PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

This newsletter reflects the contributions of many enthusiastic members in a period where there is certainly no shortage of activities. I am delighted to see the varied content; take your time reading our newsletter, there is much to discover and learn - thanks to all our generous contributors.

The Association is still one of only a few members, with real potential to grow. We hope you will take advantage and broadcast your news and interests, and share with the Board your willingness to develop activities and partnerships that are of value to all of us. Help us realize the fuller ASA potential by joining today and encouraging colleagues and students to do the same!

The health of our Albertan string community requires attention and renewed action, now and for the future. Many issues have impacted string education in Alberta in recent years - perhaps some that affected you directly. The ASA can help solve some of these issues, and committed members can help change directions and influence decisions.

The ASA also wants to recognize the long-standing contributors, teachers, and promoters of string activities in Alberta. Time to grow, time to join! Do write to us from time to time - small gestures will go a long way. We thank Isis Tse for her dedicated work as Executive Assistant (now moving on to other studies), and Tyson Oatway and Blake Simpson for their service as directors. The Board will at the AGM be accepting nominations for new directors; we look forward to hearing from you!

Best regards,
Guillaume Tardif
FROM ASA BOARD MEMBER CRISTIAN NEACSU

One of the newer members of Alberta String Association, I moved to Canada in September 2013 to work at Canadian University College, a relatively small Christian Seventh-day Adventist institution in Lacombe central Alberta. At CUC my responsibilities include directing the university orchestra, teaching violin lessons and some classroom teaching. Lacombe is situated about an hour south of Edmonton and a half hour north of Red Deer.

While many might not have heard of it this place is nothing short of a vibrant musical community. The university has a large choir, an orchestra and there are two other smaller community orchestras for children.

The university orchestra, which is a project that dates back to 2005, started with six string members and over the years it grew to include about thirty combined strings, winds and brass members mostly CUC students with some community joining. The orchestra performs regularly on campus and Red Deer area, and has been touring once every year through Canada and the US.

The Choir is made up of about a hundred members mostly students of CUC joined by interested members from the community. It has toured extensively not only in Canada and US, but to Asia, South America and Europe.

The Lacombe and District Music Festival Association is a member of the Alberta Music Festival Association which promotes musical education and enables local young musicians to compete for awards, trophies and scholarships at the local, provincial and national levels.

SUNDAY at SEVEN is the professional concert series on campus bringing renowned classical and folk/world musicians from Canada, the US and Europe to the CUC campus. Some of the soloists and ensembles featured are Gryphon Trio, Ensemble Caprice, Cecilia String Quartet, Denise Djokie, Guy Few & Nadina Mackie Jackson, Angèle Dubeau and La Pieta.

For more information and an up-to-date schedule of events please visit us online at http://www.burmanu.ca/music.
CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF TANYA PROCHAZKA

The life of Professor Tanya Prochazka (1952-2015) was celebrated at a concert held at Convocation Hall, University of Alberta, on October 10th, 2015. The ASA is indebted to Tanya for her many contributions as a board member over the years. Here are some portraits of the many musicians who gathered that evening for this moving tribute to a great lady of the cello.

For more information on Tanya’s many contributions visit https://uofa.ualberta.ca/music/about-us/news/2015/october/remembering-cellist-tanya-prochazka
NEWS FROM GAELEEN RATTÉ, ASA MEMBER

Cameron (left) plays violin, piano and viola

Emma (right) studies violin

Chantal (left) studies violin, cello and piano

Beth (right) studies violin

We are always blessed with a wide variety of music in our home. December 2014 was a whirlwind of local opportunities to share music with the communities of Irma, Viking and Wainwright at various community events, lodges, and long term care facilities. Then we joined the Viking Fiddle Festival in February, which draws fiddlers from all over the province to play at this annual fundraiser for the Viking Ladies Auxiliary. It was a sad year without Vegreville’s Heather Solden who was killed in a vehicle accident late in 2014. She was an inspired fiddle teacher with a strong commitment to children’s musical education, and especially group playing, that is heavily missed. March 2015 was a busy month for us with another fundraiser for World Vision in Wainwright, quartet performance at a wine and cheese party for the Vermilion Allied Arts Council – with free admission to a show by Tomáš Kubínek afterwards! - and the many successful presentations at the Coronation Music Festival, the Vermilion Music Festival, the Camrose Music Festival, and at the Edmonton Kiwanis as part of Mathias Silveira’s Intermediate Orchestra. Cameron, Emma and Chantal attended the SaltSpring Chamber Music Festival during the summer. The Edmonton Legislature is welcoming our young musicians on December 10th at 12 pm for Celebrate the Season, at the invitation of Mr. Richard Starke, MLA for Lloydminster-Vermilion.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GUITAR

by Tyson Oatway

The Renaissance (or Four-Course) Guitar

The guitar is perhaps one of the most recognizable instruments in the world. Its characteristic shape can be easily identified regardless of whether it is an electric, steel string acoustic, or a classic guitar. However, the earliest predecessor to the guitar appeared quite different, more akin to the ukulele than its modern counterpart, this instrument is known as the Renaissance guitar, or the four-course guitar. By the early sixteenth century the Renaissance guitar began to make an appearance in literature and art and most likely originated during the fifteenth century in Spain. “According to documentary evidence, including contemporaneous sources of music for the instrument, the typical sixteenth-century guitar was a small, figure-8-shaped, four course, treble range instrument, tuned a fourth or more higher and about one-third the size of a modern Classical guitar” (Tyler and Sparks, 2002, 3). This guitar also had ten frets that were made of tied gut and required the performer to adjust them for optimal placement. Often the four-
course guitar would be strung with four courses of paired strings. There was no standardized way for the tuning and stringing of the Renaissance guitar and these aspects were often variable according to region, tradition, and performer.

The stringing the four-course guitar usually consisted of sets of paired strings for all four courses, although sometimes a single string would be used for first course. This single string, also known as a chanterelle is specified. The purpose of using a chanterelle would be to provide more clarity to the upper voice, to let it ‘sing’ the melody. A bourdon string, a thicker gut bass string, was sometimes used for the fourth course to thicken the sound and provide more presence to the bass notes of the four-course guitar. The tuning of each course is in unison with the exception of the fourth course which is tuned to an octave. However, the tuning of the fourth course did vary. Some composers advocated for the use of re-entrant tuning, where the fourth course would be tuned an octave higher in unison. There are different tonal qualities that result from the use of either tuning. The octave tuning of the fourth course imparted a specific timbre to the four-course guitar that resembles some tonal features of the lute and vihuela, while lacking in the depth of physical resources the latter two instruments possessed. The use of re-entrant tuning imparted a timbre unique to the guitar, which focussed on the melodic and treble range of the guitar, a sound that would continue to be heard in the next iteration of the guitar.

The guitar during the sixteenth century faced stiff competition from the lute and vihuela. Both the lute and vihuela were considered courtly instruments fit for the upper echelons of society, whereas the guitar was considered to be an instrument of the people. The Renaissance guitar gained ground through the middle of the sixteenth century, drew more public interest in learning this instrument. After 1550, there was a steady increase in publications that focused on music and methods for the four-course guitar. This is reflective of the growing popularity of the guitar and the demand for new music and methods. In 1556, an anonymous author of La maniére de bien et justement, entoucher les lucs et guiternes charts the growing interest in the guitar, “In my earliest years we used to play the lute more than the guitar, but for twelve or fifteen years now everyone has been guitaring; the lute is almost forgotten for goodness knows what kind of music on the guitar which is much easier to play than the lute” (Wade 1980, 53-54).

Perhaps the less demanding nature of the four-course guitar attracted more beginners compared to the more complicated nature of the lute. Simon Gorlier (1550-84), a publisher of guitar intabulations and an amateur composer, describes and defends against criticism he faced concerning the time and effort he spent preparing music for his publications, “because some people might think that such a small instrument, I mean ‘small’ in both senses, hardly deserves such trouble as I have spent” (Tyler and Sparks 2002, 13). By small, Gorlier refers both to the size of the instrument and the size of the sound of the instrument. Despite these limitations of the four-course guitar, public demand soared. Spanish composers, Alonso Mudarra and Miguel Fuenllana in their treatises and collections of music for the vihuela included music written specifically for the four-course guitar. Although there was public demand for music to play on the four-course guitar as indicative of its popularity among the masses, this was not always the case for the aristocratic courts across Europe.

In the Italian and Spanish courts, the lute and vihuela were the instruments of choice but in the royal court of France, the Renaissance guitar was preferred. The king of France, Henri II favoured the four-course guitar which would have ensured the spread of interest in the guitar not only among the public but throughout the aristocratic courts of France. The four course guitar took root in France around 1548, perhaps because “its culture there may have been directly due to the experiences of Henri II who spent many years in Spain as a hostage” (Wade 1980, 53) which he was exposed to the guitar and perhaps during that time learned the guitar himself. The king’s interest in the guitar led him to grant publishing
privileges to the court composer and performer of lute and guitar, Adrian Le Roy and his cousin Robert Ballard (Tyler and Sparks 2002, Turnbull 1974). Although, it should be noted that royal interest in an instrument did not guarantee general public interest in the instrument, as can be seen in Spain where the vihuela was the courtly instrument and the guitar the instrument of the people. There is an extensive record of the guitar’s popularity in everyday society in Spain and very little in known about the vihuela’s life outside the court. This separation was maintained by the low opinion of the guitar in the minds of the aristocracy who considered the guitar to be of a base nature suitable to those of the lower class (Gasser 1997), a distinction that was not shared in France.

The Renaissance guitar survived well into the seventeenth century, it was joined by the five-course Baroque guitar in the mid-sixteenth century and for a time both instruments existed contemporaneously. Eventually the four-course guitar was overshadowed and phased out by the increased capabilities of the five-course guitar which was gaining in popularity near the end of the sixteenth century. This led to the disappearance of the four-course guitar in Europe. However, the four-course guitar, along with the vihuela was transplanted to South America by the Spanish explorers and maintained popular use. Even today modified forms of these instruments can be seen in use by folk musicians in South America long after the disappearance of these instruments in Europe. “The little four-course, as an early prototype of a larger instrument, gave birth to the five-course Baroque guitar, and its survival among the Spanish people of the sixteenth century transcends in time the higher aspirations of the vihuela and lute traditions” (Wade 1980, 55). The days of the four-course guitar came to a close in the late sixteenth century and finally made way for the five-course guitar to emerge.

CHAMBER ENSEMBLES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

By Jake Saito & Alline Cormier

Our family was doubly fortunate to have Dr. Guillaume Tardif and Professor Yue Deng teach chamber ensemble to students registered in the Music Enrichment Program because we have two children, and they both took advantage of this wonderful opportunity. We thought it was good for the children to play in a smaller setting than an orchestra because they all had an important part to play and couldn’t simply coast along (i.e. hiding in back rows). We also appreciated Dr. Tardif’s little music history lessons. Our children found the ensembles fun and thought it was a good experience. Laura Ehrkamp writes: “We have noticed Simon’s playing (left) has really improved and he is enjoying his time with the chamber group.”

By Teresa Lank, parent of a cello student

The Chamber Music Ensembles Program, offered for the first time this year to students of Music Enrichment Program, was a tremendous success. These young string players had the amazing opportunity of developing technique from professional musicians, connecting with other string students and acquiring new skills resulting in an experience of a lifetime. Parents and students had the opportunity to learn about the Baroque composer, Jean-Marie Leclair and about chamber music. All were delightfully entertained by the trio groups at their final concert.
HOW PARENTS CAN ENRICH THEIR CHILD’S MUSIC EDUCATION, PART 1

By Wayne Toews

A quality music education consists of a variety of rich experiences that are appropriately timed. Parental support is needed while their child builds self-confidence. That support can take many forms as outlined below.

Provide opportunities for performance.

Musicians share their music through performances, but, to make the experience fulfilling, it takes courage and the learned ability to face the risk of failure. Young musicians need the opportunity to have a rewarding experience when sharing their music with others. Negative comments made by family members while the child is practicing can be devastating. The study of music involves developing the ability to criticize one’s own work and that ability can inhibit young players if it’s not managed properly. Parents need to understand how to help their child prepare for performances so that nervousness doesn’t ruin all the effort and make the child want to quit. Teaching the child to take slow, deep breaths to flush out tension and then giving them the chance to practice the technique consistently is of utmost importance.

The solo repertoire for the concert should be well within the ability of the performer to perform with few or no blatant errors. The input of the teacher is necessary and invaluable. The pieces can be chosen from studies and songs that the student has been studying. The best choices are those that are appropriate and accessible to the particular audience. Short, attractive pieces are good choices.

- Give private house-concerts, where the audience consists only of supportive and positive people, so that young musicians have the opportunity to perform in a safe, supportive atmosphere. The concerts need not be long. The guests need to know that complete attention and only positive comments are the price of admission.
- Make a private recording as a gift for friends and family. The young musician needs to understand that a best effort is required, but imposing time restraints and expecting perfection in a single session will likely create a bad experience. Great focus and a sustained effort are needed to produce a good recording. It is best if the player knows, before beginning, that the recording can involve unlimited re-takes and the possibility to record over several sessions. This is a powerful learning experience if handled appropriately. The young musician needs to know that the recording is a special gift that no one else can provide. It’s helpful too if the recipient knows how to give appropriate thanks for the gift.
- Join in family music making. Young musicians should learn to play, by ear, songs such as “Happy Birthday”, the national anthem and other pieces such as those used religious observances. That will allow them to make a unique contribution to the performance.
- Perform in a retirement home, hospital, church function, community or charitable event. The audiences at such events are typically overwhelmingly appreciative and complimentary.
- Perform in an ensemble, large or small. The development of ensemble and social skills are of enormous value. The student will come to appreciate the kind of effort they need to make to adequately contribute to the group, especially a small ensemble. Peer support and appreciation are great motivators to sustain an effort.
- Perform in a festival. This kind of performance requires careful preparation, especially if there is competition involved. The pieces chosen for the festival performance should have been performed in front of an audience as often as reasonably possible before the festival. Recitals organized by teachers are valuable in this regard. Performers who enter festivals to get better rather than just to win will benefit most from this experience. There are great benefits to these experiences if the players are adequately prepared both psychologically and musically. Parents can prepare the child for the festival experience by explaining that judgments about the performance are subjective and influenced by many conditions that are beyond their control. Worth considering is going to a
festival as an observer the year before entering one for competition. Some festivals offer first-time classes where everyone wins. One hope is that the young musician would readily volunteer to be involved in performances rather than being forced to do so. Those young players who can anticipate a positive response to their playing are more likely to volunteer and to enjoy the experiences.

Wayne Toews taught music in Saskatoon's Public Schools for 32 years. He was Music Director of the Saskatoon Youth Orchestra for 25 years and led the orchestra to six successive national performance awards. His daughter and son studied the Suzuki Violin method and both played wind instruments in their school bands. He celebrates his many students who have maintained an avocational involvement with music and many others who are sharing their gifts as professional musicians. He is a founding board member of the Saskatchewan Orchestral Association and chair of the Orchestra division of Musicfest Canada.

THE DOUBLE BASS RECITAL

By Ioan Tetel

The Double Bass Recital is a yearly event at Alberta College where I teach Double Bass. It is like a” Double Bass Show” as someone said, where all my present students or students from the past are invited to participate. They are typically very well prepared for this event after much technical work like scales, arpeggios and etudes. The music presented is drawn from a large variety of styles from Baroque to Modern, including music by Bach, Marcello, Pichl, Bichels, Capuzzi, Dittersdorf, Dragonetti, and modern works such as Hindemith and Bartok. Preparing them for the Annual Recital is a way to motivate them to practice and prepare to do a good job. For further motivation I usually recommend them to play in Fall Festival or Kiwanis Festival and as a result they are also prepared to audition for the Intermediate Youth Orchestra, and Senior Orchestra. As the result, these Orchestras contain only my students. Adults students are very much in demand to play in several Community Orchestras or in other Chamber Orchestras around Edmonton. Another major achievement is that two of my former students were accepted to NYOrchestra and this of course makes me very proud. Another former student just played as soloist the Tubin Concerto with the Kitchener Symphony Orchestra.

After spending 30 years playing with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and a further 20 years in Romania as a member of the George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra and as a Double Bass Professor at the University there, I enjoy every minute spent with my students here. It invigorates me to help them discover the beauty of the double bass just as I did.

FROM YINGCHUN LIU, ASA TREASURER (NOVEMBER 2014 - )

YingChun (left, left) moved to Canada in 2002 and began her study at Concordia University in Montreal the following year. Yingchun received her B.Comm degree from Concordia University in 2006 and started her career in accounting. In 2008, her family decided to move to Edmonton, encouraged by their university friends who enjoyed their life in Alberta. As a result, the whole family had a chance to travel across the country by driving from east to west. Realizing the relocation could be difficult for her French-speaking daughter (left, right), who was very young at the time, Yingchun let her enrol in a francophone school. Her daughter is now enrolled in an English high school and has merged herself to the English environment.

Yingchun joined ASA as a treasurer in November 2014 and she held a similar role at another non-profit organization before ASA - Yingchun was a dedicated treasurer at her daughter's gymnastics club. In 2011, her daughter took interest in the violin. Two years later, she joined Music Enrichment as a member of the Intermediate Orchestra, and this year, she also joined Dr. Tardif's Chamber Music Program to further her skills in violin.
MANY STRING ACTIVITIES

By Guillaume Tardif

These last few terms, I was glad to facilitate a few ASA co-sponsored (and previously-announced) masterclasses with Brian Lewis (U Texas, in partnership with the Suzuki Charter School) and Yehonathan Berick (McGill, in partnership with Alberta College and the University of Alberta). I was also glad to initiate a free chamber music program with the help of Carolyn Dagenais and Alline Cormier (of ESPA), and Yue Deng (of the Music Department). The inaugural term was dedicated to the (rarely played) Op. 4 of Leclair, played from the autograph score. An afternoon concert featured performances by a number of young trio-sonata groups (2 violins and cello). This term, students are discovering Pugnani’s Op. 2, again from the autograph - Pugnani was the teacher of Viotti and appears to have inspired Kreisler’s famous Preludium und Allegro. Isn’t it a nice way to learn literature, history, and techniques at the same time? If you are interested in joining next term, please contact me.

The Winter and Spring terms were quite busy as I took on the role of interim Chair of the Department of Music. In addition to my regular teaching and performing duties, I learned much about how the Department of Music works, as well as starting thinking and discussing about how it could develop within its context. I particularly enjoyed the conversations with my fellow instructors of all disciplines, learning about their work and ambitions. I also considered the potential for more consolidation in the music education scene in Edmonton, and as a result, a Stakeholders’ meeting was developed in partnership with ESPA and MacEwan University. It met again this October at Concordia, and conversations I believe are developing in good directions.

During this intensive period, I enjoyed presenting repertoire with guitar and as part of the Enterprise Quartet quartet. For example I learned the remarkable Tarentella by Paganini, and discovered Cherubini’s first quartet and Beethoven’s Op. 95. Another concert featured clarinet showpieces and Brahms’ Op. 115 with guest clarinettist Kornel Wolak. I also arranged music for string quartet (Ukrainian songs) and for string orchestra (Wieniawski’s Faust Fantasy, which I performed in July at the Salt Spring Chamber Music Festival), and was concertmaster with Pro Coro at the Winspear Centre in works by Bach, Rheinberger, and Mealer, under Michael Zaugg. Later, as guest of the Alberta Ballet at the Art Gallery of Alberta, I participated in the ‘Creation Experience’, performing a solo violin piece by my colleague, composer Howard Bashaw (“Buzz” from Seven Movements for Solo Violin, 2010; revised 2015), while Jean Grand-Maitre developed a ‘pas-de-deux’ (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpV9Htbhlmk). I continued teaching violin in Grande Prairie, and also played as concertmaster of the new orchestra formed by Jeannie Pernal (for the Boys’ Choir annual concert), in a movies-inspired program under talented conductor Trent Worthington. What a large and enthusiastic crowd they assembled for this rare event! I return every month this year again, with lessons now hosted at Grande Prairie Regional College, where I will give a recital on January 22, 2016 with pianist Mathew Walton.

The Enterprise Quartet appeared as part of a magnificent orchestral arrangement by Michael Massey of Bach’s first book of fugues for keyboard, performed at All Saints’ Anglican Cathedral in June. The string quartet joined a wind trio, a brass quintet and a choir in this project co-produced by pianist Alexandra Munn, who gathered a more-than-capacity audience in the large space. Pianists Jeremy Spurgeon, Marnie Giesbrecht, Joachim Segger and Sheila Shadick-Taylor rotated to masterfully perform the preludes. An inspiring night, from all perspectives.

In the Winter, I also saw the publication of a book chapter, ‘Dialogues, Duels, Diets: Leclair, the French Violin School, and the 2-Violin Repertoire’ in the volume ‘Locatelli and the Bravura Tradition’; Ed. Brepols, Amsterdam, 2015 (see
In March, I also completed a book review of Richard Maunder’s ‘The Scoring of Early Classical Concertos 1750-1780’, 2014; The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, to appear in the October 2015 edition of Ad Parnassum - A Journal on Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Instrumental Music (http://www.adparnassum.org/). I was also glad to see the publication of a kinesiology research paper on compensatory mechanisms in violin playing: ‘Unraveling mysteries of personal performance style; biomechanics of left-hand position changes (shifting) in violin performance’ (October 1, 2015), as part of a team including Peter Visentin (first author), Shiming Li (second), and Gongbing Shan (fourth), now available at https://peerj.com/articles/1299/). I expect that more work in health and string playing will be forthcoming, through collaboration with Dr. Guptill who was recently appointed to Rehabilitation Medicine at the University of Alberta (she was part of the medical team accompanying the National Youth Orchestra).

When July arrived, relieved of administrative duties, I traveled first to Greece (amidst the vote concerning the crushing European bailout proposal) and soon after, to Italy to meet various violin scholars Philippe Borer, Joseph Gold, and Roman luthiers Claude Lebet and Capodici. I visited the Biblioteca Casanatense in Rome, where I obtained permission to consult many precious Paganini manuscripts. I was particularly struck by differences between manuscripts of the first concerto and current publications. I also closely inspected the Sonata Napoleone, a piece played on the G string – and strikingly beautiful in its notation. I also stopped again in Genoa to admire Paganini’s Guarnerius violin and meet with luthier Alberto Giordano, the instrument’s curator - who obviously knows a thousand details about the famous ‘Cannone’ and actually makes exact replicae.

Upon my return to Canada, I flew to Salt Spring Island, again with a number of enthusiastic students, and enjoyed all that this wonderful place has to offer, performing with the orchestra (Wieniawski’s Faust Fantasy) and chamber music (Mendelssohn Op. 80) with members of the Vancouver Symphony and artists from Toronto. A visit to Butchard Gardens completed our visit. Back in Edmonton, before the Fall term, I again performed Faust at Edmonton’s City Hall with pianist Viktoria Reiswich-Dapp and my quartet arrangements of Wagner’s Wesendonck Lieder (with soprano Bailey Cameron, left).

Early in September, I participated in the international conference ‘Bruxelles : 1900 : Vienna’ held by the Wirth Institute on the U of Alberta campus, delivering a paper, ‘Eugene Ysaïe, Parallels and Intervals’, on Eugene Ysaïe’s role in changing violin traditions of Europe at the turn of the century and his importance in the musical life of Brussels during a period of artistic ebullience. This was followed by a Enterprise Quartet performance of rare and representative works of the period (I suspect all premieres in Edmonton, and some perhaps in Canada): Jongen’s Quartet No. 2 (dedicated to Theo Ysaïe, Eugene’s brother), Ysaïe’s Poème ‘Extase’ Op. 21 (in a 2-violin arrangement by the composer, with Kyung Rok Moon), and the challenging 2nd Quartet by Zemlinsky (who taught Schoenberg for a while - stylistic similarities are clear). I so enjoy the process of conference, conversation, and critical observation with eminent scholars from various fields in the arts and now look forward to publication.

http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowProduct.aspx?prod_id=IS-9782503555355-1). Other chapters by Neal Zaslaw, Rudolf Rasch, and Michael Talbot remind me of the excellent conversations held in Bergamo at the Locatelli Conference in November 2014. My chapter includes an extensive listing of the duo repertoire from Leclair to Ysaïe, organized by ‘schools’, from one generation of teacher-student to the next. More projects will stem from this work in the near future, and in particular with the first violinist of the Alcan Quartet, Laura Andriani, who was recently featured with the Vaughan Quartet in Chausson’s Concert.
Earlier in the term I was glad to hear the first Edmonton performance of the XIA Quartet (left), featuring Robert Uchida (ESO concertmaster) and members of the TSO. It was a glorious program of Bartok and Beethoven offered in Convocation Hall, with a rhythmically dazzling encore. I also enjoyed Uchida’s playing in Sarasate’s Navarra with a guest artist of the ESO, and meeting him and the new Principal cellist Rafael Hoekman (right) at the memorial concert for Tanya Prochazka, a concert that brought together talented musicians from Edmonton and abroad.

On the new music front, I recently performed the premiere of the complete violin suite by Howard Bashaw, *Seven Movements for Solo Violin* (2010, rev. 2015), as part of a contemporary music program at Convocation Hall with pianist Roger Admiral (also including works by Isabelle Panneton from Montreal and Hope Lee from Calgary). I had the opportunity to work with Bashaw and Lee on these performances. Interesting works, to say the least! I was also happy to invite the Duo Concertante from Memorial University (right) to present recital and masterclass, including the performance of a Bach-inspired work by Jocelyn Morlock (of Vancouver).

And good news, my former student Arlan Vrien (left), who continues to study with Prof Dahn (above, left) in Newfoundland, was recently appointed associate concertmaster of the Newfoundland Symphony. Congratulations!!

Finally, my last adventures included a week of teaching and performing at the international festival in Loja, Ecuador, where I taught daily masterclasses for c. 50 advanced students and teachers (140 in total, with the younger ones). With two gala concert performances in 2 weeks (in Loja, and for the Edmonton Guitar Society’s 20th anniversary) behind me, I am now preparing for the H.W. Ernst International Conference in Göttingen, Germany (end of November, recital performance and paper presentation), and a performance of Beethoven’s Violin Concerto in December with the Burman University Orchestra.

**KATHLEEN PARLOW: THE LADY OF THE GOLDEN BOW**

By Brooklyn Biegel

Among the gifted students of Leopold Auer who were dedicated to keeping the legacy of their revered teacher alive was the Canadian violinist Kathleen Parlow. She was born at Fort Calgary, Alberta in 1890. During her lifetime she was dubbed as “the world’s greatest woman violinist.”

Kathleen Parlow was home-educated, and her life demonstrated an enormous amount of determination to surmount overwhelming odds, and a tenacious dedication to master her beloved instrument. At age four, Kathleen moved with her mother, Minnie Parlow, to California. The little girl began her violin studies there with a cousin, Conrad Coward. By the time she was fourteen, her second teacher, Henry Holmes, encouraged Kathleen to seek out the best violin teaching in Europe. Not to be disheartened by continual financial strains, with the help of a patron and a church that raised funds to assist them, the Parlows left North America and sailed for England, bringing with them a mere sum of $300.

It was after witnessing a sensational concert delivered by the fourteen-year-old Mischa Elman, who had been a pupil of Professor Auer since age eleven, that Kathleen determined to pursue violin instruction from Elman’s
teacher. But she and her mother did not have the money necessary to travel to Russia where Auer taught at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. The ambitious young girl resolved to address Lord Strathcona, Canadian High Commissioner, for assistance in the matter. She had already enjoyed much success in Europe, having performed the Beethoven violin concerto in the Bechstein Hall and performed with the London Symphony Orchestra. Before discussing the matter with her mother, after one of her concerts, Lord Strathcona approached Kathleen. “...I was scared to death,” she recounts, “but I just blurted it out. I asked if he would lend me the money to go to Russia to study with Auer.” [1] Following the interview, Strathcona agreed to Kathleen’s request, insisting that she not worry about repaying the loan.

Soon after having arrived in Russia, Kathleen was enrolled in the St. Petersburg Conservatory. She became the very first foreign student to be admitted into the Conservatory. On her first day there, Kathleen found herself in a class of 45 students - in which she was the only girl. Despite the intimidation she felt at witnessing the extraordinary talent surrounding her, she pressed on, and in her article Student Days in Russia, she says, “The joy I had in my lessons is hard to describe... I sat in that room twice a week from two until six and drank it all in, coming away utterly exhausted but happy.” [2] Auer taught Kathleen always to “Sing, sing on your violin.”

Kathleen’s career as a concert soloist was formally launched in Berlin, in October of 1907. Her violin was Viotti’s former 1735 Guarnerius, given to her by a Norwegian gentleman named Einar Bjornson. During her career she became ranked by critics as being equal to Mischa Elman. She did concert tours in North America, Europe and Asia, almost always traveling accompanied by her mother. While on a concert tour in Mexico she was even praised as being superior to Jascha Heifetz. In her twenties, Kathleen performed at a benefit concert for survivors of the Titanic, and, upon the request of Thomas Edison, Parlow made her first recording. In 1933, Mills College presented Kathleen Parlow with an honorary Master of Arts degree.

When the Parlows moved back to Canada in 1940, Kathleen, now in her forties, formed the chamber groups which included The Canadian Trio and the famous Parlow String Quartet, of which she was principal violinist. She also began teaching at the Royal Conservatory of Toronto. Through her teaching she continued the legacy of violin instruction instilled in her by Professor Auer. Though her financial situation remained difficult throughout her life, when she died in 1963, in her will she provided, through the sale of her Guarnerius violin, a scholarship for string students at the University of Toronto.

Kathleen Parlow was nicknamed “The Lady of the Golden Bow.” The Canadian Encyclopedia says that, “As a performer Parlow was very great indeed. She had a big, pure tone, a sauvé legato, (‘as if she were playing with a nine-foot bow,’ as one admirer put it) and effortless technique. Her repertoire was enormous: there was probably no work in the great violin repertoire that she had not played.” [3]

To see a full biography on Kathleen Parlow, visit the Library and Archives of Canada:
http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/gramophone/028011-1022-e.html
1. SIRS: Kathleen Parlow: A Life in Music by Hubert G. Mayes. The Beaver Magazine, Aug./Sept. 1994: Web:
http://sks.sirs.bdl.arc.scoolaid.net/cgi-bin/hst-article-display?id=SNY5793-0-3764&artnum=00000060492&type=ART
2. Library and Archives of Canada, Parlow, 1961: Web:
http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/gramophone/028011-1022-e.html
Looking for even more string news? Interested in sharing your news, events, and interests? Would you like to refer others to the Association?

Please contact us at [http://albertastringassociation.org](http://albertastringassociation.org)

### Annual General Meeting

**SUNDAY Nov. 29, 2015 | 4:30PM**  
**ROOM 3-17 Fine Arts Building, U of Alberta**  
Remote access (Google hangout: tardifg)

If interested in nominating yourself as a board member, please contact us  
(3 vacancies)

### NEW!! ASA SOCIAL AND TEACHER RECOGNITION – ‘PRESIDENT’S TOUR’

The ASA Board invites members, string teachers and students to join us for a free tea social in Lacombe (Dec. 6, following the orchestra performance), Edmonton (following MACH recital, Jan 15) and Grande Prairie (following GPRC recital, Jan. 22). At these events, the Board wishes to recognize those who teach in our communities and to learn more from members and prospective members. To nominate someone to receive an ASA Teaching Award, please write us (contact page on website albertastringassociation.org). We wish to see many of you there!

### THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC (UALBERTA) CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

On the afternoon of January 24, 2016 at the Winspear Centre: guest soloist Jeff Nelson (horn) in Strauss, and Beethoven’s ‘Choral’ Symphony op. 125 (and much more!).

### GUEST TEACHING AND NEW ORCHESTRA IN GRANDE PRAIRIE

by Krista McLauchlan and Amber Caicco

On Sunday, October 25th, ASA Member Frank Ho held a masterclass and workshop with high school students from the Grande Prairie Public School District.

We are excited to celebrate the rebirth of the Grande Prairie Community Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Bob Howey. Our first concert will be held on November 27th, 7:30 pm at the Douglas J. Cardinal Theatre.
NEW!! THE ASA CONCERTO COMPETITION

On January 21, 2016 (in Grande Prairie), January 23, 2016 (in Edmonton) and January 24, 2016 (in Lacombe), three auditions will be held to identify young string soloists to appear with the Burman Chamber Orchestra (Lacombe, AB), under Maestro Cristian Neacsu. Specific venues will be conveyed to participants at a later date.

**Deadline to apply: January 10, 2016.**

Apply by sending an email to both: tardifg@gmail.com and cristianneacsu@burmanu.ca with your name, age, instrument, movement to be performed (1st of a concerto, or concert piece), name of your teacher, telephone number and availability on the date of the performance (April 16, 2016, 8pm, venue: College Heights Church, 6910 University Dr., Lacombe AB).

The competition fee is $50, which includes required individual membership (NOTE: if you are already a member, please see adjusted amounts on the ASA website - [http://albertastringassociation.org/concerto-competition/](http://albertastringassociation.org/concerto-competition/)). Payment is either by cheque (made out to the Alberta String Association, and forwarded to 203, 10221-111th Street Edmonton AB, T5K 2W5) or via Paypal (see link above).

3 winners will be selected from the categories: middle school, high school and college. 1 movement each will be performed, with cadenza (max. c. 15’). Performers are to make arrangements for their own piano accompanist for the competition.

This competition is a performance opportunity open to all young Albertan string players.

**NEXT NEWSLETTER**

**Deadline April 24, 2016.** Send us materials, pictures, articles - Don’t miss it!

**PLEASE DONATE**

The ASA accepts charitable donations and can issue receipts. **Support our cause!**