



MUSIC NOTES



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Echoes of Winter CHEO Fundraiser, a Success!

The Kanata Music Academy is pleased to announce that its Echoes of Winter CHEO Fundraiser committee has met its goal of raising \$1,300. Thank you everyone who made this possible!

Royal Conservatory of Music Examinations

**Application Deadline:
March 9, 2004**

Session dates

Theory Examinations:

May 14 & 15, 2004

Practical Examinations:

June 7 to 26, 2004

Special of the month



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SEEING YOURSELF SUCCEED: VISUALIZATION AND PERFORMANCE

After my own performances, people often ask me "How do you do it?" or "Don't you get nervous?" Of course, just about everyone gets nervous, but how do we do it, precisely? What exactly is involved in performing music, as opposed to merely practicing it?

One of the most disappointing experiences a student can have is to play a sub-standard public performance. Whether it be at an exam, festival, recital or even at the lesson, a bad performance can haunt a student for many years to come, potentially undermining his or her self-confidence. Visualization exercises, done before, during and after playing, can be used to enhance the performance experience and achieve a better musical result.

Of course, adequate preparation in the form of practice and regular attendance at lessons is crucial. Preparation is directly related to confidence and technical assurance. But it is not enough to guarantee a successful performance, by which I mean a performance that is representative of the student's true ability.

Mental preparation is essential and tuning the mind begins with tuning the body. Be well rested! If there is a choice between that extra hour's sleep and a last minute, frantic practice session, go for the sleep! This way, you will be much more able to concentrate and focus during the actual performance.

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Try some arm stretches or yoga postures before warming-up at the piano. This can help make you aware of any physical tension you may have and allow you to release it before even touching the instrument. Do your regular warm-up at the piano. If you don't have one, develop one in consultation with your teacher. Be careful not to over practice on the day of your performance - trust yourself that you have done the proper preparation in advance and save your energy for the stage. This is especially true before an important or technically demanding performance.

For those of you that do these things already, bravo! You are ready to incorporate some visualization techniques into your preparation. The week before your performance, have a seat in a comfortable chair with your score and a pencil and go through the entire program in your mind. This exercise is not as easy as it sounds because the idea is to hear the music exactly: every dynamic, chord, accent etc. Time yourself: ideally it should take precisely the same amount of time as it would to physically play it.

Another powerful exercise is to close your eyes and see yourself in the room where you will be performing. If you have never been to that particular room, imagine one. For example, see the piano on stage and see yourself walking towards it and sitting down. Breathe out comfortably and allow your muscles to relax. See yourself playing the pieces, in order, and see yourself playing them well. See the audience and see them enjoying the music. Imagine that they are friendly and receptive to your music. Hear them applaud in your mind after you have finished. As you go through this exercise, you may notice that you get butterflies or that you have tension in your arms or neck or that you have all the physical signs of being nervous: pulse rate is up, hands trembling, sweating. This is good because it means that your visualization is really working. Now, practice overcoming those nerves by breathing deeply and reminding yourself that this is a good performance and that it is going well. No need to be nervous.

Practice playing through your program wearing the clothes that you intend to wear at your performance. Although this is a practical tip, it is also an aide to the visualization. The more detail that you can incorporate into your visualization, the more effective it will be. Remember: the key is to imagine the performance going WELL. Exactly the way you practiced it!

During the actual performance, maintain your focus on the music itself. It is certainly a challenge to get rid of the "background noise" in your mind: "Is so-and-so in the audience?", "Uh-oh, I'm coming to that passage I always mess up?", "What are they writing down?"

The way out of that noise is the music. Hear the music you are actually playing. Know that if something is not going exactly the way you want, such as the pedal squeaking, the piano too loud, the room too resonant, the keys heavier than your piano at home etc., you have the ability to compensate for these things during the moment. Use some pedal or change your articulation to better suit the acoustic. You can make spontaneous choices and this knowledge can give you a sense of security, knowing that you are not at the mercy of a bad piano.

Also, be sure to take as much time as you require to be comfortable before you start playing. It may seem like forever up there while you are adjusting the bench, but it may actually be only 30 seconds. Take it and insist that you are comfortable before beginning. Do not rush into your piece but hear the first 4 to 8 bars in your mind before playing. This will help you reestablish the tempo and resist the impulse to play faster. One of my teachers suggested that the reason we tend to play faster in performance is because our heart rate is elevated and therefore our internal sense of rhythm is running faster. Compensate for this by taking a slightly more relaxed tempo. This often turns out to be the correct tempo.

If you find yourself becoming nervous during a performance, think of channeling this nervous energy into the music in order to make it more exciting. Nervous energy can be a positive force, since without it, a performance tends to be hollow and lacking in vitality and commitment. Do not hold onto nerves or fight them but allow them to pass through your body and out your hands into the music. Imagine that the adrenaline is fuelling the music and bringing energy and excitement to your performance.

After your performance is over, take the time to properly acknowledge the applause. Bow and smile at your audience. Their appreciation is a gift to you and it would be rude not to receive it with gratitude. The same goes for compliments. If someone comes up to you and says, "congratulations-that was beautiful!", accept this comment as sincere and thank them. Perhaps you didn't think it was as beautiful as they did, but develop the habit of receiving compliments graciously. People want to express how your music touched them and it is part of our duty as performers to honor and cultivate this. This will also help reinforce the positive elements of your performance. We can be our own worst critic. Listen to your fans!

Adapted from article written by: Katherine Hume, M. Mus., The Canadian Music Teacher, Winter 2004

MUSIC NOTES ADVERTISING RATES

- 600 copies distributed each month, 1/2 page: \$40, 1/4 page: \$25, 1/8 page: \$15

Echoes of Winter CHEO Fundraiser pictures



MENTIONABLE STUDENTS

RCM Examination Results

With Honours: Rula Charaf: grade 2 piano, Sarah Charaf: grade 2 piano, Nicole Kasbary: grade 3 piano, Cierra Keith: grade 4 piano, Jamie Banneman: grade 3 piano, & David Bannerman: grade 1 piano.

Successful: Sarah Au: grade 1 piano, Kristin Dinault: grade 1 piano, Jenny Lee: grade 8 piano, & Julianna Dioguardi: grade 3 piano.

Musicians of the Month

For hard work, dedication and a positive attitude, the following students have been named February's *Musicians of the Month*. Congratulations students!

Kanata Music Academy:

Sarah Au, David Bannerman, Jamie Bannerman, Jenny Lee, Eunji Lee, Andra Wong, Beverly Wong, Catherine Wong, Johanna Gamauf, Danielle Cantal, Kyle Cantal, Gregory Berezny, Danilo Vuetic, Kathleen Woo, Kristina Cattell, Bnanna Derro, Seon Deschamps, Katelyn Ramsay, Katherine Buckley, Holly MacDonald, Kerra Pedder, Catherine Constantinof, & Olivia Dabda.

Ottawa Music Academy:

Jason Sau, Jordan O'Doherty, Katie Duschene, Cameron McArthur, Teresa McArthur, Chantal Jahn, Fatima Moazin, Diane Moazin, Zeinab Moazin. Jena DesRochers, Suzanne Hewitt, Magan Halhed, Richard Paguette, & Shaun Laughland.

SUMMER MUSIC CAMPS

For fun and educational summer music camps, designed and delivered by qualified and experienced music teachers, the Ottawa Music Academy and Kanata Music Academy have a number of alternatives:

Music is Fun is a pre-school camp, available from **July 26 - 30**, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.. Children from the **ages of 3 to 5** are welcome. This camp has been designed to introduce music to young children in an intriguing and captivating manner. Rhythm, pitch and an appreciation for music are developed through activities such as singing, rhythm instruments, games, story telling and arts and crafts. **Fee: \$115.**

The ***Musical Adventure*** camp is available from **July 5 - 16** or from **August 2 - 13**, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.. Children from the **ages of 6 to 12** are welcome for this two-week camp. Participants are taught the basic concepts involved in the production and delivery of a musical. The musical is selected based on the strengths and interests of the students and adapted if necessary. Students are provided with vocal and acting instruction and preparation. Activities also involve arts and crafts in order to create the props, sets and costumes for the final public performance held on the last day of the camp. **Fee: \$350.**

The ***Talent Quest*** camp is available **July 19 - 23** and **August 23 - 27**, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.. Children from the **ages of 5 to 12** are welcome. The purpose of this camp is to uncover hidden musical talent and interests by learning the basics of a number of different instruments including the piano, keyboard, drums, violin, guitar, recorder and voice. Participants will also play music games to help learn rhythm, counting and note reading. **Fee: \$195.**

The ***Jammin' Anyone*** camp is available **August 16 - 20**, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.. Children from the **ages of 8 to 14** are welcome. This camp is a great start to the guitar and drums. Students will learn basic guitar chords and methods of drum patterns. Small groups ensure individual attention. **Fee: \$195.**

Summer Theory Classes are available starting **July 5** (Monday). Classes are arranged to accommodate student availability. Students may choose to be prepared for Royal Conservatory of Music examinations or Trinity College of London examinations. Classes are offered for rudiments, harmony and history. **Fees:** For Preliminary, Grade 1, and Grade 2 Rudiments: **\$135 (10 hours)**. **Fees:** For history or harmony grade 3 and 4: **\$365 (28 hours)**.

Head Start Sessions are private lessons that will be scheduled throughout the summer. Students of **any ages including adults** are welcome. Students can get a head start on September's music classes, or simply continue music lessons at a **very special rate**. Ten half-hour or 5 one-hour sessions are available for **\$165**. Summer session students receive **10% off rentals**.

Please note:

- Snacks and lunches are not provided, but instruments, teaching materials, and all other supplies are provided. There are no hidden costs in any of the camps
- Children may be picked up after the camp has ended, but there will be no direct supervision once the camp has ended.
- Early drop-off is available for an extra charge of \$5.00 per day
- A 10% discount is enjoyed by all family members after the first family member.

We hope you find the camp that's best for you!