



New Concertmaster Apprenticeship Program an Intensive Study of Orchestral Life

When Dale Barltrop, Concertmaster of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, joined the VAM faculty in the fall of 2013, he brought with him the inspiration for a new program, the Concertmaster Apprenticeship Program (CAP). "In any city the leading music institutions should have a close association with the symphony orchestra. I know that Joseph [Elworthy] really values this here in Vancouver. When he approached me about coming on board, I floated the idea of a program for students who were on the verge of professional orchestral careers, just one or two students at a time, to give them practical training in orchestral playing and leadership."

"My model is my own teacher, William Preucil, Concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra. I learned so much from observing him in concerts, in rehearsals, studying the orchestral repertoire with him, and also how to deal with a section, with an orchestra, with a music director; these extramusical aspects are all

very important. After I left he started a concertmaster training program, where he works with only one undergraduate or even postgraduate student a year."

"The number one skill that a concertmaster has to develop is communication," says

"I've had interest internationally for next fall. We hope to attract great young musicians to Vancouver"
- Dale Barltrop

Nicholas Wright, VAM's Violin Department Co-head, and Assistant Concertmaster of the VSO. Nicholas is highly qualified on this subject. He has a distinguished background in orchestral playing, becoming the youngest member of the London Symphony Orchestra in 2003, holding the first violin Sub-Principal position there. He performs regularly as guest concertmaster with orchestras in England, and has worked with many of today's leading conductors. He continues, "The concertmaster has to have a high standard of playing, but needs to be able

to communicate with the conductor in order to draw out their ideas, communicate the musical ideas to the orchestra, communicate the timing to the orchestra. You have to help guide the orchestra through the piece; the players look to the concertmaster for that."

"There are many great orchestras, but if you look at them closely each orchestra has its own style. Because of this, playing as a guest is a different sort of experience than leading your own orchestra.

You have to adapt to the orchestra; it can be a little tricky. To give a technical example, you might be used to playing right with the beat, but in Germany they tend to play behind the beat. As a guest concertmaster you have to quickly decipher all these subtleties."

"And there are times in live performance that things can happen," says Nicholas. "Occasionally mistakes can happen; in that moment you have to be quite

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Message from the Chair

Message from the Director

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Ian MacIntosh
Chair of the
Board of Trustees

I'm glad that you're taking the time to read our publication and I truly hope that you find it enlightening and inspiring. It's so wonderful to see where a music education can take you. Some of us just hum and tap our fingers, others get up on a stage and perform in front of many and most of us who have studied music have developed a life-long love of music - listening to it, playing it, learning it, mastering it and sharing it.

I truly believe that a music education is invaluable and provides skills that are fundamental to a happy and successful life. If you are a parent, please congratulate yourself for giving your child an opportunity to know and love music. You have given a life-long gift that will keep giving. If you are a student, enjoy your lessons and remember to smile and enjoy yourself.

We are blessed with a wonderful faculty and the support of so many in our community that value music education. We could not operate in the manner that we do without the ongoing support that we receive from many private and public donors. To all of you, we say thanks!

Warm regards,

Ian MacIntosh
Chair, VAM Board of Trustees



Joseph Elworthy
VAM Executive
Director

Welcome to the spring edition of the Vancouver Academy of Music's *Appassionato* newsletter. This edition offers an engaging synopsis of the many recent VAM events, whilst providing informative updates on students, faculty, patrons and alumni. The range of articles speaks to the vibrancy of our musical community. I am grateful for the vital role VAM's faculty plays in supplying student and alumni updates for the newsletter, as well as content for feature articles.

Glancing over the *People in the News* later in this edition, with career and life milestones summarized in a few words, it is easy to lose sight of the magnitude of each achievement: think of the hours – if not years – necessary to achieve a career-launching performance, a successful graduate school audition, or a prize of distinction at a competition or examination. The lessons learned from these pursuits are essentially life lessons that have far-reaching benefits and applicability beyond musical ambitions. VAM is justifiably proud of our alumni who have carried their musical dreams into the professional sphere; however, it is worth noting that the vast majority of our students have translated the discipline and perseverance acquired through their musical training into leadership positions in a variety of professional sectors. All of this is of course predicated on support – family, donors, teachers, and mentors – the essential pillars necessary to foster the enlightened and community-minded students VAM is dedicated to producing.

I look forward to greeting you at a future VAM concert and thank you for your support.

Musically yours,

Joseph Elworthy
Executive Director, VAM

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We acknowledge the financial support of the
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Student Energy creates Synergy

In the fall of 2013, students in Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School's (SWCSS) Synergy program (an enhanced academic program for students in grades eight and nine) were given an assignment to plan and implement a fundraiser for a not-for-profit organization. One group, which included a violinist in the Intermediate Vancouver Youth Symphony Orchestra and three pianists, one of whom is a student at VAM studying with Lorraine Ambrose, came together with a shared interest in music. Fortunately for VAM, the group decided on VAM as a suitable beneficiary for their efforts. Six students (Cherie Tay, Catherine Wang, Gurmaan Gill, Henry Huang, Jenny Tang and Karen Shi) formed the fundraising group Charity Notes, so named to highlight the two main elements of their project.

The *Evening in December* benefit concert was held on Friday December 13, 2013, in the Koerner Recital Hall. It showcased a talented group of local performers: Vivian Lou (piano), Brian Deng (piano), Jenny Li, first place winner in British Columbia and second in North America in the 2011 Vancouver Chamber Choir Young Composers Competition (piano improvisation), Xiao Yu Huang (piano), Roger Wang (piano), Alanna Hunter (cello, accompanied by Xiao Yu Huang), Christina Madarasz, student teacher at SWCSS who holds a Bachelor's degree in music from UBC and a Music Diploma from Douglas College (soprano, accompanied by Xiao Yu Huang), and the VAM student trio of Sophia Cho (violin), Olivia Cho (cello) and Catherine Wang (piano). The front of the house was ably and enthusiastically staffed by volunteers Amy Guan and Cici Guan (York House School Vancouver)

and Nellie Sun (General Currie Elementary School Richmond). Charity Notes would like to thank the performers and volunteers who gave of their time to put on a terrific evening, and the donors and lovers of music who supported the benefit and came out to hear the performance.

As a school project, this fundraising effort was a great learning experience for the whole group. In a very short time (two weeks!) the students learned a lot about business, charitable endeavours, administrative tasks, event organization and coordination, and music. A minor setback occurred when the originally proposed venue became unavailable due to unforeseen costs. Charity Notes is very grateful to Joseph Elworthy and VAM for making the Koerner Recital Hall available; it was a special treat to use such a beautiful and practical venue.

The word 'synergy' is derived from the Greek word for 'working together'. The Charity Notes students brought together their two schools, volunteers, performers, audience and donors to produce a lovely evening of music for all those who participated. Charity Notes' *Evening in December* raised \$960 for VAM. A heartfelt *thank you* to this wonderful group, with a wish that they may continue to enjoy the music in their lives!



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newest ensemble
and explore the world
of Count Basie and
Duke Ellington!
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New Concertmaster Apprenticeship Program

an Intensive Study of Orchestral Life

(Continued from page 1)



strong. I've seen concertmasters have to make very fast decisions in live performances to repair damage, to hold things together."

Dale recounts, "There was a moment several years ago when our soloist had a memory slip and looped back to a previous section in the piece. It left us floundering, a terrifying feeling that seemed to last an eternity (although it was probably only 20 or 30 seconds, but that's still a sickeningly long time for an entire orchestra to be lost!). We had basically stopped playing altogether as the soloist struggled to find their way back. Eventually I recognized what the soloist had done and began to play, so my colleagues were able to jump back on the train! Fortunately they were all so tuned in to what I was doing that disaster was averted." And further, he says, "If I miss an entrance, often the 14 people sitting behind me will also miss it, not because they weren't counting, but because it is ingrained in us to play as a unit. So the leaders of the section – all the principal players – have a huge responsibility to play at the right moment!"

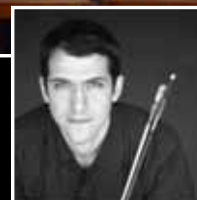
The CAP, which provides tuition funding through bursaries and scholarships,

includes weekly lessons with Dale Barltrop, opportunities to observe professional rehearsals of the VSO, guidance in leadership skills, study of audition repertoire and audition preparation, and the opportunity to sit as concertmaster with the VAMSO.

About CAP Nicholas says, "It is a great program. We have a very talented student, Sunny, working with Dale at the moment". Sunny She, on the cusp of a promising career as an orchestral player, is the first student in the CAP. Holding an MMus from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China, and a Graduate Certificate in Performance from the University of Southern California, she was one of five string players selected to attend the National Arts Centre Orchestra's (NACO) ten-week Apprenticeship Program in 2013, which included participating in their tour of China. "With the NACO, I was sitting with professional musicians, learning from them," says Sunny. "Here with the VAMSO, I am in the leader's chair, learning leadership skills. I have to communicate with the conductor, and also with my section and the rest of the orchestra. The players rely on me, so I have to be really clear. It is a little bit scary," she admits. "I make sure I know the piece really well."

"The CAP is an opportunity to work closely with a concertmaster, but isn't limited to training concertmasters – the competition there is very tough," says Dale. "Through this intensive study of orchestral life I want to equip young musicians to be effective within a section, as a principal, or as a concertmaster. I've had interest expressed internationally already for next fall. We hope to attract great young musicians to Vancouver; we are also looking for a level of maturity and professionalism in the student that indicates they are ready to work in the professional orchestral field."

KOERNER QUARTET AT VAM



with
Ariel Barnes,
cello

Performing works by:

Wagner

Siegfried Idyll

Shostakovich

Quartet No. 7

Schubert Cello Quintet

FRIDAY MAY 23, 7:30PM
KOERNER RECITAL HALL

Admission to all Koerner Quartet concerts is free and open to the public. Festival seating applies for each concert, please reserve your seats and specify quantity at www.koernerquartet.com



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PLAY / LEARN / CREATE



Mandarin and Music a good Mix

In the fall of 2014 a fun new class will start at VAM: Learn Mandarin through Music. Developed and taught by early childhood educator Suzanne Su, this is a unique language program in which children experience learning Mandarin through rhythm and rhyme, song, finger play, expressive movement, dance, drama and instrumental playing.

Ms. Su, who has a Masters degree in Music Education and teacher training in Early Childhood Education, and has been teaching music in preschools around the lower mainland, developed the Learn Mandarin through Music program when she was asked to teach Mandarin at a church Mandarin language school. She observed that the 'traditional' method of teaching was not engaging the young children: "I had to overcome the stereotype that language school was boring and hard," she says. "The children would spend three hours on Saturday mornings learning Mandarin, but they were not engaged." In her second year of teaching at the Mandarin school she asked to be allowed to revise the program "to create a joyful and encouraging musical atmosphere for learning to read, write and speak Mandarin". While enjoying musical and language games, children develop Mandarin language skills such as speaking in correct tones, recognizing the graphic symbols and translating them to corresponding tones and sounds, and analyzing sounds and patterns. The class will use rhythm instruments such as maracas, triangles and cymbals. Because Mandarin is a very tonal language, melodic percussion instruments such as the xylophone will help demonstrate pitch differences for different words and expressions.

Two beginner groups are planned for the fall, one for ages 3 to 6 and one for ages 6 to 9. The classes require no background in Mandarin speaking. Watch for registration this spring!



Musician Parents Finding the Right Note

"Elliot loves Lego; every morning it's, 'What am I going to build today?'" says Christie. "He's into dinosaurs, volcanoes, cars and trucks...his first word was 'truck', not 'cello'!" Elliot, age four-and-a-half, started playing the cello in VAM's Suzuki program in the fall of 2013, first in the group preparatory class, and then beginning lessons with Mary Thomson in January. "We didn't really say, 'is Elliot going to play an instrument?'" It was more like, "When is he going to start, which instrument is he going to play, which of the many great teachers that we know is he going to study with?"

Elliot's parents, Christie Reside and Rebecca Whitting, are both professional musicians. Christie, a second-generation musician (both her parents were flautists) is currently the Principal Flute of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and a member of the Vancouver-based Standing Wave Ensemble. Rebecca is a member of the first violin section of the VSO as well as a member of Standing Wave. "Everybody we know, everybody he knows, our friends' kids, they all play instruments. We assume it is just part of a well-rounded education, like learning to read and write," says Christie. "We had a casual agreement: no violin, no flute, so we don't get too neurotic."

Rebecca adds, "We know a lot of cellists; they are lovely people. Personality-wise it seemed like a good fit with Elliot. The musical community is the community that we live in, so it was quite natural that he should become involved. We listen to a lot of music, but we don't make music together like some musical families do. I think what we've had to define more since we thought about Elliot learning music is the importance of the discipline, the commitment. You have to do it every day, practice every day. That's how we feel about our music, just having it in our life. It's

more than sitting around singing Christmas carols. It is about devoting time to it. It is understanding that if you want to get something out of music-making you want to be good at it. That's part of enjoying it, living music."

"The Suzuki program is great at making practicing fun," says Christie. "We take turns going to his lessons. Mary [Thomson] is so good at giving him specific tasks that he has to accomplish; we can often make a little game of it. Some weeks practicing might be harder, you have to know when to step back and take a break, when to have a lighter attitude." "Maybe being musicians we might be more tuned in to when to push and when not to push," says Rebecca. "Perseverance is the key. A lot of times there can be frustration, looking at a good player and thinking, 'I'll never get there.' Elliot has already played in his first recital – *Pop Goes the Weasel*. It was really special watching him perform. My heart was pounding, but he was cool as a cucumber."

Rebecca concludes, "We both use music to express ourselves, and it is our community. Those are things that are so satisfying and important to both of us, I can't imagine us not trying to impart that to Elliot." Christie adds, "If he decides he doesn't want to play, that is fine, as long as he goes on liking music. That's the most important thing, to have that in his life."



Vancouver Academy of Music

Scholarship & Competition News



Suzuki Scholarships for 2014-2015

Marguerite M. Echaus Memorial Scholarship

Joshua Liu (piano, Teresa Ho)

Walter E. Kelly Memorial Scholarship

Caroline Kim (cello, Audrey Nodwell)

Stuart McCallum Memorial Scholarship

Declan Ng (piano, Martha Brickman)

Marian Schreiber Memorial Scholarship

Katharine Lee (violin, Evelyn Creaser)

Chua Tiampo Memorial Scholarship

Rosalind Wang (violin, Evelyn Creaser)
Aiden Crowe (violin, Evelyn Creaser)

Gifted Youth Scholarship Awards for 2014-2015

Edith Lando Scholarship

Olivia Cho (cello, Joseph Elworthy)

Eugenie & Edward Yeung Scholarship

Caitlin Wong (violin, Lawrie Hill & piano, Lorraine Ambrose)
Davin Mar (viola, Manti Poon)

VAM Scholarship

Rosalind Wang (violin, Evelyn Creaser)

Malcolm G. Aikman Scholarship

Augustin Wright (piano, Rebecca Kelly)

Ann Lesley Bain Memorial Scholarship

Sarah Baek (cello, Joseph Elworthy)

Dr. & Mrs. Joseph H. Cohen Scholarship

Joshua Liu (piano, Teresa Ho)

Harold & Florence Morris Scholarship

Phoebe Cheng (violin, Lawrie Hill)

Seymour & Janet Vineberg Memorial Scholarship

Maryam Khamis (violin, Nicki Steida)

Tarum Damji Sidpra Memorial Scholarship

Athena Deng (piano, Lorraine Ambrose)

Phyllis Salter Scholarships for Piano for 2014-2015

Clare Hii (Rebecca Kelly)
Xiaohan Yang (Lee Kum Sing)
Aydan Con (Lorraine Ambrose)
Zabrina Ng (Saida Matyukov)
Kristina Yau (Lorraine Ambrose)

Young Composers Competition 2014

The winning composition from each category will be premiered at VAM's Orpheum Showcase on May 4, 2014.

Junior Category Winner (8-12)

Leonard Gao

Junior Category Submission Participants

Michelle Cheng, Kevin Yan, Joshua Liu, John Lang, Olivia Cook, Henry From

Intermediate Category Winner (13-17)

Aya Robertson

Intermediate Category Submission Participants

Timmy Wang, Kira Bennett

Collegiate Category Winner (18-22)

Joseph Glaser

Collegiate Category Submission Participants

Adam Junk, Bevan Yau, Jaelem Bhate

Friends of Chamber Music Competition 2014

Junior Category

First Place
Doreen Dasol Yun (violin)
Trisha Doo (cello)
Linda Ruan (piano)

Second Place
Alison Kim (violin),
Grace Sohn (cello)
Claire Hii (piano)

Senior Category

First Place
Simon Gidora (violin)
Esther Hwang (violin)
On You Lee (viola)
Albert Seo (cello)

Second Place
Alina Khvatova (violin)
Diana Kim (violin)
On You Lee (viola)
Trisha Doo (cello)

2nd Annual Barbara Clague Festival of Song

James Forward
(\$400, Caroline Jang)

Tamara Chang
(\$200, Caroline Jang)

Leonard Gao
(\$200, Caroline Jang)

Meghna Lohia
(\$200, Caroline Jang)

Chloe Mackay
(\$200, Karin Plato)

Noah Skarsgard
(\$200, Margaret Skarsgard)



Give the Gift of Music

For 45 years the Vancouver Academy of Music has been dedicated to providing quality music education to people of all ages and backgrounds. Every donation enables VAM to provide support for programs such as:

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Thank you for your continued support of the Vancouver Academy of Music!

31st Annual Elsje de Ridder Armstrong Chamber Music Competition

Elsje de Ridder Armstrong Memorial Scholarship (\$1000)

Ester Hwang, violin
Simon Gidora, violin
On You Lee, viola
Albert Seo, cello
Coach: Andrew Dawes

Iby Koerner Memorial Scholarship (\$500)

Diana Kim, violin
Alina Khvatova, violin
On You Lee, viola
Trisha Doo, cello
Coach: Andrew Dawes

Provincial Chapter, I.O.D.E. Scholarship (\$500)

Julie Lin, viola
Marko Miletic, viola
Shauna Choi, cello
Eric Liang, piano
Coach: Andrew Dawes

Josephine & Alexander Walton Scholarship (\$500)

Caitlin Wong, violin
Sarah Baek, cello
Augustin Wright, piano
Coach: Evelyn Creaser

Eugenia & Evelyn Lawrence Memorial Scholarship (\$500)

Alina Khvatova, violin
Vanessa Shiao, cello
Teresa Bowes, piano
Coach: Andrew Dawes

Ulrika Wallersteiner & Peter Van de Velde Scholarship (\$200)

Sophia Cho, violin
Olivia Cho, cello
Catherine Wang, piano
Coach: Andrew Dawes

Joseph Elworthy Scholarship (\$200)

Russell Kim, violin
Yu-Hsin Chen, viola
Noah Verheyen, flute
Coach: Andrew Dawes

VAM Scholarship (\$200)

Alison Kim, violin
Grace Sohn, cello
Aydan Con, piano
Coach: Andrew Dawes

VAM Scholarship (\$200)

Vivian Liu, violin
Emily Ahn, cello
Aydan Con, piano
Coach: Andrew Dawes

People in the News

(listings in alphabetical order)



Olivia Atkinson, Lora Jackson, Evelyn Lukits, Gabrielle MacInnes and Sylvia Wvong (ballet) danced the role of "Street Urchins" in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's *Romeo and Juliet*, which ran January 30 to February 1 at Queen Elizabeth Theatre.



Sarah Baek, Yuyang Cao, Olivia Cho, Bobby Choi, Shauna Choi, Matthew Lee, Matthew Ng, Grace Sohn, Eileen Tian, Augustin Wright and Joshua Young (cello students of Joseph Elworthy) performed three sold-out concerts and one CBC live-to-air broadcast (March 17-19) for Music in the Morning at Koerner Recital Hall with **Shauna Rolston** (University of Toronto, Prof of Cello).

Ariel Barnes, who was appointed to the chair of principal cellist of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in January 2013, was recently appointed Co-head of VAM's Cello Department.



Olivia Cho (cello, Joseph Elworthy) made her Orpheum concerto debut as the youngest winner (12 years old) of VAM's Kay Meek Competition, performing Saint-Saens Concerto in A minor.

James Choi, (cello, Audrey Nodwell) is completing his degree in Dentistry at the University of Pennsylvania and continues to play his cello.

Jennifer Cyr, (soprano), who got her Artist Diploma at VAM, is returning to Lucca, Italy for the second time. Last summer she sang Musetta in *La Boheme* and this summer she will sing the Governess in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* for the Accademia Europea dell'Opera program.

DeAnne Eisch will take up the position of Head of the Suzuki Violin Department at VAM, replacing **Rosalind O'Keefe**, who will continue her teaching role.

Isabelle Eist (ballet) will be studying at Maryland Ballet and The Rock School for Dance Education this summer.

Mark Fewer, former VAM artist-in-residence, is leaving McGill University to accept a position at Stanford University as second violin of the St. Lawrence String Quartet.

James Forward (voice, Caroline Jang) and **Meghna Lohia** (voice, Caroline Jang) made their chorus debut with the Vancouver Opera Children's Chorus in their season opener, *Tosca*.

Mary From (ballet) will be spending her summer studying at Oregon Ballet Theatre and Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

Ray Han (french horn, Brian G'froerer) was selected as a winner in the 2013 American National Young Arts Foundation competition (top 180 students out of 11,000 applicants, and sole winner for french horn) and spent a week in January at the YoungArts Week in Miami, Florida. Ray is studying at Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan.

Gabrielle Haslett (cello, Audrey Nodwell) will appear as a young cellist in the upcoming movie, *If I Stay*, about a seventeen year old cellist, Mia, who is involved in an accident. Gabrielle portrays Mia in flashbacks, as she first takes up the cello as a young girl. *If I Stay* stars Chloe Grace Moretz, and will open in theatres August 22.

Andrzej Jeziorski (tenor) is singing chorus and small roles at the opera house in Coburg, Germany and is now in his second year with the company.

Ryan Kang (cello, Joseph Elworthy) has been accepted to the University of California, Berkeley.

Ji-Ye Kim (cello, Audrey Nodwell) is completing her Master of Music Degree with Hans Jorgen Jensen at Northwestern University, Chicago.

Russell Kim (violin, Nicholas Wright) and **Zachary Levin** (viola, Andrew Dawes) have been accepted into this year's National Youth Orchestra of Canada. The participants will complete a residency from June to August, culminating in a performance tour across Canada.

Jane Lee (cello, Joseph Elworthy) has been accepted to Vanderbilt University on a full scholarship.

Professor Lee Kum Sing, Head of the Piano Department, will tour in Asia in May 2014, giving lectures and masterclasses. The tour will include China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. In June and July he will be in Poland, Italy and Calgary, participating in international summer festivals.

Jack Li (clarinet, Cris Inguanti) made his Carnegie Hall debut performing Carl Maria von Weber's *Grand Duo Concertante* as part of a competition prize.

Ashton Lim (cello, Audrey Nodwell) has been accepted into the New World Symphony, an orchestral training program based in Miami Beach, founded and directed by esteemed conductor Michael Tilson Thomas. Ashton completed a Master of Music Degree with Hans Jorgen Jensen at Northwestern University, Chicago, and is a recent graduate of the RCM's Glen Gould School with **Desmond Hoebig** (VAM alum). He recently participated in a two month program with the Canadian Opera Company. Summer plans for Ashton include the Chamber Music Session at Domaine Forget as well as the Winnipeg International Cello Festival where he will collaborate with fellow VAM cello alum **Brian Yoon** (Victoria Symphony Orchestra, principal cello).

Max Lin (cello, Mary Thomson), **Allen Zhou** (cello, Audrey Nodwell), **Bryan Chun-Hin Wong** (piano, Sheila Hardy) and **Kathy Chen** (violin, DeAnne Eisch) were featured as soloists with the Lord Byng Secondary School Symphony Orchestra this past year. Max and Allen performed the Elgar Cello Concerto in Lord Byng's November concert, and Bryan and Kathy were featured in the February concert.

Jonathan Lo (cello, Audrey Nodwell) completed his Master's Degree in cello with Joel Krosnick at the Juilliard School of Music and is presently at the Glenn Gould School where he has been awarded a Rebank Fellow Career Development Residency.

Tejas Madhur (cello, Audrey Nodwell) just completed her law degree at Dalhousie University, Halifax.

Kathleen Morrison (coloratura soprano) is in Berlin, Germany, where she has performed the role of Queen of the Night and other such roles with a small company and is making herself known to German audiences.

Audrey Nodwell, Head of the Suzuki Cello Department, has been away adjudicating for the Calgary Kiwanis Music Festival cello classes, for the Langley Music School Festival and for the Medicine Hat Rotary Club Music Festival, cello division. She also did a residency for the Victoria Conservatory Advanced Collegium cello and chamber music class in the fall. Her string quartet, the Pro Nova Quartet, will be performing the Brahms *G Major String Sextet* at the Kay Meek Centre April 9th, with VAM faculty **Cyrena Huang** (cello) and **Mark Luchkow** (viola) as guests.

Soula Parassidis (soprano), recently married to American tenor Norman Reinhardt, is working on *Vanessa* by Samuel Barber for a performance in France. She recently sang the soprano solo in Mahler's Symphony No. 4 in Toulouse. Last summer she had a successful run of performances in Hyde Park, London, singing the soprano lead in *The Pearl Fishers* by Bizet. She was a leading soprano at the opera house in Leipzig, Germany for three years, where she sang roles such as Pamina and Fiordiligi, and is now a freelance artist.

Heidi Peters (soprano) is still with the opera house in Magdeburg, Germany, where she is singing chorus and significant solo roles. She recently joined **Andrzej Jeziorski** in Coburg for a guest appearance.

Isabelle Roland will take up the position of Head of the VAM Viola Department.

Albert Seo (cello, Cristian Márkos) was a finalist in the Seattle Young Artist Competition. He was the only cellist to make it into the top eight. Albert will be performing at the Young Artists Concerto Concert with a professional orchestra on May 10th in Seattle.

Alexandra Sia (cello, Audrey Nodwell) completed a Master of Music Degree with Alan Stepanyk and is currently freelancing in Atlanta, Georgia.

Jennifer Son (cello, Audrey Nodwell) has been studying cello with Tanya Carey on scholarship at Roosevelt University in Chicago and will be graduating with a Bachelor of Music Degree this spring.

Eric Thewalt (cello, Audrey Nodwell) is working on his PhD in physics at the University of California, Berkeley and is at present a Graduate Student Researcher at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

Eileen Tian (cello, Joseph Elworthy) won first place at the Little Mozarts Competition and performed at the Little Mozarts Honor Recital in Carnegie Hall on April 13th.

Carol Tsai (cello, Audrey Nodwell) is finishing her Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Ottawa this year.

Mariana Valdes (soprano), who sang her graduation recital last spring and then went to study in Rome, is back for a short stay while she works on the role of Mimi in *La Boheme* which she will sing in a concert performance of the opera on her return to Rome at the end of May. While here, she plans to sing some recitals to raise funds for the return to Europe.

Augustin Wright (piano, Rebecca Kelly) has been accepted to the Vianden International Music Festival and School in Luxembourg. Augustin is one of only four young people to have been accepted to the prestigious summer festival (participants include exceptionally talented children, advanced high school, college and graduate students, and amateur musicians as well as young professionals).

Felicia Wu (ballet) will be attending Miami City Ballet's Summer Intensive this year.

Tian-Yu Zhou (piano, Professor Lee Kum Sing), one of the Professor Lee's leading students, will be doing a concert tour across Asia, including China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. Ms. Zhou will perform solo recitals, and has been invited to play Rachmaninoff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* with the Hubei Symphony Orchestra. In September 2014 Tian-Yu will travel to England to give a recital. The program will include Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and a selection of pieces by Chopin.



Vancouver Academy of Music

Calendar Highlights



May 2014

Saturday, May 3, 10:00am-5:00pm
VAM Open House

Friday, May 9, 7:30pm
Orff Concert

Sunday, May 18, 2:00pm
Jerold Gerbrecht Winds & Brass Competition

Friday, May 23, 7:30pm
Koerner Quartet Concert

Saturday, May 24, 10:00am & 11:00am
Group Piano Recitals

Sunday, May 25, 2:00pm
Suzuki Festival Concert

Friday, May 30, 7:30pm
Adult Learning Program Soirée

June 2014

Sunday, June 1, 2:00pm
VAMSO Provincial Concerto Competition

Friday, June 6, 7:30pm
Kay Meek Competition

June 9-28
Royal Conservatory of Music Practical Exams

Sunday, June 15, 2:00pm
VAM Graduation Recital

Monday June 16, 2:00-4:00pm
Violin Masterclass with James Ehnes

Saturday, June 21, 11:00am
Ballet Performance & Demonstration

Summer Feature



KOERNER QUARTET String Seminar

July 7-11, 2014

- Chamber Music
- Master Class
- String Orchestra
- Technique Class

String orchestra led by the Koerner Quartet
Ages 12-18

RCM Grade 8 and above

Tuition \$300, Limited space available

For more information please contact:
executivedirector@vam.can

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Every *Twinkle* is Different

In Rosalind O'Keefe's office at VAM there are photo montages with snapshots of children, violins tucked under their chins, bows in hand, serious expressions of concentration on their faces. "I take a photo of every child that goes through the prep class," says Rosalind. "Getting their violin is a very big deal, being measured and graduating from the 'sponge and ruler' [a violin model that Rosalind developed to help teach the correct head position] to a real instrument. They are quite proud to be carrying a real violin case with a real violin."

Head of the Suzuki Violin Department since 1983, Rosalind has been teaching Suzuki violin at VAM since 1971. Born in 1933 in Birmingham, England, she studied violin at the Royal Academy of Music in London, England, earning her LRAM (Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music) in 1956. She married, emigrated to Canada in 1958, and raised two children. Rosalind did a pre-school teacher training program at Vancouver City College Langara (now Langara College). "One day my son was watching a preschool program that showed a whole football field of young children playing the violin for the Emperor and Empress of Japan. I was quite impressed. I didn't play at all when my children were small, but I thought it would be like riding a bicycle, I could just pick it up again. I got quite a shock, because I had to start almost from the ground up!" In 1970 Rosalind went to Edmonton to com-

plete the Suzuki Violin Teacher Training course with Yasuko Eastman, a pioneer of the Suzuki method in Canada. Back in Vancouver she found a mentor in Marian Schreiber. "Marian started the Suzuki program at VAM – it was the Community Music School then – in 1970, and invited me to be a part of it in 1971."

Over the years, Rosalind continued her teacher education, attending a workshop in Japan given by Shinichi Suzuki, and teacher development courses with John Kendall, the pioneering Suzuki pedagogue in North America. She was awarded Teacher Trainer status from the Suzuki Association of the Americas, was Director of the Canadian American Suzuki Summer Institute for several years, and did teacher training at Suzuki Summer Institutes in Canada and the United States.

The program at VAM has changed a bit over the years, observes Rosalind. "The Suzuki method is very dependent on parent participation, and fewer parents have time to spend each day with their child practicing. I think the children progress a bit more slowly on average. I prefer if the parents learn the basics of playing the violin, so they can appreciate the difficulty of what their child is trying to do – violin is a very hard instrument, holding the instrument seems unnatural. I've only ever had one parent, a dad, who was a natural; he picked it up very easily. He couldn't

understand why his daughter was having difficulties, so I had to fire him, and bring in the mom instead! The Suzuki method really is so good that very few students are unable to progress, given time and parental support. For all the kids who continue with it, they benefit in so many ways: social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and musical. Some children do go on to become professional musicians, but there are non-musical benefits for those who don't, as well." Suzuki himself was focussed on 'developing the whole child to help unfold his natural potential to learn and become a well-balanced person'. Rosalind notes humourously, "Suzuki was once quoted as saying that if any of his students went on to become professional musicians it wasn't his fault."

The passion of a true teacher shines out as she explains, "Sometimes people ask me how I continue teaching the same simple tunes, the same classes for so many years. I find it fascinating; there is always something new: a really creative student, a new difficulty to overcome, every *Twinkle* is different [referring to one of the beginning tunes in the Suzuki repertoire, the *Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star* variations]. Although I'm retiring as Head of the Suzuki Violin Department, I'll keep on teaching the preparatory classes. It's really what I do, what I am."



Vancouver Academy of Music



Wenwen Du: Collaborative Pianist is the new Accompanist

An exciting new era began for pianist Wenwen Du in January when she performed in concert with world-renowned tenor and long-time personal idol Ian Bostridge. To critical acclaim, the pair performed the first twelve works of Schubert's *Die Winterreise*, Benjamin Britten's *Winter Words*, and songs by Cole Porter, Charles Ives and Noel Coward. They encoored with Schubert's *Die Forelle* and Britten's arrangement of the folksong *O Waly, Waly*.

A life-time fan of Bostridge, Wenwen first met him in the summer of 2013, when she attended the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme in Aldeburgh, UK. The masterclass was given that year by Bostridge and Julius Drake (Bostridge's long-time duo partner). The workshop concluded with a Young Artists concert: "Ian decided he would perform in the concert. On the last day he asked me if I wanted to play for him! We had just one rehearsal and then we did the performance! He had to leave right after the concert, so I got no feedback. Then I went to Austria for a course at the Schubert Institute, and I got an email from Ian's manager asking whether I was available for a recital in Dallas

in January 2014. I met up with Ian in November in New York and ran through some parts of the program. We arrived in Dallas two or three days before the concert, went through everything maybe twice – no rehearsal on concert day! After the concert we had a dinner with the donors, and they thought we had been together for a long time. It was such an adventure for me!"

Wenwen came to Vancouver to study with Professor Lee Kum Sing after finishing Grade 12 in China. She completed the

"Pianist Du's insightful collaboration reminded that, after all, Schubert's greatest piano writing...is in his song accompaniments."

– Wayne Lee Gay, *D Magazine* FrontRow Blog

Bachelor of Music program, and received an Artists Diploma in 2011. She says, "In China I never got a chance to play with singers. The first time I played with a singer it was so fresh and interesting. Playing with singers is different even from playing with instrumentalists. With instruments, we practice and plan, we try to stick to the way we have practiced. With a singer it is all much more spontaneous, I have to listen intensely; the breathing tells

you everything. And there is text as well. So the singer and the piano work together to tell the story of the text; the piano is very important to give the whole picture."

"When I play with Ian he gives me freedom to experiment with lots of new things. He has a pianist that he has worked with for a long time, Julius Drake, but when he works with me he never imposes his [Drake's] ideas. In rehearsal he might grab a chair and sit next to me, or walk around the piano. He asks me questions about the piano, why I do something a certain way."

From the collaboration in Dallas, further opportunities have opened for Wenwen: "Ian has asked me to do a concert with him in July, and then a North American concert tour in 2015."

"For many years I've focussed on solo repertoire, and I still work on this, but for now I have to confess I have a deeper love for art song than for other areas. It is so new to me, there is so much repertoire – Schubert wrote around 600 songs! – and I'm glad Ian is such a specialist in this; I always love what he chooses. It draws us together."



VAM Opera Studio: The Life that is Opera

The Opera Studio has just wrapped up its opera scenes program for this term. Students performed scenes from both modern and classical operas, giving many of the newer people the chance to show how well they have progressed over the last term, along with the mature performances of those in third and fourth year and the Artist Diploma. The students acquitted themselves excellently and received due acclaim from the audiences.

Coming up on May 4th, the Showcase concert at the Orpheum will feature the superb voice of soprano Melissa Bideau, winner of the 2013 Eva Bene Scholarship in the Kay Meek Annual Scholarship Competition. Together with members of the Opera Studio, Melissa will perform scenes from Verdi's *La Traviata* and Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

In June this year, the Opera Studio will be presenting two one-act operas: *Suor Angelica*, a tragic snapshot of a young woman separated from her illegitimate son and banished to a convent by her wealthy family; and *Gianni Schicchi*, a comic vignette based on a scene from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, in which Schicchi, a newcomer to Florence society, turns the tables on the exclusive and greedy family of his daughter's suitor. These two operas, together with a third, *Il Tabarro* (The Cloak), form a trio of one-act operas by

Puccini known as *Il Trittico*. The operas will be staged by Vancouver-based singer/stage director Jeanine Fynn, Artistic Director of the DragonDiva Operatic Theatre Company. Conductor John Arsenault, who led the 2013 Opera Studio production of *Susannah*, will once again conduct members of the VAM Symphony Orchestra for this year's productions.

The Opera Studio's alumni (see 'People in the News' section in this newsletter) are out in the professional world making names for themselves. David Meek, Director of the Opera Studio and current or former teacher of most of these young artists, says, "It is very gratifying to see them making their way in the very difficult life that is opera, and it is a tribute to VAM for the opportunity it affords young singers to get the education and experience needed to pursue their artistic goals."



**Come see the budding stars
of VAM's Suzuki Program!**

Marian Schreiber

Suzuki
Festival

Sunday 2014
May 25 | 2:00 pm

Orpheum Theatre



Adult LEARNING PROGRAM

Pianist Tian-Yu Zhou: A Call to Spread Classical Music

Last fall, pianist Tian-Yu Zhou completed a tour of China and Japan, giving seven recitals in 16 days. At the age of 20, she is already an old hand at this; she began touring four or five years ago on the invitation of Professor Lee Kum Sing, who gives masterclasses in Asia each year. Born in China, Tian-Yu began playing the piano at age 4. "My dad composes music for films and my mom is a violinist and pianist, so I heard music all day. When I was nine I got a scholarship to the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. Then when I was 13 I did a masterclass with Professor Lee Kum Sing, and he was so great, I decided to come to Vancouver to study with him. I am graduating from the Bachelor's program at VAM this year, then will do the Artist Diploma."

VAM asked Tian-Yu to share some of her thoughts on her music-making.

On practicing:

"I wish I could have 25 hours in a day, I'm almost always playing. I don't really count the hours that I play, it is kind of weird to me to think of practicing for a set time. I just play until I'm satisfied with that session. When I'm busy with academic stuff I try to practice as much as I can but sometimes, if I have a whole day free, I'll play the whole day. If I don't get home until late I might start practicing at 10pm, play through the night. I don't really work on a schedule."

On favourite composers:

"My favourites are Bach and Schumann. I feel very connected to them, that I can play them quite naturally. Bach I started very young, the inventions, fugues. I first started working on the Goldberg Variations in a masterclass with Professor Lee. We were studying Bach and I thought I'd learn one or two of them, and then learn a few more each year. But I had a recital

On playing many different pianos while on tour:

"I see it as a really good challenge. My professor always says there are no bad pianos, only bad pianists. Great pianists can play bad pianos really well; I try not to blame the piano."

– Tian-Yu Zhou

coming up, and Professor Lee suggested I try the whole set! It really challenged me! You need a lot of concentration; there are 32 sections. Schumann I started playing three or four years ago. His music is very hard. I love his chamber music."

On playing with the Koerner Quartet in the Rising Stars Mentorship Program:

"I got to play Schumann's Piano Quintet with the Koerner Quartet in December. It was totally an honour to be invited to play with such amazing musicians. We had a lot of fun working together, talking about the music, and the concert was fun."

On her goals in life:

"My challenge is to spread classical music around the world. My career, my dream is to be a true artist. I always put the composer in front of me, but strive for a higher level of artistic achievement all the time. I really love to perform on a stage. It is natural for me, I never feel nervous. In the last concert of the fall tour I played five encores...Even though it is tiring, I really love what I'm doing, there is always more that I can look forward to."

On where she is going next:

"Next month I'm off on a tour to Hong Kong, China, Malaysia and Singapore. I'm going to Poland for a summer festival, and then next fall I have a recital in England."

VAM wishes Tian-Yu good fortune in her travels!



VAM's Adult Learning Program is a perfect way to begin, revisit or enhance your passion for music.

Beautiful Vanier Park learning environment

100 free parking stalls available to Adult Learning Program students

Lessons are available for voice & all instruments.

VAM's Adult Learning Program offers flexibility and affordability – you choose the number of lessons at the following price:

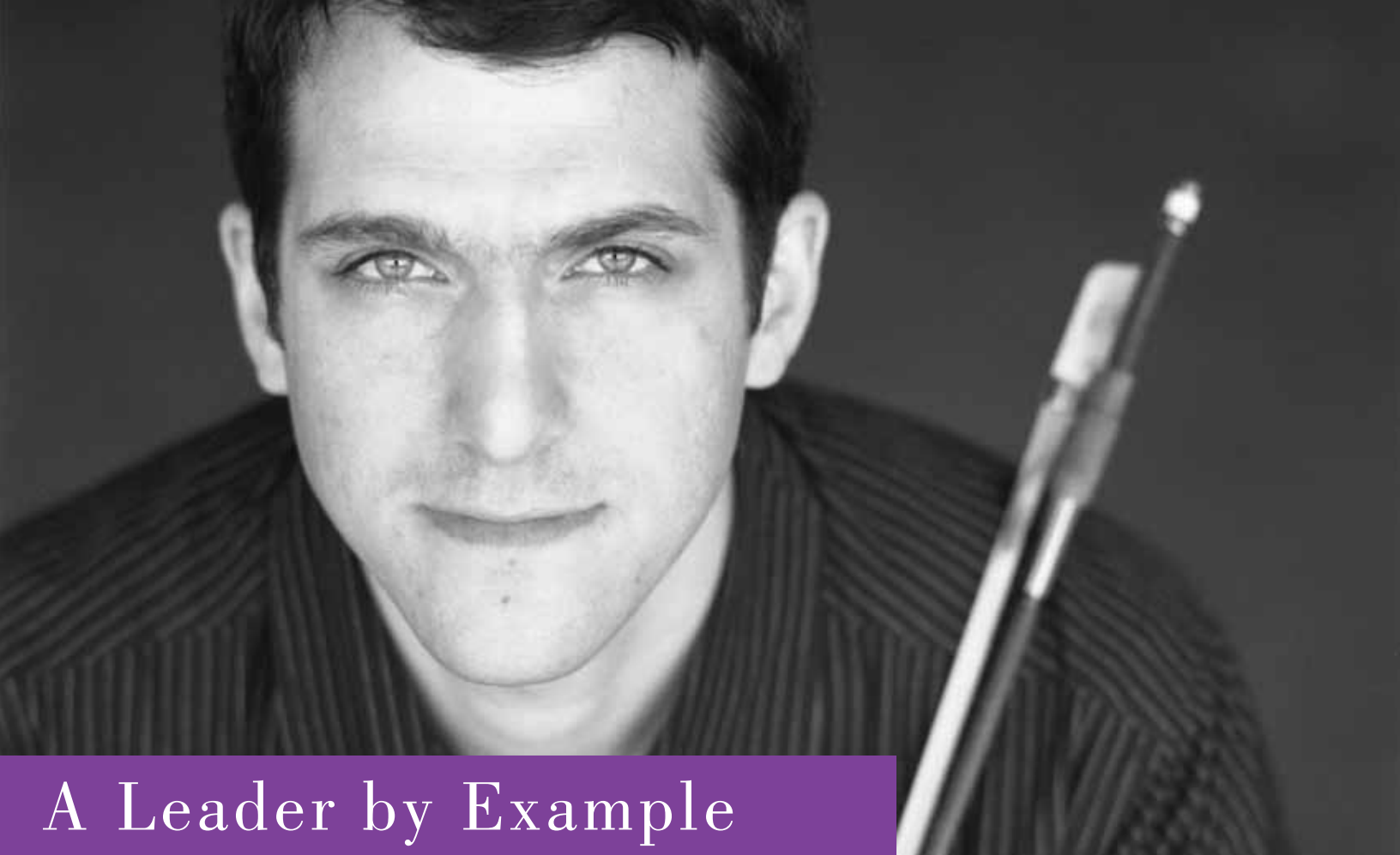
30 minutes = \$30 45 minutes = \$45 60 minutes = \$60

As a bonus, ALP participants receive free admission for VAM concerts including our ever-popular VAM Orpheum Series & master classes with world-renowned guest artists.

To find out more visit us online at www.vam.ca

Owen Underhill works with a Young Composer and members of the VAMSO in the Young Composers Competition reading session (see story on page 16).





A Leader by Example

VAM welcomes Ariel Barnes as the new Co-head of the Cello Department. Ariel, who has been on the cello faculty here since January of 2012, says of his appointment, "I think that working with Joseph, who has an incredible amount of experience in this position, is an incredible boon for me. We will have ongoing discussions about how things develop and what needs to be done. I hope to be involved with teaching a lot of students, helping to develop what is already a flourishing department. The cello department teachers do fantastic work. I love hearing the students from different classes. When I listen to the VAM Symphony Orchestra, the cello section really shines."

"With every passing year I love music-making more and more."

—A. Barnes

Ariel moved to Vancouver at age 11 and began his studies with cellist Sophie Willer (a VAM alum), also playing in the VYSO. He studied at Western Michigan University with Bruce Uchimura, and later at the University of Toronto with Daniel Domb. He returned to Vancouver and rapidly established himself as a key member of the musical community. He was a member of the Borealis String Quartet and Trio Accord, Co-principal of the CBC Radio Orchestra and Principal Cello of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra, and is an active solo performer in recitals and concerts. He is a member of

the Turning Point Ensemble, and in January 2013 was appointed Principal Cello of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

"To juggle all this you have to get really good at scheduling! I, and many of my colleagues, spend many administrative hours trying to figure out how to make everything work, how to pursue the projects we love, engage in the work that's necessary for us to do. Even though I enjoy the colourful existence of being involved with so many projects – and I still do have a number of projects that I want to engage

in – the VAM and VSO appointments will allow me to focus my energy, as opposed to having my fingers in so many pies, which I'm happy about. It's time for that."

One of Ariel's current projects is his latest collaboration, Couloir, with harpist Heidi Krutzen. The pair started exploring the repertoire for cello and harp; finding little, they have taken it upon themselves to commission and play new works. "We commission composers that we love, but we don't try to influence the creation of the pieces. So far they have brought us works

that have story lines, which we can use as access points to help draw in audiences who may be more used to the traditional classical repertoire." He continues, "The idea that living performers engage with living composers, this is what 'classical' music has been about for centuries. The great composers often had relationships with performers or groups who premiered their work, championed their music, made it real for people." Now in their third season, Couloir has toured across Canada and in the United States, and has just released their first CD, *Wine Dark Sea*. Check out

their website at couloir.ca.

"For relaxation I spend time with my family; it is rewarding to watch my two girls connect. We go for walks, I go to a movie with my wife, get together with friends. I listen to music – I recently got a record player, and have been listening to vinyl. It is a different experience from much of today's listening, you sit and listen, it is warmer, more tactile. With every passing year I love music-making more and more. I find myself more deeply engrossed in it, in what we do. You can explore and explore, and you only just scratch the surface."



Vancouver Academy of Music



Young Composers: Ultimately it is about Hearing your Music Played

This past winter, VAM held its inaugural Young Composers Competition. Applicants in junior, intermediate and collegiate categories were invited to submit compositions, with the prize being to have their work performed at the VAM Orpheum Showcase concert on May 4th. The adjudication panel consisted of Owen Underhill, an active composer/conductor, professor at SFU's School for the Contemporary Arts and conductor of the Turning Point Ensemble; Edward Top, composer-in-residence of the VSO and newly-appointed Head of the newly-formed Composition Department at VAM; and Jacquie Leggatt, Head of the VAM Theory Department, an active composer in acoustic and electroacoustic genres and manager of the VAM library.

Edward describes the adjudication process: "We came together as a group, and looked at each piece together. We didn't really impose criteria, but tried to look at each piece on its merits and in the context of the age group. For a 9- or 10-year-old we might look for something skillfully written, with a good idea that is consistently presented. In the intermediate group, the teens already have more skills, so they want to try these out as much as possible; we would look for a basic background level of theory and harmony, at the same time, creativity and personality. At the collegiate level, they have played at a certain level, been exposed to so much, there is a bit of a risk to become limited in ideas, and you have to open that up again."

"Two things that we did which are not common to most competitions: Firstly, during our adjudication process, Jacquie took notes on our comments, which we then forwarded to the applicants as feedback. We thought this would help to

make this a learning experience. With the number of applicants we had this year it was still feasible; for big competitions, you never get any feedback."

"Secondly, we had an orchestral reading session of all the compositions that didn't win – that was Joseph [Elworthy's] idea. Owen conducted members of the VAM senior orchestra. They spent a bit of time on each piece, then the composers had some discussion with him, trying out different things, changing dynamics, or articulation. This is all very new for most of them. I think when you hear your music being performed that is the best thing! The orchestra was really great, they were totally good sports, seemed to be really involved and having fun." Jacquie Leggatt adds, "I can't imagine being 9 or 14 and having an orchestra play your work! Ultimately, it is about hearing your music played."

The three winning compositions will be performed at VAM's Orpheum Showcase concert. Of Junior category winner Leonard Gao's piece, Jacquie says, "Leonard's is for string orchestra, called *The Night Hung*. It is very dramatic, thick chords, big gestures, use of different capabilities of the strings. His work is very accomplished, very detailed, with bowings, dynamics, articulation. Owen and Edward were so impressed with this. I didn't participate in his adjudication, as he is my student, but at the end when they chose him as the winner, I was really thrilled." Leonard is a Grade 6 student at Trafalgar Elementary School. He has been improvising and composing on the piano since he was five, and has been studying composition with Jacquie Leggatt for the past year.

Intermediate category winner Aya Robertson is in her final year at Templeton

Secondary School, where she has written scores for school film and theatre productions. She has completed both the ARCT Performers exam and the ARCT Elementary Piano Pedagogy exam. Aya studies composition with Rita Ueda and piano with Rebecca Kelly. "I really look forward to hearing Aya's piece," says Jacquie. "It is called *Let's Candy*. It is for full orchestra, quite short. It's about anticipating eating candy, then eating candy, then being happy after eating candy. It is full of personality, a quirky, fun, crazy piece. It is well orchestrated, really well executed."

As context for his composition, *Kaddish*, Collegiate category winner Joseph Glaser says, "The kaddish...marks the transitions between elements of the Jewish liturgy. In the mourner's kaddish, it marks the transition from life to death." Jacquie describes his piece: "It is almost a theme and variations; there is a beautiful melody that comes back in different instruments. It is for full orchestra, a very hard piece; the orchestra is going to have to work at it. It is very mature writing. Joseph has turned something very personal into a beautiful, heartfelt composition." Joseph attends UBC, where he has studied with Dorothy Chang, Stephen Chatman, Keith Hamel and Jocelyn Morlock. His works have been performed by the VSO, the Turning Point Ensemble, the Gryphon Trio, the Amici Chamber Ensemble and the UBC Contemporary Players.

The Young Composers Competition will be held annually. Watch for the winners' names on orchestral programs in years to come!

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