



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.

The end of one chapter, the beginning of another

by Barbara Hankins

Editor



Writers learn that a chapter break underscores the fact that there's been a significant change of some kind – of place, of perspective, of point of view, of plot direction. This chapter-break idea happens throughout our workplaces as well as our lives.

Jim Mason has embraced the retirement chapter with an enthusiastic and well-planned approach. His musicianship and joie-de-vivre has brightened our kws workpace for forty years, and although we will miss him greatly, we know that he will continue to contribute to the musical world in many ways.

Our orchestra has begun a new chapter with Andrei Feher at the helm. Larry Larson's interview with him points out Andrei's connections to past chapters in the kws as well as his dreams for the future. Andrei speaks candidly of how he brings out the best in the musicians.

Also in this issue, Gwen Klassen introduces creative ideas on leadership in our organizations, and there are informational articles on the Musicians' Rights Organization of Canada and the McMaster University research centre LIVElab.

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I'd like to thank all those who have contributed to the OCSM newsletter over these past ten years that I have been editor. Your input has always been inspirational to the editing process. It's time for a "refresh" as they say in computer jargon. With the completion of this issue, Steve Izma and I will be handing the baton of producing

Una Voce to the next runner on the team. If you are interested in running with it, please contact the OCSM Executive (exec@ocsm-omosc.org)

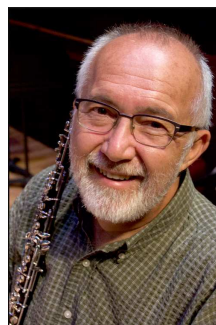
If you think you are too small to be effective, you have never been in bed with a mosquito. — Betty Reese

The aging orchestral musician

Looking down the barrel of the retirement gun: Ready, aim, fire!

by Jim Mason

Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony



Many of you contacted me after my article in the April 2017 *Una Voce*, thanking me for talking for about problems that I had been experiencing as an aging wind player in a symphony orchestra and offering solutions to those problems. I really appreciated the comments; they confirmed my feelings that these issues are universal. I was happy to open up a dialogue so we could share the pain, so to speak.

In spite of sharing the pain, I couldn't shake the feeling that playing the oboe in a symphony orchestra was actually becoming less fun. I realized that in order to achieve the results that I wanted, I was working harder than I wanted to work. The stiffness in my hands that I spoke of in the April 2017 article wasn't getting any better. If I took a few days off, I was having problems covering the keys of my instrument. Despite taking glucosamine three times a day, my hands were stiffening up, and after a busy two-service day, they actually hurt sometimes. I was finding that practicing to

play all of those high register sections in Pops shows was becoming less and less rewarding; in fact, I HATED doing it! Basically, I went from wanting to practice as much as was needed, to needing to practice more than I wanted to. So, in the summer of 2017 I made the decision to retire.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Collective Agreement has a retirement clause. In the process of using this clause, a musician has to declare their intention to retire. One can do this for up to three seasons before the actual end. I chose to play for two more seasons, so at the end of this season (for the kws, the end of May 2019), I'm done. The declaration of intent to retire entitles a musician to book out of up to a quarter of the season with no interference from management, as long as we do so by August 1 before the season starts. I've been doing that for the past two seasons. The kws management has been incredibly gracious to me, allowing me to program a couple of my favourite pieces on this, my last season.

The entire process is going unbelievably smoothly for me and I'm totally ready to retire from the orchestra. Events in my personal life have made this a natural consequence. A year ago my daughter died of a drug overdose and as a result my wife and I are now raising our young grandchildren, who really need our time. Also, for several years I've been operating a musical instrument business while playing in the orchestra. The business has been steadily growing. It now takes up an amazing amount of my time, so the freedom from regular playing will give me more time to continue to grow the business.

Please don't get me wrong: I'm not quitting playing the oboe. I have several projects on the go. I can still play well, and if I pick and choose the things I play and have time to practice, I can probably continue to play for a long time. I love making music and, like many oboists, I'm a total reed/mechanics/tool geek, so running an instrument business is a perfect outlet for me.

I hope all of you get to choose the time when you call it quits from your respective orchestras. There is life after your orchestra job and I hope you all are able to set yourselves up to continue living a vital, vibrant life, with or without music, on your terms.

An L.A. recording session ground to a halt yesterday when an oboe player, who was constantly sucking on her reed to keep it moist during rests and between takes, inadvertently inhaled and swallowed it. The conductor immediately called 911 and asked what he should do. The operator told him, "Use muted trumpet instead."

MROC – Helping musicians collect neighbouring rights royalties

There *is* money in music

by Julia Train

Senior Manager- Communications & Outreach, MROC



Musicians' Rights Organization Canada (MROC) pays musicians and vocalists for the public performance and private copying of their sound recordings. The royalties we distribute flow from tariffs approved by the Copyright Board of Canada.

Musicians' Rights Organization Canada (MROC) pays musicians and vocalists for the public performance and private copying of their sound recordings. The royalties we distribute flow from tariffs approved by the Copyright Board of Canada.

As a not-for-profit organization governed by musicians and experts working in the music industry, MROC's main goal is to help you earn as much as you can from the copying and use of your performances on sound recordings. MROC represents more than 10,000 musicians, from session players to featured artists, recording across the full range of genres.

MROC also fosters the education and empowerment of musicians through various partnerships, sponsorships, and initiatives.

MROC was founded on September 30, 2009, as a federally incorporated not-for-profit collective society, which collects remuneration, royalties, license fees, levies, and other compensation arising from musicians' and vocalists' performances on sound recordings. At that time, MROC took over the role that AFM Canada's Musicians' Neighbouring Rights Royalties (MNRR) had played since 1998.

In 1997, the Copyright Act of Canada was amended to allow musicians, vocalists, and record companies to collect royalties for their role in the creation of sound recordings.

The new "neighbouring rights" regime expressly recognized the rights of musicians and vocalists in their performances and their right to compensation (called "equitable remuneration") for the public performance or broadcast of their performances on recordings.

Until 1997, only songwriters and music publishers received royalties for music broadcast or publicly performed because the law only recognized the value in the songs (musical works). Since 1997, when the neighbouring rights regime was established in the Canadian Copyright Act, musicians (performers) and record labels (makers of the sound recordings) also have a right to be remunerated for the broadcast and public performance of their sound recordings and of the performers' performances on those sound recordings.

Neighbouring rights revenue is collected in Canada by Re:Sound (formerly NRCC Neighbouring Rights Collective of Canada) under the following tariffs certified by the Copyright Board:

- Commercial Radio
- Non-Commercial Radio (e.g., community radio, college radio)
- CBC Radio
- Pay Audio (music programming channels such as Galaxie and Max-Trax delivered as part of cable TV packages)
- Satellite Radio (multi-channel subscription radio services like Sirius XM)
- Music Streaming (non-interactive and semi-interactive services only, which excludes downloads and on-demand streaming)
- Background Music (sound recordings played in businesses such as restaurants, retail stores, and hotels, whether programmed in-house or by a background music supplier)
- Dance and Fitness Studios
- Live Events (sound recordings played at the events)

Why Join MROC?

MROC collects neighbouring rights and private copying royalties from Canada and internationally.

Musicians can register, manage their repertoire, and review their payment history easily through the MROC online portal.

We have a knowledgeable and friendly staff there for assistance, from repertoire submission to completion of US tax forms (W8BEN, W8BEN-E, W9).

Musicians can receive secure payments through direct deposit.

Optional Benefits

MROC musicians can also participate in the governance of MROC. Musicians who earn \$500 or more from MROC in two consecutive years become eligible to nominate and elect a musician – even be elected – to MROC's board.

MROC musicians can also purchase exceptional instrument and equipment insurance from Intact Insurance, offered via CFM and HUB International.

Every MROC musician is eligible for a free consultation of up to 30 minutes from MROC's music and copyright lawyer to help you set a band partnership agreement.

To find out more about MROC and to sign up, please call us at 416-510-0279 or (toll free) 1-855-510-0279 or visit (www.musiciansrights.ca).

Leadership and Flow

by Gwen Klassen

Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra



What really spoke to me during the August 2018 OCSM conference was the OCSM lawyer's statement: In order to build trust between the different areas within the orchestral organization, the process must be clearly laid out and available to everyone. This is office management 101.

I am going to go further and suggest that we are being asked to use our musical training and executive skills to explore leadership in order to create a collaborative, compassionate, and kind hierarchy without compromising excellence in service to music and the community. As the former head of Human Resources for City Bank said to me, "We are all CEO's of our chair. We are the best equipped to know what we need in order to find the balance between form and flow."

The **principles** of leadership are simple, but not easy: *know yourself, your role, and the team.*

It is important to accept and know that everyone will have their own perspective and responsibilities, and that we are all capable, competent, and creative. At the same time, we need to recognize that there is a spectrum of capacity for this and that some may have an us-versus-them mindset.

We need to build the skills to gracefully pivot between a role-to-role conversation and a heart-to-heart conversation, discerning which one is appropriate at the time. This involves exploring and expanding our mental skills, emotional literacy, and creative intuition; and learning to listen deeply to ourselves and each other. Both/and. As musicians, don't we do that already?

The **tools**:

1. ABC's: Acceptance, Bravery, Curiosity
2. the three R's of Rest, Recovery and Resiliency
3. embracing the paradox of both/and
 - being *and* doing at the same time
 - alert *and* still at the same time
 - a clear foundation *and* creative freedom
 - knowing the rules *and* knowing when to break them

The main **resources** for this process are Dr. Brené Brown's *Dare to Lead*, Jamie Wheal's Flow Fundamentals course, and Kevin Cashman's *Leadership from the Inside Out*.

Leadership starts with us and with the courage to

explore authentic dialogue without an instrument in our hands. "Authentic dialogue" is defined by Dr. David Benner in his book *Presence and Encounter* as "the willingness to be changed by what we hear." It is when we seek to be present with what is – for me, you, and the situation.

When we are present, in the zone (flow), and listening deeply to each other while playing, we are attuned and creating a sense of belonging that is tangible to each other and the audience. We can take these exceptional skills and experiences and transfer them to dialogue with administration, board, association, and audience. It is a game changer.

This requires **courage** and **resiliency**: *My heart is racing, palms sweating, and I am going to do it anyway. I will be okay.* Both/and. These are the same mental skills necessary when performing.

It is a vulnerable process to inquire what may be going on for another person: there are no guarantees as to their response! Never mind the courage required to investigate one's own internal world! This is also the practice of **curiosity**: what am I thinking, feeling, sensing? What are they thinking, feeling, sensing? Discerning what is mine and what is not.

As we have well-established neuro grooves for language without words, nuance, communication, and executive skills, it will not require a degree to learn to speak the language of the non-musicians in our organization. It may be an act of kindness and inclusion to learn their language and what is important to them, and ultimately it creates a healthy, fluid work environment where we are all valued and aligned.

Acceptance, with compassion for ourselves and each other,

- of what it is to be human with all the chaos, cycles, spirals, and the occasional linear clarity of it all.
- of who we are, and how we hear and experience music.
- of how we judge when we are disappointed in ourselves and each other.
- of how we recover and bounce back as well as when we delight in the pure joy of what we hear.
- of how we love ourselves, music and each other.
- of what is in our control or power and what is not, without disconnecting.
- that it will suck sometimes and we will be okay.

Acceptance of our roles, responsibilities, and their limitations

As the Assistant Principal flute/piccolo of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, I fulfill many roles and my job requires that my relationship to "in tune tone, on time,

in time" is fluid between positions and instruments.

As a member of the CPO organization, I get to be on committees, show up to meetings, represent my colleagues, advocate for them, be of service, negotiate my own contract, *and* know I will receive push back, silence, shaming, be the subject of gossip, *and* I know I will be okay. I know that sometimes I will communicate in a kind, clear, compassionate way and sometimes I will not, which is a great moment for humility, recovery, and repair! Sometimes I will listen deeply and sometimes I will not. Both/and.

I will accept that there will be times when this does not feel good and the brain will make up some great stories about the feelings. The brain sends lovely chemicals when there is finally a story. Then the churning and fear stops and there is relief. Unfortunately, that is not what is needed for leadership. We are called to go deeper. It is precisely at that moment of fear that we leap, trusting our wings of resiliency.

Dr. Brené Brown calls the story we make up as "your shitty first draft." So I breathe and "sit in my discomfort" without denial, delay, or deceit. I trust in my wings of resiliency and the wisdom of my inner voice to know whether its time to speak, to act, to be silent with grace, or anything in between. This process usually involves chocolate! And I lean into my friends at the CPO who will listen without judgement, hug me, and kick my ass. I am deeply grateful for the long-time and recent friendships which have developed over these twenty-three years!

Resilience practice

There is quite a spectrum to one's capacity to bounce back. It is a gift, similar to the gift of musical talent. The great news is that resiliency can also be learned and is a practice. We musicians sure know how to practice!

Feedback is the foundation for building trust and feeling heard. My experience is that at times we have a mechanism in place, through the Collective Agreement, to provide that feedback to the administration, board, association, and colleagues, and sometimes we do not. Sometimes the feedback is welcome and sometimes the silence is deafening. This is the first step in creating a solid foundation within any organization, business, or in parenting. We need structure, predictability, and clarity. If that's not there, we will continue to seek it out (Maslow's hierarchy of needs); there is no way around it. And at the same time we need to be out of our comfort zone in order to tip into flow. Both/and.

Direct communication

Clear is kind. It does not defend or attack. It requires vulnerability, resiliency, and courage. "If you're brave

enough, often enough, you're gonna get your ass kicked," said Dr. Brené Brown. No way around it.

It is not the critic who counts; not the person who points out how the strong person stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the person who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends themselves in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if they fail, at least fails while daring greatly."

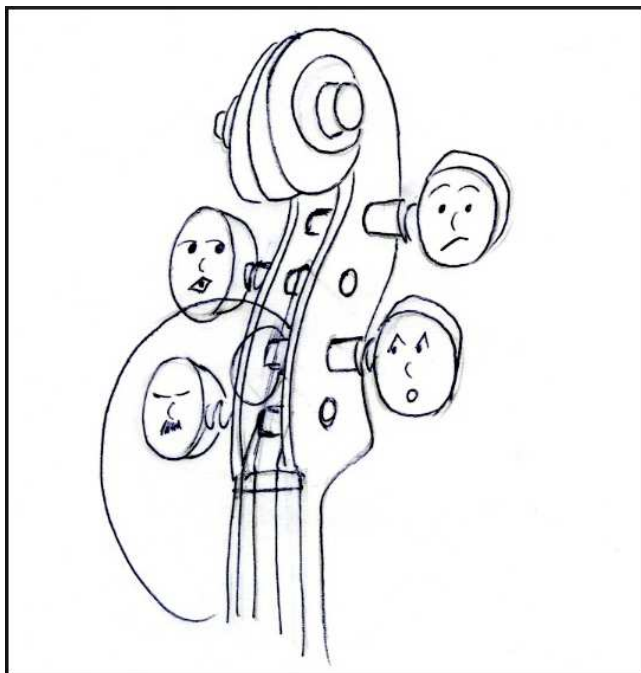
— Theodore Roosevelt, "The Man in the Arena," speech delivered in Paris, France, April 23, 1910

Is it time to dare to lead from every chair?

Patience is not sitting and waiting, it is foreseeing. It is looking at the thorn and seeing the rose, looking at the night and seeing the day. Know that the moon needs time to become full. — Rumi

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Gwen Klassen is the Founder and Director of the Pender Island Flute Retreat Inc. with William Bennett and Lorna McGhee (www.fluteretreat.com), Life & Music Coach, Assistant Principal Flute/Piccolo of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, and Sessional Flute Instructor at the University of Calgary.



"Looks like Fred's strung out again!"

— Graphic by Susan Sametz

LIVELab

The exploration of music and the brain

by the LIVELab Communications Team

Why do we spend so much time and resources on musical activities? This is one of the most basic questions that we are addressing in the LIVELab at McMaster University. The McMaster Institute for Music and the Mind is an interdisciplinary institute that brings together researchers from every discipline, musicians, media artists, engineers, medical professionals, and industry to study questions about the performance, perception, neural processing, and impact of music and other creative arts. Creative performance becomes a broad framework that helps researchers to understand not only specific questions related to the aesthetics and perception of artistic presentations, but also broader scientific questions associated with child development, aging, learning, cognition, brain function, and communication.

The Institute is led by Dr. Laurel Trainor, a renowned expert on child development and music cognition. Other members of the Institute's leadership team include Dr. Ian Bruce (Associate Director), an engineer who specializes in hearing loss and related assistive technologies; Dr. Dan Bosnyak (Technical Director), an engineer and behavioural neuroscientist who is an expert in auditory neuroscience and signal processing; and Dr. Ranil Sonnadara (Creative / Artistic Director), an expert in skill acquisition, sound design, music cognition, and auditory perception. Supporting this team, and the work of the institute, are a large cadre of technical staff, postdoctoral fellows, students, as well as scientific collaborators from every faculty at McMaster and from other institutions worldwide.



The nexus for this research agenda is the Large Interactive Virtual Environment Laboratory (LIVELab), presently the only facility of its kind in the world. The LIVELab is a 106-seat research space which allows for the simultaneous collection of all types of behavioural, electrophysiological, and physiological measurements from up to 106 people at a time. Real time physiological data such as EEG or heart rate, synchronized with data from other collection systems like motion capture, audio, or video recordings can be monitored and recorded from both performers and audience members simultaneously. This allows researchers both to collect individual data much more

quickly than would be possible in a traditional laboratory (a study which might take a month to run in a regular laboratory can be completed in a morning in the LIVE-Lab), and also to answer questions about how people respond to the presence of others in large group settings and in realistic performer/audience scenarios, something that is impossible in a traditional neuroscience laboratory where participants are studied individually.



Beyond the unique configuration of data acquisition systems, other technologies such as a large video wall, a highly flexible infrastructure, broadcast quality audio/video recording and motion capture systems, and a highly flexible active acoustics system let us configure the LIVElab for different types of studies very quickly. The LIVElab can transition from a concert hall to a lecture theatre to a movie theatre to a movement lab almost instantly.

One area of research in the LIVElab concerns how musicians in small ensembles coordinate. For example, we have shown that musicians continually predict (largely at a preconscious level) what their fellow musicians will do in terms of micro-timing, phrasing, dynamics, and articulation. In a paper published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*,¹ we used motion capture to analyze the body sway of musicians in string quartets (Afiara Quartet and Cecilia Quartet) when different musicians were assigned to lead the group. Mathematical predictive models showed that how one musician moved at one point in time predicted how the other musicians would move later, and that assigned leaders influenced other musicians more than vice versa. In a second paper published in the journal *Scientific Reports*,² we examined how musicians intuitively coordinate with one another during a performance to achieve a common emotional musical expression. For this study, each performer of a piano trio (Gryphon Trio) was fitted with motion capture markers to track their movements while they played happy or sad musical excerpts, once with musical expression and once without. We found that musicians predicted each others' movements across all musical excerpts to a greater extent when they played expressively, compared to when they played with no emotion. This novel technique for measuring communication of emotion between musicians can be applied to other situations, such as communication between non-verbal patients and their caregivers.



The Gryphon Trio

Another area of LIVElab research explores the effectiveness of new hearing aid algorithms. By the age of 60, almost 50% of people suffer from some kind of hearing loss. Hearing aids are a useful part of the solution, but they are often not optimized for musicians or for music listening. Thus, music listening can be a frustrating experience for hearing aid users. The LIVElab is currently working to solve this problem in conjunction with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra (HPO). During an HPO concert in the spring of 2019, LIVElab scientists and our industrial partners will evaluate a new way of delivering sound directly to participants' hearing aids to enhance the sounds they hear through the air. We are hopeful that such technologies can increase enjoyment at live music events for those with hearing loss, and contribute to alleviating the social isolation that can result from hearing loss.

Although the Institute's primary focus centres on the intersection of music and neuroscience, the research agenda is in practice far broader, driven by the interests of our key collaborators. Other research projects include using rhythm to help children with Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD); understanding social performance anxiety; using machine learning to improve processing of electroencephalographic signals; creating models of neural processing of music; developing brain-computer interfaces; understanding neural correlates of mind wandering; the acquisition of complex skills; understanding how music can ameliorate cognitive decline; and even clinical studies of drug efficacy. Several research projects involve partnerships with industry, including studies which have explored audience reactions to new musical releases; see

livelab.mcmaster.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07

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For more information about the LIVElab, please visit livelab.mcmaster.ca and for the McMaster Institute for Music and the Mind, please visit mimm.mcmaster.ca.

1 www.pnas.org/content/pnas/114/21/E4134.full.pdf

2 www.nature.com/articles/s41598-018-36358-4

My Interview with Andrei New KWS Music Director: Young, but with an old soul

by Larry Larson

Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony

photos by Ben Lariviere

LARRY LARSON: Andrei, you started as a young violinist in Romania, and then moved to Montreal with your family when you were thirteen. How did you go from becoming a violinist to wanting to become a conductor?



Andrei Feher

ANDREI FEHER: A lot of people have wanted to become conductors so badly since they were kids. You know, “I want to do that.” It wasn’t like that for me, because I didn’t even like music that much. I was just doing it because my parents were efficient, especially my father and my grandmother. Actually I think I was curious

enough about music in general that I just listened to all sorts of things. All the Bruckners and Mahlers and all that stuff that nobody does except some curious friends who are just into it and so passionate about it.

I had a friend about my age with me and we were just exchanging versions of the Bruckner Seventh Symphony. We had twenty versions – Giulini, Barenboim, Karajan, and so on. I would start to open a score and see what’s in there. The first time I thought, “This is Chinese to me, nothing makes any sense. You turn pages every three seconds.” But then I just listened and listened and then I felt, oh, I love this. In school I made some teachers angry because I was so annoying: “Can I do that, can I do that?”

At some point I got to conduct a string ensemble because the teacher wasn’t there and they knew that I could. That was the beginning. I was 15 or 16. Then I felt, “Ah, this is interesting.” I continued on and did violin and conducting at the same time at the conservatory.

LL: Was there any one score that really sparked your interest?

AF: My father was playing double bass in an orchestra and I attended the concerts every Thursday, starting when I was six. Well, I never listened, really, because I didn’t want to. I was just there with different friends from school. But at some point I heard Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony -that second movement. I was probably eight. I still remember how special that was – wow, like everything stops.

LL: I’ve already had a couple of those moments with you conducting on our stage. You made a very immediate connection with us as KWS musicians when you first conducted us, and I’m just wondering if that had anything to do with you being a protégé of Raffi Armenian, our former Music Director.

AF: Actually, I had that question once from CBC. Did that help me in any way? Yes and no, because everybody knows Raffi’s involvement in this orchestra, but it’s such a long time ago and so many things have happened since then, with many new musicians who didn’t know Raffi.



Larry Larson

LL: I was the last person he hired. That was 26 years ago.

AF: For me it was a special connection because I heard from his stories about this place and this orchestra, about the wonderful hall – but you don’t know before you actually hear it. Oh, it’s good.

Something in the DNA of this orchestra means that they don’t take that conductor “in-

spiration” and “let’s try that” bullshit. You have to know what you’re doing. And if people feel that it’s not well-thought out, it’s just “let’s try this because it’s fun.”

One thing I remember from our first rehearsal: I told that story about Nijinsky and Debussy and the faun, and he was – yeah. And one second before I said that I wondered, oh, maybe I shouldn’t because they don’t know me, I don’t know them. But then I have to be myself, I cannot play a game. I have to get the music done as well as I can with the people I have in front of me. So then I felt so comfortable because I felt OK, I can say anything and they will laugh. The rehearsals were fine for me but I think the evolution throughout the week was what I really liked.

I often say that the first concert must be interesting and good but if we do the same concert again, I try to do something different. For our second concert I opened some door and everybody got through that door and it was just so much more special.

LL: My feeling from that first week is that you were as honest with us then as you are now. What we saw that week was you, which is so refreshing because so many conductors will come in, especially if they’re on trial, and be someone that they’re not in order to impress. You, from the very beginning, were just you. That freshness and honesty always, week after week, is great.

AF: You have to be involved and going somewhere musically technically, artistically – the whole thing.

LL: Let’s move on to Yannick Nézet-Séguin, who has

conducted here. We were lucky enough to see him four times. The first time, he was your age when you first came here. I remember seeing this young, passionate genius on the stage who could get anything out of us. Then fast-forward twenty years and you arrive and, I'm dead serious, that first week I saw the same spark and genius that we saw in Yannick. We were so lucky to have the opportunity to bring you here because of your association with Yannick. What was it about him and his tutelage that was so special to you?

AF: I wrote to him in 2007 or 2008. He was very young then and becoming a big thing. He answered, "it would be a pleasure to meet you after a concert."

I went to hear Bruckner's Ninth Symphony. I'm a very shy person but I just wanted to speak with him, because he's so passionate about what he's doing. And he said, "You can come to any rehearsal you want." So even today I go whenever I can. It's always good, because even though Yannick is still young for a conductor, he has almost twenty years of experience.

I learned a lot from his way of working with people, and his way of getting things without controlling too much. And just being respectful to your musicians.

LL: We see both of those qualities with you: not controlling too much and your respect for us.

AF: There are some conductors who are controlling everything and they don't let go. The frame is too small. What I saw with Yannick is there's a frame, a clear one, but it's a bigger one, so you have more space to spread and try things.

LL: The last time he was here we did Franck's D Minor Symphony, which I've always hated, because it's always played like a big band piece.

AF: And it's fat!

LL: The very first rehearsal, before we played a note, he said, "Franck was an organist. I'm an organist. You are my instrument. I will play this symphony." And it was all of a sudden magic. It made sense.

AF: And he has a way to refresh things. Yannick was conducting Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony in Philadelphia for his debut with them and the flute player said, "Oh, not Tchaik Six again." But something happened, and he discovered a new piece.

LL: Your time in Paris sounds like it was a different experience than your mentoring under Yannick.

AF: People talk about Yannick a lot but one person who helped me in my career and my moving to Paris was Fabian Gabel, the Music Director of l'Orchestre Symphonie de Québec where I was Assistant for two years. He told me, "There might be an audition in Paris and you should do it." I found out two weeks before the au-

dition that I was invited. We were twelve or thirteen candidates. The first part of the rehearsal was the first three minutes of the Egmont Overture. Then there were five of us left, and for the second part of the rehearsal we did the scherzo from Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra -which is not hard, but you have to know how to beat it. Then Sibelius' Fifth Symphony, last movement. And then we were two, and I got it.

What happened after was life-changing because l'Orchestre de Paris is one of the biggest and greatest orchestras in Europe. They tour a lot, they have Paavo Järvi there, they had Daniel Harding, they had Karajan for two years, Barenboim, and Münch, who started it.

The whole experience was crazy for me because I met someone in the orchestra who knew everybody in every orchestra. So once or twice a week there were concerts. In two days it's London Philharmonic or London Symphony, then the next week it's Concertgebouw, and Bayerische Radio Orchestra, or Berlin.

And then I realized what German sound means, what French means, what Russian means. Paavo Järvi has an amazing tradition with Russian music. His father was very close to Shostakovich. I once had a small concert in Prague, spending five days there, and then I understood Dvorak's music. But you have to go there – it's in the air. It's in the green and trees.

LL: Tommy Kay, our beloved principal flute, and I were on the committee that selected you two years ago. At the announcement he said, "He is young but with an old soul." Do you ever feel disadvantaged by how young you are?

AF: It feels now that I didn't have any real experience then. But three years from now I'll feel the same about where I am now. So I just try to prepare as much as possible, to have something clear, and to know exactly where I'm going and what I need to say, and how to show it with gestures.

In a way I'm a very spiritual person so I believe that some of this comes from somewhere so far away, in a different life. That's why when he said "you're an old soul," I realized that this might be true. I believe that somehow I've lived different lives. There's some calm feeling: "I know where I'm going." So maybe that's what he meant.

LL: We see in your concerts from night to night, when you're free enough and you have the confidence and trust in us and we in you, we're going to see something different with the stick. We're not going to see the same thing.

AF: Yes, it's an exercise and just stretching the limits. In January I was in Norway and I did eight 45-minute educational concerts with the same repertoire. We did the

last movement of Tchaikovsky's First Symphony eight times. Around the third concert I started changing things in the speeds and by the sixth one I was just playing yo-yo with the tempo. I told them after one concert, this was the fastest version possible. But they liked it, because I didn't do it right away. I just tried to slowly stretch the limits and see that I have everybody on board, and then okay, good, now we can move because, can you imagine playing the same thing eight times the same way? It was a very hard exercise, but very useful.

LL: That goes for the preparation that we see for all of your Signature concerts with us. There are pieces that I often feel I never have to play again: Brahms's Second Symphony, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. You play a career-full of those, and what is this conductor going to bring that's so different? Well, in both those instances they were – to say "life-changing" is a little heavy – but there were moments when I cried on stage.

At the very first rehearsal with us, we always know that there's never a doubt. You always know what the outline is going to be, the road map, how we're going to go about it. How long a process is that for you?

AF: Usually I start months before, just analyzing and reading anything about the piece and the composer. And then I put it aside, and come back to it three weeks before coming here.

LL: Well, that was one thing in Beethoven's Ninth for instance. I thought, I never need to play this piece again because it's often cookie cutter, same thing. But in rehearsals we knew that you had delved really deeply into the piece and Beethoven's life. We heard reflections from Beethoven's own letters and what specific things meant. I had never heard that in my forty-year career! Then to have that new insight made all the difference in the world for us musicians.

The same thing with Brahms's Second. This speaks very well to the idea that different nights can be different things. On the second night, in the last movement, just before the woodwinds have that beautiful Mahler One quote, you took a hair's breath extra time before you started that, and I literally burst into tears on stage. I had to come in with this very soft G, easiest note to hit, and [wimpering]. It's moments like that where there was that feeling of trust with you and you with us that just brought a magical moment that I know so many of us felt.

AF: You see some people make these tiny two-bar phrases and just phrase it because they feel like it. But can you imagine a whole symphony that goes in one direction to one key point. It's all about tension and release. But there's one moment you need to know exactly: this is the moment. Then you can take a little more time than usual, and it's even more special.

Of course it's very hard since I'm doing most of the pieces for the first time. So it's all preparation, but it's in the moment that it happens. Then you realize, "Okay. I'm just stupid and just trying to do my own thing and it's not going to work." That's when you have to respect everything that the composer put down on paper. So I just need to be intelligent enough that, hey, this isn't working but something else could work.

It's not weakness, but the first time doing something is so hard. You don't have the confidence of having done it before and knowing how it goes.

LL: If you feel it's a weakness, we're not collectively feeling it's a weakness. Because, you may have doubt in your head, but we never sense there's any doubt in what you're doing. Even if something doesn't go well, your reaction is, "Okay, well let's try this." Like instantly. Confidently. It's not a weakness. We feel that in the orchestra. Otherwise we wouldn't go with you like we do.

AF: You have to be confident enough at the right moment. You have keep your doubts to the time off the podium. When you're on the podium, it's just – boom. You know exactly where you're going and then you think, I'm not sure about that, but I have to stick with it until the end of the performance.

There's a saying in French : *The bad things well done are better than bad things almost done.* Do it right. If you do it bad, just do it.

I'm at that point in my work here where I have to be clear about where we are going and I need to try to get things progressing. Now I know people better, I know how things are going, and I know what I want to do. I cannot just do the music, be nice, and say, "That's okay." It has to move on and people need to feel that we're going in one direction.

LL: We just launched our new season for 2019–2020 and it's very clear that you're putting your stamp on our orchestra and our community, and that's wonderful.

AF: My idea is to present new music and great but unfamiliar music from the Romantic period. Everything I've programmed is good and interesting and makes sense – entirely.

We're starting to work on the 2020–2021 season. It's our 75th and 40th of the hall. I believe that it could be great. Not just good. Really interesting for everybody.

LL: Good. I'll stick around.

AF: Oh yes, Please stay. I need you. At least for this weekend.

* * *

For the full transcript of this interview, contact Barbara Hankins at bhankins@gto.net.

Announcing the 2019 OCSM Conference

ocsm Executive

Our 44th Annual Conference will be held August 12 to 16 at the Sheraton Hotel in Hamilton, Ontario. OCSM members are welcome to attend any of the open sessions from Tuesday, August 13, at 9 a.m. through adjournment on Friday, August 16, at 1 p.m.

All twenty-one OCSM orchestras are invited to send Delegates for the full conference. AFM/CFM officials, Symphonic Services Division staff, and representatives from the Symphonic Services Division, Musicians' Pension Fund of Canada, and other special guests will also attend. The agenda will include a variety of presentations, workshops, and topics for general discussion and legislation.

The hotel is located at 116 King Street West in downtown Hamilton. Reservations are available online and by phone at 1-888-627-8161; mention OCSM for a discounted rate. More information and a registration link will be posted on OCSM's website (ocsm-omosc.org). Please register at that link for the most updated agenda and arrival information.

Many thanks to our Host Local, Hamilton Musicians' Guild, CFM Local 293. We hope to see many members in Hamilton in August!

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Please make inquiries to editor@ocsm-omosc.org.

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