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Alla Breve

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Société Kodály du Canada**

Alla Breve

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Alla Breve welcomes original academic and non-academic articles of varying lengths and topics that reflect the Canadian context of Kodály-inspired education, pedagogy, philosophy, music, and history. Articles may be submitted in English or French.

Submissions are due by February 15 of each calendar year

- Submissions must be presented as Word documents on letter size paper
- Images (photographs and logos) should be sent separately (not embedded) in high resolution with standard file format (.jpeg, .png, etc.) and must conform to Canadian Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA). Please note within the document particular image placement, if necessary.
- The KSC must have permission to print your article. If your piece has been printed in another publication, please declare that when you submit it and include written permission to reprint it from the original publisher.
- All submissions may be edited for typos, length, and style.
- Submissions must use APA Guidelines for citations.
- Include a 100 word biography and headshot with your submission.

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In addition to our regular columns, *Alla Breve* is a peer-review journal. Manuscripts read and evaluated by qualified referees and are identified as such in the journal. Manuscripts should range from 3,000-6,000 words and may be submitted in English or French.

Alla Breve operates a strictly anonymous peer review process in which the reviewer's name is withheld from the author and, the author's name from the reviewer. The reviewers may at their own discretion opt to reveal their name to the author in their review but our standard policy practice is for both identities to remain concealed.

Each manuscript is reviewed by at least two referees, who will recommend to the Editor whether a manuscript should be accepted, revised (major or minor revisions), or rejected. The Editor will make a decision on the manuscript based on the recommendations from the referees. Please note that the Editor's decision on a manuscript will be final.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

WHAT? SO WHAT? NOW WHAT?

BY JACOB AUTIO

Here we are. Amidst a global pandemic we gather remotely through our annual journal that highlights reflections, reviews, and other regular columns. Nothing could have prepared us for this moment and yet this time of self-isolation and social distancing has been a unique opportunity to be alone with our thoughts and intentionally connect with others in different ways. Social media and online platforms have become a way to stay informed of what is happening and share our experiences. One poem, *In the Time of Pandemic* (O'Meara, 2020) has circulated widely:

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows.

And the people began to think differently. And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

This poem is a reflection and a vision for this moment in our collective history. It mirrors Rolfe et al.'s (2001) reflection structure "What? So what? Now what?"

What we are asked to do is self-isolate and distance ourselves from others. People are asked to work from home and find ways to stay connected and productive

while others, devastatingly, are losing their jobs and income and are seeking ways to feel secure. Since there is no set date of when this will end, we are all facing fears of the unknown and having no end in sight. School, rehearsals, concerts, tours, conferences, meetings, and all other types of gatherings are being cancelled or indefinitely postponed and we are left to face our shadows of how to live in this present reality. Who are we if we are not teaching in front of a group of students? Who are we if not musicians who play with or for others? Who are we if we cannot be *doing* something? Social media is being inundated with solutions and products that speak to our anxiety of how to teach remotely all the while school districts, post-secondary institutions, and Ministries of Education across the country are still in the process of making decisions and monitoring the situation. As such, how many of these solutions and time spent planning for the unknown may be rendered moot?

So what? Perhaps the only thing we can do is take the time to stop doing and truly be present. For many it is difficult to embrace stillness and meet shadows be they personal or those of our society. Our collective colonial-Western-North-American-Canadian identity has been built on producing and doing. In the absence of the arguably "ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless" mindsets and practices within the day-to-day planning, assessing, creating, researching, behaviour managing, meeting, coordinating, collaborating, and so forth that we oft identify with as musician educators we are left to reconnect with the true essence of ourselves. It is time to breathe and notice the present moment. It is not only a time to look back on our practice, read, and set goals but also to be still and reconnect with

our true self and the presence of music in our lives. As a group of Kodály-inspired educators, what is the true essence of Kodály that still inspires us? For me, this time of self-isolation (luckily surrounded by my loved ones) means time to work on this edition of *Alla Breve*, learning to play a few songs on the piano and ukulele (instruments I have neglected for far too many years), as well as to truly notice the sounds and colours of nature and of the city that surround me. Without knowing what comes next or how exactly the future will look, I am satisfied with the touch of the computer keyboard, the weight of the piano keys, and the acceptance of that which surrounds me. Therefore, as the next moment unfolds I seek to encounter it with a mindset of noticing and acceptance.

Now what? O'Meara (2020) hopes this experience will bring with it a time of transformation. Each one of us will undergo our own transformation to which we can never know its effect on the collective. My self-isolation transformation is being inspired by reading Eckhart Tolle's *The Power of Now* (2004) and *A New Earth* (2008). My hope is that, whatever happens, I will bring with me a greater sense of presence into all moments of my life, including the production and consumption of music. To this end I am reminded of the work of Kodály's student Klára Kokas who worked to develop a true sense of joy and present consciousness with her students which she refers to as "alertness," "absorption," and "musical concentration" among other descriptors (Kokas, 1999). My "new choices" will be based more on being aware of the present moment: to continue to be open to notice what is happening and truly listening. For the Kodály Society of Canada (KSC), this transformation is yet to be seen. How can we "be" if we cannot be together for workshops and summer courses? How can we connect with one another and support if we are not in the process of "doing" our jobs? Moving forward, what essence of Kodály's visions will reawaken and inspire us in ourselves and our practices?

It is the hope of this journal to provide a review of what the KSC has done throughout the past year as well as provide considerations and peer reflections as we engage in our own reflection during this global halt. As we read we can begin to think of how we continue to transform and heal ourselves and our national Kodály-inspired organization. In this

edition, our newly elected president, Dr. Jody Stark greets us and reviews the KSC's accomplishments and gives fond farewells to our outgoing board members followed by a review of two choral albums, for your consideration and self-isolated listening pleasure, by Dr. Jakub Martinec. Next is a series of reflections by our scholarship recipients from 2019 that highlight their transformations during their summer studies across Canada. From our archives we present a piece from 2007 by Dr. Sheila Scott that summarizes the many leadership roles a Kodály-inspired teacher holds in a school community. Finally, our Canadian Composer feature this year is Franco-Ontarian Marie-Claire Saindon who presents examples of her work accompanied by a critical look at our collective view of Franco-Canadian choral repertoire.

It is always the goal of the *Alla Breve* team to present high quality and thought-provoking content and we highly encourage all of our readers and academic leaders to submit for our next issue. Now and always we also want to connect with you to discuss what you read and discover on our social media platforms and keep the transformation and conversation going!

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

MUSIC TEACHERS ARE HEROES

BY DR. JODY STARK

As I write this message, I have just stepped into the presidency of the Kodály Society of Canada. Since our board meeting in Calgary less than a month ago, the world has changed dramatically.

People all over the world are sheltering at home amid a global pandemic and many countries are reeling from the impact of the spread of COVID-19. It seems that the arts have become even more critical during this uncertain time. Many are engaging with music for solace, connection, entertainment, and as a way to stay occupied and fulfilled. You have likely seen the videos of quarantined Italians singing together from their balconies amid a crisis of epic proportions, and the number of musicians and arts organizations who are providing content on the internet to comfort and unite us, is staggering (Yo-yo Ma, Neil Diamond, Chris Martin, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, John Legend, and Ben Gibbard come to mind, and there are many more).

Amidst all the fear and uncertainty we are facing, I have decided that music teachers are my heroes. Many are taking to the internet to share songs, lessons, and resources to encourage and support colleagues as we all figure out how to teach music online, and many others are contributing content to comfort and sustain their students and other children at this difficult time. I have found great peace watching videos posted by music educators on the Singing Space Facebook page and in seeing the many generous offers of help made to complete strangers. Music teachers, you are amazing humans and you make me proud to be a music educator!

In spite of difficult times, I couldn't be

more thrilled to be associated with the Kodály Society of Canada. The KSC was founded in 1973 with the aim of promoting and supporting Kodály-inspired music education across the country. While Canadian society and the field of music education have changed greatly since the 1970s, the KSC and other arts organizations across the country have tirelessly worked to support music education that fosters a life-long love and understanding of music. Since the International Kodály Society Symposium in Camrose, Alberta in 2017, the national board has been actively revisioning what our impact on Canadian society might be. Thanks to a successful symposium organized by KSC board member and AKA advisor Dr. Ardelle Ries, a foundation in honour of former KSC president Darlene Ngo, and a generous gift from the late Canadian Kodály pioneer Pierre Perron, the KSC has been able to fund more scholarships for teacher professional learning and a new resource development grant. With five Kodály programs across the country, this money has been well-used in support of quality music education in Canada.

We would not be here without our pioneers. I would like to take the opportunity to thank two of them. Connie Foss More was among the first American graduate students to head to Hungary with Jean Sinor and begin work on a North American adaptation of Kodály-inspired music education. Luckily for us, Connie met a handsome Canadian and moved to Vancouver Island early in her career. Connie infamously was my husband David Stark's Kindergarten music teacher in Nanaimo, BC in the early 1970s. Since then, Connie has not stopped. She has brought music into the lives of thousands of children in her choirs and various music classrooms in schools and conservatory

programs, organized and taught summer Kodály teacher education programs, served on the International Society of Music Education Early Childhood Commission, edited the national Kodály Society of Canada journal, served on the executives of the KSBC and the KSC, assumed the presidency of the Kodály Society of Canada from 2008-2012 and stepped back in to help make things run when our beloved president became ill and passed away, and was instrumental in creating the Darlene Ngo Legacy Fund to support quality music education in Canada. Many of the leaders of the Kodály movement in BC owe their inspiration to Connie. In 2018, the Kodály Society of Canada made Connie an honorary member to thank her for her tremendous service to the cause of Kodály music education in Canada.

Similarly, Dr. Ardelle Ries has touched the lives of many of the people who are currently involved in the Kodály movement across the country and around the world. Many of us were children and youth in Ardelle's choirs, students in her university classes, participants in the University of Calgary, University of Alberta or Wilfred Laurier Kodály programs, or Augustana conducting course and/or countless other workshops and conferences she has given or planned, including the IKS Symposium, which Ardelle spearheaded with her characteristic brilliance and grace. We have also been blessed to be her colleague in a variety of professional arts organizations including the Alberta Kodály Association, the Alberta Choral Association (Choir Alberta), the International Kodály Society, and the Kodály Society of Canada. Whatever she does, Ardelle does with excellence and care as evidenced by the many acknowledgements she has received including Choir Alberta's Richard S. Eaton Award, the AKA Teacher Recognition Award, and the University of Alberta Augustana Faculty Murray Lauber Distinguished Service Award. Like Connie, Ardelle's impact is immeasurable in large part because of her passion for singing and music for everyone, and because of her tremendous care for each individual.

Both Connie and Ardelle will be greatly missed on the Board of the Directors of the Kodály Society

of Canada as they move on to new adventures. Luckily for us, they are not going far. Connie has turned her tremendous talents to working on several important causes she holds dear, and Ardelle continues to be a presence as the Director of Music at U of A's Augustana campus, through her newly-launched SingAble inclusive choir, and as an advisor for the Alberta Kodály Association. I am certain they will both "make new friends, but keep the old," and how lucky we are collectively to call them friends.

Speaking of "old" friends, I would like to also take this opportunity to thank (now) past-president, Dr. Kim Eyre for her leadership and wisdom over the last four years. Kim has left me with enormous shoes to fill as KSC president, and has been a treasured collaborator and colleague in my work on the board. I am thankful our collaboration will continue as we move into new roles. Kim has served as KSC president at an exciting time in our organization's history, and we have accomplished much under her steady leadership. However, this has not been Kim's first time on the board. Kim served as president once before from 1999-2004, and also served as a board member earlier in her career. Kim's legacy will continue as the Kodály Society of Canada works to develop an online Canadian song collection, creates a national Kodály teacher education curriculum, and republishes new editions of treasured Canadian music education resources from the past. Like Connie and Ardelle, Kim has been an important contributor to the Kodály movement in Canada, and we are grateful to her. Thank you, Kim. You are amazing and beloved to many.

And as for you, dear colleagues, may you hold tight to those who are beloved to you. May you sing and laugh with others often, whether in person or not. May you take the time to rest and contemplate what matters to you most, and may you know that you mean the world to many people because of your work as a music educator. Stay well.

Respectfully,

Jody Stark





ALBUM REVIEW

A CELEBRATION OF CANADIAN CHORAL MUSIC BY DR. JAKUB MARTINEC

A review of two albums:

I. SEASONS OF LIFE AND LANDSCAPE (released 2019) The Canadian Chamber Choir, with conductor Julia Davids

II. WHEN THERE IS PEACE (released 2019) Chor Leoni, with conductor Erick Lichte

"There is no complete spiritual life without music, for the human soul has regions only illuminated by music" (Wightman, 2010). When Kodály speaks of the integral relationship between wellness and music, one can interchange the word *music* for *singing*. Kodály advocates for healthy and informed *singing* education beginning with the youngest children in every school and suggests that the spiritual health and wellness of a country can be measured by its *singing*. And that is the essence of this review, specifically the potential impact of singing on health and well-being as shown in these recordings. There are many indicators of a healthy singing environment across Canada and each one of us can proudly identify a multitude of exceptional choral programs in schools and communities involving singers of all genders from early years to senescence.

Choral recordings highlight the musical excellence of a specific ensemble as well as identifying current choral trends. This review looks at two albums worthy of attention by all who find excellent and accomplished singing their "comforting elixir" in life (Hooker, 2013). These albums, however, are not just about one's informed listening and contributions to well-being, but they also serve to teach us several things about trends in Canadian choral music.

It is not often that two recordings by two exceptional choirs come on the market almost simultaneously. One might wonder

why a single review would cover recordings by two very different ensembles. First and foremost, I have had the opportunity to interact with both ensembles and have the greatest respect for their accomplishments, so I was excited to receive and review their latest recordings. That being said, the purpose of this review is *not* to compare them, but rather to look at the highlights of each and articulate their significant contributions to Canadian singing. Interesting to note that both ensembles have been recognized by the professional music cadre in Canada as JUNO nominees – the 2019 *Chor Leoni* album was nominated for a 2020 JUNO while the *Canadian Chamber Choir's* release of a prior album in 2016, *Sacred Reflections*, also received a JUNO nomination in that year.

Formed in 1999 by Iwan Edwards (and now conducted by Julia Davids, assisted by Joel Tranquilla), the Canadian Chamber Choir (CCC) draws together highly accomplished singers from across Canada for intensive seven to ten-day projects in various regions of the country. CCC is usually hosted by a school or community group and after a few days of intensive, full-time rehearsal, the choir offers a short tour of its program in that province. The Choirs at Memorial University were privileged to engage with this wonderful ensemble a few years ago when Julia Davids brought the Canadian Chamber Choir on tour to Newfoundland. There, we organized some inspiring workshops with our choirs and our graduate students in choral conducting.

The CCC mandate "to bring new and existing Canadian choral music to every corner of Canada has allowed singers, conductors, audiences, and composers to come together in celebration of the depth of this country's choral heritage." The choir

has received accolades for its performances from all corners of the country. Additional information on the choir can be accessed on its website at www.canadianchamberchoir.ca.

Chor Leoni (CL) is a household name for singers and appreciators of male choirs in Canada. Founded in 1992 by Diane Loomer, the choir is now led by artistic director Erick Lichte. I was honoured to host this exceptional choir and Ms. Loomer in 2008 during the World Festival of Singing for Boys and Men in Prague and was inspired not just by their singing, but by their humanitarian approach to life and living. The choir has released numerous recordings and has won accolades for their achievements nationally and internationally. This choir also focuses on Canadian music, having commissioned songs for male choir by dozens of Canadian composers and has released many albums. They describe themselves as follows:

The singing men of Chor Leoni are brought together by a common vulnerability and sensitivity to the music. Through the collective choral experience these singers, audiences and communities become more interconnected. For Chor Leoni music is more than just entertainment; it brings people together and provides healing. Now, more than ever, we need men to sing in harmony together.

More information about CL can be found at www.chorleoni.org.

SEASONS OF LIFE AND LANDSCAPE – CANADIAN CHAMBER CHOIR

Eighteen new songs in the Canadian choral canon - sensitively curated by director Julia Davids as one might see 18 paintings in an exhibition - come together on this album, showing the warp and woof of life all across the country. The warp of constant connectedness contrasted with the woof of amazing diversity arises as the key theme as the singing unfolds to bring the various seasons, the incredible landscapes, and the varied journeys of life in this country to vivid reality. The significant factor is that these are not songs simply about winter or summer, or of the plains or the mountains and shining waters, but songs evocative of the highs and lows of emotions within lived experience, impacted consciously and unconsciously by space and place. Each song, creatively composed and expressively performed, paints a picture that takes the listener to a place of reflection and visualization. I suspect

that for some pieces, you will want to press repeat to listen to it several times in a row, as I did.

Accompanist and composer Laura Hawley's song cycle, *In Song*, forms the foundation of the recording with her five songs effectively weaving in and out of the album. Song No.1, *Entre Nos Vois*, opens the album and immediately challenges the listener to define a personal concept of our own voice: *And so we live a new beginning./Starting slowly, thinking small./We root ourselves in peace and quiet;/ No more worries for us all*. Then, the other pieces weave in and out of the tapestry as we visualize and treasure personal life moments. The album fittingly ends with *There Was a Time* by Cy Giacomin that helps to tie the reflective moments together with the familiar biblical text: *A time to be born, a time to die....a time to hurt and a time to heal ... a time to be silent, ...and perhaps most importantly ...a time to sing*.

The beauty of these compositions, as our life elixir, is that each of us will visualize or hear something different in each piece. Whether it is the subtle and rich accompaniment of Jeff Reilly's bass clarinet, Keith Hamm's viola, Beverly Johnston's vibraphone, or perhaps more thematic reflections such as the theme of journey (*The Song My Paddle Sings*, text by E. Pauline Johnson; *The River* by Joni Mitchell; Gordon Lightfoot; or the Ojibway *babamadizwin*), the song choices lead us on our own personal reflective journey. It is an album that will culminate in different outcomes for different listeners – from a reflective inward-looking personal journey to evoking deep conversation amongst a group of listeners.

WHEN THERE IS PEACE - CHOR LEONI

In contrast, *When There Is Peace: An Armistice Oratorio*, is a live recording of an oratorio commissioned from CL's composer-in-residence, Zachary Wadsworth, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Armistice of WWI (November, 11, 1918). Wadsworth writes:

As I wrote *When There Is Peace*, my central musical aim was not to flatten these stories, emotions, and experiences into a single stance: of moral condemnation, for example, or of unquestioning patriotism. The oratorio's libretto, so expertly curated by Peter Rothstein and Erick Lichte, combines texts of many moods: the excitement of a soldier marching into war, moments of calm in the barracks, the

horror of the front, and the mourning of those who survived. I wanted to honour these stories with faithful music which, though unified by core themes and harmonies, nonetheless proudly marches, sings, screams, and weeps.

When WWI began, the new recruits, their families and even the allied governments all believed it would be over in a matter of months and life would go on, with everyone and everything largely unscathed. However, it was a bloodbath over four years with 40 million casualties and it left the entire western world reeling. Divided into four major sections: Prologue, War, Armistice, and Epilogue, the composer blends the artistry of poets from WWI so that the listener feels the anxious waiting of the soldiers in the trenches, then the terrifying engagement of flesh on flesh, the wondering about the eerie silence, then a cacophony of celebratory church bells on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, followed by the relief and subsequent reflections of lived experience.

Each of the nine movements brings a profound emotional sense of drama (Marching Men), reflection (Soft Rain) – a sense of the natural and the unnatural in what must have been a horrifying lived experience that we now know stayed with the men and women for the rest of their lives. There is an interesting and refreshing take on two standard poems set for choirs by many composers: *In Flanders Fields* – a new treatment and not to the text as we know it – and *For the Fallen*. The men of Chor Leoni, accompanied by the Borealis String Quartet, tenor Lawrence Williford and soprano Arwen Myers, expertly manoeuvre through the many moods and emotions. As I listened, it seemed that some of the movements could be performed

effectively as stand-alone works in concert.

The parallels between *Seasons of Life and Landscape* and *When There is Peace* may not be as immediately obvious to the reader as it came to me upon listening and reflecting. The level of performance is elevated, as expected, from both Chor Leoni and the Canadian Chamber Choir, and besides providing a recording that all of us should want to acquire, both provide a model of excellence that those of us singing and conducting in adult choirs should emulate. Almost without exception, the repertoire focuses on 21st century choral compositional writing trends – pushing against the norms but staying within the traditional boundaries.

I return to the opening quote by Kodály: “*There is no complete spiritual life without music, for the human soul has regions only illuminated by music.*” The goal of both choirs through these recordings is to share the concept of our varied lived experiences from different centuries and land(scapes), through music that illuminates the soul and provides a rich and personal place of reflection.

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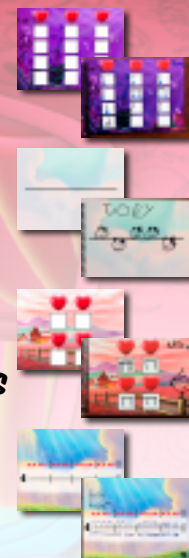
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2019 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

REFLECTIONS ON SUMMER TEACHER EDUCATION



Julie Gagnon
FORMATION KODÁLY
NIVEAU I: ANALYSE
RÉFLEXIVE
*Université de Québec à
Montréal (QUAM)*

-English version follows-

L'enseignement de la musique au primaire représente un défi de tous les jours. Les activités d'apprentissage doivent être planifiées rigoureusement pour favoriser l'acquisition des savoirs-essentiels et développer les compétences musicales des élèves. Dans cette optique, la formation continue représente un atout important dans mon enseignement quotidien. Même si j'enseigne depuis plusieurs années, j'aime innover et découvrir de nouvelles approches pédagogiques. Avant même de débiter la formation estivale de Kodály niveau I, plusieurs questions me venaient à l'esprit...Comment varier les activités musicales sans perdre de vue les notions à enseigner? Comment faire progresser les apprentissages plus efficacement quand les classes de musique sont espacées dans le temps et de courtes durées? Comment mieux intégrer les savoirs essentiels aux activités musicales interactives?

J'ai été initiée à la méthode Kodály lors de mes premières années au Conservatoire de musique de Victoria sous l'aile de Mme Illona Bartalus. Des années plus tard, après un court atelier de formation Kodály au Congrès FAMEQ avec Dr. Hélène Boucher, j'ai décidé d'intégrer quelques notions apprises dans ma pratique. Rapidement, j'ai constaté l'efficacité de cette méthode, mais j'avais besoin de plus d'outils pour mieux l'enseigner. La formation Kodály niveau I avec Dr. Boucher à l'UQAM cet été a bien

répondu à mes attentes.

Au programme, deux semaines intensives de formation comprenant : pédagogie, solfège et formation auditive, analyse et direction chorale. Dr. Boucher a su nous mettre en confiance dès le départ, ce qui a facilité notre participation et nos apprentissages. J'ai apprécié partager cette expérience avec de jeunes professeurs, des universitaires et des enseignants plus expérimentés. Les échanges étaient vraiment enrichissants.

Rapidement, pendant la formation, j'ai constaté que la progression des apprentissages proposée par Kodály présente les notions musicales de façon explicite et simplifiée, dans un court laps de temps. En quelques minutes, l'élève est mis en action dans un cadre structurant. Cela sécurise les enfants tout en laissant place à beaucoup de liberté dans le choix des activités et des jeux proposés. En tant qu'adulte, j'ai pris plaisir à participer aux activités et autres jeux préparés avec attention par notre professeure. Il était facile d'imaginer les élèves en train de vivre ces expériences dans ma classe.

La formation Kodály niveau I m'a permis d'explorer un répertoire de chansons folkloriques francophones que j'aime et avec lequel j'ai une certaine familiarité. Plusieurs enfants n'ont plus accès à ces chansons et il est important de les faire découvrir. J'utilise souvent le répertoire folklorique d'ici ou d'ailleurs dans mes classes, car les mélodies sont souvent accrocheuses et faciles à mémoriser. Elles racontent aussi des histoires qui font rire les enfants. Je comprends mieux maintenant comment utiliser ces chansons pour enseigner les concepts musicaux.

Enfin, lors de la formation, tous les participants ont pu travailler leur musicalité à un niveau supérieur, ce qui m'a agréablement plu. Les exercices pratiques que nous avons présentés devant le groupe, à tour de rôle, m'ont permis de réinvestir sur-le-champ, les notions apprises pendant les deux semaines.

Sommes toutes, je suis emballée à l'idée de recommencer l'année scolaire avec un bagage de chansons et d'activités nouvelles à présenter à mes élèves. Je remercie la Société Kodály de m'avoir offert cette bourse et je recommande cette formation tant aux futurs enseignants qu'à mes collègues expérimentés.

Elementary music education is an everyday challenge. Learning activities must be rigorously planned to promote the acquisition of musical skills. With this in mind, continuing education is an important asset in my daily teaching. Even though I have been teaching for several years, I like to innovate and discover new pedagogical methods. Even before starting the summer Kodály training course level I, several questions came to my mind ... How does one vary musical activities without losing sight of the concepts to teach? How can one make learning progress more effectively when music classes are spaced out in time and of short duration? How can one better integrate essential knowledge into interactive music activities?

I was introduced to the Kodály method during my first years at the Victoria Conservatory under the wing of Mrs. Illona Bartalus. Years later, after a short Kodály workshop at the FAMEQ Congress with Dr. Hélène Boucher, I decided to integrate some notions I learned there in my own practice. Quickly, I noticed the effectiveness of this method, but I needed more tools to better teach it. The Kodály Level I training with Dr. Boucher at UQAM this summer met my expectations.

The two intensive weeks of training included: pedagogy, musicianship, folk song analysis and choral conducting. Dr. Boucher was able to put us at ease from the start, which facilitated our participation and our learning. I enjoyed sharing this experience with young teachers, academics and more experienced teachers. The discussions were really rewarding.

Quickly, during the course, I noticed how the Kodály method's progression of learning presents musical

notions in an explicit and simplified way, and in a short period of time. In a few minutes, students are put into action in a structured framework. This secures children while leaving room for a lot of freedom in the choice of activities and games offered. As an adult, I enjoyed participating in activities and other games prepared with care by our teacher. It was easy to imagine students experiencing these games in my class.

The Kodály Level I course allowed me to explore a familiar French folk song repertoire that I like. Many children no longer have access to these songs and it is important to introduce them to our heritage. I often use our folk music or folk music from other countries in my classes because melodies are catchy and easy to memorize. They also tell stories that make children laugh. Now, after this course, I know how to use these songs to teach musical concepts.

Finally, during the course, I really appreciated that all participants were able to work their musicality to a higher level. The practical exercises that we presented to the group allowed me to immediately put into practice the concepts learned during the two weeks.

I am excited about starting the school year with new songs and activities to present to my students. I thank the Kodály Society for awarding me this scholarship and I recommend this training to future teachers as well as my experienced colleagues.



Trish Brooks
*University of Western
Ontario*

Twenty-two years ago was the last time that I had taken a course at the Don Wright Faculty of Music on the beautiful campus of Western University. Over the past few years I have been trying to seek opportunities (beyond a workshop or a conference) to find deep and meaningful professional development to enhance best practices in the delivery of my elementary music program. The Kodály Certification Program intrigued me as I was already using some Kodály-inspired concepts for years in my own classroom. As soon as I enrolled in Level 1, I was looking forward to starting the first two weeks of summer vacation surrounded by others that shared a passion for music education.

Throughout Level 1, I experienced a variety of emotions. After the first day, I was catapulted into taking on a workload at a pace I had not been familiar with in years. Musicianship classes started our day with Eila Peterson. Two hours of sight singing, rhythmic and/or melodic dictation were certainly a challenge but a necessity. Teachers need to keep the mechanics of our craft in optimal working order. I had not accessed many of the skills required at an advanced level in years. Once I jumped over that mental hurdle, I was ready to work. Waiting for a new ear training task or assignment became motivational. Singing the pentatonic scale, in 5 different inversions, was a personal challenge that I still find myself practising to ensure perfection.

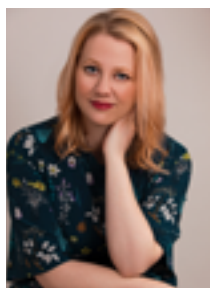
The pedagogy of Kodály-inspired sequencing was an excellent refresher for me. I must admit that I have spent more time teaching rhythmic elements over melodic elements simply because I find rhythm easier to teach. Now that I have seen the elements modelled seamlessly by our wonderful teacher, Kim Eyre, I can easily implement them into what I already do. This section of the course will have a direct impact on my students starting in September. The extensive repertoire of folk songs, singing games, manipulatives, and resources available to me will surely enhance student engagement and be reflected in student achievement.

A personal highlight was choral conducting classes with Laurel Forshaw. Laurel challenged us to think more about the gestures we make while conducting and how they have a direct impact on the sound of the choir; for instance, the shape of our hands, the positioning of our arms, the subdivision that may or may not be needed in our beat patterns. She encouraged us to think and reflect about the choices we make as conductors and the choices we offer to our students. Laurel walked us through how she has her choir decide on a concert. She rehearsed the beginning and ending of each song for our final performance to see how each one played off the other. A very interesting exercise and a lesson in democracy for the group. Repertoire for this class was all new to me. Laurel ignited emotions in many of us as she shared stories and experiences about the music we sang. By week 2, I believe my colleagues were connected even further because of our shared experience.

Lastly, the people I met and the friendships I made topped the experience. Everyone was very supportive. Although our reasons for taking the

course were diverse, we cannot deny the comradeship that blossomed over time through the myriad of opportunities when we created and performed together. The lessons my colleagues taught were just as important and valuable as the lessons taught by our teachers. The community created during this course is the same type of community that I hope my own student's experience when they enter our music room at F.D Roosevelt Public School in London, Ontario. In September, I hope to nurture this environment by allowing more student choice and partner games to foster creativity and community.

This experience has certainly nurtured within me, a stronger passion for what I do each and every day. I finished Level 1 realizing the importance of continuing this journey. It has been most challenging from both a musician's perspective and an educator's perspective. It remains ingrained in me, the most important reason why I became a teacher - to share the joy that music brings when you create and perform together. My hope over the year is to become an ambassador for this program. I hope to encourage other music educators as they reflect on their teaching practices to consider enrolling in the Western Kodály Certification Program.



Allison Luff
*University of Western
Ontario*

The Kodály philosophy is much more than a structured approach to teaching, it is a way in which to view how one may impart knowledge. Children are naturally curious, thus active discovery must be a part of every Kodály-inspired lesson. Games are taught to increase the level of enjoyment and music is chosen so that children will find humour or beauty as they develop into their teen years and beyond.

My personal application of Kodály philosophy is within the context of private piano teaching. For a long time, I shied away from working with very young students as a certain amount of assumed music literacy is required when using the traditional piano method books. This past year, as a way to bridge this gap, I adopted singing and games as a part of every lesson with my students between the

ages of 4 and 7. Particularly with the very little ones I noticed how important these elements are during this stage of a young student's development. Every lesson now begins with a song which then becomes the basis for making conscious musical elements in my students' second year of study. After learning the songs, we are able to transfer the simple melodies to the piano. My favourite part of the lessons is teaching children songs with infectious words like those of, "*Naughty Pussy Cat*," which inevitably ensues with peals of laughter. No longer do I feel shy, but actually relish working with younger students. The song collection I developed from Level I at Western University in 2018 has been a great resource.

This past summer in Level II, I added to my Level I song collection as well as explored a topic of my choice for a cultural engagement project. I chose the music from the *Nueva canción* movement (New Song movement) in Chile from the 1960s and 1970s. This was a folk revival movement with political leanings. One of the famous songs from the movement is, "*The People United Will Never Be Defeated*," which was composed as an anthem for the Chilean socialist party. I first became aware of this music after hearing American composer, Frederic Rzewski's composition of the same name. I believe this music resonates with students into their pre-teen years, as it moves with their developing emotional maturity. This assignment reminded me of Kodály's belief of determining what constitutes 'good' music as well as his intentions to revive a national identity and culture. Kodály advocated for music authentically composed music rather than music composed for a specific pedagogical purpose. Through my research into the New Song movement in Chile, I found not only teachable musical elements, but also a rich social context. This assignment pushed me to think of ways to introduce powerful music to students and the types of questions we may ask around music as a force of change, which also made me reflect on how we create bonds through music and/or what compels us to relate or love art.

This summer also reminded me to include more listening exercises as a regular part of my lessons, with students of all ages of students. Within these listening lessons, I may facilitate a dialogue about emotions or world events that will hopefully lead students to develop their own musical tastes and identity. I believe musical identity is formed with exposure to a vast repertoire, therefore, developing listening these skills within the context of a private

piano lesson is equal to students' piano repertoire. Moreover, throughout the Level II course, we were asked to explore the idea of choice. This came in the form of games, when to enter a canon "correctly," and/or improvisation. Ultimately, these tools lead students to developing confidence and autonomy. I am committed, more than ever, to helping students strengthen their own voice.

Ariana Ribeiro

ON BECOMING AN
EDUCATOR: A KODÁLY-
BASED STORY

*University of Western
Ontario*

Whenever I am asked how my journey in music education started, I always say that I wish I had a beautiful inspired story to tell. The truth is that the options in the university I wanted to go to were classical music performance or music education. I knew I loved music, but I also knew being a classical music performer was not my path so I chose the other option. My love for music education started during my undergrad. The more I learned about it, the more I wanted to know.

I was fortunate enough to have professors that were really involved in the music education field in Brazil and who were in tune with the latest research and our country's educational needs. With them, I learned that music education and musical development cannot fit in a tiny little box, or follow a straight line, but that musical learning takes an infinity of paths that develop and change along the way. One thing that my professors stressed a lot: be careful with methods. So, I was.

Moving to Canada, I understood that even though I have been in the music education field for a while, it was not possible to teach music without knowing about the musical culture in the country so I decided to do a post-grad in early childhood music in order to better understand the culture (or as I now know, cultures), and there came the first surprise: methods! I was both excited and frightened about learning about the different approaches to music education, then along came Kodály and everything changed. I was pleasantly surprised by the simplicity of the approach and the complexity of music development it offered. Coming from a country so rich in musical culture but with so little funding for music education, I was simply amazed by the fact that one could teach music using nothing but a tuning fork.

Many things drew me to the Kodály approach, but Zoltán Kodály's philosophy and his understanding that one could not be a well-rounded human being without a love and understanding of music were certainly my main attractions. Besides that, the teacher education that I experienced both at The Royal Conservatory of Music and at Western University were so engaging and powerful that I doubt anyone can go through it unchanged. The past three summers have been *very* intense. I have learned, I have cried, I have thought I wouldn't make it, but in the end, I became a different educator and a stronger musician. The everyday learning is tiring and two weeks seem far too little to learn so much, but during the year I always got the chance not only to practice what I learned, but also to touch-base with my wonderful professors at Western in case I needed some help or simply to talk about my experiences. This is another unique characteristic about Kodály-inspired education: it builds community. I am grateful for being able to be a part of the Kodály community and for having tools to give meaningful opportunities to my students. If the approach is not the path for them, that is okay, too. In finding new ways to teach my students and develop their musical skills and love for music I am also honouring Kodály's philosophy as I respect all musical cultures and start from my students' musical mother-tongue.



Leanne Jensen
University of Manitoba

I have always been interested in the Kodály approach to teaching music. As an undergrad, I had a gut feeling that it was an approach that made sense to me, I liked its sequential planning and its iconic notation. But, in Manitoba there were no Kodály-specific professional development opportunities, so I did my best through reading books and blogs and watching videos. When Kodály levels were offered at the Desautels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba, I knew I wanted to be a part of them. I just knew that this was the learning opportunity I had been waiting for.

On that first day, nerves and apprehension were strong, but immediately upon arriving, I was greeted by my fellow learners and the friendly

faculty and I was put at ease. Each day became more comfortable. At first I wondered if there was going to be much more than what I had read in books. I already had a basic understanding of the Prepare, Present and Practice structure, and had been using solfège and Curwen hand signs in my teaching. It was around day 4 when I knew, without a doubt, that my thinking was shifting and the possibilities of Kodály-inspired teaching offers started becoming clearer.

What I had been missing were purpose and praxis: the WHY of the Kodály approach. Understanding that the folksongs and sequencing must always be chosen for their quality and should methodically be chosen to best guide students through the sequence. The awareness that the games are the true reason for singing the song in the first place and that playing the games is a fundamental part of Preparation. I had also been underestimating the value in the Preparation stage and putting more weight on the other phases. It is now clear how vital good Preparation is.

Day after day I was coming home tired but energized by my new learning. There was always something new and thought provoking to reflect upon. I have deep gratitude toward the faculty. They guided us toward our new learning with kindness, joy, and purpose. David Stark led us to become comfortable with solfège and hand signs and to trust our ears. Dr. Jody Stark helped us to see the big Kodály picture, helped us to sequence and pace our lessons, and helped us find the purpose of singing games and dances. Andrea Wicha connected us with beautiful choral music and helped overcome our conducting fears. We discussed the importance of developing singing skills at an early age and the benefits of giving students quality choral experiences.

A wonderful side-effect of this experience was the way our small group of Level 1's connected. To my fellow learners: it was a true pleasure to watch you learn and I am a better teacher because of our joint experiences and discussions. I know that we will keep learning together far beyond our time in class together.

Now that the summer is passed and I am back in with my students, I can say that the Level 1 course has had a deeply positive impact on my teaching. The impact it has made on my planning process, on my lessons, and my approach to play in the classroom is evident every day. Most importantly are the sequential year plans I was able to design

for each grade are tailor-made for my students. These sequences have provided a structure and focus that were previously lacking. They have become the framework that my lessons are hinged on. Everything we do, from a folk dance or instrument arrangement, to the smallest transition are directly related to these sequential year plans. For a logical thinker like myself, it was exactly what my teaching needed.

Thank you to the Kodály Society of Canada for this scholarship. I am truly appreciative. I am encouraged by the renewed interest in the Kodály approach in Manitoba and feel like it is the beginning of exciting new learning opportunities. I am looking forward to Level 2!



Katherine Pernal
University of Alberta

Teaching, be it one-on-one to a group of 30, is intimidating to say the least. How to connect with each student and have them come away with a deeper understanding and appreciation for music is a whole other challenge. This is why I sought out Kodály-inspired methodology and why I continued to study it over the past 4 years in Edmonton and Hungary. I quickly connected with the overarching Kodály philosophy and its application in my future music classroom as well as my private cello studio. This article will describe how my thinking about music education and how my own personal musicianship has changed after my experience in Level 2.

Coming into Level 2 my thinking about music education was already based in the Kodály framework, but I was missing tools in how to teach more advanced skills such as part singing. I was also wondering how to practically apply some of the more advanced musicianship skills that we would be learning. Now, after learning about part singing and its relationship to canon singing with my pedagogy instructor, Josie Burgess, I understand the sequencing needed for students to gradually learn how to sing in two parts. During my musicianship class with Dr. Ardelle Ries, I mostly connected with the "sing and play" assignments. This skill helps give a better picture of the song in general as well as allows the musician to be able to sing the voice part and play the accompaniment at the same time which, in turn, helps develop a better harmonic base for the learner to understand the song. In our ensemble class, I appreciated having all four instructors (from both Level 1 & 2) conduct and each teach us different pieces. Not only were they able to connect with the students as musicians, but also they provided excellent examples of how to run an efficient rehearsal and how to isolate different sections of a given piece, usually using solfège! I plan to take the ideas of teaching passages in solfège and applying them when I get in front of my future music classroom or choral ensemble.

One moment in particular stands out as a revelation to my future teaching practice. Before this course, I always imagined composition and improvisation as skills taught to older students in junior or senior high school. But what I realized between my pedagogy and musicianship classes is that these musical concepts can start anytime and that they do not have to be overly complex or complicated. For example, during musicianship we were assigned to



more than just sight singing

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write a three-part canon. Luckily, we were not left on our own to simply figure it out; we were taught the steps to write a simple canon and our creativity was born out of that base. Although a three-part canon could be a bit of a stretch for an average elementary classroom, the same compositional building blocks could be applied to any contexts.

Though the professors were certainly inspirational and insightful, each participant also brought with them a wealth of knowledge. I found the time we spent sharing between colleagues about French repertoire, strategies on how to incorporate an ear-training based singing method into the curriculum, as well as ideas for short and long-term planning was very beneficial. As my post secondary education journey will be finishing this upcoming year, I look forward to putting many of these ideas to practice soon. In all, this most recent experience with the Kodály method has greatly benefited me, not only as a future educator, but also as a musician.

What could be better than being with like-minded



Lisa Gruber
University of Alberta

colleagues while benefiting from expert instruction in the art of teaching music? My two weeks in Kodály Level I were a treat from start to finish. Yes, it was hard work, but the gains were immense. One of the goals I had going into the course was to improve my personal musicianship and conducting skills. Practicing pentatonic drills and memorizing ensemble pieces took my reading and singing skills to new levels- the amount of growth I experienced in two weeks was surprising. The materials we worked with during these sessions were all of practical value. Particularly challenging were short pieces sung in the round accompanied by coordinated group movement. Once mastered, these provide an effective vocal and physical warmup as well as practice part singing. Our conducting sessions were equally beneficial. As all

four instructors from Kodály levels I and II lead us in different pieces, we observed many styles and techniques that we then experimented with in our own conducting sessions.

Each afternoon, we focused on pedagogy and instruction. As we worked through teaching methods and student activities, we were presented with food for thought. How does the Kodály approach contribute to contemporary music education? What is revealed when today's issues are viewed through a Kodály lens? As we wrestled with these questions, some themes began to emerge. The Kodály approach as a whole is the result of many educators, over many years, carefully practicing and delineating, defining and redefining valuable methods of musical instruction. As a teacher gains the skills and insights associated with the Kodály method, she can reflect on the best ways of adapting them to her current educational situation. We discussed the importance of choosing culturally appropriate repertoire for our classes and came away with a fresh determination to explore the musical cultures represented by our students. A special session with Sherryl Sewepagaham was instrumental in leading us to deeper understanding of indigenous music in Canada, and she provided many pieces for use in our classrooms.

Finally, our experience would not have been complete without the many excellent activities and teaching examples provided both by our instructor and our colleagues. As we shared folk songs, dances, movement activities and singing games, we focused on not only the intrinsic value of the musical experiences, but pinpointed the musical understandings to be gleaned from them. How could we take these activities and use them to guide students to deepen their knowledge and extend their skills? Many ways of doing just that were presented during our course.

The two weeks I spent in Kodály Level I were practical, valuable, and just plain fun. I look forward to implementing many of the strategies and materials I gained throughout the course in my own classroom. I highly recommend this experience to anyone who loves and teaches music!





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FROM THE ARCHIVES

MUSIC ADVOCACY CORNER: MUSIC TEACHERS AS LEADERS

BY DR. SHEILA J. SCOTT

EDITOR NOTE: Originally published in *Alla Breve* June 2007, vol 31(2) pp. 5-7.

"When we feel empowered, we give ourselves permission to speak up for what we believe in, and we come forward to be a voice for those who are unable to speak for themselves, because we believe that EVERY VOICE COUNTS!"

Wayna Buch, Kaua'i child care provider (quoted in Taba, Castle, Vermeer, Hanchett, Flores, & Caulfield, 1999, p. 173)

Music teachers are leaders. They encourage each student's participation in the day-to-day activities of the music classroom, many music programs include extra-curricular offerings such as choirs and/or recorder groups that provide students with additional avenues for musical enrichment within their schools and communities. The interest and involvement demonstrated by students in such programs are powerful vehicles for music education advocacy.

What are the leadership qualities of music teachers and how might these qualities provide ways to advocate for music education? Frank Battasti (1999) describes the attributes he sees in music teachers as leaders. In this column, I discuss how some of his ideas resonate with Kodály-inspired music education.

A PASSION FOR MUSIC.

[N]o [hu]man is complete without music, and so the general education must include music. (Z. Kodály in Johnson, 1986, p. 32)

Kodály-inspired music teachers have close associations with music in their lives and a passion to bring the great music of the world to their students. This "is the most priceless

gift we can pass on to you students. And we pass it on, not by talking about music, but by the example of it in our lives (Choksy, 2000, p. 7).

Commitment is a cornerstone of Kodály-inspired teachers. Choksy (2000) illustrates this point: I am a music teacher who believes in the Kodály philosophy. I am a music teacher who has found the Kodály method and context to be the best way to teach music- but the subject of my lessons is music, not Kodály. Still, I cannot deny the importance of Kodály in my life (p. 6).

This passion for music and commitment to music education are actualized through a comprehensive vision of music education.

VISION.

Strong leaders have vision. Music teachers with vision have a clear sense of the long-term goals for their music programs and a keen understanding of how to reach these goals. For Kodály-inspired educators, this vision emerges from the guiding principles of the philosophy of Kodály-based music education:

- All people capable of linguistic literacy are also capable of music literacy.
- Singing is the best foundation for musicianship.
- Music education to be most effective must begin with the very young child.
- The folk songs of a child's own linguistic heritage constitute a musical "mother tongue" and should therefore be the vehicle for all early instruction.
- Only music of the highest artistic value, both folk and composed, should be used in teaching.
- Music should be at the heart of the curriculum, a core subject, used as a basis for education.

(Choksy et al., 2001, p. 82).

The instructional sequence that emerges from this philosophy provides ways for students to extend their understanding of music (rhythm, melody, form, harmony, style, terminology, and symbols) through active participation in music (singing, moving, composing, improvising, reading, writing, conducting, playing instruments). Kodály-inspired teachers carefully orchestrate students' learning experiences in relationship to the stages they will pass through as they extend mastery in each skill area, keeping in mind that no single sequence will be appropriate for all students in all instructional settings (Trinka, 2001).

ABILITY TO MOTIVATE OTHERS.

In Kodály-inspired music programs, students are actively involved in the process of making music. Teachers are not seen as all-knowing seers imparting knowledge. Rather, students are encouraged to apply prior experiences in their continued search for deeper understanding. Teachers motivate students on this journey by viewing musical analyses as musical games. For example, Grade 1 students may be challenged to place felt "notes" in the appropriate places on the staff or place the umbrellas [icons] on the staff to show the high and low sounds in the song "Rain, Rain Go Away". At more advanced levels students are encouraged to analyze multiple aspects of music in their own performances and the performances of others. For example, students in a Grade 5 class sing the song "Simple Gifts" and make expressive decisions in relationship to tempo and dynamics. They then analyze how Copland used this song in his suite "Appalachian Spring". By providing students with the freedom to analyze and evaluate music, teachers motivate them towards independent thinking with the ultimate end that they are inspired to make music as an essential part of their lives.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

As leaders, music teachers create learning contexts in which students explore their environments as knowledgeable music makers. Students often engage in large-group interactions when they sing songs and play games. Improvisation and composition activities allow for both large-group and small-group interactions. These communities move beyond intact classrooms when students prepare performances for school assemblies or public concerts. These become avenues for

students to share what they learned in class when they sing themes in solfa or share analytic features of the words they performed.

COMMUNICATING SKILLS.

Leaders are strong communicators. As communicators, music teachers nurture relationships with administrators, parents, and students. Music teachers need to make the requirements for their programs known to administrators, for example, the budgets that are needed to update equipment; the instructional time to deliver sequential music curricula such as those based on Kodály-inspired principles. Music teachers communicate with parents through informal meetings, newsletters, and formal concerts. These become venues where teachers explain how the Kodály philosophy provides a foundation for deep understanding of music and how this understanding contributes to the place of music in their students' lives. Most importantly, music teachers communicate with students by sharing their passion for music and guiding them toward independent musicianship.

DESIRE FOR EXCELLENCE.

For Kodály-inspired teachers, excellence begins with the musical models they provide for their students. The singing voice is the foundation for musicianship. Music teachers heed this advice by choosing song material that is musically appropriate for their students. Teachers provide vocal models that demonstrate correct intonation and rhythmic accuracy and set high, but attainable, standard of vocal performance for their students.

Trinka (2000) notes, "the teacher must be able to show a wide range of emotions in musical performance and be at ease 'being musical' for the students" (p. 3). As musical leaders, Kodály-inspired teachers demonstrate musical sensitivity in singing, moving, listening, and various modes of performing s appropriate to their specific teacher environments (for example, playing recorder) (Trinka, 2000). Kodály-inspired teachers who consistently nurture the musicality of their students are reminding them to strive for excellence each and every day.

CONCLUSION

Leadership requires commitment and involvement (Taba et al., 1999). It requires a sense of responsibility. For Kodály-inspired teachers, responsibility comes from the understanding that they are providing students with knowledge

and skills for exploring the magic of music in their lives. Thus, the experiences of students in Kodály-inspired classrooms last a lifetime.

Students who grow to love music through their school music programs may very well become leaders and advocates for the inclusion of music as a necessary and important component in the education of future generations. To increase the support for music in our schools, we need to have outstanding teachers who possess a great passion for music as an art and a desire to assist young people in the development of their creative, receptive, and leadership potentials. The result will be generations of people who appreciate and support music in our schools and our society (Battasti, 1999, p. 4).

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CANADIAN COMPOSER

FEATURE

MOVING BEYOND THE FRENCH-CANADIAN CANON: ONE COMPOSER'S MISSION TO RETAIN ELEMENTS OF THE TRADITIONAL IN CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITION

BY MARIE-CLAIRE SAINDON

EDITOR NOTE

Please note that some examples are links to recordings. Links were active at the time of publication.

BACKGROUND

I was born and raised in Ottawa, within its wonderfully thriving Franco-Ontarian community. Both my parents are artists, born and raised in New Brunswick. My mother, Suzanne Hébert, was an active Acadian singer-songwriter in the 70's and 80's. Not surprisingly, I learned to fiddle with a distinct mixture of Ottawa Valley and Acadian styles. I would often accompany my mother on stage at festivals and workshops. My brother and I ended up, at the tender age of 13 and 12, being the opening act for Angèle Arsenault, a beloved Acadian singer-songwriter, when she toured France in the Summer of 1996.

At the same time, I was learning classical violin with Sylvie Rocheleau, playing in the Ottawa Youth Orchestra, and attending l'École secondaire publique De La Salle, which is renowned across the province for its excellent Francophone education and Centre d'excellence artistique program. We were lucky to have conductors such as Paolo Bellomia (Orchestre 21), Pierre Simard (Vancouver Island Orchestra) and Jean-Marie Zeitouni (I Musici de Montréal, Opéra de Montréal) be our high school orchestra musical directors. Since 1990, the school's vocal/choral program has been steered by none other than Robert Filion, who has created a great many opportunities for its pupils. I was even given carte blanche during my last year of high school to

compose and produce a whole musical. It doesn't get more supportive than that!

I studied contemporary composition at McGill University with Jean Lesage and Chris Paul Harman for a Bachelor of Music degree then a Masters of Music degree at the Université de Montréal where I studied film & multimedia composition with Ana Sokolović and Pierre-Daniel Rheault. Meanwhile, my summers were filled with fiddling on the Hull-Chelsea-Wakefield historical steam train, where I've learned an incredible amount of traditional music and shared thousands of hours of intense performance with a tight group of young musicians whose enthusiasm matched my own. I've had my fair share of performing high-octane late-night traditional music shows across the province's local pubs. In a particularly memorable show, I ended up breaking so many bow hairs that I could not finish my last New Years' set with my fiddle and had to switch to podorythmie and wooden spoons while belting out call-and-response songs with the rest of my band.

Strangely, I only came to choral music later in life by joining Concerto Della Donna under the direction of Iwan Edwards. As a young adult having recently moved to Montréal, I felt the need for community and hoped to find it there, like so many other Canadians joining choirs. What I ended up finding was not only a wonderful group of colleagues and friends, but an unexpected creative outlet that propelled me into the world of choral composition.

I've recently read an interesting study that

states that “[a]s adolescents and young adults, we tend to listen to music that our friends listen to, and this contributes to defining [...] our adult musical tastes and preferences”¹. While I was in high school and university, playing in youth orchestras, folk bands, and studying composition, my peers listened to classical, romantic, contemporary, folk, indie, film scores, and traditional music. Such a mishmash of contemporary, classical, and traditional styles, with both vocal and instrumental idiosyncrasies might explain much of the music I write today.

THE ABUNDANCE OF TRADITIONAL FRENCH-CANADIAN CHORAL WORKS

Over the years, I’ve noticed a certain quirk whenever I attend a choral music festival where groups are required to perform French-Canadian music. Inevitably, the majority of the performances are arrangements of traditional French-Canadian folk songs. It’s as if there are no current French-Canadian, Acadian, or Québécois choral works being created, giving us the impression that our culture’s music hasn’t evolved. This is the furthest thing from the truth when one takes a quick glance, for example, at the incredibly thriving Québécois music scene!

I love traditional music and I also love participating in the culturally rich music French-Canada has to offer. From my family and community, I learned to value our musical cultural heritage as a living art, not from a need to preserve history, but because it was fun and interactive and something to be shared with others. This is why I must ask myself and others: why are we continually trapping French-Canadians with logging and fishing songs from the 16th-19th centuries? Where are the modern French-Canadian choral works and why aren’t they being performed? I ask this not as an academic scholar, historian, or musicologist, but as a performer and composer of choral music who also happens to be French-Canadian.

FRENCH-CANADIAN, ACADIAN, AND QUÉBÉCOIS MUSICAL IDENTITY: TRADITIONAL VS. CONTEMPORARY

There is a misconception that all Francophone communities in Canada have the same traditions as Québec. Not so! There are indeed many similarities, such as the influence of the Celtic musical styles when the Irish and Scottish settlers

immigrated². However, their independent histories can be discovered through their music. For example, Acadians developed a wide variety of “la complainte” (laments) after their deportation, so much so that the Church would often encourage the people to move on and sing rousing patriotic songs. However, the people preferred singing complaintes until the mid-20th century (a staggering 80% of collected archival Acadian songs are complaintes)³. Another example is the logging industry of the 17th century of the Ottawa Valley⁴, which in turn generated a good amount of motivating songs that helped keeping a steady beat while paddling down the river (and probably staved off boredom)⁵.

Although we enjoy our traditional music, many of us feel that there is so much more to our Francophone cultures than jigs, reels, and call-and-response songs. Québec and Acadie have very strong contemporary musical cultural identities outside of traditional music, and the same can be said of other Francophone communities across the country, such as the Franco-Albertans and the Franco-Manitobans, for example.

One of the influences that affected the shift from traditional songs to today’s vocal French-Canadian music was France’s chanson française (such as the music of Jacques Brel in France and of Félix Leclerc in Québec). Particularly, these chansons were “driven by poetry and poignant lyricism [...]”, and have strongly affected today’s Francophone vocal pop, folk, and indie music that is heard on the radio and on stage⁶. One would think that this chanson tradition would be absolutely ideal for choral music, as our English-language choral pieces are chalk-full of works with intricate text-setting featuring complex, meaningful poems. Yet, other than the classical works of the French impressionists of the early 20th century, we don’t

² Montgomery, M. (2017, March 16). *Musical cross-pollination: French Quebec-Ireland*. Radio Canada International. Retrieved February 12, 2020, from <https://www.rcinet.ca/en/2017/03/16/musical-cross-pollination-french-quebec-ireland/>

³ Gallant, J. (2014). Acadian Victimization and Empowerment: Music and Power in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century French Canada. *Critical Discourse Studies Journal*, 11(3):1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2013.866589>

⁴ Bélanger, M. (2018, January 13). *Draveurs et cageux, héros nationaux de l’Outaouais*. Le Soleil. Retrieved February 12, 2020, from <https://www.lesoleil.com/actualite/le-fil-groupe-capitales-medias/draveurs-et-cageux-heros-nationaux-de-loutaouais-0a1cb68a47c2f-2c6b75f2fe1a69a3814>

⁵ Fowes, E. F., & Johnson, R. (1957). *Folk Songs of Québec: Chansons de Québec*. Waterloo, ON: Waterloo Music Company Limited, p. 9.

⁶ Ottenhof, L. (2018, September 18). Québécois music isn’t marginalized-it’s English Canadians who are missing out. Retrieved February 5, 2020, from <https://www.macleans.ca/culture/arts/quebecois-music-isnt-marginalized-its-english-canadians-who-are-missing-out/>

¹ Rentfrow, P. J., Goldberg, L. R., & Levitin, D. J. (2011). The structure of musical preferences: A five-factor model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100(6), 1139-1157.

find many of those in our programming. Why?

ACCESSIBILITY

Traditional music is distinctive and recognisable. Since these tunes were created to be shared orally, melodies had to be catchy, and repetition was a must. Similar patterns of forms, rhythm, and melodic cells are easily recognised from tune to tune. Once one learns these patterns, learning a new French-Canadian traditional tune is even simpler. There are of course advanced performance-worthy traditional tunes that feature complex rhythms, but they are the exception.

Another trait that makes French-Canadian music accessible is how the bulk of these older instrumental melodies were written around social 'bals' [balls]. Like many folk traditions around the world, their primary function was to make people dance! Much of the vocal music that followed then kept the original instrumental style of these dances⁷. It therefore comes as no surprise that arrangements of these songs are favoured in choral programming today, as many of us are constantly looking for more upbeat music.

The older chansons and today's Francophone songs can be seen as a little less accessible. As stated above, many of them rely heavily on the beauty and the poignancy of their poetry. Today's perfect chanson is a delicate balance between text and music. Unfortunately, many Canadians either do not speak French, and this language barrier affects understanding the meaning and the impact of these pieces. Not being able to understand the text means that the performer and the listener is only able to hold onto a part of the sum – and the meaning of the piece is then lost.

As opposed to a multi-layered chanson, traditional French-Canadian song lyrics often present simpler themes and stories. Their meaning is easier to grasp for someone who may only have rudimentary knowledge of the language. And if language is an issue, then the traditional song's lively music definitely makes up for it.

And if one wants to forgo French entirely, the tradition also includes a facet of vocal music that transcends language: the mouth-reel! More on that style later.

⁷ University of Washington. (n.d.) *Québécois Music*. Retrieved February 5, 2020, from <https://jsis.washington.edu/canada/resources/music-collection/quebecois-music/>

COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Choral music today is about community-building as much as it is about performance – and as it turns out, so is traditional music.

After the music written for bals spread from its high-society events to the rural areas, it could be heard at kitchen parties, New Year events, Christmases, and any old night at the village's drinking hole. In fact, you will still find this music played today in similar settings, though less often live because of our current tendency to favour recorded music. There are, however, renewed efforts to bring back live traditional music in multiple aspects of our daily lives, in part to rebuild a sense of community that has been lost over the years, particularly in larger cities.

As a fiddle teacher who mostly caters to adult beginners, I can see that one of the large attractions to this art form is not a drive to become a performer, but a desire to actively share and enjoy music in a group. In short, my students are looking to be part of a community.

Learning the large repertoire of traditional music means that one can sit in at a French-Canadian "session" (informal traditional jam) anywhere in the world and be able to participate. And, of course, because of the Scottish and Irish heritage crossover in the French-Canadian tradition, it is not unheard of to be able to join in for, say, a few tunes at an Irish session on the Emerald Isle. Unfortunately, for many reasons that we will not get into here, this important Canadian activity – playing music communally – has been almost completely lost over the years. A large part of the adult population refused or was denied musical education, and not everyone has an instrument lying around at home. Because of this, it's quite difficult to join a group of fiddlers for the simple fact that learning the violin as an adult can be very difficult.

Which brings us back to singing in a choir. Choral music is one of the only places today where Canadians, young and old, can share music communally at any level. Believe it or not, it even rivals our other national pastime, hockey⁸!

With the lack of any other major communal music-making outlet, it is theoretically possible to assume that choral singing is now a major medium used to

⁸Vincent, M. (2018, October 25). THE SCOOP: Move Over Hockey, Study Shows Singing Is Canada's National Pastime. Retrieved February 7, 2020, from <https://www.ludwig-van.com/toronto/2017/10/02/the-scoop-move-over-hockey-study-shows-singing-is-canadas-national-pastime/>

preserve and share our traditional musical culture. This can then be another good reason as to why we have so many choral arrangements of French-Canadian traditional songs.

TRADITIONAL AND CHANSON MUSICAL ELEMENTS

Let's look at the older traditional musical elements first.

Forms & types of tunes

This music has a clear structure with a strict set of repetitions to follow. When looking at instrumental tunes, most have an AA-BB form, with some rare variants having a few more sections. A tune must also be repeated three times in its entirety before finishing or moving on to another tune. Therefore, when playing, say, a jig in a session, you will play it as such: AA-BB-AA-BB-AA-BB. If it has more than two sections, it will be AA-BB-CC-DD, then back to A to repeat all the sections in order three times. Sections, for their part, will mostly have either four, eight, or 16 measures each.

Each type of instrumental tune is generally associated with a type of dance. You can have polkas, barn dances, strathspeys, waltzes, etc. The two most common ones are the reel and the jig (gigue). The difference between the two is that the reel is in 4/4, whereas the jig is in 6/8 time. Both are played fairly quickly.

All these forms and types of tunes are for instrumental music, but it is also used in a particular vocal tradition. The mouth-reel (reel à bouche, turlutte) is the art of imitating an instrumental tune (often a reel or a jig) with one's voice, using a specific set of syllables – not unlike jazz scat singers. The mouth-reel was developed originally if instruments were unavailable⁹. Over the years, it became its own tradition.

The syllables of the French-Canadian mouth-reel are very similar to the ones used in other Celtic-based mouth-reels. One fun syllable that is quite featured in the Québécois and Acadian mouth-reel is the *ts*. It ends up sounding a little bit like a closed drum-kit high-hat. The other most commonly used

⁹ Valley, F. (Ed.) (1999). *The Companion to Irish Traditional Music*. New York: New York University Press, p. 50.

syllables are *dam*, *tam*, *di*, *ti*, *dl*, *ley*, and *lai*, to name a few. One must improvise as to what syllables to use in a melody depending on their performance level and their level of comfort with the syllables. There are some standard conventions one can use to get started. For example, the *dams* and the *tams* are favoured for accented and/or longer notes; a string of *di-dl-la-di* is an excellent way to plow through less important notes; and the *ts* feels the most natural on quick single accented notes preceding another syllable beginning with a *t*.

Here is an example of a fiddle reel with mouth-reel syllables applied to it ([Example 1 : Reel à Toto, mm. 1-2](#)). NOTE: Unfortunately this recording does not demonstrate “*ts*” syllable as I have written it out. The recording is an example of the melody only.

When it comes to songs, their forms are as varied as any European-based traditional songs. The most well-known ones in French-Canadian tradition are the lament in Acadie, as previously discussed, and the call-and-response song in Québec.

The call-and-response, with the standard verse-chorus structure, works just like one can imagine. The verse begins with a statement, usually sung by a leader, and a response is sung by everyone else (instrumentalists included). The response can either be an exact repetition of what has been sung by the leader, or it can be a short tag that will be repeated at every verse, effectively becoming a type of chorus ([Example 2: Lundi mardi jour de mai, first verse](#)) [page23]. Regarding the content of the lyrics, the verse tells a story, while the chorus is a general commentary on the story itself. Often, the stories feature morality, celebration, laments, or jokes.

Modes

Traditional tunes and songs generally follow the classical rules of tonal music. One can easily accompany a melody using the standard I-IV-V-I progressions, or even just I-V-I. However, melodies often have a strong use of modes. The most common ones are the Ionian, Aeolian, Dorian, and (my personal favourite) Mixolydian.

Melody

As stated above, there is a lot of repetition in the



Example 1 - Reel a Toto

Caller
 Em-barqu' dans mes sou-liers Em-barqu' dans mes sou-liers, m'en va faire la grand' d'mande

Response
 C'est le lun-di mar-di jour de mai

5
 C
 M'en

R
 Em-barqu' dans mes sou-liers C'est le lun-di mar-di jour de mai Em-barqu' dans mes sou-liers, m'en va faire la grand' d'mande

9
 C
 va faire la grand' d'mand' au gai, m'en va faire la grand' d'man-de

R
 M'en va faire la grand' d'mand' au gai, m'en va faire la grand' d'man-de

Example 2 - Lundi mardi jour de mai

formal structure. Repetition is also found in the melody's building blocks. At first glance, it may seem simple to try to memorise the music, but it can sometimes become a little bit of a puzzle to remember when the melody repeats its short cells and when it breaks form.

([Example 3: La fleur de mandragore, mm. 1-8](#)).

With that much repetition, the melody needs to be catchy to be a good tune – otherwise it'll be a big mess of fast repeated notes with not much direction!

Rhythm

The rhythm can be very straightforward: mostly sixteenth notes for reels, while jigs will have a mix of eighth notes, quarters, and dotted quarters.

The variety comes in the shape of the melody that will highlight syncopations with high or low pitches surrounded by mid-range pitches. For example, while playing all sixteenth notes in a reel (in 4/4), the melody can feature three-note arpeggios, which will give the rhythm an underlying syncopation feeling ([Example 4: Jean's Reel, mm. 5-6](#)).

In the Acadian traditions that have been influenced by Scottish ones, the “Scotch snap” (Lombard rhythm) is very common, where a quick 16th note is played on a beat, followed by a dotted eighth note ([Example 5: Captain Campbell, mm. 1-2](#)) [page 24]. This is different from a grace note, since this sixteenth will also be accented, and if played on the fiddle, it will be bowed separately

Example 3 - La fleur de mandragore

Example 4 - Jean's Reel



Example 5 - Captain Campbell



Example 6 - La belle Catherine

from the dotted eighth note that follows it. This is particularly common in Cape Breton music.

To counteract with the potential monotony of constant sixteenth notes, Québécois music can have irregular rhythms or changing time signatures for the duration of a measure, often cutting a beat to propel the music forward¹⁰. One of my favourite examples of this is in the reel “La belle Catherine” ([Example 6: La belle Catherine, section B](#)).

Now that we’ve looked at some elements of the older traditional music, let’s look at some elements of the chanson.

Lyrics

The chanson is very much a text-first artform. As stated above, the lyrics usually tell a multi-layered story and are usually quite poignant and meaningful. Because of this, the music is a little more at the service of the text. The melodies, rhythm, and forms end up less strict than the traditional song.

Rhythm

Every language has its own intrinsic melody and rhythm – the French language is no exception. Its idiosyncrasies affect how music is shaped around it. An interesting characteristic that differs from one language to another is how words are stressed. The French language places equal stresses on every single syllable as opposed to English that has a specific syllable emphasised in every word. For example, the way we say Canada in English will be Ca-na-da, while in French, it will be Ca-na-da. Or, with a longer word: repetition. English: re-pe-ti-tion; French: ré-pé-ti-ti-on (ray-pay-tee-see-on)¹¹. This can be translated into a rather consonant and

rhythmic delivery of lyrics in music as opposed to, say, the very lyrical melodic Italian style of singing¹². Historically, song melodies derived from the natural inflection of the French language, to the point that there was a strong clash of musical text-setting philosophies in the opera world between the French and the Italians in the mid-18th century. Today’s Francophone songwriters are now a little freer with text-setting, but you will still find many songs that favour the text’s natural inflection in favour of expressing the meaning and the drama of the lyrics¹³. What I like to do is to take the context of an entire sentence and figure out where stresses should be emphasised according to its meaning. This could differ according to one’s interpretation of the meaning if there can be more than one. Balancing the text’s interpretation and its natural inflections while composing definitely takes time and practice - and it can vary depending on the speaker’s mood, too! As you can imagine, setting French text to music can be quite dynamic.

Melody

Chanson melodies can be extremely lyrical when one properly balances both text and music while composing one. There is really not much difference between a chanson melody and, say, an art song. The only difference is that, while the art song is usually performed by trained singers that have a much wider range and a multitude of techniques, a chanson performer will be self-taught, or else will have more of what we call a “folk” voice. The melodies of the chanson won’t have too large a range, or too many difficult techniques or leaps while staying very lyrical.

Incorporating Traditional and Chanson Elements in Contemporary Choral Music

¹⁰ Valley, F. (Ed.) (1999). *The Companion to Irish Traditional Music*. New York: New York University Press, p. 50.

¹¹ Fry, S. (2010). *The Ode Less Travelled: Unlocking the Poet Within*. London: Cornerstone Digital, p.32

¹² Potter, J. (Ed.) (2000). *The Cambridge Companion To Singing*. Cambridge University Press, p. 86.

¹³ Potter, J. (Ed.) (2000). *The Cambridge Companion To Singing*. Cambridge University Press, p. 86.

There is a range in how one can integrate traditional elements in new music. The elements can be either very subtle to the point that we barely notice them – or they can be so present that the new work almost sounds like it's a traditional tune that has been around for centuries. And then, there's everything in between! I picked a selection of my pieces that best represented how I as a composer deal with that wide range in my own voice.

1) "[Turlutte acadienne montréalaise](#)": an original traditional melody Turlutte was composed for Choeur Adleisia in Montréal who asked me if I could write them a mouth-reel. I was a little taken aback that I was asked to write something so traditional, and yet, I appreciated the challenge. I got to listen to all of my favourite Acadian mouth-reels, find out exactly what elements made me like them so much, and incorporate those into my own turlutte. It was recently featured in Tracy Wong's session during the International Kodály Symposium 2019.

Form

I followed the strict AA-BB and three-time repetition rule, only succumbing to the lure of having a bridge to refresh the sound after the second time through the full melody. The form is AA-BB-AA-BB-C-A-BB. What does change with each repetition is the texture of the accompaniment, and which voice sings the melody.

Lyrics

A simple set of standard mouth-reel syllables,

including the famous ts, are featured to be of service to the rhythm and the melody.

Rhythm & Melody

The melody, like reels in general, has a lot of repeated notes to keep the energy going. I could potentially remove a few of them and replace them with longer note values to fill the time, but that would take away from the drive of the piece. Take for example the endings of most phrases (example 7). Here, I could have just used a long half note tied to an eighth note. However, I use a particular rhythmic tag to give those endings a little more energy (Example 7, Turlutte acadienne montréalaise, m. 3).

What I particularly enjoyed in multiple Acadian mouth-reels were syncopated rhythms, which you will find all over Turlutte. This rhythm becomes more important than actual pitches in the A section, which is fairly low and does not have a very wide tessitura (Example 7: Turlutte acadienne montréalaise, mm. 1-8).

As a contrast to A, my B section is brighter thanks to its higher register. Its melody favours changing pitches as opposed to repetition, a wider tessitura, and has a little less syncopation than the A section (Example 8: Turlutte acadienne montréalaise, section B) [page 27].

Percussion

To keep it driving forward, I added a traditional percussive element in Turlutte: podorythmie.

Pensif, introspectif (♩=96)

Hey dam ti da di dam dam di dam, hey ta dl-la di dam ti da dl-ley ti
da dl-lam, hey dam di dâ. Hey dam ti ta di dam dam ti ta dl-lam, hey ts ta di da ti ta dl-ley di
dam, ts tam ta di dl - lâ.
Ou

Example 7 - Turlutte acadienne montréalais mm 1-8

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system has three staves: S1 (Soprano), S2 (Soprano), and A (Alto). S1 has a melody with lyrics: "Hey ts ta dl-ley di dam di da, ta dl - lam ts ta dl - la di dey ta di dl-ley di". S2 and A have a simple accompaniment with the word "Ou" written below the notes. The second system continues the melody in S1 with lyrics: "dam. Hey dl-la di dam ts ta, ta dl - lam ti da di dl-ley-di dâ. Hey ts ta dl-ley di dam di da, ta dl-". S2 and A have lyrics: "Ou Hey dam di dâ Ou" and "Ou Hey dam di dâ Ou". Dynamic markings include *mf*, *mp*, and *doucement*.

Example 8 - Turlutte B section

Podorythmie is basically stomping one's feet in a very square pattern while sitting down. For Turlutte, it's a wonderful contrast to the syncopated rhythms of the melody. Podorythmie's performance is straightforward, but it definitely takes practice, especially if one wants to sing the syncopations at the same time – never mind not getting winded while doing it! (Tip: make sure you're sitting on a fairly high chair so that you're not constantly lifting your thighs – your quads will thank me!)



Example 9 - Turlutte podorythmie

The basic podorythmie rhythm is the following, where R = your dominant foot, and L = your non-dominant foot (Example 9: podorythmie in Turlutte acadienne montréalaise).

1) "[Une fleur si petite](#)": a mix of both traditional and chanson elements NOTE: The recording is the premiere which had some percussion issues. Otherwise, [here](#) is voice-piano mock-up that I recorded myself (which is the version that is for sale). Written in 2018 for Les Jeunes voix du Coeur de la Vallée du Richelieu which was celebrating its 10th anniversary, Une fleur si petite is energetic and still accessible for the children to perform it comfortably. Being a Québécois group, using the French language was not an issue, so I chose a very lyrical poem for the text.

Lyrics

This poem was written in a chanson style by my singer-songwriter mother. It has many metaphors, and speaks of war, love, and hope. However, its images evoke a large dance party where one would sing and play more traditional music. This made me bring in elements of both styles into my piece.

F Festif et dansant

S.
Gé-né-ral, l'hôte en chef

A.
Gé-né-ral, l'hôte en chef

Pno.
Gm/Bb C5 F
Festif et dansant
à l'irlandaise
mf

U.
legato
mf
Y se-ront in-vi-tées Tou-tes les fil-les du pa-ys

Pno.
F Am/E Dm
simile

Example 10 - Une fleur si petite mm 37-44

Form

Une fleur became an A-B-A1 form, where A is more of the chanson style, B brings in more traditional elements, and A1 mixes the two together. To keep things simple for this particular group, the traditional elements were brought in more prominently into the instrumental parts, keeping the vocal line a little more lyrical. Although it was originally written for piano and string quartet so as to feature a few fiddle lines, the piano adaptation has kept the reel in its right hand (example 10).

Rhythm

Again, the rhythm is kept fairly straightforward in the vocal part to keep it accessible. True to the purest form of the chanson, the melody closely follows the spoken rhythm of the language.

Thankfully, this particular poem's form is very regular, so it was quite easy to find a simple rhythm that fit both my musical intentions and served the meaning of the text.

It is in the piano that one will find more rhythmic variety to signal the change between the chanson style and the traditional style. If the reel in the right hand isn't obvious enough to signal the change, the accompaniment following the little instrumental solo becomes jaunty and features a lot of syncopations to make it swing (Example 10: Une fleur si petite, mm. 37-44). This is also the rhythm that continues into the return of the original melody in A1.

Melody

As opposed to Turlutte acadienne montréalaise, this is an extremely lyrical melody. In fact, it must be one of my most lyrical compositions, along with De ce roseau. I placed a lot of importance as to where would be my highest point and my lowest point in each phrase and how that would affect the meaning of the text – just like one would normally do with an art song (Example 11: Une fleur si petite, mm. 4-11).

“[Terre-Neuve](#)”: how traditional elements influence my contemporary writing. Terre-Neuve was written in 2018 for the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. It was meant to be an encore the instrumentalists could sing at the end of their concerts during their tour in Scotland and Germany. This meant that the piece needed to be musically interesting for such accomplished young musicians, but not impossible to sing, since many of them had no vocal training. Thus, the ranges had to stay fairly tight, and despite the quick tempo, rhythms had to allow enough space for the words to be enunciated fairly comfortably. The commission had to feature a French-Canadian text. I picked Terre-Neuve by Annick Perrot-Bishop because of its incredibly raw and powerful description of Newfoundland's geology, without being too overtly obvious that it is actually talking about a province. One could think that the piece is simply about a new world waking from its ancestral memories if we did not piece together the first and the last words of the poem, which give “Terre Neuve”.

Style

It may not be outwardly obvious, but I was yet again influenced by traditional music for the simple fact that when I think of an energetic piece that is still sing-able, I think of a jig (6/8 meter). Some of my

absolute favourite instrumental tunes are jigs – more so than reels. Terre-Neuve is mainly in 12/8, with a few switches back and forth between this time signature and 4/4 to break up what would otherwise risk becoming too monotonous.

Form

The form is definitely following the practice of the chanson, where I follow the meaning of the text and reflect it musically. Therefore, it's quite a fluid form as opposed to the stricter traditional forms. I am, however, particularly proud of how I managed to bring in thematic repetition thanks to Annick's fantastic text. For a more thorough analysis of the text itself and how I used its imagery to structure my piece, you can find an explanation on this following [video](#) produced by Elektra Women's Choir.

Tonality

Although I tend to stay quite tonal, I also write a lot with modes – and Terre-Neuve is no exception. Many might attribute my modal writing to jazz harmony, but I'll be frank – I have no knowledge of the subtleties of jazz harmony! My love of modes stems unequivocally from my traditional music influences.

CONCLUSION

Since the choral medium is becoming more and more of a vehicle for our cultural heritage, it is imperative that we as Canadians not only share our traditional culture, but that we share our current culture when programming choral music. It is my hope that more Francophone composers of multicultural backgrounds living in Canada create new, accessible French-Canadian content that speaks of today's worries and joys, struggles and victories, and the simple things to which we

Une marche lointaine (♩ = 100)
mp A

Unis. $\frac{12}{8}$ 3

J'ai cueil-li pour toi En bor-dure d'u - ne plai - ne

mp B

U - ne fleur si pe - ti - te Qu'on la vo - yait à pei - ne Mais sou - dain elle me par - le

mf *f*

De de - ve - nir le... roi De tout... un ré - gi - ment De mille... et un sol dats

Example 11 - Une fleur si petite mm 1-14

can all identify (i.e.: snow - who in this country can't identify with its joys and frustrations?).

Today, Francophone communities are also being influenced by the multicultural influx of French-speaking immigrants from Algeria, France, Lebanon, Republic of the Congo, and Vietnam, to name a few. There is exciting new art and music coming out of our Francophone communities that aren't even close to our traditional music, and our musical identity is shifting with it. There are also the Wendake and Innu communities living within the borders of the Québec province and the Maliseet and Mi'kmak living in Acadie that have influenced the traditional music over the centuries, to name a few. No doubt they will continue to do so for years to come. In short, who knows what Francophone music will sound like in the future – and that's an exciting prospect!

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A huge thank you to Dr. Jeanette Gallant who was kind enough to point me towards her research, and the research of others, concerning Acadian music traditions. For a very informative read on the changing reception of folksongs in Acadian society, look up these three articles by Dr. Jeanette Gallant: "The Changing Face of Acadian Folksong" (2009), "The Governed voice: Understanding Folksong as a Public Expression of Acadian Culture" (2011), and "Acadian Victimization and Empowerment: Music and Power in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century French Canada" (2014).

RESOURCES

For access to traditional French-Canadian choral scores, explore the catalogues from [l'Alliance des chorales du Québec](#), [Cypress Choral Music](#), and [Earthsongs Choral Music](#) (search the keyword "French").

For some non-traditional French-Canadian choral scores, also check out some of Cypress Choral Music's catalogue. Seeing that French-Canadian choral "art song" works are more difficult to find, I would also suggest contacting composers directly. You can find an extensive list of Canadian choral composers on [Choral Canada's website](#). Most composers are easily reachable via Facebook nowadays, and they do like to interact. Be bold and reach out to us!


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To advance education in music by:

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HISTORY

The federal charter for the Kodály Institute of Canada (KIC) was granted in 1973. The announcement that the organization was formed was made at the first International Kodály Symposium held in August 1973 in Oakland, California. The Canadian organization was established prior to the International Kodály Society (IKS) and the Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE), both of which were chartered in 1975. In order to parallel the International Kodály Society, the name of the Canadian Kodály Organization was changed to the Kodály Society of Canada in 1986. Since its inception, the Kodály Society of Canada has had thirteen different presidents.

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