schulte



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Musicthon

February 10-12



2017



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<http://mrmta.org/?event=musicthon-at-the-forks-atrium>

This year at Kildonan Place Shopping Centre

CANADA MUSIC WEEK RECITAL

REPORT ON BRANDON WESTMAN

Submitted by April Gibson

The Brandon & Westman RMT Recital was celebrated on Sunday, November 20 at the Music Studio of Ann Germani in Brandon.

Students of Tenley Dyck and April Gibson performed. Several students performed their own compositions.

Our audience was delighted by the variety, humour and expressive Canadian pieces that were performed.

A reception followed the recital.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MORNING OF COFFEE, COOKIES AND COMPUTERS!

December 12, 2016

Come to the home of our president: Leanne Hiebert at 56 Garnet Bay, (204)284-8581, Winnipeg, R3T 0L6

Come to meet and greet, and get your profile set up! If you have a laptop, please bring it and we will be on hand to help you get your bio and picture up on the website. There will be a few computers available if you can't bring yours along. Come prepared with a written bio- we can take your picture at the party so don't forget to brush your hair! Please email to confirm a spot and to let us know you are coming! Leanne would love to host all 180 of you, but will have to cap it at about 40 people! Everyone is welcome- all the better if your bio and picture are already posted and you can just come and enjoy a morning of coffee and cookies!

RSVP to info@mrrmta.org

RED RIVER REVERIE — THE FRONTIER FIDDLERS WITH THE MCO

Westminster United Church

- 1:00 pm matinee start time (doors open 12:30)
7:30 PM evening show start time
- Tuesday, 14 February 2017
- Student tickets: \$10.

Transportation and ticket subsidies available depending on your needs. At this concert, the Frontier Fiddlers - la crème de la crème of young fiddle players in the province - will treat us to a spectacular medley of fiddle tunes with a Red River flavour, backed by the MCO.

For more information:

Conrad Sweatman
204-783-7377
www.themco.ca

NANABUSH AND THE DRUM / NANABOZHO ET LE TAMBOUR

Westminster United Church

- 10:30 am matinee start times (doors open 10:00)
7:30 PM evening show start time
- Wednesday and Thursday, 7 and 8 June 2017
- Student tickets: \$10.

Transportation and ticket subsidies available depending on your needs. This hilarious, touching theatrical work - with live orchestra, inventive lighting, and actors - follows a hapless French voyageur, as he attempts to navigate the land and woo his more savvy Indigenous love interest. Dramatizing the foundation of the Métis people in celebration of Canada's 150th birthday, this bilingual work is accessible to everyone with a taste for theatre, music, and fun.

For more information:

Conrad Sweatman
204-783-7377
www.themco.ca



REPORT ON THE WESTERN YOUNG ARTIST TOUR 2016

Muriel Smith - Western Young Artist Tour Convenor

Last spring, Luis Ramirez, was chosen from three accomplished competitors at the Western Young Artist Competition to perform as the 2016 Western Young Artist. Originally from Aguascalientes, Mexico, Luis Ramirez began an early career as a solo performer. His main piano teachers have been Alain del Real and Alexander Tselyakov. Luis is particularly enthusiastic about chamber music and composition, as well as the implementation of technology in musical performance. He started his Bachelor studies at the Autonomous University of Aguascalientes, and in 2012 he received a full scholarship to study at Brandon University in Manitoba, Canada, where he earned his Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance in 2014, and subsequently his Master of Music degree in Piano in 2016. He is currently finishing a second master's degree in Composition, with Dr. Patrick Carrabré. His passion and curiosity have been the essential components in his development as a musician, compensating him with numerous scholarships and several performances in festivals across México, Canada, Italy, and Serbia.

PRESENTS

**2016 WESTERN
YOUNG ARTIST CONCERT TOUR**



LUIS RAMIREZ PIANO

BRANDON, MANITOBA
Saturday • September 24 • 7:00 pm
Watson Hall, Music Building, Brandon University
Contact: Marla Winters
Email: mwinters_vln@yahoo.ca
Phone or text 204-570-1936

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA
Sunday • September 25 • 3:30 pm
St. Charles Country Club, 100 Country Club Blvd
Contact: Tiffany Wilson
Email: president@mmta.org
Phone or text 204-960-1539

GIMLI, MANITOBA
Monday • September 26 • 7:00 pm
Johnson Hall, The Waterfront Centre, 94 - 1st Ave
Contact: Muriel Smith
Email: muriel.smith5@gmail.com
Phone or text 204-781-2307

PRINCE ALBERT, SASKATCHEWAN
Wednesday • October 5 • 7:00 pm
Grace Mennonite Church, 250 - 28th St. West
Contact: Marilyn Lohrenz
Email: wmlz@shaw.ca Phone: 306-763-7382

SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN
Thursday • October 6 • 7:30 pm
Emmanuel Anglican Church, 609 Dufferin Street
Contact: Kathleen Solose
Email: ksolose@usask.ca Phone: 306-374-4262

ROSETOWN, SASKATCHEWAN
Friday • October 7 • 7:00 pm
Rosetown United Church, Upper Hall, 118-2nd Ave East
Contact: Claire Seibold
Email: rcseibold@sasktel.net Home: 306-882-3591

 CANADIAN FEDERATION OF MUSIC TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS
FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE DES ASSOCIATIONS DES PROFESSEURS DE MUSIQUE

Young Artist Series

CFMTA
FCAPM

Western Tour

The 2016 Western Young Artist Tour, Luis Ramirez included concerts in Brandon, Winnipeg, and Gimli Manitoba, on September 24th, 25th and 26th respectively, followed by Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Rosetown, Saskatchewan on October 5th, 6th and 7th. All venues and concert dates were agreed upon by the end of June 2016. It was with regret that Regina was unable to hold a Young Artist Concert this year, and because of bad weather, the Prince Albert concert was cancelled.

Luis Ramirez chose his program in July and press releases were sent to each local representative. The program included Debussy's Estampes, Beethoven's Piano Sonata, no. 30, op. 109 in E major, Prokofiev's Piano Sonata, no 7, op. 83 in Bb and Burge's Everything Waits for the Lilacs. Individualized concert programs, ticket templates and posters were sent to local representatives in August 2016.

In addition to performing five concerts, Luis was also required to write a journal regarding the tour. ☞

YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION TOUR JOURNAL

by Luis Ramirez

I can't begin to find the words to express my gratitude towards everyone involved in the organization and realization of this year's Young Artists Concert Tour. I am forever thankful to the Registered Music Teachers Associations of Manitoba and Saskatchewan that contributed to one of the best musical experiences of my career as a musician. Special thanks go to Muriel Smith for her patience with all my concerns, her coordination skills to make sure everything went smoothly, and her hospitality when hosting me in her beautiful and peaceful home in Gimli.

The tour began with a little anxiety, since the first concert I would play was right at home in Brandon, MB, and that meant a lot of familiar faces in the audience, adding to the ever-present pre-performance nerves. Despite this, I received wonderful feedback and kind comments from my peers and professors. I was pleased with the turnout, and I really appreciated all the help from Marla Winters for her support with publicity and the logistics of booking the venue. The success of the concert was a good start, but it was just the first day of the tour and I was already exhausted!

The next day, my fiancé Catie and I were kindly received by Tiffany Wilson at the St. Charles Country Club in Winnipeg, MB. The concert was a part of the Annual General Meeting of the Manitoba Registered Music Teachers Association, and it was a pleasure to meet so many

people striving for the same goal of reaching out to people through music. It was an inspiring event and I found it particularly interesting to learn how the working gears of such caring organization function from within. After a delicious lunch I had a few minutes to relax before the start of the concert. The teachers in the audience seemed to enjoy my playing, and one of them even streamed part of the concert live over Facebook! In the end it resulted in a very useful experience regarding the adaptability to the different instruments that I would be facing throughout my tour.

The next concert was in Gimli, and it was one of the most enjoyable places of the whole tour. I got to spend some wonderful time in Muriel and Jeff's beautiful house, and it was a very relaxing and peaceful experience. Their house was built facing the "Prairie Sea", as Jeff likes to call the effect of the wind over the bulrush of the marshes. It was very inspiring and I think I will be writing a piece soon with this effect in mind! The concert venue was astonishing, with a beautiful view of the lake and a great piano to go with it. I had the largest audience attendance of my whole tour, and they had kind words to me after the concert. I noticed their enthusiasm for my performance, and it was an honour to be asked to give another concert in the future.

This was the end of the Manitoba part of the tour, and after a busy week at school I was joined by Catie to continue to the Saskatchewan part

of the tour. The first town to visit was Prince Albert, and unfortunately rapid changing weather made it hard for us to have a smooth trip. We ended up getting stuck in the middle of nowhere. It was quite the adventure! Catie was on the wheel and I was pushing the car, and after a long struggle we managed to get out of this without needing to call a tow truck. Even though we got out, there was no way we could have made it on time for the concert, but at least I was able to contact Lorna and Bob Gibson in Prince Albert and notify them about this - luckily they were very understanding, and we were able to still use our reservation in the Prince Albert hotel. After 11 hours on the road we made it safely!

The next day the roads were clearer and much to our relief we had a normal drive to Saskatoon. After some rest we visited the Emmanuel Anglican Church, where I completely fell in love with their Yamaha piano. It was a hidden jewel and a delight to play it - I have rarely felt such responsiveness and control from a piano! It quickly became my favorite of the tour, and because of that the concert went very well and I was very warmly welcomed. I received really valuable feedback from Kathleen and Garry Gable, who are faculty at University of Saskatchewan, and Shirley England who was in charge of the organization of the concert expressed that she really enjoyed my performance. I was very satisfied with this concert, and there was only one more to go.



YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION TOUR JOURNAL - CONT.

My final concert in Rosetown was an absolute delight from beginning to end. We were so fortunate to meet Claire Seibold and our time at her house, albeit limited, was truly a pleasure. We had some really interesting conversations, and the meal we had was delicious. The concert was a great success, and there was a good outcome despite the fact that there were some important hockey games going on at the same time. Even kids who had planned to go only for the first half stayed for the entirety of the concert! I was very flattered to be so well received, and I felt very lucky to be able to share my interpretations with

this people. I had a surprise for them at the end - I premiered my freshly composed piece for solo piano and they absolutely loved it! In the end it seemed like everybody had a great time and I could not have asked for anything more than that.

This tour was without a doubt a remarkable learning experience, both as a performer and as a human. I had never done a tour like this before, and even though the main purpose of it is for me to perform in front of new audiences, it also taught me how to connect with them by talking about the music prior to the performances. It is rare for emerging

performers to have an experience like this, and I can now say that it should be an essential part of the growth and development of musicians. I believe this reason is what makes the support from the Registered Music Teachers Association so essential and invaluable. This tour gave me the opportunity to achieve one of the most fundamental aspects of music: to connect the composer directly to the audience. Even if only one person in the audience was moved in some way, this entire tour is definitely worth it. I am forever grateful to all the people that made this possible.



CONCERT REVIEW: LUIS RAMIREZ, SEPTEMBER 26, 2016, GIMLI, MB

Johnson Hall, the Waterfront Centre, in the lakeside community of Gimli, Manitoba was the setting for Luis Ramirez's third concert of the 2016 Western Area Young Artist Tour. The fifth floor concert space is floor to ceiling glass on three sides, giving spectacular views over Gimli Harbour and beyond to Lake Winnipeg. Just as Luis began playing Claude Debussy's *Estampes* (1903), the silhouettes of the seabirds flying past the windows were shaded black as the setting sun turned the sky and surrounding landscape golden creating a magical beginning to what turned out to be a really exciting concert. Luis educated and entertained the 80 people in the audience with his energetic, informed

playing and by introducing each work making them more accessible for the audience. Before performing Sergei Prokofiev's, *Piano Sonata no. 7 op. 83 in Bb* (1942), Luis played some of the specific themes from the work – the marching of the army and the galloping of horses hooves, and offered some insight into what was expected of a composer under Stalin's rule, and how, through this sonata, Prokofiev told the devastating story of World War II. This really aided in bringing the work to life for many in the audience.

At the end of the evening Luis remarked, *"I am always pleased to perform for people who know me and come to concerts to support me,*

but tonight, this was the first concert where people came to hear me – and they were all strangers". After the concert, the many comments on the social media site "Meanwhile in Gimli" confirmed how much the audience enjoyed his performance.

Photos and an article about the concert were published in the *Interlake Spectator*, while an interview with Luis was woven into an article advertising the concert and published in *Interlake Express Weekly*.

This report was prepared and respectfully submitted by
Muriel Smith
Western Young Artist Tour Convenor
November 13, 2016.



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THE MELNYK SCALE BOOK

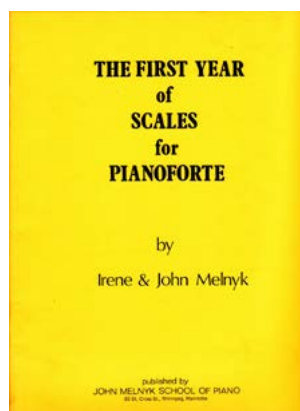
A review by Jacqueline Ryz



I'm sure there's no need to explain the importance of scales to fellow members of the Manitoba Registered Music Teachers Association. However, in my examining experience across Canada over the past 20 years, I have often been surprised at the weak scales of many exam candidates.

There was certainly no doubt about the importance of scales in the Melnyk studio, where John and Irene Melnyk taught for over half a century. Virtually every lesson I can remember began with "Let's hear your scales" – even when I was working towards my performer's A.R.C.T.

I understand the "Melnik scale book" was actually Irene's idea, because she taught the younger students in the early grades in their studio. In 1974 they published this material as *The First Year of Scales for Pianoforte* in an original print run of 2,000 copies. That had to be supplemented years later by a second printing, which now too is "out of print."



Original edition, 1974

I have used this material ever since I started teaching many years ago. Through it, I have beginners as young as four years old learn the C major scale at their very first lesson and practice it on their own the following week. This establishes scale practice as a regular part of their piano routine right from the start.

The distinctive, uncluttered presentation is a great help in this respect. Students' hands move on the keyboard in the same direction as their eyes move on the page for the similar motion scales which is intuitive to very young students. This also encourages hand-eye coordination and the importance of looking at the music – not just at the keys – while playing.

I find the book remains relevant for the first three to four years of lessons because it includes contrary motion scales and arpeggios, even though the latter are not required in the Royal Conservatory curriculum until Grade 4. And the highly original presentation of the chromatic scale, as fingering on a keyboard graphic, is particularly valuable; this eliminates the intimidating clutter of multiple sharps or flats on a staff and allows for introduction of the chromatic scale pattern while a student's ability to read music is still developing.

Through Irene and John Melnyk's own teaching, and that of their numerous students who went on to become music teachers (including many of us) this book has started literally thousands of youngsters on the path to a sound pianistic technique and further study of the piano. I certainly intend to continue using it in my own teaching, which is part of the reason for this new edition, retitled *An Introduction to Scales and Arpeggios for Piano*. But the main reason is that my husband, John Melnyk Jr., and I would like to share the pedagogical potential of this material with other teachers here in Manitoba and across the country as a living tribute to the teaching legacy of John and Irene Melnyk.





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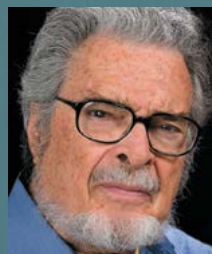


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PRE-DIPLOMA GROUP WORKSHOP ON OCTOBER 23

It was a beautiful Sunday afternoon, but a group of students and members of MRMTA spent that time attending a workshop about how to set up a music studio. A panel of three teachers, Nancy Nowosad, Virginia Heinrichs and Eleanor Lwiwski presented a very interesting workshop in three different sections.

First, Nancy talked about the business aspect of managing a music studio, giving many tips regarding the studio policy, the claimable expenses, the fees, the records... an amazing resource of experience! Then, Eleanor presented a section about teaching outside the home studio, in different music programs, sharing generously her great experience with our group. And finally, Virginia helped us to build a new library: how do we start, what are the different methods available and which editions can we consider when we buy our books.

Again, so much experience! A period of questions followed, and the audience had lots of questions for our three passionate teachers.

We would like to thank Nancy, Eleanor and Virginia for their generosity and their passion. When a profession can count on leaders like them, transmitting their knowledge to the next generation of teachers, there is a promising future!

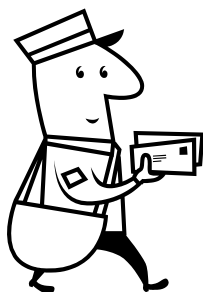
Don't miss our next workshop, on January 15, "How to prevent and deal with injuries" presented by Julie Scarlett, physiotherapist and hand therapist at the Panam Clinic.

For more info, look on our website mrmta.org under calendar, or contact me at 204-253-1310 or by email

prediplomagroup@mrmta.org

Musically yours,

Michele Leclerc, president
Pre-Diploma Group of MRMTA

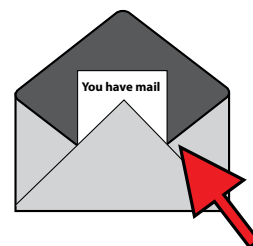


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HELLO FROM THE EDITOR

Dina Pollock

Hello Everyone,

Happy Holidays to all and all the best for 2017

What would you like to see in Take Note? More articles, interviews. . .

What can I do to make this magazine more of a tool for you?

I am always looking for ideas of what you would like to see in the magazine, so if you have any, please send them to me.

Thanks,

Dina



