



Fifteen Minutes of Fame: Piano Pinnacle

Piano Pinnacle has established itself as a leading new piano duo ensemble in Canada. Its performances have been hailed as a “true tour de force[...],” and “an absolute delight” (Musetta Stone). Piano Pinnacle won Second Prizes at the United States International Duo Piano Competition (USIDPC), and at the International Northwest Piano Ensemble Competition (NWIPEC), and has twice attained the Audience Choice award at the latter. The duo’s performances have been heard across Europe and North America, in cities such as Paris, Chicago, Toronto, Seattle, Oslo, Colorado Springs, and Vancouver. Piano Pinnacle is dedicated to rejuvenating the piano duo genre, by presenting an eclectic mix of old and new repertoire with “a passion that could only be achieved by years of patience[...].” (The Other Press). The ensemble aspires to promote and nurture the development of new music, and has so far inspired and premiered a dozen original Canadian compositions for two pianos.

Pianist Deborah Grimmett’s performances have been heard throughout Canada and Europe in major concert halls such as Auditorium Santa Croce (Italy), Norges Musikkhøgskole (Norway), Espace Carpeaux (France), Ganz Hall, and Sherman Clay Steinway Hall (US), Centennial Theatre, and The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts (Canada). She was a prizewinner in both the Vancouver Academy Provincial Senior Secondary Competition, and the BC Piano Competition.

Iman Habibi has successfully established his career as a composer as well as a pianist. He is recognized by critics as a “confident player,” (Prince George Citizen) and a “giant in talent” (The Penticton Herald). His compositions have been programmed by many prestigious concert organizations such as The Marilyn Horne Foundation (New York), The Canadian Opera Company (Toronto), Tapestry New Opera (Toronto), Atlantic Music Festival (Maine), the BCScene Festival (Ottawa), The Sonic Boom Festival, and the Powell Street Festival (Vancouver). He has received numerous awards including the International Composers’ Award at the Esoterics’ POLYPHONOS competition (2012), the First Prize at SOCAN Foundations Awards for Young AV Composers (for two consecutive years), the Mayor’s Arts Awards as well as others.

Vieux-Quebec

Rodrigo Baggio is a guitarist and composer from São Paulo, Brazil. His music has been performed in many cities around the world such as São Paulo (Brazil), Paris (France), Quebec (Canada), Bremen (Germany), London (England), Bucharest (Romania), Vermont, New York and Washington DC (USA). As a performer, he has played concerts in different countries of the globe. In 2012, during my first trip to Quebec to play a concert at Université Laval, I've visited the neighbourhood of Vieux-Quebec. The astonishing landscape provided me beautiful historical, social and cultural memories. Therefore, according with the theme of the call, I composed this miniature... utilizing a part of those memories.

dancing Leaves in the wind

Miriam Berardi trained at Conservatory of Music "Santa Cecilia" in Rome (Italy) and then at Conservatory "A. Casella" in L'Aquila. She is graduated as a composer and as a pianist. Lately she is focusing on chamber music, mainly in the repertoire of 19th and 20th centuries. I wrote this little piano piece imagining the wild and boundless canadian forests crossed by the wind: gentle and full of scents in spring, impetuous in summer, strong and cold in autumn when the snow promises and leaves die.

Bells of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré

David Bohn received degrees in composition from the University of Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and the University of Illinois. He currently resides in West Allis, Wisconsin, and is the music director at St. John's Lutheran Church in West Milwaukee. He is the President of the Wisconsin Alliance for Composers. A memento mori of the bells of the old Basilica Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, destroyed by fire in 1922.

Duck, Duck, Goose

Soo Jin Cho (b.1977, Seoul, Korea) holds a BM in music composition from Yonsei University in Korea, Master's and Doctorate degrees in composition at Florida State University. Her two piano piece, Exodus was selected for the 2010 Society of Composer's CD series. She currently resides in Timonium Maryland. This piece, akin to a painting, expresses the sight of Claire and Kayden, my little ones, running around Canadian geese near the Loch Raven Reservoir. My children's laughter, the sporadic and boisterous voice of the birds, and the sound of serene water... The wind was expressed by considering its idiosyncratic rhythm and color.

Paddling Northern Rivers

Ruth Watson Henderson has an international reputation as one of Canada's leading composers and as an admired pianist and organist. She is known especially as a composer of choral works, using the expertise gleaned over many years as accompanist of the Toronto Children's Chorus under Jean Ashworth Bartle, and accompanist of the Festival Singers under Dr. Elmer Iseler. This piece describes the way water swirls around a canoe when one is paddling on rivers and lakes in Canada. It gave me a chance to explore the different sounds one can produce on the strings inside a grand piano in contrast to the music played on the keyboard of the other piano.

Dextre

Alison Ireland is an Australian composer and pianist who is currently enrolled part-time in the Master of Music (Composition) course at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, where she also graduated with a Bachelor of Music (Honours first class). 'Dextre' is one of Canada's contributions to the International Space Station - a robotic handyman, or 'Special Purpose Dexterous Manipulator', that performs maintenance and repairs, and reduces the need for dangerous space-walks. In this piece, the pianos represent Dextre and the ISS. Dextre approaches, they lock together, then Dextre withdraws, each now different in configuration, imitating a repair job - such as the replacement of a circuit-breaker box.

Northern Light

A native of the Seattle area, composer Nathan R. Johnson (b. 1982) writes music that is inspired by diverse sources such as folk music, astronomy, literature, and the nature of the Pacific Northwest. His music has been performed in the United States, Canada, and Russia. Colors and harmonies blend together, gently dancing and swirling, mimicking the Aurora Borealis.

49th parallel

My objective as a composer is to create music that evokes feelings, thoughts and ideas that can be experienced on the most personal level of every listener. In the light of the 21st century, I open myself to all forms and mediums for the creation and experience of music. One summer, I camped out on Lake Ontario in New York. I stood at the edge of the Lake with an outrageous thought, "I want to swim across this lake into Canada". This memory was the driving force behind for this piece; Separated by a border, the 49th parallel.

Maple Breeze for Two Pianos

Shao Suan LOW is a Singaporean pianist-composer-songwriter. A graduate of the École Normale de Musique de Paris, she has performed as soloist numerous times with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. Her compositions have won awards at online music competitions, and her songs have been sung by Asian pop singers. Maple Breeze is a relaxing New Age piece for two pianos. It depicts falling maple leaves in autumn, dancing in the breeze. This piece, in no fixed form, begins and ends with a four-bar introduction and codetta. The key modulates between G major, F major and C major.

RED

Zack Merritt - (muZack_) My work is as simple as you think it is. I like curries, knitting, and kittens (though not combined). Sitting against the window with tomato soup. A spoonful in my mouth taste of goldfish crackers. Some of it splashes to the ground.

Roger's Hill

William Murray is a clinical psychologist with a private practice in Brooklyn, NY. A life-long amateur musician, William has recently begun studying composition with Douglas Gibson. The Murray homestead on Roger's Hill sits above Pictou Harbour, Nova Scotia, Canada. The source material for my composition is a pair of waltzes written with "the Hill" in mind. My father's cousin, Edna Peppard, wrote one a couple of generations ago; I wrote the other last spring, on the occasion of my father's death.

Pinnacle Miniature

Giorgos Papamitrou graduated in guitar and in composition. He has attended several seminars on electronic music and on music for media. He is working as a guitar teacher in Athens and as a computer teacher at schools. His works have been played in Concerts for Young Composers. Pinnacle miniature sounds like a upward ladder leading to a pinnacle.

too long-

Farshid Samandari's music reflects his interest in contemporary classical vocabulary, spectral analysis, and extended techniques. His profound faith in unity in diversity stirred him to utilize different elements from a variety of non-western musics in his compositions. He is currently serving as the composer-in-residence for the Vancouver Intercultural Orchestra. too long is a depiction of the Canadian cultural mosaic in the context of its untouched vast nature. While one piano plays a bi-tonal ever-changing, etude-like arpeggios, the other plays bi-modal and through-composed melodic lines occasionally peppered with counterpoint.

back in Montreal, Ginger was a baker

Joaquín Mendoza Sebastián (Caracas, 1980), composer and multimedia artist. www.joaquinmendoza.net Throughout his music and sound work, he has explored the close (sometimes not so apparent) relationship between post WWII avant-garde and popular music, with works ranging from abstract sound objects to experimental pop. I think I'm becoming addicted to write little punk miniatures, they come and go fast, but you can't keep away from thinking "hey!...play it again!", for some strange reason, while I was writing this piece, I could not take out of my mind the Expos' logo, weird...enjoy the ride!

Valse Montrealaise

Christopher M. Wicks holds a MM in composition from the University of Montreal, and is a Fellow of the American Guild of Organists. He is the organist and choir accompanist at Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Salem, Oregon. After two years of life in Montreality, I found it difficult to readjust to the earnestness and literalism of life in the USA. My "Valse Montrealaise" is dedicated to Piano Pinnacle, but also to all who are dancing on, into the French Canadian night.

Rodrigo Baggio

Miriam Berardi

David Bohn

Soo Jin Cho

Ruth Watson Henderson

Alison Ireland

Nathan R. Johnson

Adam Kennaugh

Shao Suan LOW

Zack Merritt

William Murray

Giorgos Papamitrou

Farshid Samandari

Joaquín Mendoza Sebastián

Christopher M. Wicks

