Profile: Dr. Conor Nelson

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Playing the flute and studying with a selfless teacher, Donna Sykes, in Oshawa, Ontario, provided a creative and social outlet for Conor’s early musical development. Sykes made playing the flute fun, even rhythm and scales! She established a strong sense of community within her flute studio, taking the flute choir to perform at amusement parks, encouraging students to enter local competitions and driving hundreds of miles to National Flute Association conventions. When Conor reached a certain level, Sykes arranged for him to study with Dr. Amy Hamilton, flute professor at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario.

Entire families make sacrifices of time and money for their children to take music lessons. Conor’s father would drive him an hour-and-forty-five minutes each way for lessons with Hamilton in high school. Conor’s dad also took him to hear James Galway in Toronto, a transformative experience for the aspiring 16-year-old flutist.

Conor started traveling for musical events in the 10th grade and has attended summer festivals ever since. At age 16, he traveled to Danbury, Conn., an international excursion for the young Canadian, having to transfer to a Greyhound bus at the Port Authority in Manhattan. Having waited for the bus on the wrong side of the street the first day of ninth grade, this was a big adventure for him!

Now Conor is a regular globe trotter, from state to state, country to country, and across continents. Dr. Nelson was certain by the end of ninth grade that music would figure prominently in his life. As an undergraduate student, he started gravitating towards teaching and performing. He began to consider college teaching when he was auditioning for doctoral programs. Dr. Nelson credits music for giving him a clear direction in life, teaching him the value of hard work, setting goals and patience. He affirms that the list of skills acquired through music are simply too long to list. Communication, organization, time-management and leadership skills, as well as entrepreneurial abilities, a relationship with technology and becoming a team player are just a few that have shaped him as an individual. Attribution a large part of his success to his public school music teachers and his flute and chamber music teachers, Dr. Nelson stresses the continued need for excellent music teachers for all ages.

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In honor of our 30th birthday, we ask you to increase your planned contribution by $30 or even a multiple of $30. Perhaps you have friends who would be interested in becoming members, joining our rich history and ensuring our continuation for many years to come. Please remember that membership is renewed each year and the fiscal year begins in July. More information can be found on our website: www.bgsu.edu/promusica.

Plans are underway to celebrate our unique organization and we hope you will join us for each event. In early fall, the Pro Musica Student Council will host a Donor Appreciation Recital followed by an ice cream social. This afternoon event recognizes all donors with beautiful music and an opportunity to talk with student travelers. Next, please join us on Facebook. Details of future events will be shared and you will be continually included in the experiences of travelers.

Finally, on March 29, 2014, we will hold our 30th Anniversary Party at the Stone Ridge Country Club in Bowling Green. We will recognize our founders while raising additional funds to support student travel. Pro Musica’s founding predates computer records and all information is not in the archive. If you are a founding member, a past president or a 30-year member, please share that information by entering 30 years in the subject line and emailing the newsletter editor, Dr. Penny Thompson Kruse at krusep@bgsu.edu.

Sincerely,
Karol Spencer
Ioana Flonta
2nd Piano Pedagogy Symposium featuring MTNA Collegiate Chapters
Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music
November 3-4, 2012

I had the privilege to attend the 2nd Piano Pedagogy Symposium in Cincinnati. Presentations by graduate students covered a wide range of topics related to performance and teaching. Handouts were given at each presentation. "Modern Approaches to Piano Technique" was presented by University of Michigan students, approaching both technical and musical issues. "Helping Students Progress through Injury," presented by students from the University of Oklahoma, highlighted one-handed piano repertoire and selected exercises. Students from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette presented "You are alone. Building a Professional Community of Independent Studio Teachers through Blogs." I was struck by the amount of new information a teacher can obtain from piano-related blogs. Faculty advisor teaching demonstrations or master classes were held on both days, allowing me to observe six teachers working with students of different ages and abilities. Master class clinicians were professors at Hope College, Ohio University, University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Northern Kentucky University. By attending the symposium, I met wonderful people who significantly impact our field of music.

Robert Collins
Fifth International Master Class in Orchestral Conducting
St. Petersburg, Russia
May 28 – June 1, 2013

I was honored to be one of nine conductors at the Fifth International Master Class in Orchestral Conducting between May 28 and June 1, 2013, in St. Petersburg, Russia, hosted by the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic. I studied conducting under Maestro Alexander Poliuchuk and Mark Stringer. Each day we had a 25-minute session with the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic, applying what we learned that morning. The language barrier presented new challenges. The majority of the orchestra did not speak English, requiring our physical gestures to be even clearer, indicating the exact sound we desired.

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I know the technique I learned will guide me during the rest of my career and the personal contacts I made will assist me in the search for employment. I would like to thank Pro Musica for its generous support of the endeavor.

Corey Keating
2012 Melos New Music Concert
Philadelphia
December 7-8, 2012

Thank you for supporting my trip to Philadelphia to participate in the 2012 Melos New Music Concert. I met and collaborated with the Philadelphia new music ensemble39. Considered to be an up-and-coming group, ensemble39 is composed of alumni from the Curtis Institute of Music.

Eight chamber works by each of the composers in attendance were premiered before an audience consisting of community members, students, friends and arts/music reviewers. Members of my ensemble performed as a quintet, a sextet, a septet and a quintet. The overall experience provided valuable insight into the myriad of composers involved in successfully organizing and promoting a professional-level concert. This opportunity has proven invaluable to my growth as a musician, as work I receive as a composer will be a direct result of my ability to market my talents and work with other musicians.

Ioana Flonta (right) with one of the symposium founders, Dr. Jonatan de Jongh, associate professor of piano and piano pedagogy, University of Michigan, School of Music, Theatre and Dance.

Save the Date
Pro Musica 3rd Annual Celebrity Server and 30th Anniversary Party: Saturday, March 29, 2014, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Stone Ridge Country Club, Bowling Green
Bowling Green Chamber Music Competition: March 1-2, 2014

Student Essays
University of Oklahoma, highlighted one-handed piano repertoire and selected exercises. Students from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette presented "You are alone. Building a Professional Community of Independent Studio Teachers through Blogs." I was struck by the amount of new information a teacher can obtain from piano-related blogs. Faculty advisor teaching demonstrations or master classes were held on both days, allowing me to observe six teachers working with students of different ages and abilities. Master class clinicians were professors at Hope College, Ohio University, University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Northern Kentucky University. By attending the symposium, I met wonderful people who significantly impact our field of music.

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Essays

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Rex Surany (Curtis)

Ayane Kozasa (Curtis)

Olivier friendly

Members of ensemble39 (from left to right)

Corey Keating (Curtis)

Gabriel Cabezas (Curtis)

Ayane Kozasa (Curtis)

Stanislav Chernyshev (Curtis)

Eighth blackbird, a renowned new music group, also attended the Friday night concert. Last summer, I was commissioned by ensemble39 to write a piece for the unusual combination of oboe, clarinet, viola and string bass, the same instruments used in Prokofiev’s Quintet, Op. 39. This challenging endeavor resulted in a successful composition that expanded the limited repertoire for this particular instrumentation. A recording session is scheduled for February 2013 and a CD featuring each composer’s work from the December concert will be produced.

Observation experience provided valuable insight into the myriad of composers involved in successfully organizing and promoting a professional-level concert. This opportunity has proven invaluable to my growth as a musician, as work I receive as a composer will be a direct result of my ability to market my talents and work with other musicians.

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Profile: Dr. Conor Nelson

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We are grateful to Shannon Bolen, our new student publicist, for exponentially increasing our following on Facebook.

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