

MUSIC MATTERS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR MUSIC TEACHERS

SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 2010



Convocation 2009

Celebrating Together: The Royal Conservatory Turns 125

By Dr. Jennifer Snow, Director of Teacher Pedagogy, Chief Academic Officer, Examinations

In 2011, The Royal Conservatory will celebrate its 125th anniversary with over a year of activities, experiences, and programs that focus on teachers and students in community. This will be a year to remember as we recognize a century and a quarter of achievement, reconnect with the millions of Canadians who have experienced music and the arts with us, and turn a new page in our history as we build an exciting future together.

When The Conservatory was founded in 1886, Canada was only seven provinces, and major arts organizations like the Montreal Symphony and Canadian Opera Company were decades away from being established. Only a handful of Canadian universities and private schools are older than The Conservatory. What started as a small, Toronto-based music school—a mere nineteen years after the confederation of Canada—has now grown to become the nation's oldest and largest arts organization, with examinations and classes offered across North America, world-renowned alumni, an internationally recognized pedagogical system, and generations of teachers consistently held in the highest regard amongst their peers across the continent.

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You Asked

Is April Session
returning?

Yes. We are happy to announce that April Trial Session is returning this academic year. See p. 6 for more information.

The 125th-anniversary events will renew the connection between The Conservatory and all our relationships, including the Government of Canada and every Canadian province and territory; over twenty-thousand music teachers whose commitment to their profession has sustained the organization over the years; and the estimated three-million Canadians for whom taking a Royal Conservatory examination was a part of growing up in Canada. We will also renew our relationships with the many celebrated performers whose success has created an international reputation for our organization and the thousands of public school teachers whose teaching practice has been creatively enriched by our Learning Through the Arts™ program.

In this 125th year, we will focus on our mission “to develop human potential through music and the arts” with a renewed enthusiasm and purpose, highlighting the growing body of research supporting the benefits of music and the arts for cognitive development. Such research increasingly shows that the qualities of the creative mind—a passion for excellence, the vision to see what has not yet been conceived, the tenacity to pursue innovative ideas, and the ability to inspire others—are essential in human development.

All the upcoming events will allow us to tell our unique story to Canadians, and accelerate the transformation of our organization from national to global, from a diverse set of program areas into a fully integrated digital learning organization, and from a teaching organization to a catalyst for social change and innovation. At the forefront of the 125th-anniversary festivities will be initiatives that reward and recognize the contributions of our remarkable teachers, examiners, students, and parents who, by their support and dedication, have helped shape who we are today.

Exciting Initiatives for Students and Teachers

As teachers, we are now into the fall season and working on our long- and short-term plans for our students. This is the time to involve all your students in the exciting opportunities coming up for the 125th-celebration year. Most meaningful is the focus on the examination experience to help motivate students to recognize their own personal growth and achievement, and become a part of history.

This year's examination experience will be all about celebration. Centers will be focused on creating an atmosphere of joy and participation. To give our students a sense of history and being part of a lifetime legacy, all examination candidates will receive a participation certificate as well as a special 125th-anniversary commemorative medal from the examiner.



Awards for young and emerging teachers

The 125th anniversary festivities ... will reward and recognize the contributions of our remarkable teachers, examiners, students and parents.

The launch of 125th-anniversary events will begin in January; keep in touch through our website and upcoming issues of *Music Matters* for the details of exciting initiatives sponsored by Yamaha Canada Music Ltd. Any student who takes an examination this year will be eligible to be a part of a national piano competition. Also, for each examination registration, both the teacher and candidate will be automatically entered to win an incredible grand prize donated by Yamaha Canada Music Ltd.

As teachers, our main focus is our students and their experiences. With our renewed focus on excellence in teaching, we are planning activities across the country. As part of the national celebrations, Silver Medal recipients and ARCT Diploma recipients will be able to participate in special joint Silver Medal–Convocation Ceremonies in cities throughout Canada during the commemorative year.

Through these engaging events and performance opportunities, as well as collaborative activities between RCM Examinations and Learning Through the Arts™, students will have a chance to unite with their peers across the country. Parents too will be engaged in the 125th-anniversary celebrations, with a parent-and-student focused newsletter and access to online resources and materials.

We are also launching programs that focus on teachers, including our upcoming Teacher Pedagogy Seminars, participant packages for teachers who register students for examinations during this special year, and teacher recognition awards. Creative professional development workshops focusing on innovative new methodologies designed to inspire and invigorate your teaching practice will be held in every province and across the United States. Resources to support teaching will be made available with the launch of the RCM Online Bookstore, new publications, and many other exciting new online offerings and opportunities.



Recognition programs for veteran teachers

Initiatives Supporting Excellence

Initiatives to assist new teachers will be introduced, helping them to set up their studios and providing them with resources designed to alleviate the challenges associated with opening a new studio. We are also establishing awards for young and emerging teachers to help them start their careers and support them as future leaders in music education. Most notably, we will also honor dedicated veteran teachers through recognition programs that pay tribute to their service and commitment.

The 125th-anniversary year will culminate in an incredible television event showcasing celebrated alumni of The Royal Conservatory, great Canadian artists, and people who are making a difference, through the arts, to their community. We are launching an exciting contest to find Canada's favorite teacher, both in the arts and in public education, and the winners will be honored on the television program.

As teachers we are always looking for opportunities to celebrate our students' successes, recognize their achievements, and most importantly motivate them to strive for everything they can be. With these ideals, the focus of The Conservatory's 125th-anniversary is the student experience. We celebrate together the excellence of our curriculum and assessment program that is recognized world wide as the top standard. This is the time to reconnect with all our new and exciting programs and initiatives: join the teacher

blog, share your stories, and tell us about your own mentor memories and how your teacher inspired and motivated you.

We are looking forward to hearing your ideas and connecting through our website for alumni, teachers, and parents. We are thrilled to celebrate the work of teachers across the country and the accomplishments of our new and continuing students who are all part of our community. One-hundred-and-twenty-five years of pedagogical excellence and arts leadership is unparalleled. Our partnerships and relationships with teachers continue to embody music as an essential aspect of human development. We are leading the way to maintain the value of holistic education and quality in music experience. This is the year for rejuvenating our teaching and giving our students a sense of history, legacy, and mission in music.



Fostering a culture of creativity

This year's examination experience will be all about celebration . . . an atmosphere of joy and participation.

Planning for the 125th-anniversary year is well under way and these events are just some of the exciting initiatives that we will be launching. We celebrate this milestone year with the teachers, students, alumni, examiners, and parents who have all helped to create, build, and sustain the organization. We encourage you to get involved and we welcome your feedback, ideas, and suggestions. Most of all, we look forward to having you join us as we celebrate 125 years of fostering a culture of creativity in Canada, the United States, and beyond.



Silver Medal Ceremony 2009

SPECIAL NEWS FOR GRADE 10 PIANO CANDIDATES



Splitting the Grade 10 Piano Examination

Candidates who prepare for and perform a Grade 10 piano examination face a singular challenge: balancing a range of technical and musicianship tests with the demands of very challenging repertoire. In addition to playing a series of technical exercises and studies and completing a number of ear- and sight-reading tests, they must perform a series of repertoire selections representing five different musical style periods. Most of the pieces performed at the Grade 10 piano examination consist of “concert repertoire”—selections that might be heard in a program presented by a professional pianist. Even some Grade 10 studies fall into this category.

In response to teacher and candidate concerns, RCM Examinations has created a new option for Grade 10 piano candidates. Beginning with the January 2011 examination session, they may choose to perform their Grade 10 piano examination in two separate sittings:

- one consisting entirely of the candidate’s repertoire;
- one consisting of technical requirements, studies, ear tests, and sight reading.

Although the division of material in split examinations cannot be altered, candidates will be able to schedule the two sittings in either order. One candidate may choose to perform his Grade 10 repertoire in his first sitting and his technical requirements, studies, ear tests, and sight reading in his second sitting. Another candidate may perform her technical requirements, studies, ear tests, and sight reading first, and her repertoire later.

There are many reasons why a split examination can be both pedagogically sound and advantageous for candidates. The majority of candidates for Grade 10 piano examinations are busy high school students who struggle to find time for music outside their crowded academic schedules and social calendars. Others are adults who juggle exam preparation with busy personal and professional lives. By splitting their Grade 10 practical examination into two components, piano candidates will be able to focus on different portions of the examination more intensely. With their concentration more focused and their preparation more secure, many candidates will perform more confidently. For students who wish to qualify for the ARCT piano examination, this will likely result in fewer supplemental examinations.

Most of the current regulations concerning Grade 10 piano will apply to the split-examination option:

- Candidates for the complete Grade 10 piano examination and the split Grade 10 examination must finish their practical examination requirements within two years of the first successful complete or partial Grade 10 examination.
- Candidates for the split Grade 10 piano examination may schedule their sittings within the same examination session or in different sessions, but both portions of the Grade 10 piano examination and any supplemental examinations must be completed within the two-year period.
- Grade 10 candidates who complete their examination in two sittings must complete both parts, with a minimum total mark of 65 percent, before registering for any supplemental examinations.
- All theoretical co-requisites must be completed within five years of the first successful complete or partial Grade 10 piano examination.

Grade 10 Silver Medals

The Royal Conservatory recognizes that exceptional candidates who complete the Grade 10 piano examination in a single sitting demonstrate a level of competence that deserves special recognition. For this reason, only candidates who complete the Grade 10 piano examination in one sitting will be eligible to receive a silver medal. Like the ARCT examination in piano performance, the complete Grade 10 examination requires considerable stamina, control, and confidence. To qualify as a silver medalist, Grade 10 candidates will have to demonstrate these qualities by performing their practical examination in a single sitting.

Other Disciplines

Although the Grade 10 split examination option will be offered initially only for piano examinations, we plan to extend this option to other disciplines in the near future. This is one of the many ways in which we are striving to meet the needs of busy students who consider music an important part of their life.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jennifer Snow'.

Dr. Jennifer Snow
Chief Academic Officer, Examinations

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Thomas Green'.

Dr. Thomas Green
Chief Examiner, Practical Subjects

**The Royal
Conservatory™**
The finest instrument is the mind.

Keyboard Pedagogy Professional Development Summit 2010

A review of this July 24–25 event at the TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning



Dr. Janet Lopinski



Dr. Kent McWilliams



Dr. Jennifer Snow & Mr. Marvin Blickenstaff



Dr. Andrew Hisey

“Not only did I learn from people in the music industry who handled their profession extremely well, I also obtained an incentive to share these wonderful ideas with my community.”

“Excellent. Thank you. I am inspired, I have great ideas to improve my time with my students. I look forward to any and all opportunities The RCM has to offer!”

“The lectures with every music professor were very enjoyable. They were informative but my no means boring, as each professor had so much to offer and were so excited to present.”

“It taught refreshing ideas and gave much thoughtful insight into teaching pieces, the student’s thought process, and personal fulfillment.”

“I enjoyed being able to look at my teaching in a different way, using the great ideas that were presented.”



Attendees networking outside the TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning



Dr. Jennifer Snow demonstrating live distance teaching via the Internet



Dr. Kent McWilliams giving a demonstration



Attendees touring the TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning

“It was great meeting and sharing with teachers from so many places, all with similar goals and challenges.”

“It gave me the most practical ways of incorporating ideas into teaching from a different perspective with very clear examples in the repertoire—excellent, humorous and enjoyable!”

“In my daily life, I don’t get...to interact with people who share the same interest in teaching as me. I’ll be back next time!”

“Thank you for making this Summit a great success! Even though I have just begun to teach, it is one of the most rewarding experiences I have had.”

Discipline Updates: The Marks Are In!

Spring Session 2010 Average Practical Marks*

LEVEL	Cello	Clarinet	Flute	Guitar	Piano	Saxophone	Speech Arts and Drama	Violin	Voice
Preparatory A	-	-	-	-	87	-	-	-	-
Preparatory B	-	-	-	-	86	-	-	-	-
Grade 1	-	-	88	80	83	-	81	81	82
Grade 2	-	81	82	81	81	-	82	80	82
Grade 3	83	-	-	76	78	-	82	78	79
Grade 4	80	77	79	75	78	77	84	78	80
Grade 5	78	-	-	77	76	-	85	76	78
Grade 6	76	80	78	75	76	76	84	76	78
Grade 7	77	-	-	72	76	-	81	75	78
Grade 8	76	73	76	75	74	75	83	74	77
Grade 9	77	-	78	-	77	-	85	76	78
Grade 10	-	-	78	-	75	-	86	78	75
ARCT Performer's	-	-	-	-	77	-	-	79	-
ARCT Teacher's	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Elementary Piano Pedagogy <i>Viva Voce</i>	-	-	-	-	76	-	-	-	-
Intermediate Piano Pedagogy <i>Viva Voce</i>	-	-	-	-	75	-	-	-	-
Advanced Piano Pedagogy <i>Viva Voce</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*To respect confidentiality and statistical significance, results are not reported if there were fewer than ten examinations.

April Session Returns

After surveying teachers, candidates and parents who took part in the April 2010 Trial Session, we received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Initially offered in Burnaby, Calgary, and Markham, April Session will be offered in 12 additional centers across Canada in 2011.

Online registration will begin in December.

DATES

Registration Deadline January 17, 2011
Practical Examinations April 14–16, 2010

LOCATIONS

BRITISH COLUMBIA	ONTARIO
Burnaby	Hamilton
Richmond	London
Vancouver	Markham
	Mississauga
ALBERTA	Ottawa
Calgary	Toronto
Edmonton	
	QUEBEC
SASKATCHEWAN	Montreal
Saskatoon	
	NOVA SCOTIA
MANITOBA	Halifax
Winnipeg NW	

Spring Session 2010 Average Theory Marks*

RUDIMENTS

Preparatory 95
Basic 86
Intermediate 84
Advanced 84

HARMONY

Introductory 80
Basic 76
Intermediate 69
Advanced 68

History 1 70
History 2 72
History 3 74

Analysis 68
Counterpoint 74

KEYBOARD HARMONY

Basic 77
Intermediate 80
Advanced 76

SPEECH ARTS AND DRAMA

TECHNICAL THEORY

Level 1 81
Level 2 82
Level 3 66
Level 4 84

HISTORY AND LITERATURE

Level 1 81
Level 2 71
Level 3 69

*To respect confidentiality and statistical significance, results are not reported if there were fewer than ten examinations.



Mentor Memories with Susan Hoepfner

Mentor Memories invites leading arts professionals to share memorable moments of inspiration and motivation. For this fourth installment, Ms. Susan Hoepfner, internationally celebrated flutist, shares her reflections on the value of performance experience.

Susan Hoepfner

Appreciated for being “a born soloist” with “complete fluency in all registers, well-controlled technique and beautiful tone” (Toronto Star), Canadian flutist Susan Hoepfner is in great demand internationally. Her appearances span the continents of North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. She has performed at the Canadian Embassies in London, New York, and Tokyo, and has had a standing engagement with the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City since 2009. Ms. Hoepfner has numerous recordings on various labels, including Marquis Classics, EMI Classics, BIS Grammafón AB, JVC Victor, and King Record Labels, which can be heard frequently on Canada’s national broadcaster, CBC Radio 2, and in live broadcasts on Bravo! Television. She is a graduate of The Juilliard School and is a Canadian representative for Yamaha. Ms. Hoepfner recently launched *Overtones™*: *A Comprehensive Flute Series* for The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited at the National Flute Association Convention in California this past August.

MM: *Dubbed a “musical ambassador of Canada,” you have performed in many prestigious venues around the world. How have these experiences influenced your teaching?*

SH: Sharing first-hand experience from being on the concert stage is invaluable for my students. Ideally each performance, regardless of the venue, should be as good as it possibly can be. There’s personal integrity at stake. And we want a return audience! It’s important to me to relay clear and realistic expectations of the performance world to each student. They need to know that what should look easy on stage actually requires incredible commitment and dedication.

MM: *As a Canadian Yamaha Artist, you participate in and conduct master classes extensively throughout North America. What is the value of the master class experience for a student?*

SH: Master classes are great for students! It’s like an open lesson that gives them a chance to hear their peers play. Students come away with new ideas and concepts they can apply to their own practice. From my personal experience, master classes exposed me to a lot of new repertoire and I heard many different musical approaches from numerous teachers. A master class can expand one’s understanding of new and standard repertoire. While it can be confusing to hear many different interpretations for the same piece, that’s how a maturing student/performer is able to eventually form their own opinion and develop their own personal interpretation.

MM: *You have collaborated with many soloists and orchestras. What is your favorite memory of a collaborative project or performance?*

SH: It’s really difficult to boil a favorite memory down to just one, but the first thing that comes to mind is a recital I did with Renée Fleming at Roy Thompson Hall. I remember there was a hushed atmosphere before she appeared for our rehearsal. She was so gracious, generous, “normal,” and kind. It was an incredible musical experience for me. I loved the collaboration with someone I completely trusted on stage and could count on in performance. There was nothing else to think about except making music. An ideal situation!

MM: *Your New York debut was at age twenty. What advice do you give young musicians as they strive for success as performers?*

SH: What young musicians see today is instant, so-called “overnight” success. There is absolutely no substitute for daily practice. Believe me, sometimes I wished there were! My New York debut came about from the recommendation of my teacher, Julius Baker, while still studying with him at Juilliard. As exhilarating and memorable as it was, I knew it was a stepping-stone—just the beginning of my career as a soloist. I guess my advice would be this: we can see success all around us, and we must be clear how we define success for ourselves. Ultimately, people will decide their own level of excellence. It’s important to remember why you’ve chosen music as a career, and to remember that (or why?) you love it.

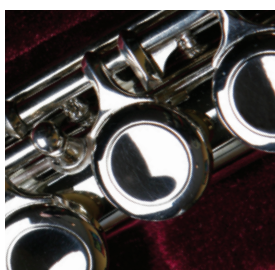
MM: *With such an illustrious list of achievements behind you, performing must be second nature by now. How do you prepare for a performance?*

SH: I’ve always felt completely at home on the stage. What I do to prepare is the obvious physical practice, but also mental practice. I perform most concerts by memory, so it’s very important for me to know the music inside and out. When I don’t have my flute in my hands, I’m practicing in my mind, reading, and absorbing the music. Above all, just before any performance it’s incredibly important to keep one’s positive attitude and check any daily stresses at the stage door. I’m very big on students building themselves up rather than tearing themselves into mental shreds.

Learn more about Ms. Hoepfner at www.susanhoepfner.com

Important Dates 2010–2011

		CANADA	USA
Winter Session 2011	Registration Deadline	Nov. 2, 2010	Oct. 19, 2010
	Theory Examinations	Dec. 10 & 11, 2010	Dec. 10 & 11, 2010
	Practical Examinations	Jan. 17–29, 2011	Nov. 29–Dec. 4, 2010
April Session 2011	Registration Deadline	January 17, 2011	
	Practical Examinations	April 14–16, 2011	
Spring Session 2011	Registration Deadline	March 1, 2011	February 22, 2011
	Theory Examinations	May 13 & 14, 2011	May 13 & 14, 2011
	Practical Examinations	June 6–25, 2011	May 9–June 5, 2011
Summer Session 2011	Registration Deadline	June 1, 2011	
	Theory Examinations	August 5 & 6, 2011	
	Practical Examinations	August 8–20, 2011	



Teacher Professional Development Seminars

Presenting full-day seminars for Studio Teachers

Scheduled for the 2010–2011 academic year in locations across North America, The Royal Conservatory Teacher Professional Development Seminars will focus on the integral and creative aspects of music teaching in the 21st century. Highlights will include master classes, teaching demonstrations, interactive sessions, discovery learning activities, round table discussions, and a range of specific pedagogical and professional topics. Participants will receive a Royal Conservatory Professional Development Certificate.

Seminars will be held in:

CANADA

British Columbia
Alberta
Saskatchewan
Manitoba
Ontario

Quebec
New Brunswick
Nova Scotia
Newfoundland & Labrador
Prince Edward Island

UNITED STATES

California
Massachusetts
New York
Ohio
Washington

For dates, locations, and seminar details visit rcmusic.ca/tpd

You asked

When are certificates mailed?

Certificates are mailed twice a year: **Spring and Autumn**. The next set of certificates is being mailed mid-October.

Music Matters:

The Official Newsletter of RCM Examinations and the National Music Certificate Program.

Chief Examiners:

Jennifer Snow, Chief Academic Officer
Thomas Green, Practical Subjects
Maria Case, Theoretical Subjects

Music Matters aims to provide pedagogical support and up-to-date information on The Royal Conservatory, RCM Examinations, and the National Music Certificate Program. Senior members of the teaching community offer new perspectives and useful suggestions for managing a successful teaching studio and using the RCM curriculum. Current and back issues of *Music Matters* may be downloaded free of charge from the RCM Examinations and National Music Certificate Program websites.

Contact us:

Article requests or questions about this publication? Change of address? Email us at musicmatters@rcmexaminations.org.

RCM Examinations and the National Music Certificate Program are divisions of The Royal Conservatory.

RCM Examinations
5865 McLaughlin Road, Unit 4
Mississauga ON L5R 1B8
905-501-9553

The National Music Certificate Program
PO Box 1984
Buffalo, NY 14240-1984
1-866-716-2224


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