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ADJUDICATORS



AUDREY SPROULE

Audrey Sproule is a Canadian violinist, string quartettiste, and community music initiator.

Born and raised in the village of Lafleche, Saskatchewan, Audrey studied violin with Ernest Kassian, Rudolf Sternadel, Mark Fewer, Ivan Zenaty, and Richard Schmoucler, and chamber music with members of the Cleveland Quartet, the Cavani String Quartet, and the Quatuor Arpeggione. She holds a Bachelor of Music from the Schulich School of Music (McGill University, Canada), a Master of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music (USA), a Certificat d'aptitude (CA) from the Conservatoire Nationale Supérieur de Musique de Paris (the Paris Conservatory, France), and she is

the recipient of several major scholarships and awards, including the McGill Schulich Award, the Saskatchewan Music Festival Centennial Prize, and the JWF Peacock Scholarship.

Devoted to evolving from classical music norms, Audrey co-founded the Crimson String Quartet in 2009. With their debut album, Crimson Sunrise, the quartet pioneered their unique approach to concert programming. They perform annually on 'community residency' tours through rural villages across the Canadian Prairies.

Curious to discover classical music traditions overseas, Audrey relocated to Paris, France in 2014. One year later, she joined the Quatuor Naos. From 2015 to 2018, the Quatuor Naos won second prize in the Bellan International Chamber Music Competition in Paris, performed in the National Young String Quartet Weekend's pre-concert at Wigmore Hall in London, and honed their craft in the prestigious String Quartet Training Program at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Paris.

Audrey is a core member of the contemporary-music-and-theatre collective, the Ensemble des Possibles, and she is a founding member of the Paris-based string quartet, the Quatuor Odyssée, receiving support from Naitways, Musiques Nouvelles en Liberté and the City of Paris.

Equally passionate for music outreach and pedagogy, Audrey was named a TD Scholar for her outstanding work in community leadership, and she was a finalist for the Canada National Millennium Award and for the US-Canada Fulbright Scholarship. Audrey has served as Educational Director of the Sistema-inspired CityMusic Kidz in Cleveland, USA, as section leader and assistant teacher at the Canada-India Youth Orchestra collaboration in Bangalore, India, as co-coordinator of a three-week intensive workshop focused on contemporary music in Bogotà, Colombia with the Batuta Foundation, and as teacher and artist-in-residence with the Judson String Quartet at the Interlochen Center for the Arts' Summer Academy. Audrey is co-founder, coordinator, and master clinician with the Est Ensemble's Inter-Conservatory String Quartet Training Program. In 2022, Audrey was named Professor of Violin and String Quartet at the Conservatorie à rayonnement départemental of Pantin, France, where she is currently on tenure track.







GORDON GERARD

For Canadian conductor Gordon Gerrard, music is an animating life force. He relishes the making of it. Takes pleasure in how it brings joy and comfort to audiences. Appreciates its potential to change how people perceive the non-musical aspects of their lives.

He's guest-conducted major Canadian orchestras (Vancouver, Quebec, Toronto, Victoria, London, Kitchener-Waterloo) and opera companies (Calgary, Hamilton, Edmonton). He loves working with emerging artists - at Calgary Opera, the Atelier Lyrique de l'Opéra de

Montréal, the Ban Centre, Opera Nuova (Edmonton), UBC Opera (Vancouver), Opera McGill (Montréal) and the Glenn Gould School (Toronto). And since 2016, he's delved into orchestral classics, contemporary works and programming that explores social change and community engagement as the dynamic music director of the Regina Symphony Orchestra. All rather unlikely for a kid who grew up on a farm just outside Brandon, MB.

Gordon began lessons at 7; by high school he was obsessed with music and decided to pursue it professionally. At 17, he left the farm for his undergrad at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg before getting a master's at the Manhattan School of Music. He loved collaborating with singers, which led to a fascination with opera and the world of conducting.

"Music brings people together," he says. "I consider it a privilege to be part of that magic."



YOUNGGUN KIM

Younggun Kim is a pianist known for his blazing technical capacity and a lush sound supported by a natural phrasing sense (Timothy Gilligan, New York Concert Review), who has performed across North America and Europe. He is active as concerto soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician, and he teaches at the University of Toronto. Younggun has also been closely involved with the Health Arts Society (Concerts in Care) since 2011, playing in their concert series for those who may find it difficult to visit conventional venues.

His recent performance highlights include a solo appearance with Toronto Korean-Canadian Choir/Orchestra playing Beethoven's Choral Fantasy, a solo recital as a part of Faculty Artist Series at Queen's University, a duo recital with Sophie Dervaux who is a member of the Vienna Philharmonic, an appearance with the esteemed Isabel Quartet performing Robert Schumann's *Quintet*, a concerto performance with Niagara Symphony as well as recital engagements in Seoul, Korea.

Younggun is the winner of various prizes including San Antonio International Competition, Concours International de Piano Francis Poulenc, and Doctor of Musical Arts Recital Competition at the University of Toronto. Upon completion of the doctoral degree, Younggun was chosen as the recipient of the Tecumseh Sherman Rogers Graduating Award, which is the largest award offered by the Faculty of Music.

He is a Toronto-based Canadian from South Korea. After changing his career path in his early twenties from French literature to music, Younggun finished his undergraduate degree at the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music, master's degree at Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, and the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree at the University of Toronto. He studied with renowned artists such as Kyungrok Park, Roger Admiral, Boris Slutsky and the late Marietta Orlov.

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CONCERTO COMPETITION

MC – Dianne Gryba, SMFA President

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GRAEME SCOTT, flute	(Olivier Hebert-Bouchard)
<u>Concerto pour flûte et orchestre a cordes</u> — André Jolivet Andante cantabile – Allegro scherzando – Largo – Allegro risol	luto
APRIL SHI, piano <u>Concerto in d minor, Op. 40</u> — Felix Mendelssohn Allegro appassionato – Molto sostenuto – Presto scherzando	(Bonnie Nicholson)
ROBERT YANG, violin <u>Violin Concerto No. 1 in a minor, Op. 77</u> – Dmitri Shostakovich Nocturne: Moderato – Scherzo: Allegro – Passacaglia: Andante Burlesque: Allegro con brio – Presto	
ESTHER ZHU , piano <u>Piano Concerto No. 2 in f minor, Op. 21</u> – Frédéric Chopin <u>Maestoso – Larghetto – Allegro vivace</u>	(Sofia Mycyk)
TANNER HALL , clarinetConcerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra, with Harp and Piar	(Daniel Tselyakov) <u>10</u> – Aaron Copland
LEAH MACFARLANE , piano <u>Piano Concerto in f# minor, Op. 20</u> – Alexander Scriabin <u>Allegro – Andante – Allegro moderato</u>	(Michelle Mares)
BRIDGET ALEXANDER, violin Violin Concerto in d minor – Aram Khachaturian Allegro con fermezza – Andante sostenuto – Allegro vivace	(Cherith Alexander)
BOAMAN LIU, piano <u>Concerto No. 1 in q minor, Op. 25</u> – Felix Mendelssohn Molto allegro con fuoco – Andante – Presto	(Bonnie Nicholson)
CAROLYN RATHGEBER , flute <u>Flute Concerto No. 1 in G Major, K. 313</u> – Wolfgang Amadeus I Allegro maestoso – Adagio ma non troppo – Rondo: Tempo di	
AVERY GUO, piano <u>Piano Concerto in a minor, Op. 54</u> – Robert Schumann Allegro affettuoso – Intermezzo – Allegro vivace	(Kathleen Solose)
ELISHA RUO, violin <u>Concerto in e minor, Op. 64</u> – Felix Mendelssohn Allegro molto appassionato – Andante – Allegro molto vivace	(Michelle Aalders)

Thank you to the collaborative artists who have performed at this competition. Your talents and musical support are greatly appreciated.

History of the Concerto Competition

In 1979 three Saskatchewan organizations marked their 70th Anniversaries: the Saskatchewan Music Festival Association (SMFA), the Regina Symphony Orchestra (RSO), and the Regina Cartage and Storage Co. Ltd. To celebrate this milestone, Kathleen Keple, then Executive Director of SMFA, initiated a Concerto Competition in partnership with the RSO, to be administered by SMFA and funded by Regina Cartage and Storage Co.

The three organizations held similar ideals of "enhancing lives through an appreciation for music". SMFA has played a vital role in the cultural life of Saskatchewan by "providing young musicians with educational opportunities to compete and perform". The Regina Cartage & Storage Co. President, Brian Keple, had long been supportive of community events throughout its history. The RSO, the oldest operating orchestra in Canada, also held a commitment to education in the province through the South Saskatchewan Youth Orchestra. The establishment of the Anniversary Concerto Competition was a broadening of this commitment. In addition to the monetary awards, the RSO provided the opportunity for the winner of the SMFA Concerto Competition to be featured as a guest artist in the upcoming season. In 2000 the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra (SSO), under conductor Earl Stafford, added their support by providing the winner with a performance opportunity with the SSO.

During the ensuing years generous sponsorship was provided by the City of Regina Arts Commission, CKIT FM Radio, and the Sister Geraldine Boyle and Goodfellow Trust Funds. From 1992-2007 Yolande Hodges Fitzgerald, a former Saskatchewan teacher, was the major sponsor for the competition, followed by the Lorne & Evelyn Johnson Foundation in 2009. Mr. William Shurniak became the event sponsor in 2013.

SMFA continues to play a major role in the development of our province's musicians. The SMFA Concerto Competition, now in its 36th cycle, is a tangible result of Saskatchewan co-operation. SMFA is delighted that the **Regina Symphony Orchestra** and the **Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra** provide guest appearance opportunities for the winner of this event.



Past Winners

Since its inception in 1979, the SMFA Concerto Competition has gained momentum and recognition within the musical community of our province. It is with great pride that we list the winners of previous years' competitions.

1979

1st – Tannis Gibson 2nd – Guy Few 3rd – Lawrence Amundrud

1980

1st – Audrey Andrist 2nd – Marlena Tureski 3rd – Arthur LaVertu

1981 1st - Stephen Beke 2nd - Hwa-Jung Lee 3rd - Kathy Palyga

1982 1st – Kirsimarja Helppi 2nd – Linda Bardutz 3rd – Guy Few

1983

1st – Hwa-Jung Lee 2nd – Kent McWilliams 3rd – Bridget Hunt

1984

 1^{st} – Darren Lowe 2^{nd} – Eldon McBride 3^{rd} – Bridget Hunt

1985

1st – Kent McWilliams 2nd – Bridget Hunt 3rd – Janice Kwon & Collette Forer

1986

1st – Janice Kwon 2nd – Erika Raum 3rd – Peter Pas

1987

1st – Linda Bardutz 2nd – Erika Raum 3rd – Daphne Leong & Colin Traquair

1988 1st – Erika Raum 2nd – Mary Jane Kliewer 3rd – Nicolo Eugelmi

1989

1st – Nicolo Eugelmi 2nd – Beatrice Ngai 3rd – Mark Altman

1990

1st – Mark Altman & Noel Laporte 2nd – Grant Wenaus 3rd – Rob Thaller

1991

1st – Cherith James 2nd – Marla McLennan 3rd – Roslyn Friesen

1992

1st – Michael Angell 2nd – Anna Genest 3rd – Karmyn Dyck

1993

1st – Karmyn Dyck 2nd – Allison Joynt 3rd – Kjersti Nostbakken

1994

1st – Deanne Mohr 2nd – Sarah Konecsni 3rd – David England

1995

1st – Susan Ouyang 2nd – David England 3rd – Ava Weidenhammer

1996

1st – Thomas Yu 2nd – Nathan Degenhart 3rd – Ava Weidenhammer

1997

1st – Ava Weidenhammer 2nd – Rodney Epp 3rd – Stephen Runge

1998

1st – Sarah Konecsni 2nd – Allen Harrington 3rd – Preston Hawes

1999

1st – Stephen Runge 2nd – Preston Hawes 3rd – Bede Hanley

2000

 1^{st} – Thomas Cosbey 2^{nd} – Allen Harrington 3^{rd} – Nigel Taylor

2001

1st – Kayla Wong 2nd – Junelle Rayne 3rd – Jonathan Dyck

2002

1st – Oxana Ossiptshouk 2nd – Allen Harrington 3rd – Elation Paul

2003

1st – Eric Greenwood 2nd – Jonathan Dyck 3rd – Amelia Borton

2005

1st – Yuli Chen 2nd – Raymond Ko 3rd – James Coghlin

2007

1st – Raymond Ko 2nd – Samuel Deason 3rd – Maria Fuller

2009

1st – Samuel Milner 2nd – Justin Min 3rd – Helen Kashap

2011

1st – Samuel Deason 2nd – Meagan Milatz 3rd – Alyssa Ramsay

2013

1st – Gerard Weber 2nd – Jessica Ramsay 3rd – Alyssa Ramsay

2015

1st – William Boan 2nd – Godwin Friesen 3rd – Sophie McBean

2017

 1^{st} – Godwin Friesen 2^{nd} – Rebecca Weger 3^{rd} – Sophie McBean

2019

1st – Jonathan Craig Penner 2nd – Bradley Little 3rd – Shion Tamashiro

2021

 1^{st} – Jerry Hu 2^{nd} – Alice Li 3^{rd} – Bradley Little

2023

1st – Alice Li 2nd – Connor Elias 3rd – Brandon Johnson



COMPETITOR BIOS

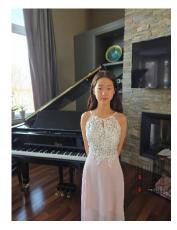


GRAEME SCOTT

Graeme Scott is a Regina Music Festival alumnus and also competed in SMFA Provincial Finals. Graeme is currently pursuing a master's degree in performance at McGill University. He enjoys a keen interest in improvisation, contemporary music, and arranging.

APRIL SHI

Fifteen-year-old April Shi has been playing the piano for more than ten years. She has won numerous awards at the Saskatoon Music Festival, SMFA Provincial Finals, as well as second place at the Canada West Performing Arts Festival in Edmonton in 2023. Last summer, April traveled to Quebec to study at the Orford Academy. April also enjoys playing the violin.





ROBERT YANG

Saskatoon violinist Robert Yang is a Grade 12 student at Walter Murray Collegiate and is currently in his second year as a second violinist with the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra. Robert actively participates in the Saskatoon Music Festival and SMFA Provincial Finals and has won numerous accolades. He also participated in the inaugural Canada West Performing Arts Festival in 2022. Robert is committed to continuing his violin and music studies—not only for his own growth, but also to share music with audiences of the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra.



ESTHER ZHU

Saskatoon pianist Esther Zhu is an 18-year-old student at the University of Saskatchewan, majoring in piano performance. She is a national and multiprovincial award winning pianist who has been playing the piano since the age of three. At the 2024 SMFA Provincial Finals, Esther was awarded the Garth Beckett/Gustin House Senior Piano Scholarship for the most promising pianist under the age of 21.

TANNER HALL

Clarinetist Tanner Hall was born in Humboldt and began playing clarinet at the age of 11. They joined the Saskatoon Youth Orchestra and participated in several provincial honour bands. Tanner was a member of the virtual National Youth Band of Canada, in 2021, on clarinet and bass clarinet. They are currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Music in Clarinet Performance program at Brandon University. Tanner is a member of the Brandon University Clarinet Choir and performed with the ensemble at ClarinetFest 2023 in Denver, Colorado.





LEAH MACFARLANE

Leah Macfarlane is a second-year medical student in UBC's Island Medical Program in Victoria. Originally from Carnduff, SK she began piano lessons through Music for Young Children. Leah completed a Bachelor of Science with Honours in Neuroscience at the University of Saskatchewan while continuing her music education. Leah holds an ARCT Diploma in Piano Performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music, and in 2022 she won the Saskatoon Music Festival Kinsmen Competition and the Garth Beckett/Gustin House Senior Piano Award at the SMFA Provincial Finals. Leah has worked extensively as a collaborative pianist and in various chamber music groups. She enjoys running marathons, playing violin in community orchestra, cooking, spending time with family and friends, and occasionally studying medicine.

BRIDGET ALEXANDER



Bridget Alexander is currently in her third year of a bachelor's program in violin performance at the University of Toronto. She grew up in Saskatchewan and participated in the Weyburn and Regina Music Festivals. In Regina, Bridget won the Gyro Club Senior String Scholarship and the grand awards of the MLT Aikins and Lions Competitions. Since 2018, she won numerous classes at the SMFA Provincial Finals, and was proud to represent Saskatchewan in the 2022 Canada West Performing Arts Festival. Bridget was a member of the South Saskatchewan Youth Orchestra for six seasons and served as their assistant concertmaster from 2019-2022. She also joined the Regina Symphony Orchestra as a utility violinist for three seasons, beginning at age fifteen.

BOAMAN LIU

Boaman Liu began his piano journey at the age of three. He has performed at festivals, Provincial Finals and the CMC National, where he has won multiple awards. Since moving to Saskatoon, Boaman has been an active participant in the Saskatoon Music Festival and SMFA Provincial Finals. His most recent award is honorable mention at the 2024 Thomas F. Hulbert International Piano Competition - Video Concerto Division. Boaman also enjoys playing ensembles with his two younger brothers. Always a keen learner, Boaman is interested in various subjects from science to health, from history to universe, and from animation to mechanics.





CAROLYN RATHGEBER

Carolyn Rathgeber is a former participant in Regina Music Festival and recent graduate of the Schulich School of Music, McGill University, where she received a Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance. Her greatest passion is classical music, having played flute since the age of six. While at McGill, Carolyn participated in the McGill Wind Orchestra, McGill Contemporary Music Ensemble, and McGill Symphony Orchestra as well as small chamber ensembles, solo recitals and new composition performance projects.

Outside of her music activities, Carolyn recently earned a Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics. She enjoys spending time outdoors with family and friends and experimenting with new recipes.



AVERY GUO

Sixteen-year-old Avery Guo has been studying piano since the age of five. She was born in Chongqing, China and moved to Saskatoon when she was eleven years old. Avery has successfully competed in the Saskatoon Music Festival and SMFA Provincial Finals and was the winner of the Gordon C. Wallis Piano Competition in 2024. Avery earned the gold medal for her Royal Conservatory of Music Grade 9 piano exam and completed her ARCT while in Grade 10 in high school. She is a top student, earning high honours in both Grades 9 and 10, and enjoys working as a lifeguard and swimming instructor at the University of Saskatchewan.

ELISHA RUO

Elisha Ruo began his violin studies at the age of three. He joined the Saskatoon Youth Orchestra at age twelve and the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra at age sixteen. In 2024, Elisha won the Kinsmen Competition at the Saskatoon Music Festival, placed 1st in his class at the SMFA Provincial Finals, and placed 2nd at the Canada West Performing Arts Festival in Victoria. Elisha also plays trombone with the Evan Hardy Concert and Jazz Bands.







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