



UNA VOCE

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The Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM) is the voice of Canadian professional orchestral musicians. OCSM's mission is to uphold and improve the working conditions of professional Canadian orchestral musicians, to promote communication among its members, and to advocate on behalf of the Canadian cultural community.

Road construction helps brain health

by Barbara Hankins

Editor



For several years, Kitchener-Waterloo residents have been frustrated and sometimes angry about the construction around the building of our new light-rail transit system. But in some ways we should be grateful for the positive effect it has had on our brains. Scientists say that by taking a different route to your destination

you are giving your brain needed exercise. The road closures were often unpredictable, so we were constantly challenged to try to figure out new routes. The trains are about to start running, so we'll be looking for other ways to exercise our brains. Here are some ideas from *Psychology Today*: (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/the-athletes-way/201403/eight-habits-improve-cognitive-function>).

Just like navigating road construction, surviving in today's fast-changing world requires being flexible, adaptable, and open to change. The producers of *Una Voce* have had the challenge of trying to figure out a new way to get the newsletter to you. We hope you like the new distribution method. Let us know your thoughts!

In this issue, you can read about the 2018 OCSM annual conference: Matt Heller provides a handy summary and Bob Fraser reminisces on past conferences. New Symphonic Services Division Associate Director Richard Sandals gives us some handy pointers on negotiating electronic media clauses, Arlene Dahl introduces us to Winnipeg's new Music Director, and Rebecca Morton interviews the KWS CEO for ideas on implementing the IDEA Declaration.

Have a great season, and try not to get lost as you explore new routes!

2018 OCSM-OMOSC Conference summary

by Matt Heller

OCSM 1st Vice President

Quebec and bilingualism

Delegates passed a resolution urging reconciliation between musicians of the Quebec Symphony and Local 406, the AFM Local representing all of Quebec. Since 2008, the Quebec Symphony Players' Association, AMMOSQ, has operated as an independent bargaining agent outside of the AFM. Good faith talks have already begun between representatives of AMMOSQ and the AFM.



Business consultant Phillippe Dancause outlined a process of strategic re-imagining and transformation at the Quebec Symphony, following a crisis and lockout in late 2015. Beginning with the question "What is a 21st-century orchestra?" Dancause led an ambitious consultation process – which fully included musicians, who were paid for their time – aimed at escaping old paradigms and drawing out fresh viewpoints resulting in a new business model, marketing strategy, and organizational vision.

The executive board acknowledged that OCSM has not done enough to engage with francophone members. Delegates passed a resolution recommitting the organization to create a culture welcoming to francophone members; to facilitate greater exchange and interaction with members in their native language; and to work towards ideals and principles of bilingualism set forth in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Media and communications

The Canadian Symphonic Media Agreement, negotiated by the CFM and a group of Canadian symphonic man-

agers, is now being offered for use by Canadian orchestras. The agreement sets conditions and fees for streaming and on-demand distribution of live performances, for use on the orchestra's own website or broadcast channels. It is considered an experimental agreement, available from 2018 to 2021; further details are available by contacting Symphonic Services Division Canada Director Bernard LeBlanc (bleblanc@afm.org).

It has been a year of revelations of sexual harassment and toxic workplaces, which have left shock waves through the arts community and elsewhere. Legal counsel Michael Wright discussed processes for investigation of allegations, and how organizations can offer due process to all parties, as well as steps towards remediation, where circumstances allow.

A role-playing workshop titled "The Curious Case of Charles the Cellist" highlighted the complex ambiguities of a disciplinary meeting held amidst unfounded allegations. The workshop challenged delegates to portray the main actors and work towards a solution. Rochelle Skol-

nick, Director of the AFM Symphonic Services Division, designed the scenario and led an informative debriefing session, exploring relevant case law applicable both in the US and Canada.

A workshop on decision bias in the audition processes led by Lisa Chisholm demonstrated how even well-intentioned committee members can be swayed by non-musical factors, and influenced by comments as well as non-verbal cues made by colleagues.

The Musicians' Pension Fund of Canada report outlined recent and prospective legislative changes affecting target-benefit multi-employer pension plans. The MPF follows Ontario law, since that is where most members reside; the status of Ontario's proposed rules, which would increase the level of funding the Fund must maintain to prove solvency, is highly uncertain. The Fund has also been working with the AFM to better protect member data, and outlined several improved procedures.

The Editorial and Bylaws Committee revised two of



Attendees at this year's OCSM conference in Quebec City: Row 1: Eline Brock, (Orchestre Symphonique de Québec), Gwen Klassen (Calgary Philharmonic), Xiao Grabke (National Ballet of Canada Orchestra), David Thies-Thompson (National Arts Centre Orchestra), Michelle Zapf-Belanger (Thunder Bay Symphony), Liesel Deppe (Windsor Symphony), Rebecca Morton (Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony), Liz Johnston (OCSM Treasurer). Row 2: Bernard Leblanc (SSD Director for Canada), Etienne Chenard (Symphony Nova Scotia), Francine Schutzman (OCSM President Emerita), Melissa Goodchild (Saskatoon Symphony), Marie-Julie Chagnon (Orchestre Symphonique de Québec), Arlene Dahl (Winnipeg Symphony), Rochelle Skolnick (AFM-SSD Director), Becky Whitting (Vancouver Symphony), Matt Heller (OCSM 1st V-P), Varun Vyas (AFM Local 571), Peter Sametz (Regina Symphony), Morgan Mackenzie (Western Financial Group Insurance), Edith Stacey (Edmonton Symphony), Barbara Hankins (OCSM Publications Editor). Row 3: Miles Jaques (Toronto Symphony), Scott Harrison (CFM Local 149), Alain Cazes (Orchestre Métropolitain), Benoit Cormier (Orchestre Symphonique de Québec), Bob Fraser (OCSM President), Paul Beauchesne (Victoria Symphony), Humbert Martins (Musicians' Pension Fund of Canada), Richard Sandals (SSD Assoc. Director), Pierre Yves Gagnon (Niagara Symphony), Mark Rogers (Canadian Opera Company Orchestra), Faith Scholfield (OCSM Secretary), Brian Baty (OCSM 2nd V-P).

OCSM's guiding documents: Member Information and the *Delegate Handbook*. While OCSM's bylaws dictate governance and structure, many of the organization's projects, principles, and day-to-day processes are found in the *Delegate Handbook*.

Conference topics

Auditions are a perennial subject for debate; a recent resolution by the Canadian Conference of Locals recommended that orchestras add CBA provisions specifying eligibility requirements for national auditions. One Canadian orchestra has determined that holding national auditions is no longer necessary under federal immigration requirements.

Diversity, inclusion, and representation are all matters of great concern among orchestras. A wide-ranging discussion touched on issues of colonialism, community impact, engagement, gender parity, programming, youth orchestras, grant agencies and criteria, and land acknowledgment speeches.

Committee work within Players' Associations is almost universally valued and appreciated, yet only rarely is it paid. Delegates considered whether paying a nominal hourly rate for committee work could encourage greater commitment and professionalism, or whether it would disrupt a culture of selfless volunteerism.

Airline policy and regulations on importing rare and endangered materials were discussed, since the AFM has pursued advocacy on both fronts. An informational booklet prepared by the AFM and CATSA (Canadian Air Transport Security Authority) is available to inform AFM members and airport security personnel of current policies; it will be updated as regulations develop.

Resolutions and elections

Tommy Banks was honoured for astounding musicianship and inspirational advocacy, which delegates experienced firsthand when he appeared as keynote speaker at the 2016 Conference in Calgary. Tommy Banks was also a key player in the creation of Edmonton's Winspear Centre. He was added to the OCSM Honour Roll.

Two dedicated unionists and administrators, who happened to be married, were also honoured for their contributions to Canadian musicians: Ellen Versteeg-Lytwyn, who retires this year after 46 years as Fund Administrator for the Musicians' Pension Fund of Canada; and Len Lytwyn, who served as Executive Director of the AFM Canadian office and founding director of Musicians' Rights Organization Canada. Len passed away in July. Both Ellen and Len were added to the OCSM Honour Roll.

A resolution calling on the AFM to uphold and communicate best practices regarding data security was

passed by delegates. Identity theft has been a growing concern for musicians, and Canada's Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) strongly discourages the use of Social Insurance Numbers as customer identity numbers; the AFM now has unique member numbers, but SINS are still requested on certain forms and contracts.

Elections: Saskatoon Symphony delegate Melissa Goodchild was elected as Secretary, while Treasurer Liz Johnston and 1st Vice-President Matt Heller were re-elected. All OCSM officers serve two-year terms.

The 2019 OCSM Conference is planned for mid-August in Hamilton, Ontario.

Additional information and resources on items listed here are available. Please contact your OCSM delegate or vp@ocsm-omosc.org.

Twenty OCSM conferences – and counting.

by Robert Fraser,
OCSM President



My first OCSM conference was at the Lord Elgin Hotel in Ottawa in 1999. I had already been in the Victoria Symphony for nine seasons, and our very capable OCSM delegate decided to pass on the work to someone else. I was working for my AFM Local at the time as Secretary-Treasurer and was keen to see how a Player Conference worked, so I volunteered to become OCSM delegate at one of our orchestra meetings (which eliminated the awkward silence that usually results from a call for nominations!). I was no stranger to conferences, having attended a number of AFM Canadian conferences and four AFM conventions. I found the AFM conferences helpful as there was very little on-the-job training for AFM officers at that time. So I wanted to see what OCSM was all about, beyond what I knew already from my orchestra's delegate reports and the OCSM newsletters. Remember this was 1999; no OCSM websites yet and a lot of people still didn't have e-mail.

The rest, as they say, is history. I learned so much at my first OCSM conference from just being in the same room as musicians from nineteen different orchestras. My luggage going home from those first few conferences was almost over the airline weight limit with all that paper: brochures, collective agreements, reports, notes (nobody had a laptop at the 1999 Conference). There was the huge wealth of topics and workshops: collective bargaining, health and safety, media training, arts fund-

ing, pension funds, electronic media agreements; all amid a pile of new acronyms and initialisms.

I have been to each OCSM conference since then. At the 2003 Conference I was asked to join the Executive Board as its Secretary and to become *Una Voce* editor, and in 2013 I became President. I am still honoured and humbled to be in a room for roughly four days each summer with a group of highly dedicated, highly skilled, articulate artists and advocates.

So much has changed since 1999. We no longer are buried in paper – since 2011 our conference has been paperless and uses Dropbox for sharing documents. The media landscape has been turned upside-down by the Internet revolution; not only the rise of social media but also the complete transformation of the recording industry as we know it, including the decline of the CBC's role in providing a media platform for orchestras. Our orchestras are much more engaged in selling smaller subscription packages and single tickets than they were in 1999, and their development departments and endowment funds have greatly increased.

And yet, with all the changes in the last twenty years, a good number of things are still a part of the conversation at an OCSM conference. Here are some observations from my twenty years of involvement.

- *We still need to get the information from the conference room to all our musicians.*

One of the unfortunate byproducts of the Internet Age is that we're drowning in information fed to us by various devices. It's very difficult to get the essence of the human interaction we experience at a conference out to all of you. We have newsletters, a website, social media platforms, e-mail forums – but using them in the most efficient and effective way possible is still a challenge. There is no substitute for what they call the "slower" methods of delivery: conversation with your delegate being probably the best way.

- *We still need to do a better job of passing down history to our newer colleagues.*

A good example of this occurred to the OCSM Executive the other day. We were discussing a very old document that dates back to the 1980s, and discovered that a great deal of it was written to address a set of circumstances that no longer exists. If we hadn't thought to ask someone who remembered the original document, we would never have known. There's a story I like to tell about a child who asks his mother why she cuts the ends off a roast when she cooks it. His mother says that she doesn't know; ask grandma. When the child asks his grandmother, she says that it is supposed to make the roast taste better somehow. Still not satisfied with that answer, the

child asks his great-grandmother (who is thankfully still around). Great-grandmother's response to the question of why cut the ends off a roast? "So it will fit in the pan!" This story has three morals: (1) be inquisitive, (2) know your history and properly understand why things happened the way they happened, and (3) just because something has been done a certain way for a long time doesn't mean it should continue to be done that way.

- *Our jobs are not getting any easier or less stressful.*

In the 1990s we were only beginning to address our physical health and safety; this is ongoing. For example, there are still only a handful of audiologists in North America who have the specialized knowledge necessary to work with orchestral musicians. We are still developing and modifying standards and trying to keep up with ever-changing provincial health and safety requirements. And we are only beginning to scratch the surface of mental health issues. Our workplaces are still fertile ground for abuse of all sorts – we have had many stories in the orchestral world fall into the #MeToo category. You will read in Matt's 2018 Conference summary in this *Una Voce* how we tackled some of these issues.

- *There is one constant to orchestras: we exist to perform great music at a high skill level for people in our communities.*

There is always going to be talk about how we will have to adapt to changes in our society in order to survive: we will have to be more diverse in both our people and our repertoire, we will have to reach more people through new innovations, we will have to wear different clothes, etc. But I don't see us ever changing the fact that people love to hear music performed live. I was giving a talk to a group of teenagers the other day and I asked them to come up with reasons why we should go to concerts when there were so many easier ways to experience music. Their answers were not surprising at all: "We go to concerts because there's no substitute for being in a room with a large number of people having the same experience." "We go to concerts because every performance is unique." All their answers showed that they get it.

- *The other constant to orchestras is that people have been predicting our demise ever since the first groups of musicians were assembled.*

This is not a new phenomenon. You can find articles from the early 1900s that bemoan the fact that orchestras are unsustainable, irrelevant, expensive, and doomed – and we're all still here (*and* there are more orchestras now than there were when the doomsayers predicted our demise, *and* we all make more money in real dollars). We have hard data to show how successful

we are both monetarily and in terms of serving our communities – we need to get these success stories out there. Every time you read an article that begins with the words “Orchestras everywhere are hitting hard times” you have to hit back!

It is an honour and privilege to serve as your President. You have a wonderful network of people in OCSM: past and present delegates and officers, your own committee members, the Locals that serve us, and the AFM staff that assist us. We are all here to help you in this complex profession – don’t hesitate to reach out if you need information, a little help, or if you want to take part in the conversation. Wishing you all the best in this orchestral season.

OCSM-OMOSC 2018 Conference resolutions

Resolution No. 1

Ellen Versteeg-Lytwyn and Len Lytwyn

Whereas Ellen Versteeg-Lytwyn and Len Lytwyn have both contributed to the Canadian Orchestral Community; and

Whereas Ellen shepherded the Musicians’ Pension Fund of Canada (MPFC) for 46 years (1972 to 2018) as Fund Administrator; and

Whereas Len was instrumental in the creation of Musicians’ Rights Organization Canada (MROC), and served the entire Canadian musical community both in this capacity and as the Executive Director of the AFM Canadian Office; and

Whereas OCSM mourns the recent passing of Len in 2018; therefore,

Be it resolved that Ellen Versteeg-Lytwyn and Len Lytwyn be added to OCSM-OMOSC’s Honour Roll.

Carried.

Resolution No. 2

Data Security

Whereas the AFM has an obligation to its members to safeguard their sensitive personal information, including Social Insurance Numbers and Social Security Numbers; and

Whereas the AFM has assigned unique member identification numbers Federation-wide, but continues to use forms and contracts requiring Social Insurance Numbers and Social Security Numbers; and

Whereas Canada’s Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) strongly discourages the use of Social Insurance Numbers as customer identity numbers; therefore,

Be it resolved that the Delegates to the 2018 OCSM

Conference call on the AFM and Locals to comply with best practices on data security and information collection, as outlined in Canada’s Social Insurance Number Code of Practice;¹ and, further,

Be it resolved that Delegates call on the AFM to communicate its best practices as widely as possible among members, Locals, and employers.

Carried.

Resolution No. 3

AMMOSQ and GMMQ

Whereas OCSM-OMOSC is a Player Conference of the American Federation of Musicians of the US and Canada (AFM); and

Whereas part of the mission of OCSM-OMOSC is to be “The voice of Canadian professional orchestral musicians”; and

Whereas the AFM has been an essential force in advancing the interests of professional musicians throughout the US and Canada; and

Whereas since 2008 the Association des musiciens et musiciennes de l’Orchestre symphonique de Québec (AMMOSQ) has operated as a non-AFM union representing the musicians of l’Orchestre symphonique de Québec (OSQ) for the purposes of collective bargaining; and

Whereas the Local 406 Guilde des musiciens et musiciennes du Québec (GMMQ), as the sole AFM Local representing professional musicians working in Québec, is uniquely placed to act as the bargaining agent for the musicians of the OSQ; therefore,

Be it resolved that the Delegates to the 2018 OCSM-OMOSC Conference urge AMMOSQ and the GMMQ to discuss in good faith how to resume their relationship and negotiate the next OSQ collective bargaining agreement as an AFM member orchestra.

Carried.

Resolution No. 4

Bilingualism

Whereas English and French are the two official languages of Canada, as guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the linguistic communities who use these official languages are equal in status and under the law;²

1 Employment and Social Development Canada, “The Social Insurance Number Code of Practice Section 4 – Private sector’s responsibilities,”

(<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/reports/code-of-practice/section-4.html>).

2 Supreme Court of Canada, “Institutional Bilingualism at Supreme Court of Canada,” Resolution 10-03-A.

(<https://www.cba.org/getattachment/Our-Work/Resolutions/Resolutions/2010/Bilinguisme-institutionnel-a-la-Cour-supreme-du-Ca/10-03-A.pdf>)

Be it resolved that the Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM) highlights the importance of institutional bilingualism; and, further,

Be it resolved, that OCSM works to create a more welcoming environment for its French-speaking members; and, further,

Be it resolved that OCSM commits to start a dialog with its French-speaking members about their needs in their mother tongue.

Carried.

Resolution No. 5

Tommy Banks Honour Roll

Whereas Tommy Banks led a distinguished career as a jazz pianist, composer, band leader, recording artist, radio and television personality, and Senator; and

Whereas he was also instrumental in the creation of Edmonton's Winspear Centre, a crown jewel among Canada's performing arts centres; and

Whereas OCSM Delegates were honoured to welcome Tommy Banks as keynote speaker for the 2016 Conference in Calgary, and inspired and galvanized by his message there; and

Whereas on January 25, 2018, Tommy passed away at age 81; therefore,

Be it resolved that OCSM hereby recognizes Tommy Banks for invaluable contributions to Canada's culture and to his fellow musicians by adding his name to the OCSM Honour Roll.

Carried.

National audition eligibility

by **Melissa Goodchild**

OCSM Secretary



At the Canadian Conference in June 2018 a resolution was passed regarding the eligibility for players to participate in national auditions in Canada:

Whereas there is at present no uniform policy across Canada regarding who may take part in the Canadian round of orchestra auditions; therefore,

Be it resolved that Canadian Locals be urged to include eligibility requirements for participation in Canadian rounds of auditions in CBA negotiations with orchestras in their jurisdiction.

There is an *Audition Code of Ethics* that was jointly created by OCSM, AFM, and Orchestras Canada, but that

document is non-binding. The representatives to the Canadian Conference learned that not all Locals and orchestras have standard criteria for defining a national audition. This resolution is a step towards making those criteria more clear.

In the past, employers were required to prove that no Canadian was able to fill the position before opening the position to international applicants in order to comply with immigration law. In 2015 those laws changed for industries with creatives.

Now the question is: are national auditions no longer required? If the purpose of national auditions is to allow Canadians the first opportunity at a position, then the national audition round fills that role; however, if national auditions were put in place to comply with immigration law then perhaps they are no longer necessary.

OCSM members are encouraged to speak to their delegates who can make suggestions to the executive and at the next conference regarding best practices.

Negotiating electronic media clauses

by **Richard Sandals**

Associate Director, Symphonic Services Division, CFM



Orchestras and their Locals have a great deal of leeway in negotiating collective agreements on the subject of live performance. When it comes to electronic media, however, Locals don't have quite the same freedom. Obviously, it's not in the Federation's best interest – or your best interest! –

to allow orchestras to undercut each other when it comes to recording. Accordingly, there are two AFM by-laws that deal with this issue:

Article 14, §4(b): A Local Symphonic CBA (including, but not limited to, an interim agreement and/or a side letter of agreement) may contain provisions for the orchestra to provide electronic services (radio, television, tape, film, phonograph, etc.), provided that the International President's office or, in Canada, the Vice President from Canada, has approved those provisions in advance of the agreement's submission for contract ratification.

Article 15, §6(b): Locals may not enter into any contract or agreement with any person, firm, or corporation providing for any type of electronic media production

without prior written approval from the International President's office.

It can be problematic if you follow only the minimum requirement that approval be requested in advance of an agreement's submission for contract ratification. If it's the night before your ratification vote, it's too late.

Accordingly, SSD recommends the following procedure for securing approval for electronic media language:

1. If your negotiating committee is considering making proposals that concern electronic media, submit those proposals to SSD before you bring them to the bargaining table.
2. If management makes proposals that concern electronic media, submit those proposals to SSD as soon as you receive them – and certainly before you accept them or start negotiating those terms.

These two steps will enable us to advise you on what changes, if any, would need to be made to the proposals (yours or management's) in order to make them acceptable to the AFM. We don't necessarily want to dictate the exact terms, merely to clarify what would be an acceptable range of outcomes. Then:

3. Once you have a tentative agreement, submit the electronic media terms to SSD for review.

If your final agreement has stayed within the parameters we've defined, this part will be easy – and that's the whole point. If Locals and negotiating committees consult with SSD early in the process, we can help make sure you're moving in a direction that will lead to conditions that can be approved by the Vice President from Canada or by the President, as required. Of course, we're also happy to provide any assistance we can throughout the bargaining process – that's why we're here.

Tangible excitement for Winnipeg's new Music Director

by Arlene Dahl

Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra



There is always excitement, eager anticipation and yes, even a bit of apprehension whenever a symphony orchestra welcomes a new Music Director onto the podium. How will their creative vision influence the artistic jour-

ney as orchestra and conductor, together, begin a new chapter of music-making? How will they recreate the masterpieces of old? How will the exploration of inventive works composed in the 21st century shape the Winnipeg New Music Festival in the years to come? How will the educational innovations influence our youngest audience members? All these questions will be answered in time, but for now, there is tangible excitement in Winnipeg as we welcome our new Music Director, Daniel Raiskin, into our community. His bio reads:

A son of a prominent musicologist, Daniel Raiskin grew up in St. Petersburg. He attended music school and later the celebrated conservatory in his native city, where he studied violin, viola, and conducting. At the age of twenty Daniel Raiskin left the Soviet Union to continue his studies in Amsterdam and Freiburg. Inspired to take up the baton by an encounter with the distinguished teacher Lev Savich, he also took classes with maestri such as Mariss Jansons, Neeme Järvi, Milan Horvat, Woldemar Nelson, and Jorma Panula. Raiskin, who cultivates a broad repertoire, often looks beyond the mainstream in his strikingly conceived programmes.

Since 2017/2018, he has been Principal Guest Conductor of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra and held the same title with Orquestra Sinfónica de Tenerife during the 2017/2018 season. His passion for chamber music and chamber orchestra repertoire led to an Artistic Partnership with Chamber Orchestra St. Michael Strings in Finland. Daniel Raiskin was Chief Conductor of the Staatsorchester Rheinische Philharmonie in Koblenz (2005 to 2016) and held the same position with the Artur Rubinstein Philharmonic Orchestra in Łódź (2008 to 2015).

Daniel Raiskin is clearly a musician of sensibility, well versed in his craft; a further example perhaps of one last great gift of the old Soviet Union, the rigour and distinction of its conducting schools.

— David Gutman, Gramophone, 2012



Daniel Raiskin

Following an extensive conductor search, Daniel became the first choice of the musicians. The concerts under his baton were exciting, inspired, and he clearly raised the level of playing – a goal that ultimately every orchestra craves. We in the Winnipeg Symphony are looking forward to collaborating with our new maestro and to providing our audiences in Manitoba with music-making of the highest calibre.

Implementing inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility

by Rebecca Morton

Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony



Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony CEO Andrew Bennett was part of the team that worked with Orchestras Canada in 2016 and 2017 to discuss ways that orchestras can “better understand, reflect, engage, and celebrate our diverse community.”

Recently I sat down with Andrew and asked him about how the kws plans to move forward with the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Declaration.

REBECCA MORTON: Have you shared possible ideas with any other Canadian symphonic orchestras?

ANDREW BENNETT: The IDEA Declaration is an initiative of Orchestras Canada. A single orchestra cannot reasonably be expected to address comprehensively all the issues that it covers, even if they are all important. The Declaration is a way for orchestras to say “We are all in this together. Our individual organizations can each play a key role, drawing on our strengths and working in the specific community where we are located. We can learn from each other’s experiences. Together we can move forward.”

RM: Why did you feel it was important for kws to adopt the IDEA Declaration?

AB: kws, like most of our colleagues, has been doing some great work in this field, but our approach has not been systematic. There has not been much sense of an overview. Also we are aware that language in this area can be problematic. A nationally agreed upon document provides a carefully worded Declaration, a framework for us to set out our work, our plans, and our aspirations. It also means that we can be held to account for making more progress.

RM: What sort of action will the kws be taking?

AB: The first issue is getting the whole organization involved. That is why there were two major discussions by the Board before adopting the Declaration and then a special session for all musicians and staff, so that everyone knows about the Declaration and what it means. The session also served to dispel a few myths! Once everyone has had a chance to absorb the wording, we shall be looking for action at all sorts of levels, from the strategic to the most practical.

RM: On what levels will there be change? Will the initiatives begin from the top and work down?

AB: Initiatives can come from any part of the organization, and I trust that includes individual players and the musicians’ representatives. The Declaration may be seen as being imposed from the top, but really it is only an enabling device. The work that we undertake, and the gradual changes that we achieve, are much more important in the long run.

RM: Will there be changes in orchestra, soloist, or composer personnel? What about changes at the community level and how we approach education?

AB: The Declaration makes it clear that orchestras get to make choices and determine priorities. There is an opportunity to address inequity through changing some of those priorities. But not all change is easy to deliver quickly.

For example, whilst evidently the composition of many Canadian orchestras does not reflect their evolving communities in terms of visible minorities, turnover of personnel is a slow process. Moreover, the commitment to anonymity in auditions has been shown to address some other equity issues, most obviously gender representation. No one seems to be arguing for changing recruitment methods, so perhaps instead orchestras should be active advocates for encouraging a much greater diversity of students in music colleges. They might use their community and education programs to actively identify talent across the community and encourage those who might not self-select for a career in music to think positively about joining our profession. We can’t just blame music colleges for producing graduates who don’t reflect our community diversity; we have to play our part in changing the range of students who want to commit to working in an orchestra.



Andrew Bennett

But in some areas it is possible to act more quickly, without prejudicing the orchestra’s work. For example, in the last few years there has already been a radical upswing in terms of the proportion of conductors and composers who are women. Many people argue that it is – to date – insufficient change. It is conceivable that an insufficient number of talented women in these fields have graduated from the education system, but it is far more likely that women have not been encouraged to join these fields or that hitherto they have simply not been employed as much as their male peers. Given that the situation is evolving significantly, we need to look at continuing the process of change, adding further momentum.

Orchestras' work in community and education fields provides an opportunity to be yet more radical. Given the huge demand for our work in this area, I suspect that many orchestras already prioritise work in more disadvantaged communities. For example kws made a point of attracting recent refugees from Syria and other Arabic-speaking countries by providing Arabic translation at one of its Family Series concerts each year. Apart from simply allowing these new Canadians to enjoy the event, it was a significant gesture on the part of the rest of our patrons. The orchestra was able to articulate on behalf of the whole community: "We, your neighbours, welcome you!"

RM: What challenges, if any, do you anticipate?

AB: As with any such initiative, keeping the issues in the foreground is always a challenge. The kws Board will be setting up a task force to monitor at a high level the implementation of the Declaration – not least how it may change future recruitment of directors. Although senior staff and our Music Director will be expected to consider the Declaration in all aspects of the orchestra's work, it really is up to all the musicians and staff to keeping asking questions, make suggestions, and make their own contribution, no matter that they may consider it small. We are passionately committed to making orchestras vital in our communities. As those communities evolve, our task is never-ending, but our concerted action is desirable and achievable. The Declaration helps focus minds and provide an incentive to keep up the good work.

UNA VOCE

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OCSM Executive Officers

(term of office in parentheses)

President (2017–19)	Robert Fraser
1st Vice-President (2018–20)	Matt Heller
2nd Vice-President (2017–19)	Brian Baty
Secretary (2018–20)	Melissa Goodchild
Treasurer (2018–20)	Liz Johnston

Adjunct officers:

Publications Editor	Barbara Hankins
Webmaster	Ken MacDonald

Current OCSM Orchestra Delegates:

Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra	Gwen Klassen
Canadian Opera Company Orchestra	Mark Rogers
Edmonton Symphony Orchestra	Edith Stacey
Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra	Elizabeth Andrews
Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra	Rebecca Morton
London Symphonia	Shawn Spicer
National Arts Centre Orchestra	David Thies-Thompson
National Ballet of Canada Orchestra	Xiao Grabke
Niagara Symphony Orchestra	Pierre Gagnon
Orchestre Métropolitain	Mélanie Harel
Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal	Stéphane Lévesque
Orchestre Symphonique de Québec	Marie-Julie Chagnon
Regina Symphony Orchestra	Peter Sametz
Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra	Melissa Goodchild
Symphony Nova Scotia	Ken Nogami
Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra	Michelle Zapf-Bélangier
Toronto Symphony Orchestra	Leslie Dawn Knowles
Vancouver Symphony Orchestra	Rebecca Whitling
Victoria Symphony	Paul Beauchesne
Windsor Symphony Orchestra	Liesel Deppe
Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra	Arlene Dahl

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