

A HISTORY OF THE ROYAL (TORONTO) CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
PIANO EXAMINATIONS, 1887-2015: THEIR IMPACT AND INFLUENCE

TATIANA VOITOVITCH-CAMILLERI

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN MUSIC
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, ONTARIO

November 2019

© Tatiana Voitovitch-Camilleri, 2019

ABSTRACT

Since its inception in 1887, the Royal Conservatory of Music has maintained its position as one of the largest and oldest community-based music schools and education centres in North America, with an integrated examination body and a comprehensive graded curriculum, influencing and shaping the Canadian musical landscape. For the past 130 years, the Conservatory has presented a wide-ranging art music repertoire for studying piano and offered a comprehensive system for assessing students' progress through its Examinations, recently retitled as The Certificate Program.

The Conservatory's internal examinations began in 1887, with the external examinations following in 1898. The latter preserved the format of the former and expanded through increasing the number of the examination centres across Canada for both financial and educational reasons. Despite varying opinions of professionals and amateurs on the efficacy and value of the piano examinations in particular from the beginning, this dissertation, using historical sources and interviews, argues that over the years the structure and content of the piano examinations, while innately conservative on the whole, have kept up with a changing demographic of students across the country, and either countered or taken on the many criticisms that surrounded them over the years despite geographical and financial challenges, and indeed competition from other institutions. Recently they have been hardy enough to enter the American market. Overall, the Conservatory's examination system has created a cultural asset ideal for a country such as Canada, providing, promoting, and disseminating both the branded curriculum and controlled assessment, which contributed to the development and improvement of music education rapidly and effectively.

A distinctive part of the dissertation in addition to its detailed history is the interviews with current examiners and teachers, who face a whole new set of challenges and uncharted waters as technology offers new approaches to teaching and evaluation. In this ethnographic approach, their voices add a whole new dimension to the historical survey of the examinations system, arguing that despite—or perhaps because of—the weight of tradition they still have much to offer.

DEDICATION

To my dearest mother Dr. Tatiana Nikolayevna Voitovitch (Bychko)—my best friend, guardian and a life-long inspiration. All that I am and ever aspire to become is devoted to you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe an infinite debt of gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Dorothy de Val who provided such indispensable guidance, bountiful knowledge, and kindness in every step of this journey: your mentorship, always conveyed with grace and tact, motivated and allowed me to grow as a researcher and an individual. Being your student has been the utmost privilege.

My most profound gratitude is expressed to Prof. Michael Coghlan for his invaluable feedback, most positive demeanour, refined sense of humour, erudition and broad perspective on life, education, and performance. As a Graduate Program Director at the time, and throughout the subsequent years, Prof. Coghlan has shown his genuine trust in me.

I wish to convey my most sincere gratitude and admiration to Prof. Christina Petrowska Quilico for her continuous encouragement, musical discoveries, invaluable advice and perception from such prominent pianist and pedagogue.

As a member of the examining committee, Dr. Naomi Norquay shared a profound and perceptive angle to some key aspects of my dissertation, evoking further pondering about Canadian culture and its heritage.

I greatly appreciate Dr. Karin Di Bella's thorough editing comments and her expertise as an RCM examiner which allowed for a meaningful and constructive discussion during the defense.

As current Graduate Program Director and a Chair at the defense, Prof. Stephanie Martin provided continuous support throughout the entire process, and stimulation for inventive thinking.

I am grateful to Dr. Gilles Comeau for his helpful comments provided for the earlier draft.

Endless gratitude goes to Tere Tilban for her tireless caring, contagious zeal, ever-empowering energy, and professionalism in every stage of my studies prior to her retirement.

My warmest thank you is also for Triporna Das (Graduate Program Assistant) for her meticulous attention to the details, guidance and administrative support.

I am forever grateful to my dear family: my husband Michael Robert Camilleri, and my aunt Dr. Galina Nikolayevna Bychko, for the love and care they surround me with every day; and my grandparents Nikolai Antonovich Bychko and Olga Mikhailovna Veremeichik (M.D.) who remain with me in kind spirit.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Section A: Literature Review.....	4
Section B: Methodology.....	10
Section C: Limitations of the Research.....	15
CHAPTER 1: FROM TCM TO RCM: THE EXAMINATIONS IN CONTEXT	
Section A: Influences and Model of the Examinations.....	17
Section B: The Piano Examination Overview.....	28
Section C: The RCM College of Examiners.....	36
Section D: Centre Representatives.....	46
Section E: The Expansion of the RCM Examinations to the US Market.....	47
CHAPTER 2: THE SYLLABUS: TRADITION AND INNOVATION	
Section A: A Historical Survey of the Piano Syllabus: The Evolution of Requirements, School Credits, Classification of Grades.....	53
Section B: Marking Schemes.....	78
Section C: Repertoire Content: Then and Now.....	88
CHAPTER 3: “THOSE MUSIC EXAMS”—PERCEPTIONS OF EXAMINATIONS	
Section A: Critical Views on Examinations.....	99
Section B: Conservatory Examinations in the Press.....	114
Section C: Women and the Examinations.....	125
CHAPTER 4: THE SYLLABUS: BEHIND THE SCENES	
Section A: Making the Syllabus and New Book Series: An Overview	133
Section A.1: 2008 Syllabus: Technical Requirements	141
Section A.2: 2015 Syllabus: Repertoire	146
Section B: Popular Selection List.....	150
Section C: Technological Advancements Utilized in the New Series.....	152
Section D: The Design of the Syllabus.....	154
Section E: Overview of RCM (TCM) Examination Publishers.....	161
Section F.1: Cost of Printed Materials.....	164
Section F.2: Examinations’ Financial Resources.....	166
Section F.3: Expenses.....	172
Section F.4: Practical Examinations Fees.....	173

CHAPTER 5: PRESENT VOICES

Section A: Examinations Through the Eyes of Examiners and Teachers: Their Impact on Students.....	181
Section B: The Teachers and the System.....	198
Section C: Creativity and Exams: A Compatible Reality?.....	202
Section D: Are Exams for Everyone?.....	205
Section E: Why Take Exams?.....	208

CHAPTER 6: CHALLENGES FOR MODERN PEDAGOGY

Section A: Expectations at Exams and Performance Conventions: Preserved or Shifting?.....	216
Section B: The Effects of Technology on Music Education: Transitioning to “New” Creativity?.....	226

CHAPTER 7: THE EXAMINATIONS TODAY: TO BE CONTINUED?

Section A: The Role and Impact of the Examinations’ Curriculum within the Musical Landscape of Canada.....	241
Section B: Honouring the Identity.....	244
Section C: Do the Benefits of Exams Outweigh Their Limitations?.....	245
Section D: Are Exams for All Teachers?.....	252
Section E: What Constitutes a Musician?.....	256
Section F: Summary: A Way Forward.....	260
Section G: Recommendations for Future Research.....	263
Conclusion.....	265

Works cited.....	267
Archives (UTARMS and RCM): Syllabuses and other sources.....	277
Newsletters/Bulletins sources.....	280
Press clippings sources.....	281
Works consulted.....	282

APPENDIX

Section A: Informed Consent Form.....	292
Section B: Interview Questions.....	296
Section C: Credits.....	298

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. The participants’ population chart categorized into age groups, gender, ethnicity, residency, and occupation.....	13
Table 2. School Music Options listed in the 1934-5 Syllabus.....	61
Table 3. The table of equivalent examinations for Ontario, listed in the syllabus for 1958-60....	66
Table 4. Circular 23 N.S. of the Department of Education referred to in the syllabus for 1958-60.....	67
Table 5. Table of School Music Credits listed in the 1981 Syllabus	71
Table 6. Table of School Music Credits listed on the RCM website, valid as of 2015.....	72
Table 7. The list of accepted examinations for secondary school credits in the 2015 Syllabus....	76
Table 8. Classification of examinable Grades/Levels (1887-2015).....	77
Table 9. Table of marks for Levels 1-10, 2015 Syllabus.....	78
Table 10. Table of marks for “pass” standing for Performer’s and Teacher’s ARCT, 2015 Syllabus.....	78
Table 11. Table of marks listed in the 1906 Syllabus.....	79
Table 12. Table of the marking scheme for each grade, 1914-5 Syllabus.....	80
Table 13. Table of revised marks for Introductory, Elementary, Primary, Junior, Intermediate and Senior Grades, listed in the 1934-5 Syllabus.....	82
Table 14. Table of marks for Grades I-X, listed in the 1935-6 Syllabus.....	82
Table 15. Table of detailed marks for the groups of Grades I-X, and ARCT, listed in the 1966-8 Syllabus.....	83
Table 16. Table showing modifications in Grade X and ARCT marks compared to previous years, as listed in the 1981 Syllabus.....	84
Table 17. Practical Examination Fees listed in the 1901-2 Syllabus	174
Table 18. Practical Examination Fees listed in the 1921-2 Syllabus.....	175
Table 19. Practical Examination fees listed in the 1935-6 Syllabus.....	176
Table 20. Practical Examination fees listed in the 1951-3 Syllabus.....	177
Table 21. Practical Examination fees listed in the 1954-5 Syllabus.....	177
Table 22. The 1962 Syllabus in the process of altering the fees for the 1964 edition.....	178
Table 23. Comparative table of fees between RCM, CC, and CNCM examinations.....	179

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The TCM advertisement in the Globe, 1908.....	115
Figure 2. The TCM advertisement in the Globe, 1909.....	116
Figure 3. The TCM advertisement of the Examinations in the Globe, 1909.....	116
Figure 4. RCM's convocation ceremony, January 21, 2001: left to right, Aline Chrétien, Boris Berlin, and Robert (Bob) Rae.....	125
Figure 5. The theory examination taken in the TCM Music Hall, as shown in the 1900-1 Syllabus.....	127
Figure 6. Ontario Ladies' College in Whitby ad in the Western Ontario Gazetteer and Directory, 1898-9.....	128
Figure 7. Pianist Miss Jessie Binns, 1911.....	130
Figure 8. Pianist Susan Small, 1962.....	131
Figure 9. Pianoforte Board of Revision appointed to work on the 1966 Syllabus and the new graded book series.....	138
Figure 10. The Toronto Conservatory of Music first Calendar, 1887-8.....	155
Figure 11. The Toronto Conservatory of Music: Calendar, 1892-3; Calendar and Syllabus, 1901-2.....	155
Figure 12. The Toronto Conservatory of Music Syllabus, 1908-9.....	156
Figure 13. The Toronto Conservatory of Music Syllabus, 1915-6.....	156
Figure 14. The Toronto Conservatory of Music Syllabus, 1934-5.....	156
Figure 15. The Toronto Conservatory of Music Syllabus, 1936-7.....	157
Figure 16. Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto Syllabuses, 1958-9; 1959-60.....	158
Figure 17. Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto Syllabuses, 1962-3; 1963-4.....	158
Figure 18. RCM Syllabus, 1968.....	158
Figure 19. RCM Syllabuses, 1970-1; 1971-2.....	158
Figure 20. RCM Syllabus, 1981.....	159
Figure 21. RCM Syllabus, 1983.....	159
Figure 22. Four consecutive Syllabuses, from left to right: 1994; 2001; 2008; 2015.....	160
Figure 23. The advertised printed resources recommended for exam preparation in 1933-4.....	165
Figure 24. The publication fees listed in the 1981 Syllabus.....	165
Figure 25. The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, Oakville, ON. Graph showing comparison of sales (volume of business) and student registration at the Toronto Conservatory of Music in 1925-46. Student registration is measured in 100s, sales is measured in \$1,000s.....	170

INTRODUCTION

Founded on November 20, 1886, and opened to the public in 1887, the Toronto Conservatory of Music (TCM) received a Royal Charter from King George VI on its 60th anniversary in 1947, becoming the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM)—the name retained to this day. The Conservatory is one of the largest and oldest community-based music schools in Canada that provides arts-based social programs, music education, student assessments and teacher certification. The Conservatory has maintained its position as a central music education and assessment body, as well as having influenced and shaped the Canadian musical landscape for the past 130 years by presenting a wide-ranging repertoire and offering a comprehensive system for assessing students' progress through its examinations—third party evaluation that leads to certification. It can also be said that the Canadian landscape shaped the examination system as it expanded from its original Toronto base to encompass a large portion of the country as early as 1898. It also sought to veer from its British influence to become a uniquely Canadian institution.

On the eve of celebrating the Conservatory's 60th anniversary in 1947, a report on this milestone occasion found in the University of Toronto archives states: "In response to demands from teachers throughout the Dominion, for something distinctly Canadian, the Toronto Conservatory of Music developed its system of examinations," noting that "this system [of examinations] has been growing for over 50 years until it has reached its present peak of 21,000 candidates in one year."¹ As of 1953, the number of students taking examinations had grown to 30,000;² and in 1960 the number of centres reached 400;³ by the 1980s "more than 60,000

¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/099. A speech made in 1947 and dedicated to the RCM's 60th Anniversary, author unknown, presumably Sydney Smith (President), or Sir Ernest MacMillan (Dean), or Ettore Mazzoleni (Principal). Printed document.

² Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 132.

examinations, across Canada, were given in approximately 250 centres, as well as those few in the United States and in Lahr, West Germany for the children of military personnel.”⁴ In the Conservatory’s 130th anniversary year (2017) and the Examinations’ 120th year (2018), the number of candidates participating in the Examinations, now part of The Certification Program, in Canada alone reached over 100,000, while the examinations are conducted in 224 centres in Canada and 132 in the US.⁵ Additionally, the RCM program/curriculum is used by over 30,000 teachers to support 500,000 students across North America.⁶

This study was inspired by my career as an examiner for the Merriam School of Music in Oakville and the RCM in Toronto (the former—since 2003, as a teacher and examiner; the latter—since 2010 as an examiner), as well as my three-decade long teaching experience in both Belarus and Canada, and a performance career as a concert pianist in Eastern/Western Europe, and Canada. Though the RCM Examinations have been associated with the Conservatory throughout its history, they have not been accorded attention as a separate body in terms of their historical perspective and significance. I was therefore interested in exploring the development of the system as an independent entity with its own historical milestones, within the context of the history of the Conservatory. The purpose of this study is to determine whether the benefits of piano examinations in their current format outweigh their limitations, and have the exams in fact outlived their usefulness in our rapidly changing society? Do they still reflect Canadian society—or aspects of it—as our demography changes? In order to answer these questions it was

³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/42. Ettore Mazzoleni. “Examine 40,892 Music Candidates.” *RCM of Toronto, Monthly Bulletin*, September-October 1960, 2.

⁴ UTARMS, P81-0264, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1981, preface.

⁵ RCM, US Examination centres by state, RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/examination-resources-for-students/us-examination-centers-by-state> (accessed June 17, 2019).

⁶ RCM USA, RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/about-us/rcm-usa> (accessed June 23, 2019).

necessary to examine the history and development of the examinations but also shed light on their current status through an assessment of their present state through interviews and a study of recent syllabuses. What role do they play now, and do they exert the impact and influence they once did? How much are they still tied to the Conservatory itself?

The dissertation comprises seven chapters and begins with an Introduction, with two separate sections outlining a literature review, methodology, and limitations of the research, and is structured in two parts, devoting Chapters 2, 3, and 4 to a history of the Conservatory Examinations, and Chapters 5, 6, and 7 to the present day, with the second part assessing how the system has adapted (or not) to the present digital age and a changing demographic in Canada generally.

Chapter 1 outlines major influences and models for creating the distinctly Canadian Examinations, as well as the main constituents of the system. Chapter 2 details the evolution of various components of the curriculum (i.e., requirements, school credits, marking scheme, and the repertoire), outlined in the syllabuses: investigated sequentially, they form the canvas of changes implemented during the past century. While the detailed survey has been completed as a background, this Chapter assesses major changes over the decades.

Chapter 3 is a historical excursion to the critical perspectives of the Examinations, including writing on the relative merits of exams. It also sheds light on the piano clientele of the period, which was mostly young women, presenting vignettes of two extraordinary women who were outliers in terms of ethnic origin and disability but were publicly celebrated for their outstanding capabilities. Chapter 4 looks at the creation of the syllabuses, both in the past and more recent trends with particular reference to the technical requirements for the 2008 edition and repertoire for the 2015 edition, while also providing information about Examinations'

publishers and financial aspects associated with them, briefly noting some changes in its practices and publication distribution in a digital age.

Following on from this chapter's present-day view, Chapter 5 takes an ethnographic and auto-ethnographic approach, using interviews with current piano teachers and examiners to provide an overview of opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of the system and reflections on their effect on music education generally in a world with shifting values; I have also used some of my own observations in this chapter. As sound pedagogy is crucial for the success of the examinations (and is also one of the reasons for their foundation) drawing on views expressed by the interviewees and the author's own experience, Chapter 6 delves deeper into challenges confronting pedagogy in the modern age. Referring to the work of Prensky and others, this chapter also discusses the effects of the technological advancements on today's piano students and the digital generation in general. It also moves outside the historical and pedagogical literature to explore the scientific exploration into music learning generally (e.g. developing sight reading and musicianship skills) and aspects of pianism more particularly.

Finally, Chapter 7 provides a conclusion and summary based on both the historical and current views examined in the dissertation and assesses the benefits and limitations of the examinations in a changing world. It also offers a perspective on how the idea of Canadian multiculturalism can be utilized, added to, or applied in the examinations format.

SECTION A

LITERATURE REVIEW

Though the literature covering the RCM Examinations in particular is somewhat limited there are nonetheless some sources covering the history of the Conservatory itself. Horwood's *Toronto*

Conservatory of Music: A Retrospect (1886-1936) is a brief survey written for the 50th anniversary and has some historiographical value. Ezra Schabas's *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music* is the most recent comprehensive history of the conservatory,⁷ and is cited throughout this dissertation extensively, however, it does not deal with the examinations in particular.

Other historical accounts of particular periods in the Conservatory's history by John Becker 1983⁸ and Gaynor Jones 1989⁹ provide information about the early years of the institution, while Schabas's biography of Sir Ernest MacMillan *Sir Ernest MacMillan: The Importance of Being Canadian*¹⁰ provides details of this prominent figure's works and convictions, depicting MacMillan from various angles of his multifaceted life.

David H. C. Wright's¹¹ comprehensive history of the examinations conducted by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) is likewise a key secondary source—a useful model to follow as the RCM system derived from it. It also proved to be useful when looking at communication between the two institutions. Equally, Jones's article covering in detail the controversy surrounding the relationship between TCM (RCM) and ABRSM (Canada vs. England) in the 1890s reveals the underlying conflicts instigated by the territorial interest and financial opportunity; attempted dominance and patronage of the British Board throughout the

⁷ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn.

⁸ John Becker. 1983. "The early years of the Toronto Conservatory of Music." MFA thesis, York University.

⁹ Gaynor G. Jones. 1989. *The Fisher Years: the Toronto Conservatory of Music 1886-1913*. Canadian Music Documents 4, 59-144.

¹⁰ Ezra Schabas. 1994. *Sir Ernest MacMillan: The Importance of Being Canadian*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

¹¹ David C. H. Wright is the author of the history of The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), published in 2013. Before his retirement, David C. H. Wright was Reader in the Social History of Music at the Royal College of Music, London.

Dominion of Canada, and an eventual exertion of breaking free from the British “mothership’s” influence.¹²

Several extensive reports on the relationship between University of Toronto and Conservatory also included assessment on the value and the current state of the examinations, showing the initiative to reform the examinations, and include those by Hamilton 1973; Hallett 1977; Wolff 1984; Trowsdale 1988; Creech 1989; Creech 1990-1 to 1995-6; Burgess, Mould and Trowsdale 1991, etc.

The historical aspects of the examinations are covered in Ann Babin’s Master’s thesis (2005)¹³ that discusses the development of conservatories established throughout Canada; it also conducts comparative analysis of the examination curricula of nine examination boards (i.e., RCM, Conservatory Canada, Mount Allison, Victoria Conservatory of Music, Laval, Vincent d’Indy, Moncton, McGill, Canadian National Conservatory of Music). This study reveals that while the repertoire requirements are interchangeable in level of difficulty across the systems, the technical demands differ widely, ensuring each system’s unique imprint. Babin also refers to relevant parts of the vast MacMillan fonds held at the National Archives and Library Canada; in my own work I determined that the Toronto-based resources were more than adequate for the research I sought to undertake, and a full investigation of the MacMillan fonds was beyond the time available for this study.

In addition to the primary archival sources dealing with the RCM and its examinations, there are a number of beneficial contextual sources (some of which used as a background or cited

¹² Gaynor G. Jones, 1991. “Exam Wars” and the Toronto Territorial Connection. *Canadian University Music Review* 11, no. 2: 51-67.

¹³ Margaret Ann Babin. 2005. “Music conservatories in Canada and the piano examination system for the preparatory student: A historical survey and comparative analysis.” MA thesis, University of Ottawa.

in the dissertation) that helped to support the archival findings. Among them are the works that provide an insight into music education in Canada and also persuasively argued discussions on the examinations' culture: in response to Harry Hill's seemingly contentious article, MacMillan, in an article for the women's magazine *Chatelaine* (1933) argues for and clarifies the value and purpose of the exams, expressing his viewpoint which still resonates today.¹⁴ A thorough history of various musical practices, their origins, and implications by Green and Vogan (1991); a coverage of how émigré musicians shaped the Canadian musical canvas by Helmer (2009) are of a great value. Beauchamp (1994) provides a multi-dimensional study of Boris Berlin's contribution to piano pedagogy, improvement of teaching practice throughout the country, involvement in the process of developing/refining the Examinations' curriculum, etc., all of which is contextualized within the history of TCM (RCM), music and teachers' associations, and Berlin's influential figures and contemporaries—both prominent composers and teachers—MacMillan and Champagne. Additionally, Berlin, a long-time teacher at the Conservatory, was known for his numerous workshops and summer courses, as well as for extensive publications of piano methods and books on ear training and sight reading, beginning in 1939.

The context of music education in Canada, explored in *Critical Perspectives in Canadian Music Education*, a collection of papers edited by Beynon and Veblen (2012) is useful and revealing as a backdrop for the Conservatory's activities; similarly, Betty Hanley's series of interviews with Franklin Churchley (2005)¹⁵ gives a perspective of a long-standing scholar and teacher. The pedagogical and performance-related perspective offered by an American pianist,

¹⁴ Ernest MacMillan. 1933. "Those Music Exams! A Stumbling Block or a Stepping Stone?" *Chatelaine* (November): 15, 48, 62, Toronto.

¹⁵ Betty Hanley. 2005. *Franklin E. Churchley: Gentleman, Scholar, Teacher*. Publisher unknown. Available online, <http://cmea.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/churchley.pdf> (accessed October 1, 2019). Hanley was also a contributor to *Critical Perspectives in Canadian Music Education*.

teacher, and composer Seymour Bernstein, both printed resources (1981 and 1991) online documentary (2015), supplements the discussion of the examination-related performance aspects.

The extensive piano pedagogy and exam preparation literature found in journals dedicated to this topic often deals with the merits of examining or testing generally but more in a British context as the US scheme is not so concerned with this aspect of pedagogy. The latter still seeks and welcomes valuable contributions to enrich the students' structured preparatory practice and draw from the guidelines of the Canadian system: in light of the examinations expansion in the US, such guidance is provided through the articles by Lopinski (2007), Lopinski and Snow (2007), et al., while Rusk's (2018) publication in *The Canadian Musician* communicates to a Canadian audience. Similarly, the members of various Examination Boards have produced handbooks for pupils, teachers and parents to familiarize them with the process and to allay any apprehension by guiding them through the Examinations (Irvine and Condie 1984 for the RCM; Taylor 2005 for ABRSM).

Louis Adam's *Méthode de piano du conservatoire*, published under the name of the Paris Conservatoire in 1804, while a far cry from past or present RCM curricula, attempted to combine pedagogy with repertoire for various levels, including 50 *leçons* graded from easy to difficult by Gluck, Haydn, Mozart and others. There was also a series of purely technical exercises.

The comprehensive guide to most current research and training in the piano pedagogy field is provided by Comeau (2009), in which the most relevant resources, including works from other disciplines, are consolidated in a detailed guide intended for students, pedagogues and scholars.

As there has historically been little connection between the scientific and pedagogy fields, various writers on music cognition and psychology (e.g., Christianson 1992; Bjork 1994;¹⁶ Bellezza 1996; Bjork and Bjork 1996;¹⁷ Chabris 1999; Hodges 1999; Altenmüller 2001; Hamann 2001; Schellenberg 2004; McDermott and Hauser 2007; Moreno et al 2009; George and Coch 2011, et al) have sought to bridge this gap. The research mentioned above provide a perspective on research in neuroscience and music that reveal the positive effects of music studies on children’s cognitive skills (thus further contributing to a higher academic achievement, improved social skills, memory, etc.). As the Conservatory strives to explore the connections between the sciences and the arts, its latest initiative includes an in-house neuroscience lab (led by neuroscientist Dr. Sean Hutchins), which communicates its findings to the wider public.

The Conservatory examinations have attempted to maintain a Canadian identity through the inclusion of works by Canadian composers, particularly more recently. The literature pertaining to Canadian composers and their presence on the national musical scene comprise works by Schafer (1984); Beckwith (1997; 1988; 2006; 2012); Wolters (1999); Kallmann (2013), as well as sources related to the Canadian League of Composers and the Canadian Music Centre, various articles and online resources. Hahn (2005)¹⁸ provides a critical and analytical survey of Canadian pedagogical repertoire (i.e., pieces for piano students published by various examination boards and independent publishers) from 1970 to 2004.

Exploring the challenges pertaining to modern pedagogy in the digital age, both Prensky (2001) and Chernigovskaya (2017) were helpful in terms of clarifying the advantages and

¹⁶ Robert A. Bjork. 1994. “Memory and Metamemory Considerations in the Training of Human Beings.” Ed. Metcalfe, Janet, and Arthur P. Shumamura. *Metacognition: Knowing about knowing*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 185-207.

¹⁷ Elizabeth L. Bjork, and Robert A. Bjork. 1996. *Memory*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

¹⁸ Christopher Charles Hahn. 2005. “Canadian pedagogical piano repertoire since 1970: A survey of contemporary compositional styles and techniques.” PhD diss., The University of Oklahoma, Graduate College.

downsides of the transitional period (from print to digital), emphasizing the necessity of preserving the arts for future generations. Some critical views on the concept of examinations by Warren (2011), and Turnbull's (2006) survey of the rapidly emerging performer pool among East Asians (with particular reference to Chinese players in their native countries, and second generation born of the naturalized citizens in other countries)—presented new perspectives on a career in music in an increasingly globalized world.

SECTION B

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this research sought to balance and connect the past with the present and comprised a two-stage process: investigating the primary sources and conducting interviews with present-day teachers and examiners. The historical study was conducted primarily at the University of Toronto Archives and Records Management Services (UTARMS), a division of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, where the records of the Toronto Conservatory of Music (former name of the current RCM), dating back to 1887, can be accessed. Many records and fonds related to the RCM and some individuals (teachers, examiners) are marked as “restricted,” and are therefore inaccessible. Since syllabuses are in the public domain, they are available for viewing. Furthermore, the minutes of the Examinations Department meetings (or assembly); Conservatory Quarterly newsletters; bulletins; yearbooks; examiners' biographies; recital programs; press/newspaper clippings; graded books; reports on the study of the efficiency of the examination system and conservatory, and their relationship with the University of Toronto; convocation speeches drafts, and so on can be found in addition to an almost complete collection of piano syllabuses. Other relevant materials found in the archives comprise paperwork from

Ezra Schabas's office preserved from the times of his tenure as a Principal of the RCM (1978-1983), including meeting minutes and miscellaneous correspondence, memoranda, etc. The archives also hold the very first ledger (1887) where the names of the enrollees, i.e., students, and the fees for the courses were entered.

Other primary source material, including a collection of published Repertoire and Studies books, selected syllabuses, meeting minutes, detailed financial records of The Frederick Harris Music Company, etc., are held in RCM Archives (recently relocated from the Rupert Edwards library), and some of the more recently published resources can be found in the College of Examiners' library and Publishing Department. For the purpose of comparison, relevant examination and sight reading and selected (available) graded book series publications of the ABRSM,¹⁹ AMEB,²⁰ WCOM²¹ and WBM²² were consulted through the RCM fonds as well.

A total of 74 syllabuses were examined (i.e., early calendars, later called syllabuses) during 1887-2015 and graded book collections (not all of them being complete sets) from the 1920s to 2015 (the latter, along with 2001 and 2008 complete sets are from my private collection). These resources were compared in relation to repertoire content both in detail and also with the perspective in mind to establish more general, large-scheme trends/developments. The changes in the technical and musicianship requirements were tracked as well as evolving marking schemes per grade, school credits; introduction or elimination, or modification of certain grades/levels and so on, thus demonstrating the evolution of the piano Syllabus up to the present arranged in so called "slice" history. Both UTARMS and RCM archives contain large

¹⁹ The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM).

²⁰ Australian Music Examination Board (AMEB).

²¹ Western Ontario Conservatory of Music (WOCM).

²² Western Board of Music (WBM).

collections, however, the former provides public service to access them, while the latter does not, due to its temporary transitional period.²³

The research outlined in Chapter 5 involved human participants (or informants) in a qualitative study—the interviews, lengthy conversations and/or written correspondence via email,²⁴ which was conducted with piano teachers, examiners (or former examiners) for the examination systems such as RCM, CC, and a former examiner for the ABRSM during the period between June and October of 2018, comprising a total of 36 participants. The interviews proceeded either as an in-person meeting or a session via VoIP²⁵ for an average of 60 to 90 minutes, involving participants from Toronto, Mississauga, Oakville, Burlington, Hamilton, St. Catharines, Ancaster, Windsor, Georgian Bay, Whitby, Barrie, Markham, Richmond Hill (ON), also Winnipeg (MB), Red Deer (AB), Vancouver (BC), New Hampshire (US), and Hong Kong. The participants were asked to respond to thirty questions pertaining to examinations (i.e., preparation strategies, perception of exams as the means of education, etc), pedagogical responsiveness to the changes in the curriculum, views on changing demographics, flexibility with or willingness to adapt to technological advancement, and challenges or issues associated with “teaching to the exam.”

As an examiner myself, I was able to draw from a pool based on my network of contacts with the examiners and teachers I have met at various venues (i.e., examination sessions, Steinway Gallery teachers’ professional development meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, etc). Reaching out to specific examiners whom I personally did not know, but

²³ I was fortunate to obtain an exclusive access to the RCM archival collection by the Conservatory’s administration and management.

²⁴ Three participants elected to communicate via written responses to the questions in pursuit of providing more thorough in their opinion, thought-through answers, which will automatically serve as a transcript, alleviating any possibility of misinterpretation.

²⁵ Voice over Internet Protocol: i.e., Skype or Face Time sessions.

whose views were important to obtain due to the examiners' long-standing careers in the field, was made possible by the Examinations Academic Office, who provided the contact information I needed.

The pool of participants was intended to be representative of a balanced mix of gender, age, experience, and ethnic background, creating a ratio of 27 females and 9 males; 12 participants over the age of 60; 14—over the age of 50; 6—over the age of 40; and 4—over the age of 30. Most of the population were in the teacher-examiner category (21), former ABRSM examiner (1), CC examiners (2), while the other half consisted of piano teachers (11), and neither teacher nor examiner (1). The ethnic background was intended to be diverse, although considering the overall racial mix reflected that of the examiners and teachers body (observed at the examiners' professional development meetings and the RCM Summer Summit), the population for this study revealed similar ratio of 30 Caucasians, 4 East Asians, 2 persons of colour: i.e., 27 Canadian born, 7 first generation immigrants, including 1 British citizen; 1 second generation immigrant; 1 native of Hong Kong (see Table 1):

AGE GROUPS	> 60			>50			>40			>30		
	12			14			6			4		
GENDER	F	M		F	M		F	M		F	M	
	8	4		11	3		4	2		4	0	
ETHNICITY	C	EA	PC	C	EA	PC	C	EA	PC	C	EA	PC
	11	0	1	13	1	0	5	0	1	1	3	0
RESIDENCY	CB	1st	2nd	CB	1st	2nd	CB	1st	2nd	CB	native East Asian	2nd
	10	2	0	10	4	0	5	1	0	2	1	1
OCCUPATION	EX	T	N	EX	T	N	EX	T	N	EX	T	N
	9	3	0	10	3	1	2	4	0	3	1	0

Table 1: The participants' population chart categorized into age groups, gender, ethnicity, residency, and occupation.²⁶

²⁶ Legend: Age Groups: over 60, over 50, over 40, over 30. Gender: F-female; M-male. Ethnicity: C-Caucasian, EA-East Asian, PC-Person of Colour. Residency: CB-Canadian Born, 1st-First generation immigrant, 2nd-Second generation. Occupation: EX-Examiner (RCM, CC, ABRSM), T-Teacher, N-Neither Examiner nor Teacher.

Inevitably, some potential candidates for the interview process either politely declined my invitation due to their own busy schedule; or replied with enthusiasm, but over time got caught up with various challenges. Overall, the goal was to create a much more voluminous and diverse population capturing wider parts of the US and Canada (especially its Eastern part).

This study, incorporating the voices of today, has brought to light many challenges the RCM Examinations has faced in the past decades, showing that certain issues can be traced back through its history. The interviews were audiotaped, and their content is the basis for the views expressed in Chapters 5 and 6. Lively, at times heated discussions, and overall professionally stimulating conversations allowed for the teachers' and examiners' voices to be heard, expressing not only the benefits of the Examination system, but also disappointments, concerns, and ideas for its future with passionate demeanour, care for pupils, and sense of devotion to their field.

Twelve participants elected to remain anonymous and were not asked to give a reason for their choice. A few participants (examiners for CC and teachers) expressed radically opposing views towards the RCM system, some of whom remained anonymous, and some did not. Overall, with some constructive criticism evident, the RCM examiners shared a fairly positive view of the exams, which was not unexpected, given their professional role.

Being both an outsider (I obtained most of my music education in Eastern Europe), as well as an insider in the examination room in Canada and the US, I believe that I can assess the system objectively. Weaving the interviews into the overall discussion, Chapter 5 may be considered as an oral history testimony that supports my hypothesis that, though imperfect, the benefits of the examinations outweigh their limitations even in today's rapidly evolving world,

and the views—both positive and negative—of its current practitioners are consistent with those expressed throughout the institution’s history.

SECTION C

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The UTARMS and RCM fonds are extensive and provided sufficient material for this particular study. As explained above, time considerations and the size of other fonds such as that of MacMillan in the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa precluded lengthy study. I decided that my study should be based mainly on the primary sources related to the examinations in Toronto.

The complete list of all the members of the College of Examiners that indicates their contact information is confidential, so I am not able to provide statistical information on its composition. Equally, the matters related to the internal processes, operations, mandates, contract details, electronic forms formats, detailed marking rubrics intended for examiners only, or plans for future initiatives, etc. could not be revealed in this dissertation.

Although the views on the examination system are communicated by the students and their parents during the student’s course of study, collecting the data from this population was not achievable due to many variables such data may entail. Since both the students and parents lack a long-range perspective on the examinations, especially given their limited knowledge of the curriculum’s specificities, as well as the constituents and nuances of the teacher’s and examiner’s work in their professional fields, such study would have been beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Since the purpose of this dissertation was to focus on the RCM’s Examination system, it did not therefore include a full comparison with all the other examining systems operating

currently, as such research has already been completed (Babin 2005), and although some other systems were briefly acknowledged, creating a full historical survey was outside the scope of my particular research. Since other histories of the Conservatory exist, notably by Schabas (2005), I concentrated only on details relevant to the topic at hand. Similarly, the description of various battles in the history between the RCM and the University of Toronto fall outside the scope of this study. While these challenges were serious, it is proof of the Examinations' strength that they managed to withstand them.

CHAPTER 1

FROM TCM TO RCM: THE EXAMINATIONS IN CONTEXT

SECTION A

INFLUENCES AND MODEL OF THE EXAMINATION

Since its foundation in 1887, the Conservatory has maintained the historic continuity of the *conservatoire*¹ by following in the footsteps of the European tradition of teaching music in a specialized institution, and at the same time instilling the concept with a modern sensibility. Although the history of conservatories can be traced back to the monasteries and orphanages in 16th- and 17th-century Italy the Toronto Conservatory school modelled itself on the more familiar nineteenth-century concept.

The first of the modern iterations was the Paris Conservatoire de Musique, founded by Napoleon in 1795, followed by similar institutions in cities across Europe, where Germany soon took the lead, notably in Leipzig, Frankfurt and Weimar, though Moscow and St. Petersburg opened their training institutions in the 1860s.² No doubt the Royal Academy of Music in London (1822) and later the Royal College of Music (1882) exerted a powerful influence on Toronto's Conservatory, so that by 1887 the Toronto Conservatory of Music (later the Royal Conservatory of Music) opened its doors, “justly claim[ing] the honor [*sic*] of being the pioneer

¹ From Latin *conservare*; Italian *conservatorio*; French *conservatoire*: the term refers to an educational body, i.e., music school that provides training in music performance, musicianship, composition, etc. A comprehensive study of the first conservatoires in Venice is given in Jane Berdes, 1993. *Women Musicians of Venice: Musical Foundations, 1525-1855*, New York: OUP, though I do not consider these institutions to have been an influence on the RCM.

² Louis Adam. 1974. *Méthode de piano du conservatoire: adoptée pour servir à l'enseignement dans cet établissement*. Reprint of 1805 Edition. Geneva: Minkoff. This was primarily a “how-to” book but also offered selections of repertoire at different levels. It was probably more of historical than practical interest. For more on English-language tutors during the 19th century, see Dorothy Jean De Val. 1991. “Gradus ad Parnassum: The Pianoforte in London, 1770-1820.” PhD diss., University of London, King's College, 200-231, <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/2931107/308701.pdf> (accessed May 4, 2019).

institution of its kind in the Dominion of Canada,” as stated in the TCM Calendar of 1893-4.

Furthermore, the foreword in the same Calendar states:

It is true the name “Conservatory” has in some instances been applied to private institutions which, however, possessed none of the distinctive features of a genuine *Conservatory of Music* in the sense that term is understood in European countries, and therefore the name has been in those cases a misnomer. [...] The substantial encouragement received by the Conservatory thus far has greatly exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its founders and friends, and has amply demonstrated the necessity and wisdom of establishing a Conservatory of Music in Canada.”³

Such assessment systems were typical of the academic requirements of many music institutions, reflecting school-specific curricula designed to foster pupils’ aspirations for professional careers in music. Alternatively, stand-alone examination boards with a standardized comprehensive curriculum emerged in an effort to provide assessments of students who were considering a career in music or were simply interested in music for its own sake. Two institutions that emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century, Trinity College London⁴ and the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music,⁵ presumably were models for the TCM’s (later RCM) initiative to make examinations available to a much wider demographic.

Competition emerged from the University of Trinity College and University of Toronto setting up the examinations without offering regular instruction (1880 and 1890, respectively);⁶ Toronto College of Music, founded in 1888; W.O. Forsyth’s Metropolitan School of Music, founded in 1893 and then absorbed in 1912 by the Canadian Academy of Music (founded in 1911),⁷ and the latter was absorbed by the TCM in 1924; the Hambourg Conservatory of Music,

³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1893-4, 11.

⁴ Trinity College London was founded in 1877 as both an institution and an examining system that administers examinations worldwide and manages the publications of the College.

⁵ The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) was founded in 1889 and is the UK’s largest examination board.

⁶ Helmut Kallmann, Carl Morey, and Patricia Wardrop. 2006. “Music in Toronto,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/toronto-ont-emc> (accessed June 16, 2019).

⁷ Ibid.

founded in 1911; Western Ontario Conservatory of Music (WOCM),⁸ founded in 1934, and the Western Board of Music (WBM), founded in 1936⁹; these two latter institutions were joined to create Conservatory Canada in 1997. And although many other music schools developed their own curricula and assessment systems over successive decades (e.g., Yamaha Music School,¹⁰ Music for Young Children,¹¹ Merriam School of Music,¹² Arcadia Academy of Music,¹³ McGill Conservatory and Examinations,¹⁴ etc.), the examining branch of the RCM is still recognized by many as a legitimate means of assessment of musical ability in both instrumental/vocal performance and theoretical skills, not only in Canada but also in the US. Furthermore, accepted by many music-specialized and arts-based schools, colleges, universities and orchestras, the Conservatory's certificates and diplomas validate the applicants' accomplishments and testify to their skill level. Such certification is an important asset of an applicant's resumé, especially since high exam scores secure an advantage in competing for placement in prominent schools or post-secondary academia. Equally accepted by employers in academia or in administrative fields in music-related industries, professional choirs or orchestras, the Conservatory's endorsement in the

⁸ Western Ontario Conservatory of Music was a teaching and examining body operated under the auspices of the University of Western Ontario (1934-97).

⁹ Western Board of Music was an examining body that was operated by music educators in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba (1936-97).

¹⁰ Focuses on the enjoyment of music, rather than on the "drills"; promotes signing in "solfege" from the young age. Founded in the 1950s, the company's branded schools span across 48 countries. "Everyone has a potential to make music," is the company's philosophy, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vlenga3geI>; <https://www.yamaha-mf.or.jp/english/about/history.html> (accessed July 29, 2019).

¹¹ The MYC method offers an integrated parent-child learning opportunity, and graded progression through the levels (age four is a starting point in the curriculum) with fun and playful environment while fostering music reading and theory acquisition, <https://www.myc.com/about-our-curriculum/> (accessed July 29, 2019).

¹² For the past 25 years, the school offers a comprehensive, branded curriculum and examinations infused with jazz and popular-music-oriented idioms, while borrowing the traditional portion of the repertoire and études from the RCM system, <https://www.merriammusic.com/music-school/> (accessed July 29, 2019).

¹³ With eleven privately owned franchises throughout Ontario, the school accomplishes to create a sense of musical family through gathering the students from all the locations at the annual MusicFest. The school developed its branded curriculum up to Level 6 and offers branded examinations, <http://arcadiaacademyofmusic.com> (accessed July 29, 2019).

¹⁴ Founded in 1904, the McGill Conservatory provides musical education and examinations to Montreal communities, <https://www.mcgill.ca/conservatory/examinations> (accessed July 29, 2019).

form of a certificate or diploma plays a crucial role in an applicant's quest for potential employment. Even novice teachers hesitate to start their teaching careers without acquiring a certain level of certification, let alone apply for teaching positions at any school.

Based on the number of countries where its exams are conducted annually, the British Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) leads the global ranking of education and examination bodies that support and assess music learning and music performance: by offering assessments in 36 disciplines in 90 countries around the world, the ABRSM surpasses its forerunner, Trinity College London (TCL), which covers just over 60 countries. However, Trinity College has a larger candidate count, evaluating over 850,000 a year, versus ABRSM's 650,000.¹⁵ Another European examination body that offers international certification is the Vienna Music Examination Board,¹⁶ operates in Austria, China, Indonesia, Taiwan and Thailand. Like the ABRSM, TCL and RCM examinations, the Australian Music Examination Board (AMEB)¹⁷ and its offshoot, the New Zealand Music Examination Board (NZMEB),¹⁸ offer a comprehensive curriculum with coinciding examinations, although the systems are contained within their respective countries.

This left the RCM examinations with the distinct opportunity of overseeing the North American continent, resulting in the Certificate Program's expansion into 34 states in the US in the past two decades, delivering its national standard to Canada's southern neighbour, where a uniform system of assessment was hitherto non-existent.

¹⁵ ABRSM website, <https://us.abrsm.org/en/about-us/> (accessed May 31, 2019).

¹⁶ Wiener Musik-Prüfungskommission (Vienna Music Examination Board, or VMEB) offers solely performance-focused assessment with neither technical requirements nor ear tests/sight reading integrated into the curriculum. The Board does not offer assessments in theoretical disciplines.

¹⁷ Australian Music Examination Board (AMEB) became a national examination body in 1918, following its inception as a program of music examinations initiated by the Universities of Adelaide and Melbourne in 1887.

¹⁸ New Zealand Music Examination Board (NZMEB) was founded in 2006 after the departure of AMEB from New Zealand.

Since Canadian, British and Australian examination systems have been mentioned, it is worth exploring Asian and Eurasian traditions to achieve a balanced viewpoint of a global scene of musical upbringing and historical underpinnings, and to identify similarities, differences and an intertwining between the systems. While the British examination board has been well regarded and extensively supported in Asia for decades now (e.g., China relies on the ABRSM's certification to acquire international accreditation, as well as to qualify for entry into a higher education institution such as a local Conservatory),¹⁹ Eastern European countries do not rely on any of the above-listed systems of assessment. In post-Revolution Russia—i.e., during the Soviet regime (1922-91)—the format of musical education in the USSR and adjacent Eastern European countries, where Soviet supremacy inevitably affected educational systems, was slightly different to that in Britain and North America. Unlike the latter's stand-alone or adjacent to an educational institution examination boards that provide evaluations conducted by a visiting examiner, the former Soviet (also current Russia and former Soviet Republics that are now independent countries) system comprises a three-stage pyramid: State-funded children's music schools, where children from age six or seven study for seven years; followed by Musical College (three-four years of study); and finally the State Conservatories or State Academies of Music—university equivalent (five years of study to obtain a bachelor's degree, more for master's or doctorate degrees).

In every capital city of former Soviet countries a single institution, usually named Central Music School or Lyceum, combines both children's music school and musical college, fostering only the most gifted pupils auditioned from across the country. Successful entrants from remote

¹⁹ The term "conservatory" is interpreted differently in Eurasia than it is in North America: in Eurasia, a Conservatory is a post-secondary educational body, an equivalent to university, where entry is granted through an audition process and a series of theoretical and musicianship tests, as well as through a review of the applicant's high school achievements and range of marks evident from his graduation.

towns are boarded at a designated dormitory for the duration of their studies (in many cases, for the entire 12 years). Upon graduating from the Central Music School (Lyceum), students enter the State Conservatory or State Academy of Music as undergraduates.

This system of education establishes robust methods of training based on a school-specific, uniform curriculum and state-standardized grading system. The exams, mid-term tests and frequent assessments throughout the year are integrated into overall music education, and as in the TCM, the exams in these state institutions were (and still are) intended for internal use within that particular institution. Individuals outside the system seeking to obtain certification or a diploma at a later stage in life, or those older than the acceptable age, are considered self-taught amateurs: the system does not encourage those who missed the age threshold to pursue music at a state institution, which focuses on professional-oriented development. Private teaching and private school practice are not very common in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, although one cannot claim that such practice does not exist. The presumption that students who did not fit into the official (age-based) roster will be challenged in measuring up to the state-approved standard of proficiency stops many from pursuing music as a leisurely, recreational activity. Music and the arts are left to professionals, while the amateurs usually become active concert- and theatregoers.

The resemblance between some aspects of musical training in European schools and the early TCM's format is quite evident. Hence, there is an impression that such a similarity of ideas, curriculum components and assessment models emerged from methodological approaches of the teachers, many of whom came from European countries, who worked at the Conservatory at the time of its commencement. However, in terms of assessment, British and Canadian external examination systems cater to a much wider spectrum of candidates and conceptually are more

inclusive in terms of accepting candidates of any age, at any stage of study and at any point of enrolment in the examinations, without distinguishing between amateurs and professionals, yet providing expert feedback to both.

It is worth noting that the Conservatories in China have a well-established tradition of employing Russian-trained teachers, either those educated as foreign students in Russia or countries of the former Soviet bloc, or by contracting Russian teachers to work in China.²⁰ This tradition derives from the period of settlement of Russian communities in China (particularly in Shanghai), when the 1917 October Revolution in Russia forced many to flee the newly formed Soviet Union. Shanghai greatly benefited from providing a new home to a wealth of Russian musicians and pedagogues—refugees escaping their country in despair at that time. The Russian diaspora influenced the development of the musical arts and shaped the musical scene, blending with but also standing out among other cultures while co-existing with British, German, Filipino, Dutch and Italian musicians who resided in Shanghai. As the Shanghai Conservatory was founded in 1927, most of its faculty comprised Russian teachers who introduced and cultivated Western classical music traditions, establishing effective pedagogical methods and building memorable rapport for many Chinese students. Hence the tradition of a trustworthy relationship developed between the Russian and Chinese cultures, especially Chinese mentees seeking Russian mentorship:

The fact that the Russian pedagogues of the Shanghai Conservatory were vividly remembered by their students who did not shy away from showing their gratitude in their memoirs testify to the cultural and musical exchanges that have shaped these individuals

²⁰ In the mid-1950s Russian pedagogues were invited to work at Shanghai and CCOM in Beijing (Chi Lin. 2002. “Piano teaching philosophies and influences on pianism at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing China.” DMA diss., Louisiana State University.

who played such important roles in the development of Chinese music in the second half of the twentieth century and even today.²¹

When the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM) in Beijing was established by the Government of the People's Republic of China in 1950 it also followed the already secured tradition of practising the Western style and, specifically, the Russian type:

At the CCOM, the Russian pianists helped establish Russian-style piano teaching methods. Specifically, they systemized functions within the piano department, adopted a Russian-style curriculum, and chose repertoire for undergraduate piano students. Also, they gave master classes and private lessons to the teachers and soloists at the CCOM, starting in 1955. With two years, the Chinese pianists at the CCOM [...] reached the highest performance level that they ever had. [...] Through the efforts of Chinese pianists/teachers and the influence of foreign pianists, especially Russian pianists, the CCOM has created a unique piano teaching system that embraces both Chinese and Western philosophies.²²

Once the Western music education style was laid as a foundation, it was not long until China welcomed the ABRSM into its assessment agenda. It is difficult to determine exactly when ABRSM exams expanded into the Asian market, but presumably it was after World War II, when the number of international applicants seeking certification began to grow.

In comparison to the above-mentioned practices, during the period from 1887 to 1898 the early piano examinations at the TCM were routine year-end evaluations offered to students who attended classes at the Conservatory and then were enrolled in what was then called the Collegiate Course in Pianoforte to continue their professional studies in pursuit of a career in music.²³ Examinations were not deemed compulsory except for in obtaining certificates and diplomas. Evident from the first Conservatory-issued Calendar (1888-9), most of the first graduates or certification recipients (named “certificated graduates”) were the students attending

²¹ D.T.N. Edmunds, and Hon-Lun Yang. 2012. “The Shanghai conservatory, Chinese musical life, and the Russian diaspora, 1927–1949.” *Twentieth-Century China* 37 (1): 95.

²² Chi Lin. 2002. “Piano teaching philosophies and influences on pianism at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China.” DMA diss., Louisiana State University, 2.

²³ In 1887 the Collegiate Department offered certification for the completion of a three-year course of study at Junior, Intermediate and Final levels.

classes at the Conservatory in Toronto, including a few who were from outside Toronto (e.g., Uxbridge, St. Catharines, Deseronto, Aurora, Dunville, Welland, Walkerton, Belleville and even Montreal). Striving to afford its students the highest university advantages, the Conservatory became affiliated in 1888 with Trinity University.²⁴ Furthermore, “by virtue of authority conferred upon this institution by Royal Charter, the degrees of Bachelor of Music and Doctor of Music are attainable by students passing the three prescribed examinations as set forth in the University Calendar.”²⁵

The first mention of exams being available for external candidates is in the 1901-2 Calendar, as part of an ongoing initiative back in 1898 to expand the examinations to other regions in Canada:

Conservatory Examinations held in Toronto are open to all candidates who may present themselves, whether Conservatory students or not, on payment of fees and submitting to the prescribed rules and regulations.²⁶

The ground-breaking change of expanding the examination system and offering exams outside Toronto was implemented in 1898. Such a drastic shift from the way the Conservatory’s exams operated prior to 1898 resulted in the establishment of examination centres first across Ontario, and then gradually expanding to other provinces in the form of so-called Local Centre Pianoforte Examinations. This expansion was initiated to make the examinations accessible to those in remote areas of Canada, alleviating the hardship of the journey for students seeking the Conservatory’s certification, which was otherwise attainable only by travelling to Toronto. However, in the examinations’ launching years the Conservatory still reserved the monopoly of

²⁴ The University of Trinity College, founded in 1851 by Anglican Bishop John Strachan, was listed as an affiliate of the TCM under University of Trinity until 1906. In 1904 Trinity College has become a member of the University of Toronto’s collegiate federation.

²⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1892-3, 9.

²⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1901-2, 19.

conducting senior and postgraduate exams in its Toronto headquarters, while the Local Centres welcomed candidates of primary, intermediate and advanced levels. It is noteworthy that expanding the examination centres beyond Toronto did not affect the examinations or evaluations customized to the Conservatory's courses or programs that ran on its premises, nor did the expansion impede access to the undergraduate and graduate degrees offered through Trinity University, endorsed by the Conservatory. However, after joining the University of Toronto, Trinity no longer provided the TCM with university-level degrees,²⁷ although the latter continued to offer its routine postgraduate course to students:

A post graduate course has been arranged for in each of the leading departments for the benefit of such graduates as desire to reach a higher standard of excellence as artists. A prominent feature in this course will consist in providing the student-artist with a varied *repertoire*, suited to his individuality and artistic bent of character. The length and scope of this course vary greatly according to the aims and ability of the student.²⁸

Two significant events surrounded the examinations' expansion in 1898: in the preceding year (1897), the Conservatory had moved to a new building at College Street and University Avenue, and in the following year (1899) the Conservatory became officially affiliated with the University of Toronto. The latter resulted in the further development of the relationship between the two academic institutions, leading to a merger and the University of Toronto's control over the Conservatory, which was officially secured in 1921 and sustained until 1991. Prior to the merger (i.e., between 1887 and 1921) the Conservatory was an independent institution funded by shareholders, incorporated under the Ontario Joint Stock Companies' Letters Patent Act (as of November 20, 1886) and governed by the Music Director (later titled Principal) and the Board of Directors.²⁹

²⁷ After 1906 no affiliation of Trinity University with TCM is evident.

²⁸ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1895-6, 26.

²⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, Sixth Annual Calendar: Toronto Conservatory of Music, 1892-3, 9.

“A radical departure from established custom was made in 1898 by the Conservatory with respect to the holding of Annual Examinations outside of Toronto”—this retrospective mention of the change is from the 1903-4 Calendar.³⁰ In his follow-up address to the Board of Directors of the Toronto Conservatory, the President at the time, G. W. Allan, restated and reinforced the main points that Principal Edward Fisher said in his earlier address to the Directors:

The new departure referred to by Dr. Fisher in the extension of the usefulness of the Conservatory by the establishment of “Local Centres” for holding examinations in music for candidates living at a distance who may be unable to afford the time and expense of coming to Toronto, is one which the Directors feel will be very much appreciated, and cannot but be considered, as Dr. Fisher says, to the advancement of music in Canada.³¹

This initiative had launched a significant shift in the approach to candidates’ certification: i.e., the Conservatory’s monopoly over the rights to a central location for conducting the examinations was no longer practical or current. However, as an educational body the Conservatory still promoted its supremacy on the music education market, guarding and advocating for the quality of its pedagogical system:

The advantages of Conservatory over private instruction are so numerous and varied, and so obvious to anyone giving the matter serious thought, that it is sufficient merely to suggest the more important aspects of the subject. The genuine Conservatory of Music stands in much the same relations to the private teacher as the University to the private tutor. [...] Unfortunately, the musical profession embraces more or less incompetent teachers, no one being debarred entering it, whether properly qualified or not. It, therefore, rests with each individual, when seeking the services of a private teacher, to form his judgment as best he can on that person’s fitness of his vocation.³²

Despite the obvious shortage of professionals working in the private field across the country at the time, with the expansion of examinations, the expected flow of candidates seeking certification began to increase, which was reflected in the retrospective remarks in the 1920-1 Calendar:

³⁰ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1903-4, 26.

³¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar and Syllabus, 1899-1900, 17.

³² UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1902-3, 14.

With a view to widening the Conservatory's sphere of influence, extending its usefulness, and advancing the cause of music generally in Canada, it was decided, in 1898, to establish a uniform system of Local Examinations throughout the Dominion.³³

The convenience of the exams being conducted by qualified examiners who travelled to the allotted centres across Canada during designated times of the year was well received. The examinations began to expand throughout other provinces,³⁴ aided by the rapid development of Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) from 1881.³⁵

SECTION B

THE PIANO EXAMINATION OVERVIEW

In the light of Trinity College London's ongoing work of offering external music assessments from 1877, the Toronto Conservatory's initial examination model and curriculum were borrowed from its British forerunner and adopted by the Conservatory's faculty (comprising teachers with various backgrounds, including European) from the very beginning. As the Conservatory was an educational institution, and not just a stand-alone examination board, a comprehensive set of examinable components was integrated into the teaching curriculum and the examinations themselves, with a view to training a well-rounded musician through the learning of solo repertoire for the instrument, the development of technical and ear training skills, the cultivation of sight reading and independent study (i.e., a self-studied piece was required at more advanced

³³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, TCM Syllabus, 1920-1, 2.

³⁴ The first publication of the list of Local Centres affected by the 1898 expansion is evident in the 1901-2 Calendar. As of 1901, 26 centres opened in Ontario only. As of 1903 the centres' count increased to 52, most of which were in Ontario; Manitoba was the first province to join Ontario, offering two centres. By 1906 there were 79 centres, including those in Manitoba (5), Quebec, (4), BC (3) and Alberta (1). By 1915, the Examinations reached a total of 100 examinations centres.

³⁵ CPR website, CP interactive timeline, <https://www.cpr.ca/en/about-cp/our-history>(accessed October 2, 2019).

levels up until 1921), graded assessment of performance, motivation through a sense of achievement, and so on.

The Royal Conservatory of Music's Examinations as a branch of the central and most reputable community school existed under the same name for over 130 years. Since 2015 the Examinations has gradually transitioned into The Certificate Program,³⁶ although the term "The Certificate Program of RCM Examinations" had been in circulation for the previous decade. The change of title represents a revitalized recognition of the wholeness of all the constituents contributing to the attainment of the Conservatory's certification. The concept of "certification" includes not only the examinations in 23 disciplines (including voice), the full curriculum and extensive online courses and apps; a set of syllabuses, printed and online branded resources for both practical and theoretical subjects, but also numerous learning opportunities for teachers, teacher certification, and so on, which makes the examinations an entity that links integrally to a larger organization, and hence the long-overdue title affirmation.

Throughout this dissertation, the term "Examinations" will be used instead of "The Certificate Program," as the main objective is being narrowed to piano examinations and not The Certificate Program, which encompasses a certification in broad spectrum of disciplines other than piano, as well as theoretical subjects: i.e., mentioned earlier digital learning through apps, and online theory courses and associated with them exams; as well as a certification of teachers, both established and aspiring.

The practical piano examinations, arguably the most significant of all the exams and forming part of the Conservatory's Certificate Program, comprise a comprehensive graded curriculum, represented through syllabuses, and require a live individual examination process

³⁶ Originally, "TCM Local Centre Examinations," then TCM turned into "RCM Examinations Department," then "RCM Examinations" and finally, "The RCM Certificate Program."

conducted by certified examiners who provide written comments and grades on a student's performance. Through this examination system, students whose levels of study span 12 stages (Preparatory A and B to Level 10) are eligible to gain official certification of progress. While at the beginner's level, the completion of a practical exam results in the attained record of achievement, starting from as early as Level 5, a practical exam can be paired with its corresponding theory exam.³⁷ Once completed successfully, such pairing of both practical and theoretical exams results in official certification, eligible for high school accreditation or used towards university entrance as an additional asset. For students studying piano in the province of Manitoba the accreditation offered upon completion of Practical Level 5 exam (paired with the Theory Level 5) counts towards Grade 9 in school. However, in the majority of provinces, the accreditation commences at Level 6, counting towards Grade 10 and onwards.

Currently, the accreditation offered throughout the provinces varies significantly, being negotiated with and then accepted/designated by the Ministry of Education. British Columbia leads in the credits count offering eight credits for various disciplines when paired with Theoretical subjects, i.e., Voice, Piano, Strings, Guitar, Accordion, Harp, Organ, Brass, Woodwinds, Percussion, Recorder and/or Harpsichord, accommodating students, equally proficient in multiple instruments, who wish to maximize their credits count.³⁸ Three provinces, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick and Ontario, offer the fewest—only two credits. Accreditation at diploma levels (ARCT and LRCM)³⁹ can be achieved only if all supporting co-

³⁷ RCM Canada, Guide to Examinations, RCM website, https://files.rcmusic.com//sites/default/files/RCM_CANADA_Guide-to-Examinations_Online.pdf (accessed December 11, 2019).

³⁸ RCM, "High School Credits – Canada, Ontario." RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/high-school-credits-canada#Ontario-5> (accessed May 14, 2019).

³⁹ ARCT stands for the Associate Diploma of the Royal Conservatory of Toronto (offered in performance and pedagogy) and LRCM is the Licentiate Diploma of the Royal Conservatory of Music (offered in performance only),

requisite written exams in theory, counterpoint, history and analysis are completed. The latter diplomas do not count towards any university credits, as the university degrees supersede them; however, on an individual basis there may be the opportunity for students to have advance placement in some university programs. Regardless, once obtained, the ARCT and LRCM diplomas are recognized as professional credentials and considered as an additional degree of accomplishment.

The Certificate Program recognizes and supports other examination systems by transferring their records of completion or diplomas towards the Conservatory's records, thus granting candidates the examination equivalents and exempting them from certain theory exams, their record of achievement being obtained through another assessment body.⁴⁰ In return, the certification obtained through the Conservatory should be recognized by fellow global examination boards, although such information was inaccessible.

The format of the examinations has changed little over its history. A century-long pursuit of crystalizing a balanced and comprehensive assessment model—a national standard for evaluating music learning—has been preserved in almost its full capacity to this day. It is noteworthy that most of the components and the layout of the practical piano examination, preserved as a constant throughout the decades, define the Conservatory's core objective and a commitment to maintain a sustainable and steady system of the exam requirements and curriculum that can withstand the test of time and carry on the traditions conceived in 1887. An insightful historical observation, and the TCM's implied mission statement, is expressed in the

with both diplomas representing the pinnacle of achievement within the Certificate Program, ARCT being prerequisite for the LRCT.

⁴⁰ RCM. "Forms and Services. Royal Conservatory Theory Examination Equivalent," RCM website, https://files.rcmusic.com/sites/default/files/examinations/documents/forms/Theory%20Equivalents_Prerequisites%20and%20Corequisites_Oct2017.pdf (accessed December 11, 2019).

annual address listed in the Conservatory's Calendar, "The great Conservatories of European fame were so called because they were intended to preserve (conserve) the true theory and practice of musical art from corruption," outlining the main purpose of the Conservatory as a cradle of conventional practice worth guarding.⁴¹

Historically, the central components of The Certificate Program's examinations were (and still are) not only purely technique oriented, but stress overall musicality (musical sensibility) over complexity of the chosen repertoire, as evident from the 1908-9 Calendar's guidelines:

Hints to Candidates. The pieces selected by the candidate for performance should represent as many different schools of composition as possible with the view of displaying his versatility of interpretation and general executive ability. The Examiners will attach far more weight *to the manner of performance than to the mere technical difficulty* of the composition chosen.⁴² [my emphasis]

Although the number of pieces required kept changing over the century, the main requirement was to demonstrate versatility: while a set of twelve repertoire pieces was required in the early 1900s (gradually decreasing in number over the years), the release of the Graded Piano Classics book series in 1930⁴³ established the expectation to prepare a selection of three to five (depending on the level) solo pieces from different musical eras, preferably contrasting in character, tempo and genre, all of which is expected to be played from memory. Additionally, one or two (also depending on the level) technical pieces, i.e., the Studies/Études, are to be played with the score (memorization is not compulsory), followed by a set of technical requirements, considered standard in the European curriculum, i.e., scales, chords, arpeggios. The concluding part of the exam comprises musicianship components—ear tests (i.e., identifying intervals, chord quality, melody playback, rhythm clapback) and sight reading tests (i.e., rhythm

⁴¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1902-3, 14.

⁴² UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1908-9, 31.

⁴³ Graded Piano Classics were categorized into lists A, B, C, D.

clapping/tapping of an unfamiliar excerpt that is played after the candidate has been given a designated time for study in silence).

The intention of including these requirements in the curriculum was to stimulate the development of performance-related and technical facilities; to encourage self-sufficiency in the process of studying music with the goal of a well-rehearsed, polished performance; and to foster the ability to fluently and expertly analyze by ear any music being listened to (i.e., intervallic relationships, tonal centre, chord progressions, etc.). Additionally, the Conservatory launched the Popular Selection syllabus in 2002, in an effort to retain its influence and keep its finger on the pulse of current demand, as well as bolster interest and enhance learning in the exam experience for intermediate and advanced students (Levels 3-9). This addendum accompanying the main syllabus provides an option to substitute one of the two mandatory études with a piece from a previously overlooked idiom that has been lacking in the official curriculum.

The 2008 syllabus had not one but two Popular Selection List addenda (i.e., 2009 and 2011): the former contained an almost doubled number of works, whereas the latter not only introduced a repertoire list, but also added elementary Levels 1-2 to the already quite substantial range. Finally, a somewhat modified and updated Popular Selection List was released along with the latest 2015 official syllabus. From a commercial point, staying current and allowing for flexibility in repertoire choices, as well as meeting the demands and tastes of the up-and-coming generations, translate into sustained or increased enrolment rates, while from a pedagogical viewpoint, such a trajectory represents an exciting opportunity to introduce a set of new idioms through a variety of styles and genres. Beyond all the advantages, what was considered an extracurricular exploration (e.g., learning sheet music from a favourite movie in addition to the routine repertoire) has now become a legitimate and accepted option to include in the exam: it

supports the student's immersion in popular tunes and adds a "cool factor" to what was perceived as a strictly classical exam.

The advanced levels of study comprise diplomas in ARCT in performance and teaching (Associate Diploma) and LRCM (Licentiate Diploma), both being the pinnacle of achievement and the highest academic standing awarded by the RCM. A rather ambitious motivation had instigated the formation of the Licentiate Diploma (LTCM, now LRCM). As Music Director (1914-26), Dr. A.S. Vogt made his mark by initiating several historical and impactful events, including the merger with the University of Toronto in 1921: the project of creating a program that was to "initiate a more demanding" diploma, and thus more supreme than the Associateship (ATCM, now ARCT), was a response to the existing competition between the organizations, as Schabas further describes:

An ardent believer in the value of examinations, he [Vogt] was concerned that the variable standards of the groups that administered them — the Associated Board, the University of Toronto, and others — devalued the diploma. [...] The more prestigious LTCM would require a minimum of one year's resident study at the TCM prior to the examination. It remained the Conservatory's most advanced diploma until 1947.⁴⁴

The precise information about the years of inception and termination of the Licentiate Diploma vary from one source to another: i.e., The Canadian Encyclopedia indicates 1914-52 (for LTCM and then LRCM),⁴⁵ however, the evidence of the program's existence beyond 1952 and until 1963-4 is shown in the 1962-4 syllabus issue, after which no sign of this Diploma offered through the RCM is traceable until its reinstatement in 2008:

⁴⁴ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 42. Schabas indicated the end-date as 1947, though according to the Canadian Encyclopedia the Diploma in fact lasted until 1952. See, Claire Versailles, Helmut Kallman, Florence Hayes, and Patricia Wardrop. 2011. "Music Diplomas." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/music-diplomas-emc> (accessed December 4, 2019).

⁴⁵ Claire Versailles, Helmut Kallman, Florence Hayes, and Patricia Wardrop. 2011. "Music Diplomas." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/music-diplomas-emc> (accessed December 4, 2019).

Candidates who have passed the A.R.C.T. practical examination in the subject for which they desire to enter, and who have also passed at least Grade II Theory and Grade III Harmony, will be admitted to the Licentiate Diploma Course without further examination. For other admission requirements, see Faculty of Music Calendar.⁴⁶

The path of the ATCM/ARCT Diploma transpires more clearly throughout its history: first appeared in the 1893 syllabus offering Performer's and Teacher's streams (previously called the Artist's Course), it split into Solo Performer and Teacher specializations the year of MacMillan's appointment as Principal in 1927, being preserved in that format to this day.

Until the last few decades, piano exams were conducted twice per year, during winter and summer sessions, before being expanded to three times per year—winter, spring, and summer. Furthermore, in response to a growing demand for a lighter exam load in January and June—the crucial months for school exams that coincide with the increased pressure on candidates who must balance both school and music exams—the April session was added to the timetable in around 2008. Adding the April session was an experimental initiative that has proven its worth and its suitable placement within the academic school year, and hence the April exam session has become permanent. Another recent initiative was established to assess demand (if any) during off-season time through conducting pilot exam sessions in the interim between the main sessions: since 2018, two-day pilot exam sessions are held in October/November and February/March (two-day sessions in each month). At first titled “pilot,” they now have become “off-session” exams and are filled up. The long-established piano exam sessions are conducted four times throughout the year: two weeks in January, one week in April, three weeks in June, and two weeks in August.

Designing a curriculum and a coinciding set of tests entails implied progress expectations with a realistic outlook on the potential completion of levels by a certain age. Although

⁴⁶ UTARMS, 1975-0014/38. RCM Syllabus, 1962-4, 20.

historically the Conservatory and the Examinations emphasized their position on the acceptance of pupils “at any age or stage of proficiency,”⁴⁷ there are certain unspoken guidelines as to what is expected if a student began studying as early as six or seven years old. Considering various aspects—such as the student’s musical aptitude, practice routine, progress pace, ability to balance school workload with piano lessons, and general interest in a long-term commitment to advance through levels of study and examinations—a teacher has a perspective on the course of action, i.e., determining a possible development outcome in the future, strategizing and planning preparation for exams and customizing timelines to suit the student’s individuality and personal goals. For adults, late beginners, students with inconsistent learning patterns or individuals with special needs there is a customized approach to expectations created by their teacher, as their progress will be contingent on many variables.

SECTION C

THE RCM COLLEGE OF EXAMINERS

At the commencement of the external examinations in 1898, the examiners were exclusively teachers who taught at the Conservatory, known as the Board of Examiners. By 1982-3 there were 93 examiners (for all disciplines), most of whom resided in the Toronto area although a number of examiners outside the Toronto headquarters were also employed at that time: Mississauga, Kitchener, Oshawa, Unionville, Fergus, Burlington, Belleville, Barrie (Ontario); Vancouver, Victoria, Burnaby, Duncan, Kelowna (British Columbia); Calgary (Alberta); Truro (Nova Scotia); and Deland (Florida, US). When the Examination Department began to extend its hiring pool to more provinces (and states in the US), the Board was renamed the College.

⁴⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004. TCM Calendar, 1901-2, 18.

The administrative team of Examinations was known as the Examination Department, now the Academic Office. Evident from the historical records, prior to the merger (1921) with the University of Toronto and TCM's amalgamation with the Canadian Academy of Music (1924),⁴⁸ and then after the administrative re-organization in 1953 the examiners were appointed by the TCM (RCM): thus, during the period 1925-53 all the appointments were controlled by the University of Toronto.⁴⁹

Being hired as an examiner is a sought after professional opportunity for many (not all) teachers, however, it takes more than being a good teacher or performer in order to become an examiner. Sometimes, after going through the entire training protocol, the external applicants who are unable to successfully demonstrate the required skills are denied membership in the Board/College, and in the past were informed of their status directly by the Principal or Music Director in the 1980s, and now by the Chief Examiner. Principal Ezra Schabas (1978-83) had the duty to respond to one unsuccessful applicant:

March 30, 1981. Dear Mrs. ----, I am sorry to inform you that the report for your recent session as an Examiner-in-Training is negative. We cannot recommend you as yet to the Board of Examiners. If you would like to take some additional training sessions this spring, please do let me know. Thank you again for your interest in becoming a member of our examining board. Sincerely yours, Ezra Schabas, Principal. Cc: Ms. Jan Schroer. March 30, 1981.⁵⁰

Employed by what is now known as the RCM College of Examiners, distinguished and experienced teachers and performers from various cultural backgrounds, as well as the academic instructors and professors from various colleges and universities residing in North America, are

⁴⁸ Helmut Kallmann, and Patricia Wardrop. 2006. "Canadian Academy of Music," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-academy-of-music-emc> (accessed September 21, 2019).

⁴⁹ UTARMS, A 1975-0014/34. Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1925-6; 1; UTARMS, A 1975-0014/37. Pianoforte Syllabus, 1953-4, 7.

⁵⁰ UTARMS, B96-0013/011, Office of the Principal: Ezra Schabas's files. Letter of Rejection, typewritten correspondence.

contracted by the College in addition to the RCM's teaching faculty members. As part of its efforts to diversify in the past decade, the College has been providing more comprehensive and demanding training, thus improving its new members' acceptance rates, and broadening the terms of suitability for the examining position. The creation of a wider network of examiners available to cover vast and remote areas across Canadian provinces and American states has facilitated more cost-effective travel arrangements for the examiners and alleviates the need of having to send examiners exclusively from the Toronto central location.

As employment at the College is set up on a contractual basis, with the examination routes and schedules being of a seasonal-demand nature (held during four sessions per year in Canada, January, April, June, and August; and two sessions in the US, December and May), the examiners' main source of income comes mostly from teaching either in their private studios or in other privately owned schools independent of the RCM (at times, independent of the RCM's curriculum as well), or from their performance careers, or Universities and Colleges. Upon receiving the examiners' availability in advance, the Academic Office assigns the routes accordingly, after which examiners can accept or decline, based on the suitability with their agendas. Whether assigned a route close to home, across the country, or abroad in the US, for many examiners balancing the work with personal and teaching schedules is a challenge and sometimes may limit their availability during examination sessions (especially during festivals, year-end recitals, and exam preparation times). This explains the College's inclination to regularly replenish their roster in order to manage the route coverage with more options.

By 1981 the RCM examination operations spanned 10 provinces (Alberta 13 centres, British Columbia 21, Manitoba 9, New Brunswick 2, Newfoundland 3, Nova Scotia 4, Ontario 65, Prince Edward Island 2, Quebec 4, Saskatchewan 14), while the Board of Examiners

comprised 109 practical members (all disciplines) and 20 theory, for a total of 129.⁵¹ Outside Canada, the RCM exams were conducted in Detroit (Michigan), Amherst (New York), Syracuse (New York), Cheney (Washington), and also in Lahr and Baden, (Germany), for the children of military personnel of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF),⁵² selected and recommended by Principal, the faculty members were assigned to travel overseas to teach and then examine on site:

The branches served those Canadian families at the RCAF installation who wanted Canadian teachers to prepare their children for RCM examinations. The two conservatory teachers, Patricia Lemoine and Marjorie Lea, did extremely good work. A third Canadian teacher who had headed the branches initially and who had stayed on to teach in the area was Warren Mould, former Conservatory registrar. This was in the land of Beethoven and Brahms! The RCM closed the branch some years later when the RCAF left Germany.⁵³

The examinations are currently conducted in all 10 provinces and two of the territories of Canada—a total of 224 examination centres across the country⁵⁴—with Ontario having the most centres (82), followed by British Columbia (48), Alberta (32), Saskatchewan (23) and Manitoba (13). It is no accident that the provinces with a minimal number of centres are Newfoundland and Labrador (9), Nova Scotia (7), Prince Edward Island (3) and New Brunswick (3), Quebec (2) and both Northwest Territories (1) and Yukon (1), reflecting the early years of the Conservatory's push westward, in keeping with national expansion at the time, and the obvious difficulties of accessing remoter territories such as the NWT and Yukon. Furthermore, expanding the curriculum and examination system into the US has been the Conservatory's venture of over

⁵¹ UTARMS, P 81-0264, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1981, 5-9.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 196.

⁵⁴ RCM "Canadian Examination Centres by Province," RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/examination-resources-for-students/canadian-examination-centres-by-province> (accessed October 6, 2019).

two decades. By now, 34 states⁵⁵ in the US host the American (and also formerly Canadian who immigrated to the US) students who follow the Canadian piano curriculum and take exams, conducted by both Canadian and American adjudicators—members of the College of Examiners.

There are now over 350 members of the College of Examiners, the majority specializing in piano, both in Canada and the US, and the new members are accepted annually.⁵⁶ The entrance to the apprenticeship program requires the applicant to have the minimum prerequisite qualifications: i.e., a Bachelor of Music or equivalent degree/diploma (master's degree preferred), RCM Advanced Specialist Teacher Certification, at least five years of professional teaching experience and demonstrated success with examination candidates (the volume of submitted candidates over the years is also considered), adjudicating experience at festivals and writing and time-management skills.⁵⁷

After a lengthy training process through the Adjudicator Certification Program (for both Canadian and American apprentices)—which includes a series of seminars, workshops and simulated exams, as well as almost a year of the scheduled exam observations—combined with the mentorship sessions with experienced examiners, the successful candidates join the College as full members. From that point on, for as long as they remain active examiners they are contracted on a yearly basis and are required to conduct examinations in a uniform and consistent manner, and provide candidates with objective evaluation and constructive feedback that reflect the philosophy and the mission of the College.

⁵⁵ RCM “Examination Centers by State,” RCM website <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/examination-resources-for-students/us-examination-centers-by-state> (accessed October 6, 2019).

⁵⁶ Statistical data is unavailable.

⁵⁷ RCM, “College of Examiners,” RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/college-of-examiners> (accessed December 11, 2019).

The 1907-8 syllabus provided rubrics for an assessment along with these useful guidelines:

The Examiners will pay special regard to the following points, namely—
 Excellence of scales, chords, arpeggios and octaves.
 Accuracy as to notes and rests, correctness of fingering, etc.
 Use of pedal.⁵⁸
 Steadiness of time and choice of tempo.⁵⁹
 Phrasing, rhythm, accent, variety and quality of touch.
 Balance of tone between melody and accompaniment, and in part playing.
 Conception, control and artistic delivery.
 Musicianship as displayed in self-studied piece and other work.⁶⁰
 Correctness of ear.
 Playing at sight.
 Playing from memory, quantity as well as quality being considered.⁶¹

Although slightly altered, the self-study piece requirement was cancelled and the use of pedal mark disappeared, instead blending into the overall mark for each musical selection. The expectations of today's assessment remain quite similar.

The examiners' reports and marking range are routinely reviewed by a designated sampling team overseen by the Academic Communications Manager, the Chief Examiner, and the Senior Director, and the review process, similar to an audit, is conducted a few times a year. Each examiner receives feedback based on several criteria,⁶² followed by constructive comment and a rating of the examiner's work, all of which is Done in pursuit of providing quality assurance and maintaining a uniform report style and consistency in marking throughout the College. Since the examiners are entrusted by the Academic Office and authorized to conduct the exams behind closed doors (i.e., in a one-on-one setting), the College schedules observations of

⁵⁸ The separate mark of 6 (out of 100) was designated for assessing the pedal use until 1923.

⁵⁹ The new Rule of Conduct implemented in 1929 allowed the examiners to use a metronome during the exam from 1929 for the purpose of verifying or establishing the tempo. It is unclear when this aspect was ruled out, eventually disappearing from the syllabuses.

⁶⁰ Discontinued in 1921.

⁶¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, Twenty First Annual TCM Calendar, 1907-8, 31.

⁶² Some of the criteria include presentation, writing style, tone of reporting, alignment of commentary and marks, etc.

several examinations per session in the interest of monitoring an adequate code of conduct and ensuring the tests are administered in compliance with the regulations of the College.

All the members of the College are obliged to participate in the annual Professional Development (PD) meetings that include discussions and workshops related to the examiners' conduct, confidentiality protocol, updates on procedures, marking, etc. This is especially important when the updated curriculum and the new books series are due for release every seven years: the examiners then are briefed and trained on implementation of the updates in the exams' procedures according to the revised repertoire and requirements.

The PD meetings for piano examiners take place at the RCM headquarters in Toronto (ON), and also Vancouver (BC), Calgary (AB), Winnipeg (MB) and in the US—Cincinnati (OH), sometimes followed by discipline-specific PD meetings, with the option of joining them via webinar sessions: this gives the examiners an opportunity to observe and participate in discussions pertaining to other disciplines and gain awareness of updates within other subjects, in which piano examiners are expected to become experts. These sessions are particularly informative and helpful to piano examiners, as they are the only specialists in the College who are trained, required and authorized to conduct exams in disciplines other than piano, should it become necessary in smaller communities or on short notice in the nearby exam centre. Besides piano, there could be any number of various disciplines represented in a smaller town, and in the best interest of the piano examiner's time, work efficiency and efforts, as well as travelling logistics, the exams in disciplines other than piano are conducted by the piano specialist. This inevitably puts a piano examiner into a privileged and at the same time highly demanding position of maintaining a wealth of knowledge, as well as developing the capability to navigate through other discipline-specific report templates, marking schemes, repertoire and technical

requirements, instrument-specific terminology and awareness of the repertoire lengths for different instruments, the presence of an accompanist, etc. Currently, the College is working on implementing an interdisciplinary alignment to ensure the unity of marking schemes, marking charts and examination formats to facilitate a more uniform assessment throughout disciplines.

Examiners are expected to produce official examination reports written in clear English⁶³ with a detailed breakdown of marks. Being a multicultural community of professionals in an inclusive society, the College welcomes the experts of various cultures with diverse schooling, teaching methods and perceptions on pedagogy. The Academic Office screens, interviews, trains and hires the examiners in order to create a uniform collegial assembly, without sacrificing the examiner's individual aesthetics, artistic convictions and standards in the ways the given music should be performed, or how any other components of the exam are executed. This seems to be in keeping with the old "Canadian mosaic" idea, as first expressed by John Murray Gibbon in 1938.⁶⁴

The Canadian College of Examiners is characterized by a mixture of Canadian born and immigrant professionals from around the world. Based on my observations and awareness of my colleagues' ethnic background over nine years at the PD meetings in Toronto, which generally comprise a group of approximately thirty or more examiners, I have observed that the majority are white, Canadian born (second and third generations); a minority are first generation immigrants, while only a very few are persons of colour. There are not many Chinese examiners in the College, which is surprising given the enthusiasm of the Chinese community for piano

⁶³ The reports are not required to be written in French, even if the entire exam is conducted in this language.

⁶⁴ See John Murray Gibbon, 1938. *The Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1938. The term was used in contrast to the American "melting pot." Gibbon's ideas were continued by the sociologist John Porter in his *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada* (1965). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, and influenced immigration policy in the 1970s.

lessons. There is a fair balance and diversity of various generations and age-groups evident in these meetings, although the majority of the examiners are female. A statistical report is unfortunately unavailable.

The Examiner Trainees' Handbook from 1988 contains the code of conduct and procedural details that are part of the examinations. Following the welcoming remarks, the introduction in the Trainees' Handbook states:

This is an old and well-respected system for which many prominent Canadian musicians have been members of the Board of Examiners: Sir Ernest MacMillan, Dr. Healey Willan, Ettore Mazzoleni, among others. So you are contemplating joining a very prestigious group. [...] The Royal Conservatory expects from all trainees: Complete respect for the institution and the examination system. While we do not have a perfect system, we are always working to improve it. If you completely disagree with policies or guidelines, please reconsider your desire to become an examiner.⁶⁵

The list addressed to the trainees comprises additional recommendations of verbal support of examinations to the general public; expected commitment to conduct exams for a certain number of days throughout the year; assurance of support of the system by sending their own students to the RCM board rather than to a competing or co-existing board operating in various parts of Canada (e.g., ABRSM; WOCM, WBM, now merged into CC;⁶⁶ or McGill Conservatory etc.). Furthermore, the trainees are encouraged to maintain a sense of fairness, impartiality, and an acceptance of other interpretations; a complete confidentiality of the examiner's materials, as well as the exam results or any occurrences in the exam room; and a pleasant demeanour.

Among the outlined policies, the most crucial is the standard of assessment: "In order that examiners work to achieve as uniform a standard as possible, there must be a consistent RCM

⁶⁵ UTARMS, B96-0013/011(09). Office of the Principal: Ezra Schabas's files. Examiner Trainee's Handbook, January 11, 1988.

⁶⁶ Conservatory Canada.

standard, not an individual one.”⁶⁷ The trainees are also asked to “be pleasant, kind and gentle with all candidates”; to ensure adequate compatibility of marks and remarks; to write legibly and clearly (nowadays, half of the reports are electronic); to “never make any comment about the teacher or the teaching,” and to write concisely to keep the exams running on time.

Notably, there are two interesting directives that stand out from the extensive policy list: they demonstrate the acceptable way to manage mistakes made by examiners, and also a compassion for the special needs candidates:

[...] Be very gracious if the candidate has pointed out your error (e.g., administering the incorrect test, or the wrong grade of technique). Remember that you have a difficult job. You are human. The way you handle your error, not the error itself is important.⁶⁸

[...] Do not ever touch candidates. The only exception to this rule are with blind candidates if they extend their hand for you to shake. This gesture may offer them great security, especially when they cannot see your friendly smile.⁶⁹

Examining gives an opportunity to advance the knowledge of diverse teaching methods across North America and the latest trends in pedagogy and repertoire, and to observe the changes of mentality in consecutive generations of piano players, style divergences, the impact of technology (or the lack of thereof) on the level and quality of performance, etc. For the examiners not born in Canada this is seen as an opportunity to assimilate and also integrate their backgrounds (i.e., performance and teaching experience, musical insight, etc.) into the North American musical culture, offering a different angle and perception on musical education.

Regardless of credentials (often received from outside Canada), cultural backgrounds, perceptions and methods of teaching, the examiners adhere to a uniform system in conducting assessments and are required to comply with the system’s procedures. Through this sense of

⁶⁷ UTARMS, B96-0013/011(09). Office of the Principal: Ezra Schabas’s files. Examiner Trainee’s Handbook, January 11, 1988.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

belonging to a distinctly Canadian community of professionals, instilled and replenished by experts from around the globe, the College is seen as the carrier and the advocate of a national standard in musical training and assessment.

SECTION D

CENTRE REPRESENTATIVES

In order for the Conservatory to grant a region its own local examination centre, a minimum number of candidates was required to be registered. Initially, the number was five, but by 1924 it had grown to eight:

[...]it is essential that the number of candidates shall be sufficient to justify the Conservatory in undertaking the examination, failing which the fees may be made up to the required sum by the Centre [...]. The Conservatory reserves the privilege of requiring a larger minimum number of candidates in the practical branches at Centres not easily accessible or where unusual expense is incurred in providing examiners. [...] New Centres will be formed wherever an appropriate demand for such is shown to exist.⁷⁰

Like its British counterpart, the TCM Examinations appointed agents (usually private or school teachers, or music-related, or music-field-supporting professionals), to coordinate and assist in running the examinations at Local Centres. In the early years, starting from 1898, these agents were responsible for setting up a centre in a specific region where the examinations were held, choosing an appropriate room layout with an adequate piano, etc. and were called “Local Honorary Representatives of the Conservatory;” then in the 1950-60s “Local Representatives;” then in the 1980s—“Field Staff” comprising Field Officers—Representatives, Co-ordinators and Presiding Officers; and now, along with the Regional Representatives, they are mostly known to the public as “Presiding Officers” who administer and invigilate theory exams, as well as

⁷⁰ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, TCM Syllabus, 1924-5, 3.

“Centre Representatives,” who manage the candidates, communicate with the examiners, and whose names are always listed on the examination form which the candidate receives upon registration. The centre representative is a primary contact for the candidates in case of an unforeseen cancellation or numerous other enquiries.

SECTION E

THE EXPANSION OF THE RCM EXAMINATIONS TO THE US MARKET

As briefly noted above, the first mention of exams conducted in the US appears in 1972-4 syllabus:

Practical Examinations are conducted by Examiners appointed by the RCM and are held throughout Canada and in a number of centres in the United States during the months of May and June.⁷¹

By the 1980s they were held in three states— Michigan (Detroit); New York (Amherst and Syracuse) and Washington (Cheney).⁷² In his correspondence with Robert Creech dated April 29, 1990, Ezra Schabas (Principal) briefly suggests looking for the means of expansion in the US:

The United States: we should check out records as to activity in US cities, especially border cities, e.g., Buffalo, Detroit, Seattle. I did [a] workshop with [Boris] Berlin in Boston in 1980. We might consider advertising in an American journal to express our wish to start centers and ask for comments by ARCTs in the US and other interested persons in our exams.⁷³

No further details of the Conservatory’s expansion into the American market are present in subsequent syllabuses, but with the advent of the internet, they instead were put on specific websites.⁷⁴

⁷¹ RCM Examinations library. Pianoforte and Theory Syllabus, 1972-3, 1973-4, 1.

⁷² UTARMS, P 81-0264, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1981, 9.

⁷³ UTARMS, B96-0013/011. Office of the Principal: Ezra Schabas, typewritten correspondence addressed to Robert Creech. April 29, 1990.

⁷⁴ RCM USA, RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/about-us/rcm-usa> (accessed February 7, 2019).

Many professional, top-quality pedagogues train outstanding performers in the advanced music schools in the US (e.g., Juilliard, Curtis, Manhattan, Eastman, Berklee, Peabody, Boston, etc.). However, significant growth in the Examinations' reputation in the US is evident from the continuous increase in the number of states in which the exams are conducted: as of 2019, there are 132 examination centres in 34 states,⁷⁵ as a structured and graded preparatory education with the reference to uniform standard was non-existent there.

Instituting an organization in another country inevitably reveals cultural differences, or differences in approach and mentality: music exams have had a long and distinguished history in Canada, whereas the Americans emphasize the individual teacher's techniques, method books, performance, and competitions, the latter serving as a sufficient evaluation of one's achievement in addition to an exciting performance and "in the field" experience, exposure to other performance styles, and even a monetary reward in case of winning. In the US, there has not been a uniform, centralized, graded system by which most of the students are taught and teachers supported, possibly because none of the music education institutions/organizations took on the role and time to invest the resources for developing a standardized system as the RCM did. The early and systematic introduction and regular implementation of technical requirements and applied theoretical concepts (i.e., scales, chords, arpeggios, etc.), as well as methodically instilled ear training—the constituents of a well-rounded musical schooling—have been practised in the American teaching studios, although not as uniformly as they are practised in Canada through a historically established framework/curriculum.⁷⁶ Moreover, adherence to the graded, age- and

⁷⁵ RCM, US Examination centres by state, RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/examination-resources-for-students/us-examination-centers-by-state> (accessed June 17, 2019).

⁷⁶ The equivalent of CFMTA (Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Association) is the American MTNA (Music Teachers National Association).

skill-appropriate repertoire practised by the RCM is gradually being discovered by the American private teachers, and is considered an asset that provides a secure template for both strategic teaching and learning.⁷⁷

Due to the lack of a national music education system in the US, the RCM examination system was welcomed, though not without some reservations, to the American market, being viewed by many as a well-structured and consistent method. The system's implementation has not always been smooth, having been restructured and renamed several times before crystallizing into the program that exists today.

In 2011 Carnegie Hall formed a partnership with the RCM's National Certificate Program, resulting in the creation of the Carnegie Hall Royal Conservatory Achievement Program. A short-lived venture had led the RCM to changing of the name to the Music Development Program in 2013, while Carnegie Hall focused on expanding other national and internationally recognized programs already launched throughout the US, transferring all the responsibilities of overseeing and managing the exams in the US back to the RCM.

While it was prestigious to be associated with the Carnegie Hall brand, the RCM's brand may have been misrepresented somehow, perceived by American teachers and aspired to as a Carnegie Hall Program, instead of Canadian "Royal Conservatory," as one of the bloggers, referring to herself as a US private teacher with a studio of 60 students, would post within John Terauds's announcement, reacting to the American partner's withdrawal:

[...M]y students were there (taking examinations) because it said CARNEGIE HALL and because they received certificates from CARNEGIE HALL. And I find the public announcement letter concerning this split a total deception. [...] (My students) were led to believe that they could complete a 10 level certification program and then get an Artist's Diploma from CARNEGIE HALL. [...] I used to tell my students that Carnegie Hall was

⁷⁷ Private communication with American examiner-apprentices, teachers, and centre-representatives in US examination centres, 2015-8.

the pinnacle of the musical world. No longer. I will now inform my students that Carnegie Hall is no better than any other American corporation [...]⁷⁸

The split of Carnegie Hall and RCM Examinations, although was given an official justification which had nothing to do with the quality of the system nor its management capability, received a rather skeptical review by John Terauds in *Ludwig Van Toronto*.⁷⁹ In response, readers defended the program and an institution, pointing out that Terauds's comparison of the effects of an upstart endeavour in the US with a century-old organization in Canada was unfair. Joe Ringhofer, an RCM Chief Examiner Emeritus, offered his insight to restore a balanced view on what only seemed like a rejection of the RCM:

As an independent teacher in Canada I have followed the growth of RCM's initiative in the United States with great interest. Over the past five years I have dedicated myself to the teaching of music theory online. In this capacity I have prepared hundreds of American students for their RCM theory examinations. It's thanks to the broad vision of their practical teachers that these students have come to embrace our fine system. They did so long before there was any mention of Carnegie Hall. I have no doubts about the continued success of this venture.

The numbers quoted by Mr. Terauds (i.e., 6,000 American students completing exams the year before, against Canadian steady numbers of 100,000) - if indeed they are accurate and not just rumours - do not tell the whole story. Yes, the number of examination candidates in America is smaller than in Canada. But the Royal Conservatory has broken new ground in America by establishing a national standardized assessment program - a feat no other American school or state has managed to do.⁸⁰

In support of the Canadian initiative, Diane Smith, who introduced herself as an American teacher of nearly 35 years and a US examination centre representative noted:

The program (curriculum) is sensational and has grown from a couple of hundred (if that) exams a few short years ago, into 6000+ today. During this time, the RCM has continued to deliver with its usual high quality. Over the last 27 years I've been involved, I have had nothing but great results. How ridiculous to compare a young enterprise just starting up

⁷⁸ John Terauds, 2013. "Carnegie Hall withdraws from The Royal Conservatory of Music's United States venture." *Ludwig Van Toronto*, January 14, post by MusicAAMore, <https://www.ludwig-van.com/toronto/2013/01/14/carnegie-hall-withdraws-from-royal-conservatory-of-musics-united-states-venture/> (accessed October 5, 2019).

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., post by Joe Ringhofer.

with an organization that has spent a century expanding and growing into the world-renowned endeavor of today. I'm delighted the RCM will continue to stay right here in America. And I applaud their hard work and excellent reputation deservedly earned. I'm a true flag-waving fan! Thank you, RCM, for being here and staying here.⁸¹

During its time as the Music Development Program known as the RCM's brand in the US, the RCM's curriculum was chosen by Lang Lang to become the basis of the *Keys of Inspiration* program, which he curated within the Lang Lang International Music Foundation (LLIMF).⁸² Interestingly, Carnegie Hall is listed among LLIMF partners along with the RCM—despite the split in 2013, the two have become indirectly connected in the final count.

The Music Development Program did not last either, crystallizing into the Examinations' final initiative of shedding the title recognizable in the US and reverting to its historically established identity—The Royal Conservatory. As of October 2017, the Music Development Program name has been discontinued, and all the assessments are now conducted in both countries under a uniform brand name, the Royal Conservatory of Music. The exams (“assessments”) in the US are offered twice a year and conducted by Canadian or American examiners (“adjudicators”), and are touted by the Conservatory as a successful endeavour on American soil, both commercially as well as educationally, although opinions are still divided.⁸³ The American examiners receive the same training as the Canadians and attend PD sessions at the designated locations, or online. Although the venture got off to a shaky start, and the extent of its success remains to be seen, the newly minted American examiners (adjudicators) testify the usefulness, practicality and organizational quality of the system.

⁸¹ Ibid., post by Diane Smith.

⁸² Lang Lang International Music Foundation (LLIMF), “Keys of Inspiration” program website, <http://langlangfoundation.org/music-education/why-music/> and <http://langlangfoundation.org/our-programs/keys-of-inspiration/curriculum/> (accessed October 5, 2019).

⁸³ Private conversations with examiners who examine in the US; centre representatives in the US; and former RCM examiners with skeptical views about RCM's recent initiatives in the US.

Moving into the US market, the Examinations inevitably face two major challenges—financial risks and necessity to maintain its identity as a Canadian institution. Introducing the brand in another country involves making compromises and keen business decisions to ensure the blending and assimilation proceeds favourably. The Examinations included 30 contemporary composers from either country in the latest 2015 Syllabus in pursuit of being inclusive and encouraging equality of the repertoire representation—a contribution of either party to the program that is being used in both countries. And although the Canadian composers' count could be much higher, considering the Canadian system serves as a mothership for the continent, does a token of acknowledgement of American composers and encouragement of cultural exchange between the two countries sharing the same system deprive the Examinations of its identity? The Conservatory has retained the most valuable asset of any business—its original and historical brand name—and that is how it is known: as a Canadian organization extending its influence in the US.

CHAPTER 2

THE SYLLABUS: TRADITION AND INNOVATION

SECTION A

A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE PIANO SYLLABUS:
THE EVOLUTION OF REQUIREMENTS, SCHOOL CREDITS, CLASSIFICATION OF
GRADES

In the address to commemorate the Conservatory's 60th jubilee, mentioned in Chapter 1, the piano syllabus was described as a “comprehensive guide to teaching material [that] gives a program of systematic instruction” and, more concisely, as a “musical bible” for teachers throughout the country to use.¹ Over the years, the syllabuses for piano examinations at the Royal Conservatory have provided a comprehensive graded curriculum, the basis for the live individual examinations conducted by certified examiners who issue written comments and grades on a student's performance.

To this day, the syllabus is an indispensable portal to the examination's requirements—a guiding tool for students and teachers who commit to fulfill and comply with the outlined examination procedures. Though the first examinations were offered for voice and other instruments, piano remained predominant, even as demand for other disciplines grew. The syllabus for piano expanded and evolved more than any other.

Until 1925 the syllabuses were published separately from the Conservatory's annual calendars² and were available from the registrar upon application (later they could be purchased

¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/099, presentation paper, jubilee speech (author unknown: presumably, Principal Ettore Mazzoleni).

² The early calendars refer to syllabuses for repertoire and requirements, giving only sample requirements for each grade. Syllabuses from 1887 to 1908 that contained exclusively the requirements and/or repertoire or both (evidently, only five editions existed during that time span), cannot be found through the archives; it is presumed that few are extant, perhaps preserved in private collections (if any). The content of the unavailable syllabuses can only be assessed based on the sample-like information provided in the calendars.

for a reasonable fee); unlike calendars, however, they were not renewed annually. A condensed version of the piano syllabus was published in the annual calendars from 1887 on, to give students and teachers an idea of the exam requirements and expectations; the title “Syllabus” joined the heading “Calendar” on the cover only in 1901-2. While the calendars contained slightly varied repertoire each year, they referred to the same source—the syllabus that was actively used during that particular academic term: each calendar would refer to a specific syllabus edition that was current at the time, and the latter would be updated at inconsistent intervals of three to five years.

This may present a challenge and reveal ambiguities when attempting to align the two sources (i.e., calendars versus syllabuses): prior to 1911 the reference as to exactly which edition of the syllabus should be used was not always effectively outlined. Only the fifth edition (1911) sheds light on the sequential order of the editions, making the alignment with the calendars more clear.

Only five syllabus editions can be traced between 1887 and 1925; the existence of the two preceding ones is evident from the retrospective summaries outlined in the fifth edition mentioned above. The first edition is presumed to be dated 1887, as it is mentioned in the calendars as a point of reference for the internal examinations; the second is dated 1898, although it is not referred to as “second” *per se* in any of the calendars; the third is 1904; the fourth 1908 (all of the above dates are cited in the fifth edition); and lastly, the fifth edition, released in 1911. Interestingly, the latter is the only syllabus preserved in both UTARMS and RCM archives as the original print, and the only historical artefact among the other syllabuses that were published separately and referred to in each calendar, and which have not yet been found through library resources. Presumably, the remaining phantom four syllabuses from the

time period 1887-1908, while missing from the official sources, may well be in private hands or with descendants of those who taught at the university or conservatory.

The 1911 edition—a 220-page pocket-sized volume that contains only the repertoire list (no other information is listed), with composers' names alphabetically arranged—comprises approximately 5,000 piano works, the most extensive collection of repertoire in the history of syllabuses. Even compared to the most recent compilation of the repertoire, which will be discussed further, in terms of the size of its content the 1911 syllabus remains unparalleled. Notably also, the fifth edition (1911) served the examinations body until 1925, setting another record of longevity of the repertoire catalogue in the history of RCM examinations.

In 1914 a new course, Associateship (Teacher's Course), was launched in addition to the already existing Elementary, Primary, Junior, and Intermediate grades:

A radical departure has now been introduced through the establishment, throughout the Dominion, of a new standard of Associateship (Teacher's Course) Examinations, thus affording candidates desirous of equipping themselves as teachers an opportunity of qualifying for the Associate Diploma of the Conservatory, permitting holders thereof to describe themselves as ATCM.³

A seemingly strategic initiative was launched to supply potential graduates of the above-mentioned Teacher's Associateship Course with an opportunity to prepare younger beginners for appropriate examinations: an Introductory grade was added in 1915 to promote good technique habits, and to ensure adequate preparation for what could potentially become a lengthy climb up the examinations ladder. This launch could be considered to have had a dual and far-reaching purpose of providing teachers, who would have just completed the course, for the examination market, where they could utilize the acquired pedagogical knowledge and demonstrate it in the examinations field:

³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, TCM Local Examinations in Music Syllabus, 1920-1, 2-3.

The newly established Conservatory Introductory Pianoforte Examination has been founded in order to provide private teachers and schools with a test covering the important earliest stages of the work of their younger students in piano playing. Official endorsement by the Conservatory of such vital matters of technical routine as principles of touch and accuracy of fingering cannot fail to prove of great value as an introduction to the institution's Local Centre Pianoforte Examinations generally.⁴

As the Examinations strove to reach out to all possible certifiable populations, special School Examinations in Music were introduced and instituted in 1918: being held at the school or college concerned, and covering the same exam material, though slightly reduced in the repertoire portion, they held the same high standards as the regular Conservatory's Local Centre:

Realizing, however, the demands upon the time of candidates from schools and colleges in connection with their regular school studies and duties, it has been arranged to modify the amount of work to be allotted in the examinations, but utilizing the same grade of material as is outlined in connection with the Conservatory's Local Centre Examinations. [...] Candidates may be entered by a School, or by any private teacher, or by the parents or guardians of candidates, though neither teachers nor candidates may have musical connection with a School.⁵

These examinations were conducted by examiners of the same professional standing as those employed in the Local Centre. Moreover, while the classification of these examinations remained the same, a special form of certificate was issued to distinguish them from those taken in the official, branded Local Centre.

In this expanding sphere of influence, a pattern clearly emerges of a continual strengthening of the system through initiatives such the ones mentioned above. Additionally, there were plans for the Artist's Course to be elevated to Licentiate level, circulating as an announcement in the calendars from 1914, however, a clear year of the actual conversion (or emersion) is not evident (see Chapter 1, Section B). This initiative was finally, though cautiously, realized sometime between 1914-6. The LTCM requirements were, according to the

⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, TCM Local Examinations in Music Syllabus, 1915-6, 9.

⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, TCM Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1920-1, 4-5.

syllabus, listed in the “specially authorized publication of technique,” and then fully referred to as being published in the annual syllabus and yearbook. The LTCM was unique in holding assessments exclusively at the Toronto central location (presumably for quality assurance):

The graduating (Artist’s Course) examinations of the Conservatory, which are available only for pupils of the Conservatory and are held only at the Conservatory itself in Toronto, will in future be designated the Licentiate Examinations of the TCM.⁶

The Licentiate Diploma was offered until 1964, after which there is no evidence of its existence in the syllabuses. There was a proposal to revive the diploma in the Report of the Royal Conservatory of Music Commission on the National Examination System (Norman E. Burgess, Warren Mould, and G. Campbell Trowsdale), a comprehensive 374-page document aimed to provide the most thorough review of the Examination body, examiners, procedures, etc. The cover letter of the report’s synopsis written by Schabas and Creech condenses that the “Licentiate or Fellowship Diploma be restored”.⁷ However, it wasn’t until 2008 that the Licentiate Diploma was returned to the certification roster.

A historical change occurred for the TCM, when “the trusteeship of the Conservatory was vested in the University of Toronto under the terms of an act of Parliament passed in 1919,” thus “[t]he management of the Conservatory [was] directed by a special Board appointed annually by the University”:⁸

Under the terms of an Act of Parliament of 1919, the Conservatory was formally acquired by the University of Toronto in 1921, thus becoming in effect a State School of Music.⁹

⁶ UTARMS, P78-0130/03, TCM Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1916-7, preface; and A1975-0014/033, TCM Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1920-1, 3.

⁷ UTARMS, B96-0013. Office of the Principal: Schabas’s files. July 30, 1991. Schabas’s and Creech’s announcement of the “Report of the Royal Conservatory of Music Commission on the National Examination System,” issued in May 1991 by Norman E. Burgess, Warren Mould, and G. Campbell Trowsdale. Typewritten document.

⁸ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1933-4, preface.

⁹ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1932-3, preface.

This official move, coming under the university's umbrella, was seen to be quite beneficial for the Conservatory, as all examination certificates were issued under the masthead of both institutions:

This made a difference, not only in Toronto, but in Moose Jaw and Victoria and St. John's: examinees and their families liked seeing the name of the Royal Conservatory on a certificate, but even more so the name of the University of Toronto.¹⁰

The year 1921 was marked by the cancellation of the requirement for a self-study piece at the examinations for Senior students at the end of year—proof of their capability to work independently, without a teacher's assistance, on one (out of twelve required) repertoire piece chosen from the syllabus. The reason for termination of this requirement is not documented: speculatively speaking, this could be due to the fact that the independent work on a “self-studied” piece could not be enforced or proven, or it was a time-consuming exam component that would instead be delegated to the private teacher for monitoring.

An overdue change in some aspects of the curriculum was prompted by two significant events—the merger with the University of Toronto (1921), mentioned in Chapter 1, and the purchase of, and amalgamation with, the Canadian Academy of Music in 1924. The latter event brought about the inevitable fusion of the exams inherited from both institutions (seemingly with the RCM's predominance in leading the transition), a thorough revision of the requirements, and the emergence of a reinvented syllabus:

On June 11th, 1924, the University of Toronto sanctioned the purchase of the Canadian Academy of Music by the Toronto Conservatory of Music. This very important step brought into artistic cooperation, under the direction of the Conservatory, two schools of music of the first rank, both of firmly established reputation and of international recognition.¹¹

¹⁰ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 187.

¹¹ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1932-3, preface.

These two events resulted in all subsequent TCM examinations being governed by the University of Toronto¹² and, furthermore, from 1928, “All the examiners [were] appointed by the University of Toronto”.¹³ The year 1927 marked an important division of the Associateship Pianoforte Examination (ATCM) into two branches—Examination for Solo performers and for Teachers.¹⁴

Notably, 1930 marked the launch of the first edition of the book series with the classification of musical eras designated as lists A (Baroque), B (Classical), C (Romantic), D (Modern)—the format preserved to this day. The compilations of selected pieces to be prepared for the examinations was from then on titled *Graded Piano Classics* and published by The Frederick Harris:

A number of compositions listed in the piano syllabus have been printed in sheet form under the name of *Conservatory Graded Piano Classics (Frederick Harris Edition)*. These have been published under the authority of the Board of Governors of the Conservatory for the convenience of teachers and students who desire to obtain at reasonable cost and at short notice a standard edition of works which they feel may make an attractive choice for them in their work. They are indicated in the following lists by the initials G.P.C.¹⁵

The 1931-2 academic period marks the first, brief mention of the special needs of candidates with visual impairment:

Blind candidates are eligible for examination. Special regulations covering these examinations may be obtained by writing to the Registrar.¹⁶

Presumably such candidates, who came to exams from the Ontario College for the Blind in Brantford, were assessed by the visiting examiners at the local centre.¹⁷

¹² UTARMS, A1975-0014/034, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1925-6, preface.

¹³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/034, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1928-9, preface.

¹⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/034. Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1927-8, Notice of Changes, preface.

¹⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/034, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1930-1, 18.

¹⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/034, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1931-2, 5.

¹⁷ Vanessa Warne, 2018. “Blindness Clears the Way: E.B.F. Robinson's *The True Sphere of the Blind* (1896).” In: *Untold Stories: A Canadian Disability History Reader*. Ed. Nancy Hansen, Roy Hanes, and Diane Driedger. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 53. See also: Margaret Ross Chandler. 1980. *A Century of Challenge*. Belleville, Ontario: Mika Publications.

In addition to accepting the candidates with small hands¹⁸ and exempting them from playing octave scales and solid four-note chords—a tradition traced to the 1900s and terminated in 2002—by 1981 the range of special needs candidates accommodated by the Examinations was extended from visual to hearing and physical impairment, as well as to those with religious preferences and French speaking.¹⁹ Notably, the remark stating that an extra 25% of the total time added to the examination for its completion for all five categories seems rather perplexing: it is not clear why would the candidates with religious preferences (with an allowance to re-schedule their exam on certain days for religious reasons), or French speaking candidates were granted an extra allotment time, being equated to the candidates with physical difficulties and whose exam tests were either modified beforehand to suit the needs (in case of visual or hearing impairment), or whose alterations to the repertoire were accepted (due to physical impairment).

The policy prompted the families to indicate the requested accommodation in the application, whereas now such candidates are encouraged to fill out a separate form for special needs at the time of an exam registration.²⁰ The candidates with special needs or special requests are no longer categorized in groups, and each case is considered on an individual basis.

The “School Music” option is first mentioned in the 1934-5 syllabus, where a detailed accreditation is listed for the eligible provinces (see Table 2). The following table shows the Conservatory’s examinations accepted in connection with school courses by the Department of Education in various provinces.

¹⁸ RCM website, “Small Hands,” <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/academic-resources-and-policies#CandidateswithSmallHands-5> (accessed May 10, 2019).

¹⁹ UTARMS, P81-0264, Pianoforte Syllabus, 1981, 16.

²⁰ RCM, “Forms and Services, Special Need Request.” RCM website, <https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/examinations/forms%20and%20services/specialneedsrequest2019.pdf> (accessed May 10, 2019).

	<i>Toronto Conservatory of Music Equivalent</i>	
	Practical	Theory
ALBERTA		
Music I	Junior	Grade I
Music II	Intermediate School	Grade II
Music III	Intermediate	Grade II Theory and Grade III Harmony
BRITISH COLUMBIA		
Grade IX Music	Primary or Primary School	Grade I
Grade X Music	Junior or Junior School	Grade II
ONTARIO		
Middle School Certificate in Music		Grade II
Ancient History (Pass Matriculation)		Grade II
Ancient History (Pass Matriculation)		Grade III
Ancient History and Chemistry (Pass Matriculation)	Intermediate	Grade II Theory and Grade III Harmony and History
Ancient History and Chemistry (Pass Matriculation)	ATCM or LTCM Diploma	
Upper School Physics, Chemistry or Third Mathematical Subject	Intermediate	Grade II Theory and Grade III Harmony and History
SASKATCHEWAN		
Grade XI Music	Junior	Grade II
Grade XII Music	Intermediate	Grade II Theory and Grade III Harmony and History

Table 2: School Music Options listed in the 1934-5 Syllabus.²¹

The new Piano Accompaniment exam was introduced in 1935-6 for “singers and violinists as an option [*sic*]²² to Grade VIII or Grade VI Certificates required in connection with ATCM or LTCM diplomas,²³ but it is not clear how long this option lasted. In the same year the

²¹ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1934-5, 8.

²² Intended, an “alternative.”

²³ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1935-6, 8. It is not evident that the Accompaniment exam was ever meant for piano candidates.

announcement of “decrease in amount of prepared work,” which affected mostly the higher grades, promoted quality over quantity:

Teachers and students should note [...] that the quality of work demanded is in no way inferior to that of former years, rather will the reverse be the case. Students in the higher grades will therefore be well advised to supplement their examination work by as much general musical study as possible, in order to build up that fundamental musicianship which is indispensable to all good performance.²⁴

After 1925, the syllabus was published annually, until 1937; in the war years, publication was less frequent for obvious reasons (i.e., 1937-9, 1939-41, 1941-4, 1944-7).²⁵ The availability of the required musical scores also suffered:

Under war conditions, many standard editions published in enemy or enemy-occupied countries are naturally unobtainable. Every effort has been made to eliminate from the Syllabus lists those editions which cannot be secured, and it is possible that additional difficulties will arise during the period covered by the present Syllabus. Use of standard editions of the classics, which may be already in the possession of students and teachers may be continued, even though other editions are indicated in the Syllabus.²⁶

This period did not, however, translate into a loss of quality, or a lack of ongoing improvements, modifications, and revisions: the year 1941 brought in completely revised piano volumes (repertoire for Grades I to X, and Studies/Études for Grades VIII-X and ATCM)²⁷ and technical requirements. The latter underwent significant changes, mostly in the form of a reduced number of scales, arpeggios, etc.:

Changes in the technical requirements of the various grades have been extensive in the case of piano examinations and have taken for the most part the form of lessening the number of scales, arpeggios, etc., required.²⁸

²⁴ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1935-6, 6.

²⁵ For the syllabuses during 1936-43, see: UTARMS, P78-0129-130; for 1942-7, see: UTARMS, A1975-0014/36.

²⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/36, Pianoforte and Theory Syllabus, 1941-3, 1.

²⁷ Roman numerals were used to denote the grades until 1981; the term “grade” was replaced by “level” in the 2015 syllabus. ATCM is the Diploma level of the Associate of the Toronto Conservatory of Music.

²⁸ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM Syllabus, 1941-3, 1.

Another comment suggests that perhaps the requirements had been rather onerous, but even though they had been simplified, students were gently reminded of their importance and the need for regular practice to achieve a good result:

The Conservatory wishes to point out that it is essential that students wishing to make genuine progress should cover gradually and systematically all the usual technical routine before approaching Grade X. Any neglect of this principle is liable to result in inadequate preparation for the higher grades.²⁹

This experiment may not have been entirely successful, as in 1944-7³⁰ the technical requirements were completely revised (i.e., changes in the scheme of the required keys),³¹ along with the simplified ear tests. Meanwhile, the repertoire and studies were not neglected either, and despite the hardships of global events and the troubling times, work on improving and crystallizing the curriculum nonetheless continued. In particular, publishing was finally streamlined when The Frederick Harris Music Company became the exclusive publisher of all of the Conservatory's curriculum materials in 1944, which undoubtedly was a profitable asset to the examinations, and continues to be so.

The year 1947 holds a special meaning, as on its 60th anniversary—indeed, its Diamond Jubilee—the Conservatory received a Royal Charter. The institution's elevated status marked a new era, setting it on the path towards achieving its eminent position in the following decades and spreading its renewed and increasing influence throughout the continent.

In recognition of the immense contribution to the musical life of Canada which the Conservatory has made during the past sixty years, His Majesty the King has been pleased to accord permission for the use by the Conservatory of the prefix "Royal." The title of the Conservatory will now be the "Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto."³²

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ UTARMS, A1975-0014/36, TCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1944-5, 1945-6, and 1946-7: three academic seasons were published in one booklet.

³¹ UTARMS, P78-0129-0130, TCM Pianoforte Syllabus, Notes for 1944-6 issue, 1.

³² UTARMS, P78-0131-0138, RCM Pianoforte and Theory Syllabus, 1947-9, 1. A formal announcement also appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, July 6, 1947: 9, that the prefix "Royal" would be effective as of August 1.

Besides minor changes to the repertoire lists, the syllabus of the jubilee year does not differ from the previous edition. However, this particular edition set a steady pattern of biennial release of the syllabus that lasted until 1974.

The revision of the graded book series became routine. In 1951-3 the books for Grades I-VIII Pianoforte (including Technical Requirements, Studies and Compositions), Grades IX-X Compositions only, and Grades IX-X-ARCT Studies (one volume for all three levels) were published. Then, for the 1953-4 academic year the ARCT was revised, as the syllabus states:

“The number of pieces has been reduced to five,³³ and Studies are no longer required. A total mark of 70 is required to pass.”³⁴ Prior to this amendment, the passing mark at the ARCT level was 65, thus the latter was the result of an intent to raise the bar for the performance of the candidates, or at least to give the impression of a higher standard; and the former aimed to increase the quality of the performance by reducing the quantity of pieces. Presumably, the elimination of studies had a dual purpose: to allow more time for the repertoire and also to liberate the candidates from memorizing the studies,³⁵ since the ARCT exam was in a recital format. It is, however, unknown whether the time for the exam decreased as a result.

Traditionally, ARCT exams were 50 minutes long, reaching a one-hour time frame in 1994—an intent to simulate an uninterrupted solo-recital performance.

Further refinements are evident in the minimum mark requirement in ARCT being raised for pieces and technical work, and in 1954 the achievement of Grade X became a compulsory requirement to proceed to the ARCT exam, provided all the theory co-requisites were completed

³³ Now the ARCT candidates are required to perform a total of six selections, including one concert étude.

³⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/37, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1953-4, 1.

³⁵ The memorization of studies at all grades/levels has never been mandatory, however, in modern times, the ARCT exam requires the inclusion of one concert Étude, which also implies its compulsory memorization.

as well.³⁶ Elaborate efforts continued, resulting in the announcement in the 1954-5 syllabus that “New books for Grades VII-VIII-IX-X will be issued for 1955-6 Academic year.”³⁷ Coming after 1952, not only can one suppose that such changes were driven by quality control, but also that a complete overhaul was timely in light of the financial state of The Frederick Harris company, which had been plunged into desperate straits by the Conservatory’s secretary-treasurer Roy Loken.³⁸

Examinations were not the only focus, and in 1955 a book titled *For All Piano Teachers* by Cora Ahrens and George Atkinson—an indispensable resource for teachers, both experienced and beginners in the field—was also published by the FHMC, endorsed by the Conservatory’s Principal, Ettore Mazzoleni (the book was reprinted in 1976, 1981).³⁹ The book offers a comprehensive and forward-looking approach to various aspects of piano education—from psychology, physiology, the history of piano development to the fundamentals of piano education, memorization, providing references for composers, pianists and teachers with the bibliography and recommendations for improvement, notes Gilles Comeau, Professor at the University of Ottawa and director of Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory.⁴⁰ Owing to its comprehensive and far-reaching content, this book was truly ahead of its time: thorough and well-rounded, its content, the level of expertise and profound understanding of the underlying processes of pedagogical practice remain relevant now.

The year 1958 saw the introduction of a new classification of grades, labelling them as numbers I-X, rather than “upper” or “lower,” “Primary “Junior,” or “Intermediate,” etc.

³⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/37, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1954-5, 5.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There’s Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 134.

³⁹ Cora Belle Ahrens, and George Douglas Atkinson. 1955. *For all piano teachers*. London, UK and Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.

⁴⁰ Gilles Comeau. 2009. *Piano pedagogy: A research and information guide*. New York, NY: Routledge, 226.

Moreover, controlled by the Ontario Department of Education, the School Music Options continued to be available to students studying a musical instrument and corresponding theory, allowing the substitution of qualifying Conservatory examinations for academic Grades X, XII and XIII examinations, as outlined in the 1958-60 syllabus (see Table 3):

<i>School Grade</i>	<i>Royal Conservatory Certificates</i>
X	Grade V (no Theory)
XII	Grade VII (including Grade II Theory) or Grade III Theory only
XIII	Grade VIII (including Grade II Theory) or Grade IV Theory only

Table 3: The table of equivalent examinations for Ontario, listed in the syllabus for 1958-60.⁴¹

Thus, “In Grades X and XII [what was referred to as General Course], Music may be substituted for any subject *except* English, History, Social Studies or Physical Education. In Grade XIII, Music may be substituted for any subject except for English and Physical Education.”⁴²

Although this can be considered a prototype of the system of accreditation practised today, such an option implied that music study was perceived as equivalent to school subjects, whereas now and in many schools music is an extracurricular activity that provides an opportunity to obtain high school accreditation—a useful contribution for many students to an overall “bank” of school credits.

Likewise, for candidates entering what was referred to as Normal School (Teachers’ College),⁴³ the Grade VIII (or higher) Certificate of the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto was accepted as an optional subject (see Table 4):

⁴¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/37, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1958-60, 19.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Normal Schools were teachers’ colleges. The Toronto Normal School, opened in 1847, was a predecessor of Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

<i>University Course</i>	<i>Royal Conservatory Music Examinations required for admission</i>
Mus. Bac. (General Music or Music Education Course)	Grade VIII Piano or Grade VI Piano and Grade VI in another instrument or Singing <i>with</i> Grade II Theory, Grade III Harmony
For Graduation from Mus. Bac. Course	Grade X examination in any instrument or Singing

Table 4: Circular 23 N.S. of the Department of Education referred to in the syllabus for 1958-60.⁴⁴

The work on updating and revising the books continued, producing new versions of Grades I to VI, and also the Grade VIII Technical Book in 1960-2,⁴⁵ followed by the Piano Examinations Books from Grades VII and VIII revisions for the 1962-4 academic period.⁴⁶ This edition introduced a new title for the book series—Conservatory Piano Series (CPS), instead of the Graded Piano Series.

Except for a fee increase and change in the syllabus's appearance, the year 1964 saw no upgrades, as the RCM moved to its new location—273 Bloor St. West, its home to this day.

Publishing activity resumed two years later in 1966, following the relocation:

The repertoire for this instrument (pianoforte) has been entirely revised and new Graded Pianoforte Examination Books have been issued for Grades I to VI (Inclusive), IX and X. Major changes have been made in the Technical Requirements for each grade, and a Technical Requirements Graded Handbook has been prepared for use in conjunction with this Syllabus (1964-66). Since the Grades VII and VIII Books have not been altered, the technical examples contained therein are no longer applicable. Candidates in Grades VII and VIII Pianoforte must adhere strictly to the technical requirements as they are prescribed in this Syllabus.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/37, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1958-60, 19.

⁴⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/38, RCM Pianoforte and Theory Syllabus, 1960-2, 5.

⁴⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/38, RCM Pianoforte and Theory Syllabus, 1962-4, 5.

⁴⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/38, RCM Pianoforte and Theory Syllabus, 1966-8, preface, iii.

The same year (1966) brought a new repertoire feature, Own Choice, which is still an option:

In addition to the substitutions allowed under the Irregular List regulations, candidates may substitute, in certain of the upper grades in Pianoforte, Organ, Violin and Singing, a piece of their Own Choice.⁴⁸

Various grades would be updated in different years: new books for Grades VII and VIII, and Studies for Grades VII, VIII, and X were published in 1968-70, followed by the revised Grade II repertoire book as well as a new Complete Technical Requirements book covering all prescribed elements in all keys being issued in 1970-2.

Admittedly, there was no system in place to synchronize the syllabuses with the updated book series, as it has been set up for the last three decades: the requirements and repertoire were upgraded in sections, six to eight years apart. While such a selective approach to modification represents an elaborate and seemingly well-planned effort of maintaining a continuous renewal of the repertoire, to a certain degree it might have caused some confusion and occasional incompatibility between the repertoire and the technical requirements, as well as some disruption of continuity and flow from one grade to another, which is otherwise achieved when the entire series is updated simultaneously.

Accordingly, for the past three decades every new piano series launch has required a one-year cross-over period for a smooth transition and gradual adaptation to the new requirements, sometimes taking up to three years to be entirely accepted and implemented in the studios. And even then, after the new series are introduced, there is often an ongoing flow of questions, misinterpretations, or misunderstandings deriving from teachers (or new teachers who have just entered the field), which continue as the requirements are settling. In the past, the misalignment with the syllabus and the somewhat random approach to publishing would inevitably have

⁴⁸ Ibid., 7.

created some confusion, and while the new editions were indeed exciting to explore, presumably they also presented some challenges for the teachers.

A notable syllabus from the 1972-4 academic period contains a few important initiatives, one of them being the first mention of exams being held in the US:

Practical Examinations are conducted by Examiners appointed by the RCM and are held throughout Canada and in a number of centres in the United States during the months of May and June.⁴⁹

There is no other reliable evidence of the exams being held in the US in the early 1970s, as the information about the venture is quite limited, and to my knowledge, the witnesses are unavailable to confirm the fact. It is true, however, that by 1980s the exams were held in three states (see Chapter 1, Section E).

Furthermore, the same syllabus announces a newly implemented Special Audition for ARCT entrance:

These prospective Associateship Candidates whose prerequisite credentials were obtained between 1966 and 1971 and who, on the basis of either inadequate performance standard on their achieved Grade X or a lack of subsequent artistic development, have reservations about their command of such essentials as style and expressive interpretation, are strongly urged to avail themselves of the Grade X Supplementary examination Pieces and Technique.⁵⁰

Presumably this requirement was the first initiative for creating Supplementary examinations that allow improving the marks for some portions of the exam, lending the candidates adequate qualifications to transition from Grade X to ARCT. Now, the students may repeat any three sections of a practical examination: repertoire, technical requirements (including études), ear tests, or sight reading. I have on occasion administered ear or sight reading tests to the Level 10 candidates who had previously either failed those exam components, or wanted to improve the

⁴⁹ RCM Examinations library, RCM Pianoforte, Organ, Accordion, Singing, Theory Syllabus, 1972-3; 1973-4, 1.

⁵⁰ Ibid., preface, iii.

overall official mark. Another reason for implementing this “re-affirmation” of the eligibility is the Conservatory’s intent to ensure an acceptable level of proficiency of those candidates whose term of preparation for the ARCT exam exceeded five years since taking the Grade X exam, even though certificates for any of the Levels or Diplomas do not officially expire.

Along with the Grade IX repertoire being renewed, the Complete Technical Requirements book covering all pianoforte grades were republished in 1972-4. Between 1968 and 1977, under Principal David Ouchterlony, the pianoforte⁵¹ syllabus was for efficiency shared in part with other disciplines (i.e., organ, accordion, harpsichord, singing, and theory), and appeared thicker in volume, inevitably adding to the cost.

In 1975 the Grade X Special Audition for advancement to ARCT was cancelled, and the Grade X piano book was withdrawn; in all practical subjects the regulations regarding the prerequisites for the ARCT Diploma were slightly revised. Piano examination books for Grades I, III, IV, and VI were published. By that time, the RCM had 12 representatives in the Local Centres throughout the country: in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, New Westminster, Vancouver, and Victoria.

In 1978 the books for Grades VII and VIII were published. The Grade X piano book was still unavailable for an unknown reason, and teachers were required to verify their choices from the previous syllabus.⁵² As well, a new study book for Grades VII and VIII was published. In addition to studies listed under each grade, studies could be selected from any previous edition of the RCM books for the respective grade.

⁵¹ “Pianoforte,” now known as piano discipline, retained its name until 1981.

⁵² It is unclear and is not documented why the book for Grade X was in a delayed print at that time. The repertoire at this advanced level would require a large book, as each of the repertoire selections could be up to seven-eight pages long. Despite the extensive number of pages each book would require, it is still quite manageable for a publication.

These triennial editions of 1975-8 and 1978-81 were the last of their kind, concluding the era of frequent syllabus publication and yielding to the subsequent five- (between 1983-8), then six- (1988-94), and then finally the seven-year period between editions. In 1981 only the books for Grades 1, 2, and 5 were published.

By 1981, the Secondary School Music Credits were less demanding than those of 1958 (and revealing of the level of music teaching in schools by that time) with “Theory” re-designated as Rudiments 2 and Harmony 3 transferred from Grade 12 to Grade 13, replacing Grade II Theory and Grade IV Theory (see Table 5):

<i>School Grade</i>	<i>Royal Conservatory of Music</i>	
	Practical	Theoretical
Grade 12 Graduation Diploma	Grade 8	2 Rudiments
Grade 13 Honour Graduation	Grade 9	3 Harmony

Table 5: Table of School Music Credits listed in the 1981 Syllabus.⁵³

Note that neither Grade 4 Harmony nor History was any longer on the roster to earn eligibility for school credits. However, the theoretical subjects were still co-requisites for certain practical certificates and diplomas, and the Certification was granted when the requirements, both practical and theoretical, for each grade had been successfully completed. Some of the co-requisites allowed for variation: e.g., Grade 2 Rudiments was acceptable in lieu of Preliminary or Grade 1 Rudiments. Similarly, Grades 4 or 5 Harmony (alternatively Intermediate Keyboard Harmony or Advanced Keyboard Harmony) were acceptable in lieu of a lower Harmony grade.

⁵³ UTARMS, P81-0264, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1981, 27.

To clarify further, theoretical subjects were categorized in the following way: Grade 3 (Harmony and History); Grade 4 (Harmony, Counterpoint and History); Grade 5 (Harmony & Counterpoint, Analysis, and History).⁵⁴

Referring back to school credits table, such changes created an easier and streamlined requirement. In time, as Grade 13 (the Ontario Academic Credit, OAC) was being gradually phased out from 1998 and was eventually eliminated in 2003 as a result of Progressive Conservative policy of the time. The school credits granted for RCM examinations had to be shifted down by a year, thus crystalizing after 2008 in the following ratio (see Table 6):

<i>Instrument(s)</i>	<i>RCM Examinations Level</i>	<i>Receive Credit for...</i>
Any musical instrument on which performance is examined including Voice, but not including Speech Arts & Drama	Level 7 Practical + Level 6 or Level 7 Theory (formerly Intermediate Rudiments)	Grade 11
Any musical instrument on which performance is examined including Voice, but not including Speech Arts & Drama	Level 8 Practical + Level 8 Theory (formerly Advanced Rudiments)	Grade 12

Table 6: Table of School Music Credits listed on the RCM website, valid as of 2015.⁵⁵

In the light of ongoing negotiations about separation from the University of Toronto and the implications for the Conservatory, the 1988 piano series was created based on that of 1983, with the same front matter design, mostly the same repertoire content, and with the title “Celebration Series Second Edition.” It was given an impressive launch followed by a

⁵⁴ RCM Examinations library, Pianoforte Syllabus, 1983, 105.

⁵⁵ RCM, “High School Credits – Canada, Ontario.” RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/high-school-credits-canada#Ontario-5> (accessed May 14, 2019).

resounding success.⁵⁶ Although it is impossible to establish how many copies were sold, critical reception seemed to be positive, according to the journal *Clavier*:

The Celebration Series is truly comprehensive. Well-conceived, paced, researched, and edited, it is an outstanding contribution to piano pedagogy in the 1990s.⁵⁷

With the RCM regaining its independence from the University of Toronto in 1991, and a homecoming appointment of Dr. Peter Simon as its President, a complete revision was planned for the 1994 edition: the new syllabus and the book series titled “New Piano Series” as the first edition under Simon’s presidency were refreshingly artfully designed, containing the illustrations by Canadian artists on each of the graded books. Also, in 1994 the marks for the requirements in the Introductory grade were eliminated as the exam at this level aimed for a non-competitive, supportive, and mainly constructive approach. However, the value of the exam was soon disputed, as the certificate was given without marks and—it was thought—did not provide enough motivation. It was nonetheless maintained until 2001.

The 2001 curriculum was marked by the delayed launch of the Popular Selection List in 2002: based on my own recollection and discussion with the colleagues, for the conservative RCM this was a truly innovative and daring feature—the opportunity to substitute one of the studies/études with a popular or jazz song arranged for piano or with a piano-adapted piece from a movie soundtrack attracted much interest among students and teachers.

The 2008 syllabus brought a drastic change: the Introductory grade would now be formally graded, and was also split into two parts, Preparatory A and B, forming the current 12-grade

⁵⁶ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There’s Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 224.

⁵⁷ RCM Archives. CL Box 12, CL 2, Series P. A photocopy from the journal *Clavier* in correspondence between Janice Holden (FHMC) and Trish Sauerbrei (FHMC Managing Editor). *New Music Reviews*. May/June 1990 Centennial Celebration Series, 37-8. The reviewer is not evident, thus it is unknown whether the review was made by an independent reviewer, or linked to the RCM. The photocopied page contained miscellaneous and brief reviews of other publications.

system. Most memorable for teachers was the ground-breaking 2008 curriculum that implemented several new aspects: firstly and primarily, the Licentiate Diploma was restored, prompted by the intention to turn the 1950s teacher's diploma⁵⁸ into a fully performance-oriented program compatible with University standard Diploma program in order to offer a higher Diploma level and thus reinforce the Certificate Program's reputation; it also satisfied the market for those students who manage to accelerate their studies and pass the exam prior to their acceptance to University, or students preparing for a career in music. Furthermore, the Piano Pedagogy Certificate Program and the ARCT in Piano Pedagogy, fully restructured, were launched. In addition to Own Choice, the Teacher's Choice was also allowed, giving more flexibility and creating an opening for students' and teachers' creative preferences. There were routine updates of the technical tests, new theory examination titles (i.e., Preliminary Rudiments were renamed as Basic, Grade 1 Rudiments—as Intermediate, Grade 2 Rudiments—as Advanced), and an extensive 142-page syllabus containing the titles of nearly 2,950 piano works, including two significantly expanded publications of the Popular Selection repertoire (2008 and 2011), ARCT and LRCM Diploma repertoire, along with the LRCM's 66 piano concertos. The latter is quite a significant collection to choose from, although it is justified by the fact that LRCM is the only examination with a concerto as an integral part of the performance.

For further comparison, the 2015 syllabus, widely considered to be the most thorough, inclusive, and versatile syllabus of the last few decades, features nearly 3,280 piano works, including the addendum—Popular Selection List repertoire.⁵⁹ Additionally, the objective of the

⁵⁸ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 123.

⁵⁹ Some examples of musical selections include: *Happy* by Pharrell Williams; *Climb Ev'ry Mountain* and *Blue Moon* by Richard Rodgers, *A Whole New World* by Alan Menken; *Circle of Life* by Elton John; *The Pink Panther* by Henry Mancini; *Take the "A" Train* by Billy Strayhorn; *Linus and Lucy* by Vince Guaraldi; *When I'm Sixty-Four*

2015 syllabus was to highlight works written in the last 20 years, focusing on an equal number of Canadian and American contemporary works. Since the RCM examination system is now being used in both countries the choices were meant to promote Canadian music and also satisfy the American market, which the RCM has been increasingly and actively exploring in the past decade. Among the American composers included in the series are Susan Alcon, Martha Mier, Robert D. Vandall, Dennis Alexander, Glenda Austin, Kevin Olson, Mike Springer, Catherine Rollin, Forrest Kinney, et al.

Apart from repertoire, the new edition incorporated a number of other features, including revisions in the technical requirements and musicianship tests.⁶⁰ Comparing the school accreditation options mentioned earlier (or, formerly, School Music Options), the table of school credits now available in Ontario is evidently less elaborate in 2015 than it was in the 1930s, as listed in the latest edition (see Table 7):

and *Yesterday* by John Lennon and Paul McCartney; *Cry Me a River* by Arthur Hamilton; *When I Fall in Love* by Victor Young; *Hotel California* by Don Henley, Glenn Frey, and Don Felder etc.

⁶⁰ The changes in the 2015 series are as follows: 1. The Grades were renamed as Levels to avoid an association and alignment with the school grades; 2. The Levels were re-categorized into Elementary Certificate (Preparatory A, B, Levels 1-4), Intermediate (Levels 5-8), Advanced (Levels 9-10), and Diplomas (ARCT in Piano Performance, ARCT in Piano Pedagogy, and LRCM in Piano Performance); 3. The substitution policy was updated (extended) and allowed for the substitution of a maximum of two selections at each exam (one repertoire work and one étude), which provided more flexibility when combining the curriculum repertoire with pieces outside of it; 4. Technical requirements were reduced and some components (e.g., scales in 10th) eliminated, particularly for Advanced Levels (9-10), aiming for a “quality over quantity” approach; 5. Musicianship testing was modified: i.e., the method with which intervals and playbacks would be administered; the technical delivery of the rhythmic component of sight reading was changed; the playback along with harmonization of a diatonic melody using basic harmonic progression (I, IV, V) was now expected at Level 10.

<i>Instrument(s)</i>	<i>RCM Examinations Level</i>	<i>Receive Credit for...</i>
Any musical instrument on which performance is examined including Voice, but not including Speech Arts & Drama	Level 7 Practical + Level 6 or Level 7 Theory (formerly Intermediate Rudiments)	Grade 11
Any musical instrument on which performance is examined including Voice, but not including Speech Arts & Drama	Level 8 Practical + Level 8 Theory (formerly Advanced Rudiments)	Grade 12

Table 7: The list of accepted examinations for secondary school credits in the 2015 Syllabus.⁶¹

In striving for “quality over quantity,” the initiative to gradually reduce the quantity of technical requirements was implemented to accommodate the younger generation’s lifestyle, school demands, and extracurricular (other than music) workload, etc. The question lingers: How much more can the requirements be trimmed down before the quality of the curriculum is compromised?

Compared to preceding syllabuses, the 2015 edition is marked not only by the increase in the overall repertoire count, but also by the effort to modify sight reading and ear tests in pursuit of improving students’ musicianship skills. The rhythm clapping component in the sight reading test is now required to be done as a two-action task: while providing a steady beat with either foot or hand tapping, the rhythmic pattern needs to be either clapped or tapped or spoken: this involves the body to “participate” in the rhythm reading process. Additionally, Level 10 candidates are now required not only play back melody in the playback test, but also to harmonize it with a basic I-IV-V-I chord progression.

As can be seen from the table below, the classification of grades (recently renamed as levels) of study has undergone significant transformations over the decades, crystallizing finally into a set of 12 levels and 3 diplomas (see Table 8):

⁶¹ RCM, Recognition of accomplishment, RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/recognition-accomplishment/high-school-credits-canada> (accessed December 16, 2018).

1887	1901	1906	1911	1914	1915	1924	1933	1935	1964	1981	2008	2015
					Introductory	Introductory	Introductory	Intro	Intro	Intro	Prep A	Prep A
			Elementary	Elementary	Elementary	Elementary	Elementary				Prep B	Prep B
	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	I	I	1	1	1
Junior	Junior	Junior	Junior	Junior	Junior	Junior	Junior	II	II	2	2	2
Senior (aka Intermediate 1892)	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	III	III	3	3	3
Final	Senior	Senior	Senior	Not evident			Senior: re-introduced	IV	IV	4	4	4
								V	V	5	5	5
	Post-Grad 1895	Post-Grad	Post-Grad	Not evident				VI	VI	6	6	6
Collegiate Course in Pianoforte	Bachelor's Degree 1892	Not evident						VII	VII	7	7	7
								VIII	VIII	8	8	8
								IX	IX	9	9	9
								X	X	10	10	10
Artists' Course	ATCM Performer 1893	ATCM Performer	ATCM Performer	ATCM Performer	ATCM Performer	ATCM Performer	ATCM Solo 1927	ATCM Solo Performer	ARCT Performer	ARCT Performer	ARCT Performer	ARCT Performer
Teachers' Course	Teachers' Course	Teachers' Course	Teachers' Course	ATCM Teacher	ATCM Teacher	ATCM Teacher	ATCM Teacher	ATCM Teacher	ARCT Teacher	ARCT Teacher	ARCT Teacher	ARCT Teacher
				LTCM 1914	LTCM	LTCM	LTCM	LTCM until 1963	Not evident	Not evident	LRCM	LRCM
		Doctor of Music	Not evident									

Table 8: Classification of examinable Grades/Levels (1887-2015).

SECTION B

MARKING SCHEMES

While many aspects within and around the Examinations have been modified and reformed over the course of 130 years, the single component that represents the numerical appraisal of musical achievement—the overall marking scheme—has not changed since its initial mention in the calendar of 1901-2, which was combined with the syllabus for the first time.⁶² Although the system changed from more general rubrics (phrasing, pedalling, etc.) to marks for List pieces, the overall classification was established and remained constant from the founding of the TCM (RCM), though not seen in the calendars until 1901. The rubrics for the passing grades in ARCT level were added much later (see Table 9):

Classification	Range of Marks
First Class Honours with Distinction	90-100
First Class Honours	80-89
Honours	70-79

Table 9: Table of marks for Levels 1-10, 2015 Syllabus.⁶³

For Performer's and Teacher's ARCT, all of the above marking except for the "pass" (see Table 10):

Pass (Performers)	Minimum 70
Pass (Teacher's Non-Piano)	75% overall OR 70% in each section

Table 10: Table of marks for "pass" standing for Performer's and Teacher's ARCT, 2015 Syllabus.⁶⁴

⁶² UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Fifteenth Annual Calendar, 1901-2, 22.

⁶³ RCM, "Resources and Policies," RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/academic-resources-and-policies> (accessed December 22, 2018).

⁶⁴ Ibid.

The very first record of the marks' breakdown (or, presumably, the first time such information become public) was evident in the 1906 syllabus (see Table 11):

	Primary	Junior	Intermediate		Senior (Pianoforte Diploma)
Scales and Arpeggios	12	12	12	Scales	12
Chords and Octaves	10	10	10	Chords and Arpeggios	10
Correctness of Notation and Fingering	17	Pieces: total 24	Pieces: total 22	Octaves	5
Phrasing, Accent, Touch	17	do	do	Correctness of Notation, Choice & Steadiness of Tempo	10
Use of Pedal	10	10	10	Quality of Touch, Variety of Tone, Phrasing, Use of Pedal	14
Choice of Tempo, Steadiness and Rendering	17	24	25	Conception, Control, Style, Artistic Delivery	14
General Memory Playing	6	7	8	Musicianship: Self-Study Piece and other work	10
Ear Test	5	5	5		5
Sight Playing	6	8	8	Sight Playing and Transposition	10
Total	100	100	100	Memory	10
				Total	100

Table 11: Table of marks listed in the 1906 Syllabus.⁶⁵

Similarly, the 1914-5 syllabus continued to list Use of Pedal and Musicianship: Self-Study Piece (see Table 12).

⁶⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Twentieth Annual Calendar, 1906, 33-44.

Introductory added 1915	Introductory added in 1915	Elementary requirements	Elementary 1914	Elementary 1915	Primary 1914	Primary 1915	Junior requirements	Junior 1914	Junior 1915	Intermediate requirements	Intermediate 1914	Intermediate 1915	ATCM requirements	ATCM 1914	ATCM 1915
Scales	15	Scales	10	do	do	do	do	do	do	do	do	do	Knowledge of technical routine, as displayed in playing of scales, etc. and in Viva Voce test, including detection of errors, etc	30	15
Position of hands and arms	10	Chords and octaves	10	do	Added arpeggios	do	Arpeggios, chords and octaves	do	do	do	do	do	Questions on pedagogical routine (Viva Voce), including detection of errors, etc 1915		15
Correctness of Fingering in Pieces and Technical Work	15	Correctness of notation and fingering	20	18	15	16	Correctness of notation and fingering, Phrasing, Accent, Quality of Touch	20	16	do	25	16	Interpretation of pieces: Correctness of notation and steadiness of tempo	30	25
Action of fingers and Quality of Touch	10	Phrasing, accent, touch	20	18	15	18	Variety and quality of touch 1915		16			16			
Action of Hand in Staccato Work	10	Use of pedal	10	6	10	8	Use of pedal	10	8	Use of pedal	10	8			
Steadiness of Time, Choice of Tempo and General Interpretation of Pieces	20	Choice of tempo, steadiness and rendering	20	25	20	do	Choice of tempo, phrasing, steadiness of time. Conception and Style	30	20	Choice of tempo, phrasing, steadiness of time. Conception and Style. Musicianship in self-studied piece and other work	25	20	Conception, Style, Pedalling, etc	30	25
Memory playing	8	General memory playing	5	8	10	8	do	8	do	do	do	8			
		Ear test	5	do	do	do	do	do	do	do	do	do	do	10	10
Accuracy of Notation, Rests etc	12	Sight playing		do	5	do	do	7	do	do	do	do	Sight playing 1915		10
Total		100													

Table 12: Table of the marking scheme for each grade, 1914-5 Syllabus.⁶⁶⁶⁶ UTARMS, P78-0130/01, TCM Local Examinations in Music Syllabus, 1914-5, 10-27.

Until 1932, the marking scheme established in 1915 remained unchanged, with a single interim modification: the self-study piece was no longer a part of testing from 1921. In 1923-4 the mark of 10 for pedal work was cancelled, as its assessment is included in the overall components of the evaluation. Additionally, Conception and Style and General Effect were assessed, and marks for Memory, Ear, and Sight Reading were increased as a result of eliminating the mark for pedalling. In this year the marks for the Associateship exam were also reconfigured.

Moreover, in 1932-3, for the first time, all the marks were summarized in a table format, instead of being listed after each level and technical requirement, making for a much more organized appearance.

For the academic season of 1934-5, the marking table for all grades was simplified, with detailed rubrics, appearing more holistic compared to the previous breakdown: i.e., instead of 16/16/14, etc., as was practised in 1932-3, now the categories were unified and assigned a more general mark, e.g., 32/32/8 etc. (see Table 13).

In 1935-6 the marking table was changed once again: there was no detailed breakdown provided for each level, but one uniform chart for grades I to X was created. As usual, the ATCM marking table was listed separately. This most holistic and generalized marking scheme united all the levels under one chart and remained in effect for an extended period—until 1966 (see Table 14).

Pieces and Studies	Introd.	Elem.	Prim.	Jun.	Interm. and Senior	ARCT	Teacher	Solo Performer	Teacher and Solo Performer
Accuracy (including Notation, Time, Values, Fingering, Touch)	32	32	24	24	24	Performance of Pieces (Accuracy, including Notation, Time Values, Fingering, Touch)	15	30	25
Musicianship, General Effect	32	32	32	32	32	Musicianship, General Effect	15	30	25
Memory	8	8	8	8	8	Studies, Scales, etc.	10	20	10
Technical Requirements (Scales, etc.)	20	20	20	20	20	Questions on Pedagogical Routine	20	n/a	12
Ear Test	8	8	8	8	8	Demonstration of Lessons, Detection of Errors, etc.	20	n/a	12
Sight Reading			8	8	8	Ear Test	10	10	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	Sight Reading	10	10	8
						Total	100	100	100

Table 13: Table of revised marks for Introductory, Elementary, Primary, Junior, Intermediate and Senior Grades, listed in the 1934-5 Syllabus.⁶⁷

	Grades I to X
Pieces and Studies	
Accuracy (including Notation, Time, Values, Fingering, Touch)	24
Musicianship, General Effect	32
Memory	8
Technical Requirements (Scales, etc.)	20
Ear Test	8
Sight Reading	8
Total	100

Table 14: Table of marks for Grades I-X, listed in the 1935-6 Syllabus.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM, Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1934-5, 15.

⁶⁸ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM Local Centre and School Examinations Syllabus, 1935-6, 21.

The 1966-8 season brought a change to the marking scheme: because there were fewer required repertoire pieces in Grades I-VII than in the higher levels of study, the marks were broken down accordingly. The groups of grades were as follows: Grades I-VII, then VIII-IX, and X. The ARCT was now split into two categories, ARCT Teacher and ARCT Performer, with no combined Teacher-Performer (see Table 15):

Pieces	I-VII	VIII-IX	X		Pieces	ARCT Teacher	ARCT Solo Performer
A	18	16	12		A	10	15
B	24	16	12		B	10	20
C	12	10	10		C	10	15
D		10	8		D		10
E			8		E		10
Memory	6	8	10		Viva Voce: a) Pedagogic Principles	18	
Technical Requirements (studies, scales, etc.)	18	18	18		Viva Voce: b) Applied Pedagogy	18	
Ear Tests	10	10	10		Ear Tests	10	10
Sight Reading	12	12	12		Sight Reading	14	10
Total	100	100	100		Technical Requirements	10	10
					Total	100	100

Table 15: Table of detailed marks for the groups of Grades I-X, and ARCT, listed in the 1966-8 Syllabus.⁶⁹

Additionally, in the same year, the minimum percentage required for eligibility for ARCT Supplemental examinations was lowered from 70% to 65%.

With minor modifications in 1972-4—the elimination of the marks for Memory from Grade X—these marking tables stayed unchanged until 1981, at which point the marks were reconfigured for Grade X and ARCT (see Table 16):

⁶⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/38, RCM Pianoforte and Theory Syllabus, 1966-8, 18.

Pieces	I-VII	VIII-IX	X		Pieces	ARCT Teacher	ARCT Solo Performer
A	18	16	14		A	5	16
B	24	16	15		B	5	22
C	12	10	12		C	5	14
D		10	9		D	5	14
E			10		E		14
Memory	6	8			Viva Voce: a) Pedagogic Principles	20	
Technical Requirements (studies, scales, etc.)	18	18	20		Viva Voce: b) Applied Pedagogy	30	
Ear Tests	10	10	10		Ear Tests	10	10
Sight Reading	12	12	10		Sight Reading	10	10
Total	100	100	100		Technical Requirements	10	
					Total	100	100

Table 16: Table showing modifications in Grade X and ARCT marks compared to previous years, as listed in the 1981 Syllabus.⁷⁰

The 1994 Syllabus brought in small changes to Grades 1-10,⁷¹ mostly related to a more uniform alignment or rounding up of marks for Technical Requirements, Ear Tests, and Sight Reading, although a more significant reconfiguration happened in the ARCT: by completely eliminating Ear Tests and Sight Reading from the ARCT Performer exam and as a result raising the marks for the repertoire and Concert Étude, this exam was elevated to recital-performance status. Furthermore, the subsequent 2001 edition implemented a rounding up of marks to either a 0 or 5 in ARCT Performer: i.e., for the lists A, B, C, D, E, and Concert Étude, the mark breakdown now was 20/25/15/15/15/10, respectively, while the marking scheme for the Teacher's exam remained the same.

⁷⁰ UTARMS, P81-0264, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1981, 33.

⁷¹ Roman numerals are replaced by Arabic to depict the grades.

In 2008 marks for Memory were reformed (uniformly 6 for Grades 1-7 inclusively), as were those for Technical Requirements (now worth more: 12 for two studies and 12 for Technique, instead of 10 each in previous syllabuses). Sight Reading was split into two tests, clapping and playing, with 3 and 7 marks respectively. The year 2008 also marks the development and further elaboration within the ARCT Teacher Diploma: a more comprehensive approach was introduced through splitting the diploma into three stages—Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced, designating four marks of 25 for each exam component in the Viva Voce examination:

1. Discussion of general pedagogical topics and the professional studio
2. Teaching rhythm, technique, musicianship, and other essential skills
3. Performance of selections from the Teaching Repertoire Sample
4. Detailed pedagogical discussion of selections from the Teaching Repertoire Sample

Also implemented in 2008 were the marks in Grades 1-7 that were uniformly arranged as 18/18/14 for the lists A, B, and C respectively. The marks in the higher levels were slightly modified owing to the gradually expanding repertoire (e.g., Grade 8: 16/16/12/12 awarded for lists A, B, C, D), while those for technical requirements and musicianship tests remained the same throughout all the grades.⁷²

Playing from memory was not rewarded at the Preparatory grade in 2008, and in the 2015 regulations a mark of 6 was established to recognize the work done at lower levels.⁷³

The year 2015 saw the introduction of a seemingly minor numerical reconfiguration, but with a substantial impact: marks were tweaked in order to reward candidates for learning the List C repertoire (depending on the level, this could be either Inventions, Romantic, or Contemporary selections). The marks were distributed as 16/18/16 for lists A, B, and C respectively. Over the

⁷² Piano Syllabus, Introductory Level through ARCT. 2008. Mississauga: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.

⁷³ Grades were renamed levels in 2015.

years, through observation at exams and teacher's feedback, it was evident that students showed particular and explicit favouritism for List C; to encourage and reward their enthusiasm with elevated marks was thus an overdue gesture.⁷⁴

As for the ARCT, the Performer Diploma marks remained constant, while the Teacher Diploma continued to transform and acquire more details and a slightly different mark distribution (i.e., Viva Voce, mentioned above, would now have marks of 20/20/30/30 instead of 25 for each component of discussion).⁷⁵

It can be said that while the overall marking scheme has remained conservative and stable since 1887, the detailed marking for each grade or level have been transformed in various ways, and have gone through phases from being overly simplified and holistic to extremely detailed in the individual grades or groups of grades. Providing a more comprehensive approach to marking was intended to raise the status of the system itself, the standards of the performance level, and indicate in detail which component of the exam needed improvement, or met (or exceeded) the expectations.

Notably, playing the repertoire from memory has always been rewarded, and marks are deducted if the pieces are not memorized. Studies/Études were never expected to be memorized, and therefore no marks are awarded for memorization of the technical pieces, even if the candidate chooses to play without the score. However, the memorization of scales, chords, and arpeggios has remained compulsory. Evidently, the memory aspect has been a part of the requirements since the origination of the examinations, while pedalling as a separate component in the marking scheme eventually disappeared.

⁷⁴ Piano Syllabus. 2015. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.

⁷⁵ Piano Syllabus, An Addendum: Associate Diploma in Piano Pedagogy. 2015. Updated October 2016. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.

As of 2015, a typical exam report consists of 12-14 marks, depending on the level:

1. List A (Baroque)
2. List B (Classical)
3. List C (Inventions, Romantic, or 20th or 21st century)
4. List D (Post-Romantic, Impressionist, and early 20th century)
5. List E (20th and 21st century) for ARCT Performer
6. Technical Tests (scales, chords, arpeggios, etc.)
7. Étude selection no. 1
8. Étude selection no. 2
9. Musicianship, Ear Tests: Intervals
10. Musicianship, Ear Tests: Chords
11. Musicianship, Ear Tests: Chord Progressions
12. Musicianship, Ear Tests: Playback (or Harmonization in Level 10)
13. Sight Reading: Rhythm
14. Sight Reading: Playing

Each component is given careful consideration, as the total mark could depend on points that are either accumulated to result in a good standing or lost due to weak preparation of a section of the exam. In the short time allotted for an exam, the examiner requires a combination of abilities to make an executive decision, and to ensure an adequate appraisal of the performance and the candidate's skills.

Along with writing a report, the examiner's central duty is to quantify the candidate's skill level, and thus "translate" the performance into numbers. Admittedly, this would not be such an accurate process without having the detailed rubrics provided. Every successive syllabus, new book series issue, and any new technical requirements require examiners to be thoroughly instructed and trained on the implementation of the new marking scheme—not only at the outset of new series, but also throughout the entire seven-year period that examiners practise mock examinations at the annual Professional Development meetings in order to maintain consensus on appropriate marking and fair assessment.

The identification of the teacher prior to or during the exam is not customary for the RCM system being considered as a precedent for the conflict of interest which may impede fair

assessment of a candidate. However, in the ABRSM system the teacher's name inclusion on a report is mandatory, as part of both honouring a teacher, and a teacher taking pride and holding accountability for his/her work. It is more a legacy of the era when examinations were seen as upholding a certain standard, for which teachers were responsible, and a way of discouraging incompetent teachers.

As the exam becomes the quantification of a talent, skill, or effort, the report provides a student with a compass as to where he stands at that moment of his developmental process, and also indicates the examiner's overall impression of that developmental stage. This aspect of the assessment is most crucial and intense, especially for novice examiners, as the entire assessment cannot always be perceived as a whole beyond the numerical values, and there are at times other intangible elements to the experience.

Occasionally in their careers, examiners are almost guaranteed to hear performances that are challenging to fit into the measuring system: they are powerful to the extent of breaking the boundaries of the marking schemata, and yet examiners are faced with the task of assigning them. Can a true, brilliant, and undeniable talent be measured by numbers?

SECTION C

REPERTOIRE CONTENT: THEN AND NOW

For the period 1887-2015, 11 calendar-syllabuses are missing from the fonds of both the University of Toronto and RCM, and thus unavailable for research: 1888-9; 1889-90; 1891-2; 1897-8; 1898-9; 1911-2 (only full syllabus containing the repertoire is available, but not the annual calendar-syllabus issued for the academic season); 1912-3; 1913-4; 1919-20; 1974-5; 1988. However, the remaining 74 (69 core syllabuses/calendars for 1887-2015, 2 Licentiate for

2008 and 2015, and 4 Popular Selection List addenda for 2002-17) present an indispensable set of documents—a resource for studying the historically significant stratum of Canadian musical culture and its vibrant and at times dramatic transformations.

On the whole, what has now been considered standard repertoire was neither considered as such nor as popular between 1887 and 1935: the majority of syllabuses of that period contain a very modest collection of pieces by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Brahms, et al. J.S. Bach's works were occasionally listed with some reservation with sometimes just a single composition in each grade, and a few more pieces in the higher grades. The list was not nearly as extensive as it is today: in the 1911 edition J.S. Bach's works were evident only in the Junior grade and represented by short "Fugues of two voices,"⁷⁶ 2-part inventions and fragments from Suites; in the Intermediate grade there were 3-part inventions (Sinfonias), 23 Preludes and Fugues from the WTC, and some preludes and fugues—outside the WTC; and finally, in the Post-Graduate grade the selection was more extensive including English Suite no. 6, Partitas, Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue, Air con Variazione in G Major (presumably, the Goldberg Variations or parts thereof), Prelude and Fugue in A minor, and Fantasia and Fugue in D Major. Occasionally, Bach's sons were included on the lists as well, i.e., W. F. Bach (appears in 1890-1 calendar); Ph. E. Bach, aka C. P. E. Bach (in 1915-6; 1918-9) survived through intermittent inclusions throughout the century and appeared on a regular roster from 1980s; I. C. F. Bach's works began to appear in the 1994 Syllabus.

Analyzing the repertoire list from those several decades, one would struggle to find a composer's name familiar to a modern audience. Most of the lists comprise an ample number of European and British composers, whose music was popular at the time. This was probably due to

⁷⁶ As listed in the 1911 syllabus.

the influence of the TCL and ABRSM despite the Conservatory's wish to be distinct from them. The composers included in the early syllabuses are rarely found in print now, if published at all: e.g., N.W. Gade (Denmark), A. Nölck (Germany), W.C. Macfarren and W. Sterndale Bennett (Britain), I.J. Paderewski and T. Leschetizky (Poland).

However, at the dawn of the Examinations, the syllabuses included some American composers influenced by the Romantic and Ragtime styles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who made the list: MacDowell (most popular since the TCM's commencement and still in the syllabus to this day), Ethelbert Nevin, Charles Dennée, Arthur Foote, William Mason, et al. There is only a single appearance of the Canadian composer George Alfred Grant-Schaefer in the syllabus of 1901-2.⁷⁷

As previously mentioned, the largest syllabus, that of 1911 (i.e., the Fifth Edition), comprises a repertoire list of 5,000 works⁷⁸ for all six levels of study (i.e., Elementary, Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Senior, Post-Graduate): the repertoire is not categorized into specific eras, most possibly because these works belong to composers who were contemporary with the Conservatory's inception. The majority of the composers who were popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would be completely unknown to today's educators and students, and yet there were many musical treasures that are now excluded from the mainstream repertoire and possibly from print.

Over a century, the choices for composers can be distilled to a list of names, most of which would be recognized by any piano student today: the curriculum repertoire is dominated by the

⁷⁷ Highly regarded by teachers for his compositions, George Alfred Grant-Schaefer was the author of over 100 piano pieces for pedagogical use, and arrangements of French-Canadian folk songs. Grant-Schaefer was not affiliated with the Conservatory. See: Elaine Keillor. "George Alfred Grant-Schaefer." 2007. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/george-alfred-grant-schaefer-emc> (accessed June 21, 2019).

⁷⁸ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, TCM Local Examinations in Music Syllabus, 1920-1, 13.

works of Mozart, Beethoven, Dussek, Duvernoy, Dvořák, Karganoff (or Karganov), Kuhlau, Schumann, Schubert, Saint-Saëns, Grieg, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Chopin, Brahms, Debussy, etc. Back in 1911 other composers—mostly nineteenth century—were given priority: e.g., Joseph Joachim Raff was represented with 30 pieces, Ede Poldini with 34, Theodor Leschetizky with 37, Cécile Chaminade with 46, Antonio Sartorio with 48, Ludvig Schytte with 56, Edvard Grieg with 67, and Moritz Moszkowski with 70, Schumann with 79, and Liszt with 86. Some of these works have survived to this day while others have disappeared despite their artistic and educational qualities. There is a notable attempt to include at least one female composer (Chaminade) at that time, whereas now the number of contemporary female composers (Canadian and American) reached at least two dozen in the latest Syllabus.

Russian composers were favoured quite extensively, especially Tchaikovsky (“Tschaikowsky”), Sapelnikov (a contemporary of Tchaikovsky and a concert pianist- performer of his works), Cui, Liadov, Arensky, Borodin, Anton Rubinstein, Rachmaninoff, et al. There were a few selections by J. S. Bach, e.g. Preludes and Fugues, Two- and Three-part Inventions, which were preferred in the higher grades, i.e., Intermediate, Senior, and Post-Graduate), however, no indication of other Baroque composers (e.g., Telemann, Handel, Scarlatti) whom we are accustomed to seeing on the standard repertoire roster today: a variety of Baroque composers missing from the early syllabuses began to appear in the repertoire after 1935, possibly due to musicological research that made these composers’ works available in usable editions. Additionally, only a few works by American and British composers were included—one per level/grade; thus it can be said that TCM students mainly played only the music of their Western and Eastern European contemporaries.

Among composers who are mostly forgotten yet revived occasionally nowadays are Charles-Valentin Alkan; Stepan Esipoff (mainly through his piano transcriptions of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, and works by Gounod);⁷⁹ Theodor Leschetizky (although now he is mostly known as an eminent teacher); and Ignacy Paderewski (virtuoso pianist and editor of works by Chopin). The works of Cécile Chaminade and Xaver Scharwenka survived until the first quarter of the twentieth century, then disappeared from the roster for a while, re-appearing in the 2000s: Scharwenka in the 2008 edition, and Chaminade joining Scharwenka in 2015.

From 1925, after the longest break between syllabuses (1911 to 1925), the repertoire was revised less frequently, and successive syllabuses contained only minor changes. The 1930 edition organizes all the compositions in the lists according to their musical era (e.g., A, B, C, D), and the composers, whose works are now part of the mainstream repertoire (e.g., composers such as Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms et al.) were still introduced cautiously, and the repertoire was not nearly as abundant as prior to 1925.

A limited number of Canadian composers were included on the repertoire list, among whom, by virtue of being faculty members, the works of MacMillan (Principal), Guerrero, and Berlin made the list in the 1935 syllabus. Somewhat of an anomaly here is the Montreal jazz musician William ("Wille") Eckstein, little known today, whose works stayed on the roster into the 1970s.⁸⁰

Although intended to be as extensive as possible, the repertoire at that time (1935) did not include compositions by other Canadian composers, possibly because there were not that many

⁷⁹ "Stepan Esipoff" (aka "Anton Strelezki") is a pseudonym for a composer Arthur Bransby Burnand who studied with Clara Schumann at the Leipzig Conservatory and composed over two hundred piano pieces and songs. See Lionel Carley. 2006. *Edvard Grieg in England*. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 331.

⁸⁰ Eckstein was born in Montreal and studied at McGill University. Eckstein's inclusion in the syllabus is interesting because of his fame and the nature of his composition, which seemed to be considered as "popular."

and in any case they were not writing for children. Berlin was a pioneer in this field, possibly influenced by Russian composers, such as his contemporary Kabalevsky and others.⁸¹

Instead, during 1944-7, more Russian and mostly Soviet composers began to appear in the curriculum, i.e., Prokofiev, Rebikov, Shostakovich, Scriabin, Spendiaryow (Spendiaryan), Goedicke, Bortkiewicz, and particularly Tchaikovsky and Kabalevsky, whose pieces are still included. Presumably, the choices of Russian/Soviet composers were not only due to the fact that the ones mentioned above wrote music specifically for young players, but also due to Berlin's influence: it seems quite ironic that Russian-Soviet composers were popularized in the West during devastating times for the Soviet country of still undergoing the Second World War and going through a period of recovery and rebuild (after 1945). Moreover, during that time, the fashionable composers who were constantly (and still are) on the repertoire roster included just one of British background (Swinstead), and of Polish-Jewish (Tansman), although the latter spent most of his time in France, influenced by Ravel and Stravinsky.

Remarkably, the motivation behind the Examinations' structure to develop "something distinctly Canadian,"⁸² gave stimulus and "planted the seed" for a gradual rise of a national talent. The compositions of Healey Willan, a highly influential, British trained composer and organist, who taught at TCM and subsequently at University of Toronto (1913-50), appeared in the list of repertoire in 1944, and those of Frederick Silvester, also an organist and composer, and the Conservatory's registrar, and registrar for examinations, were included in the list in 1947.

⁸¹ The first volume of "Meet Canadian Composers at the Piano" was published in 1958 by Gordon V. Thompson, and included compositions for children by William Lea, Healey Willan, Claude Champagne, Boris Berlin and others. Of these Healey Willan, who was born in the UK, was the oldest and most established. See CMC website, <https://www.musiccentre.ca/node/2170> (accessed October 3, 2019).

⁸² UTARMS, A1975-0014/099. Author unknown, presumably Sydney Smith (President), or Sir Ernest MacMillan (Dean), or Ettore Mazzoleni (Principal). Printed document.

It was not until the 1951 that Canadian composers, having formed the Canadian League of Composers (CLC), finally began to gain recognition. The League helped promote the growth of its composers, their own distinctive identity, enhancing and transforming the national music scene later in the twentieth century. Of course it was not possible to include all of the League composers in the Conservatory's curriculum, but eventually, a significant number were represented; presumably, some were encouraged to start writing suitable pieces for children.

Moreover, works by Samuel Dolin, John Weinzweig and Jeannine Vanier along with Soviet (Armenian) composer Aram Khachaturian appeared for the first time in the 1960-2 syllabus. In 1964, a concert featuring the students of Samuel Dolin (Ann Southam, Nick Slater, et al.) gave rise to a new generation of Canadian composers, whose works would be included in the curriculum decades later and in some cases are still retained there. Toronto composer Godfrey Ridout first appeared in the 1964 syllabus, while Southam's debut was in 1968. It is notable that, beginning in 1966, Claude Champagne and then in 1972, Jean Papineau-Couture both were token francophone composers, until joined by others in the 1990s. Whether this was due to financial barriers, or licensing and copyright, or simply a reflection of the "two solitudes" attitude of the time is not clear.

Hopefully, the inclusion of these composers in the Conservatory syllabuses not only enhanced their reputation among a larger body—an audience of piano learners and teachers—but also inevitably led to more opportunities for publication: the works of Canadian composers are in demand and were (and still are) published by companies other than the RCM, as well as by other Examination Boards (i.e., Western Board of Music and Western Ontario Conservatory of Music, now CC—Conservatory Canada).

As a result of Canadian composers uniting their efforts in forming the CLC, evidently some of their compositions slowly but steadily began to make their way to the repertoire list. An effort was made by the Conservatory to request works that would be appropriate from a pedagogical standpoint for inclusion in the curriculum, allowing the works of Canadian composers to gain national recognition. On this account, Larysa Kuzmenko recalls:

It all happened years ago, when the late Andrew Markow asked me if I had written any solo piano pieces. I gave him three. Two were chosen to be published in the RCM Grade 5 and Grade 8 books. They have also included my work “In Memoriam: To the Victims of Chornobyl” in their syllabus. These works were never commissioned by the RCM. (Larysa Kuzmenko, private correspondence, July 15, 2018)

On the generational impact of Canadian compositions on students and teachers, Kuzmenko further remarks:

I feel that it’s really important that they [RCM] continue publishing Canadian music in these graded books. It’s a great way of exposing Canadian music to young musicians. I have had a number of young students and their teachers contacting me telling me how much they enjoy playing my pieces. In fact, one student said that he attributes my “In Memoriam: To the Victims of Chornobyl” to winning him first prize at a festival. It’s very complimentary, and it’s nice to hear that these young students appreciate Canadian music. (Larysa Kuzmenko, private correspondence, July 15, 2018)

Furthermore, David Ouchterlony (Principal) had his works listed, as did Clifford Poole (also under the pseudonyms Charles Pierson and Ernest Marsden) in 1975, Walter Buczynski in 1978, and John Beckwith in 1981. While Ouchterlony’s works did not last beyond his tenure as Principal, re-appearing only in the most recent 2008 and 2015 syllabuses, the others secured their long-term placement to this day. In the years surrounding the millennium, the syllabuses routinely included (and still do) compositions by Canadians Joseph Rodolphe Mathieu (1890-1962), Claude Champagne (1891-1965), Sophie Carmen Eckhardt-Gramatté (1899-1974), Leila Fletcher (1899-1988), Barbara Pentland (1912-2000), Violet Archer (1913-2000), Jean Papineau-

Couture (1916-2000), Rhené Jaque (1918-2006),⁸³ Maurice Dela (1919-1978), Oscar Peterson (1925-2007), John Beckwith (b. 1927), Pierre Mercure (1927-1966), Jack Behrens (b. 1935); Ann Southam (1937-2010), Jacques Hétu (1938-2010), Linda Niamath (b. 1939), Andrew Markow (1942-2013), Claude Vivier (1948-1983), Alexina Louie (b. 1949), Stephen Chatman (b. 1950), Nancy Telfer (b. 1950), David McIntyre (b. 1952), Larysa Kuzmenko (b. 1956), Anne Crosby Gaudet (b. 1968), Christine Donkin (b. 1976) and many others.

Striving for a more global repertoire, the Examinations continued to expand the horizons: Polish composer Karol Szimanofski [*sic*]⁸⁴ and French composer Erik Satie appeared in 1966;⁸⁵ Japanese composer Yoshinao Nakada first featured in the syllabus in 1970, Austrian-American Robert Starer in 1975, and Russian Elena Gnessina in 1978, continue to circulate in the students' repertoire year after year, being among frequently played composers. Continuously expanding its global horizons, the syllabus in 1981 also added Mikhail Glinka (Russia), Charles Camilleri (Malta), and Olivier Messiaen (France) for the first time.

Although the repertoire underwent significant changes in the past century, representation of the late nineteenth century still remains predominant, and the era seemingly secured its position as a mainstream requirement; from the educational viewpoint, it crystallized into both the most in demand and the most effective. The works of J.S. Bach and Beethoven had gained a permanent place by 1935, while the Romantic composers—Chopin, Liszt, Schubert, Schumann, et al.— appeared regularly only in the following decades. The composers long considered to be canonic were not thought of then in quite the same way. The earlier repertoire lists (late 1890s, early 1900s), as seen from the discussion above, were “flooded” with the music of the nineteenth

⁸³ A pseudonym for Marguerite Marie Alice Cartier.

⁸⁴ Spelling of Karol Szimanowski's last name appearing in the Syllabus, 1966.

⁸⁵ Presumably, Satie was chosen more on the basis of his modernity and eccentricity than for his nationality.

century, and the composers regarded now as canonic were “sunken”/“dissolved” in the variety of works available back then. Surviving the test of time, quality, content, form, educational value, pedagogical and concert/artistic use, the works of J. S. Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Schubert, Schumann, Liszt, and Brahms although still surrounded by numerous other composers from various countries, are now considered canonic. What would be considered canonic in fifty to eighty years from now is difficult to forecast: only time will tell.

Gradually expanding and including the music of the twenty-first century, the syllabuses inevitably continued to develop and move forward as time passed, and the curricula evolved along with them. They are a great source of information—how the repertoire was compiled, how the requirements were modified, or even how the syllabuses were formatted and designed—from which one can presuppose or speculate how music was taught, what music literature was favoured during certain decades, or what did not “survive” the changing tastes, and consequently, how the role of examinations kept changing over the century.

Looking back at the transformation of the repertoire over the decades since the earliest syllabuses, the tendencies and underlying reasons for certain choices become clear. Between the 1890s and 1990s, the repertoire committees decided on the choice of repertoire, and those tendencies would often depend on who was in the position of authority at the time, or who would be commissioned or delegated to update or review the curriculum’s repertoire. There seem to be no evidence of a symbiotic relationship between the compilers and the teaching body until the late 1990s, and the system, although getting occasional infusions of updates, in general remained conservative, adhering to the canonic, with the 1960s seeing an economical approach to listing pieces.

A fresh attitude to the expansion of the repertoire horizons can be observed in the 2000s, likely due to digital advancements, and increased accessibility of scores. The Examinations began communicating more with teachers, as technology began to take over, receiving feedback along with a myriad of new ideas. These were processed incrementally and cautiously with a vast Canadian territory in mind, but the dialogue was opened up and the “forums” of voices were finally welcomed, while the Academic Office retained its control over the shape and the content of the curriculum.

CHAPTER 3

“THOSE MUSIC EXAMS”—PERCEPTIONS OF EXAMINATIONS

SECTION A

CRITICAL VIEWS ON EXAMINATIONS

[..T]he benefit to average pupils of average teachers is relatively much greater, provided always that the examinations is regarded as a means and not an end, and that pupils are not unduly hurried through them.¹

—Sir Ernest Alexander Campbell MacMillan (1893-1973).

Every enterprise has its founders, allies, and followers and, also, inevitably, its critics. While critical feedback can at first be resented, its progressive and catalytic intent eventually triggers the mechanism for further improvement, stimulating new ideas for a particular venture. It takes avid believers to endeavour to build something new, and critical eyes to elevate it to a higher level.

Undergoing a natural evolutionary process, the Examinations found itself in a series of developmental phases: while meeting with great enthusiasm in the launch years, over time it accumulated certain inevitable “side effects.” With the exams being conducted on a large scale in a country such as Canada, the side effects occasionally raised concerns that were expressed not only by the press but also by the Conservatory’s own faculty teachers and governors.

Until the recent technological advantages that have emerged in the past two decades, the Conservatory promoted, expanded, and cultivated the examinations throughout the country via all media resources available at the time: from regular advertisements of its programs, concert reviews, recitals, and event announcements in both newspapers and the Conservatory’s

¹ Ernest MacMillan. 1933. “Those Music Exams! A Stumbling Block or a Stepping Stone?” *Chatelaine*, November, 48. Toronto.

magazines, to countrywide thirty-minute weekly radio broadcasts of teachers' performances, sponsored by the National Cellulose Corporation of Canada (1943-50),² and broadcasted by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), promoting the examination curriculum (i.e., repertoire).³

The determination to disseminate the Conservatory brand and music education to all regions of the country expanded the market for sales of the branded publications and helped inexperienced teachers to establish a structured practice. Although this endeavour reached its goal to a certain extent, the examinations created a new set of problems that continued throughout the century and into modern times. The examinations “vehicle,” although not without occasional setbacks, steadily gained traction over the decades (i.e., by increasing the numbers of candidates), but at the same time revealed overly pedantic or non-expert teaching, a fixation on exam requirements, and narrow-mindedness of some teachers in their minimalistic or limited approach to repertoire, technique, ear tests, etc.

Furthermore, the philosophy behind a well-rounded curriculum as a template for developing and expanding other relevant skills was replaced by a scrupulous adherence to the exam components being perceived as a manual for a specific level of study, beyond which further development of musicianship skills was not even considered. Many teachers seemingly struggled—as they still do—to separate the concept of the exam from the concept of music education. Being under the false impression that the listed requirements represent the ultimate path to musical development, such teachers create a sense of educational confinement within those requirements, introducing only those that need to be studied at a certain level, and nothing

² Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 84.

³ Paul Helmer. 2009. *Growing with Canada: The Émigré Tradition in Canadian Music*. Montreal; Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 86.

beyond that. As an example related to ear tests, although the exam at Level 2 requires a candidate to identify only three intervals (major or minor third, and perfect fifth), it does not mean that the student cannot be introduced to the entire range of intervals, or be taught the objective of learning the concept of major versus minor quality.

Another extreme and absurd example, occasionally encountered, reveals a narrow-minded approach to exam preparation: a Level 1 candidate identifies either “major” or “minor” when the corresponding “third” interval is given during the test and, upon further inquiry, is not even aware of the numerical value of the interval. The student was taught to hear and identify either “major” or “minor” by associating it with “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” or “O Canada,” respectively, and is unaware of the interval’s distance—i.e., numerical component—or any other existing intervals, or what the word “interval” stands for (personal observation).

Additionally, and in the majority of cases, interval recognition is instead either a game of elimination or guesswork: if the first interval is identified as a major third, the student presumes the second will be minor, without making an effort to listen to it thoroughly; otherwise, the student has a 50/50 chance of guessing it correctly, rather than genuinely listening. A similar approach is often taken at higher levels: the mark of 2% awarded for interval recognition seems insignificant among the many other exam components, and thus for some candidates this segment seems trivial, having little impact on their overall mark. Needless to say, neither of the above aspects demonstrates genuine musicianship skills or an effort to acquire an acute listening capability.

It should be noted that although the list of requirements outlines the most basic scheme and traces a gradual and methodical accumulation of skills, it does not restrain teachers from expanding students’ horizons through a variety of means: by teaching them basic chord

progressions, developing their improvising skills, having them read music from sight as solo or duet, reading and discussing the programmatic aspects of their pieces, exploring biographical works on composers' lives, practising comparative analysis listening, and nurturing and encouraging active listening through playing for the teacher alone as well as for students who show up before or after the class, etc. This also concurs with MacMillan's line of thought:

Is a student who follows an examination curriculum restricted *ipso facto* to a greater extent than the one who does not? Much depends on whether he regards the requirements as barriers or as opportunities.⁴

There had been a steady accumulation of problems associated with the examinations being routinely treated as "barriers" when Schabas wrote in his notes that the British ABRSM and Royal College examinations are conducted by multi-profile examiners with interchangeable discipline specializations, meaning that "a pianist examines winds, a violinist examines voice etc."⁵ He rather bluntly notes:

Would the Committee consider still another alternative, stated tentatively: if changes appear too difficult to implement to consider dropping the Examination Department and appointing an independent board to take over its direction and management, perhaps with the cooperation of the Harris company? The predominance of piano, the unreasonable stress on written theory and the fallibility of examiners are overwhelming facts of life. I write with some prejudice since my efforts to reform certain aspects of it came to little end. There are, after all, substantial arguments for not having examinations at all. They exist in English speaking Commonwealth countries but not in the U.S. Their value is constantly being disputed in the UK and Australia.⁶

Adding to the underlying issues, Robert Creech, Vice-Principal of the RCM (1987-91), in his address to Peter Allen, Chairman of the RCM Advisory Board, pointed out the findings of the national review commissioned by the Advisory Board. Among the many proposed reforms was

⁴ Ernest MacMillan. 1933. "Those Music Exams! A Stumbling Block or a Stepping Stone?" *Chatelaine*, November, 48. Toronto.

⁵ UTARMS, B96-0013/16(4). Office of the Principal: Schabas's files. Schabas's notes on "Examinations," February 1984, 4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

to “establish guidelines for the RCM Examination System for years to come,” and there was an explicitly expressed concern about the current state of management that seemingly caused much damage in the years prior to the RCM’s acquired independence. According to Creech:

[T]he Examination Department has become administratively inefficient and academically moribund and, without a Publication Department, the publication schedule of the RCM, which included the production of the revenue-producing syllabuses and graded books, was in a state of chaos.⁷

[...] This re-organization will include the identification and appointment of appropriate and qualified senior management. Another inappropriate senior appointment in this Department could lead to a financial disaster for the RCM.⁸

This serves as evidence of an ongoing gradual deterioration of the Examinations prior to Peter Simon’s presidency (1991).

The challenges of the examination system were acknowledged and discussed in 1969, as Warren Mould, in his “Point of View” column in the *Bulletin* notes:

[I]t is the examination system which so strongly influences the study habits, and determines to a large extent the progress [...], and which presents such a challenge to this institution [...] both exciting and intimidating. Exciting because many magnificent possibilities for improving the musical training of our students through an even more valuable examination programme; intimidating because of the sheer magnitude of the many problems yet to be faced in order to achieve this goal.⁹

But issues with the examinations can be traced even further back, to the inception of the Conservatory’s *Quarterly Review* magazine (1918). Augustus Stephen Vogt, the founder of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and successor to TCM founder Edward Fisher (principal, music director, and dean, 1913-26), entrusted the editorial work for the magazine to Leo Smith, a skilled writer and a faculty teacher, who wrote insightful reviews from the examiner’s

⁷ UTARMS, B96-0013/16(10). Office of the Principal. Schabas’s files. Letter of Robert Creech to Peter Allen, May 31, 1991, 1.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/043. *RCM of Toronto, Monthly Bulletin*, Mid-Winter, 1969, no page, folded pamphlet.

perspective. Among them is one where he shares a rather curious impression of his examining trip to a remote prairie town:

[I]n spite of bad weather, parents left their farms and struggled over poor roads to get their children to the examinations punctually. [...] The little girls wore their party frocks, and the graceful thank-you after the ordeal is over would melt the heart of a public prosecutor. [...] But the teacher in their district seemed to have thought the Prelude and Fugue was just a double-barrelled name for one item and the young candidates had prepared only the Prelude.¹⁰

Evidently, through the examiner's feedback, not only the students but mainly the teachers were subject to learning and professional development: aside from primarily a financial gain, the examinations' purpose was to create "standards in a large country of old and new parts and uneven economic development," as noted by Smith.¹¹

In 1925, Luigi von Kunits, the multifaceted TCM professional—faculty violin teacher, composer, conductor, writer, fluent in Latin and Greek—regarded the examinations favourably, as "a most gratifying phenomenon" and an ongoing source of discovering "a great deal of native talent; and that not mostly confined to the big cities, as some would naturally expect, but often existent in smaller centres where such finds are exceptionally striking." He continues:

And not only real talent and earnest endeavour were manifested by numerous candidates, but also a determined ambition, a steady, dogged desire for progress, achievements and results—natural characteristics of the Canadian people, inherited from their pioneer days.¹²

However, the purpose of his article in *The Conservatory Quarterly Review* was to reveal the symptomatic misuse of the curriculum by accelerating students' progression through the grades without giving their maturation due diligence and time, which would result in hurrying the pupil

¹⁰ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 48. Schabas seems to be inaccurate in attributing this reference to *The Conservatory Quarterly Review* (November 1918, 24), and the source's origin is yet to be identified.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² UTARMS, A1975-0014/43. Luigi von Kunits. "Aftermath of the Examinations." *Conservatory Quarterly Review* 7, no. 4 (August 1925): 134.

in “breathless haste from grade to grade, or even [causing him] to skip some important steps of the ladder to the detriment of a secure foundation.”¹³

Although a violinist, von Kunits offered insight that was equally valuable for all disciplines: “Yet that which is valid for the string instruments applied *mutatis mutandis* just as much to the piano and to the voice.”¹⁴ Von Kunits also warned against the danger of learning the bare minimum repertoire—something so relevant today, almost a century later:

Moreover, he [the teacher] should bear in mind that the pieces and studies selected for examination purposes, are supposed to be representative specimens of a great number of others belonging to the same grade, [...] and by no means the *only* ones which—parrot-fashion—have been drilled into the pupil for weeks and months, just to “make a good showing” for the occasion.¹⁵

The 1929 article “Why Wasn’t I Told?” by an anonymous examiner (possibly a collaborative effort of the Examination Department) draws attention to the reasons that some exams fail, featuring a candidate on her third attempt to pass the exam. Compassionate towards the repeatedly failing candidate, the examiner is compelled to give diplomatic verbal advice to a candidate “anxious to learn the reason for her lack of success on former occasions.” In the early years, when the examinations were not as formally set up, teaching and advising in the examination room was the norm.¹⁶ This practice, however, was increasingly discouraged, “because any attempt of this sort is liable to lead to misunderstanding, and possibly to trouble with the teacher of the candidate.”¹⁷ Despite the restrictions on the examiner’s conduct, the examiner felt this case was one of those exceptions, when the candidate needed to learn the root of the reoccurring problem, as well as to eliminate the prejudice often directed at an examiner

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 135.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There’s Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 25.

¹⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/44. “Why Wasn’t I Told?” *The Conservatory Quarterly Review* 11, no. 4 (Summer 1929): 164.

when a failing mark arrives: “Many students who fail are apt to blame the examiner,” notes the author. Instead, teacher and student are recommended to read the detailed report to gain insight and to benefit from the examiner’s criticism, useful remarks, and suggestions. The article is even more relevant today: inexperienced teachers and a lack of “fundamental and thorough work” can result in impeding a student’s progress towards higher levels of study:

Such students find their marks growing smaller and smaller as the difficulties increase, until it becomes absolutely imperative that they retrace their steps and go over certain types of work which should have been done in an earlier grade. [T]he student and the teacher should in each case [a failed exam] realize that it is wise to make haste slowly and not to attempt to pass the examination at all costs, without laying the proper foundation for the future.¹⁸

The author creates a table of criticism that sheds light on the flaws that contribute to unsuccessful exam preparation, and moreover, he suggests that “every one of these points be checked up by the teacher and student, [...] and not be neglected until it is too late”:

1. Muscles too rigid.
2. Too much arm movement in finger passages.
3. Touch uneven, occasional forced notes and little real strength.
4. Touch too harsh and loud, and style too aggressive.
5. Touch too weakened, style too timid.
6. Finger work uneven; equal notes in runs not always given equal value.
7. Hands not always together.
8. Legato violated by the detaching of successive notes.
9. Legato violated by the overlapping of successive notes.
10. Staccato exaggerated.
11. Technic insufficiently prepared.
12. Scales etc. not in time with M.M. [metronome]
13. Pieces insufficiently prepared.
14. Inaccurate [notes].
15. Fingering careless.
16. Phrasing careless.
17. Tempo erratic.
18. Work on the whole too slow.
19. Work on the whole too fast.
20. Part-playing weak.
21. Somewhat mechanical.

¹⁸ Ibid., 165.

- 22. Style of playing immature.
- 23. Pedal insufficiently used.
- 24. Playing clouded by excessive pedalling.

Admittedly, the chances are minimal that these aspects can be identified by an inexperienced teacher or one with, for example, an overly percussive touch and a rather “aggressive” or “power-play” approach; thus, the danger is that the teaching will proceed in the same manner, increasing the rate of failures. In this line of thought, Ernest J. Farmer (1883-1975)—a composer, pianist, and teacher at the TCM—draws attention in a 1930 article to the reasons that some exams are failed. The insightful list with unidentified examples illustrates a range of causes for failures, the chief one being simply “not enough work.”¹⁹

Referring to what he considered insufficient practice time, gathered from candidates who would volunteer such information, Farmer notes that the time devoted is “far below normal, as only phenomenal talent would enable the student to reach the pass standard for that particular examination.”²⁰ Further, Farmer highlights the incorrect (i.e., overly fast) choice of tempo during preparation for both exam and performance, which impedes clearly hearing the full range of notes in a passagework and contributes to “inaccuracy, stumbling, poor tone and poor interpretation generally.”²¹

In his advice to teachers on how to cover the gaps in their teachings that have hitherto caused failure, Farmer also mentions incorrect hand and finger positions, insufficient accent depriving the performance of rhythmic vitality, metric and rhythmic inaccuracies, and struggles with memorization. Notably, the lack of memorization on its own will not result in a failing mark, although in cases when a candidate has not attempted to memorize a piece because they

¹⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/44. Ernest J. Farmer. “Examination Disappointments.” *Conservatory Quarterly Review* 12, no. 3 (Spring 1930): 113.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

are still at an early stage of learning it, or even still at the sight reading stage, most certainly the mark should gravitate towards a fail, as the performance (if flawed with unprepared repertoire and poorly performed ear and sight reading tests) is not presentable or ready for assessment at exam time. Farmer concludes: “Insufficient as well as inefficient teaching, and inattentiveness on the student’s part are, of course, prime causes of these faults.”²² However, Farmer’s report on Glenn Gould’s Grade 3 examination, surprises by its brevity that contrasts with the above mentioned rubrics—a four-sentence report with the lower-ranged First Class Honours standing and a mark of 81.²³

Summarizing the issues that inhibit candidates’ exam success, Farmer, in the following year (1931),²⁴ “diagnosed” several top reasons a performance might make an insufficient impression on an examiner. In the light of the examination system’s objective, previously discerned in 1918 by Leo Smith, to “discover and reward good work and, at the same time, to expose poor teaching,”²⁵ Farmer pointed out teachers’ oversights in preparing students for the tests; parents’ use of exams as a long- or short-term disciplinary tool with promises of rewards or consequences; students’ insufficient preparation for ear tests or sight reading due to last-minute, crammed practice for a few weeks prior to the exam; students’ lack of acquaintance with minor scales when they are part of the requirements, and their inability during the exam to enharmonically convert a request for an A flat minor scale into G sharp, or an A sharp minor arpeggio into a B flat minor one, though diligently practised at home. Farmer eventually portrays

²² Ibid.

²³ Library and Archives Canada. The Glenn Gould Archive. Toronto Conservatory of Music examination results, Grade 3 piano, February 20, 1940. The examiner: Ernest J. Farmer, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/glenn Gould/028010-1010.01-e.html> (accessed July 18, 2019).

²⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/44. Ernest J. Farmer. “On Passing Examinations.” *Conservatory Quarterly Review* 13, no. 4 (February 1931): 150.

²⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/43. Leo Smith. Editorial General Notes: “The Conservatory’s Local Centre and School Examinations.” *The Conservatory Quarterly Review* 1, no. 1 (1918): 22.

the qualities of the perfect candidate, who is guaranteed to both have a good experience and make a favourable impression on the examiner: “Apart from his readiness to take a credible mark on the music examination, he has gained habits of foresight, poise and adaptability, useful in many different directions.”²⁶

Going back to the revision of the syllabus and the preparation for its release in 1968, in the *Bulletin* (1966) Warren Mould shared his view on the “triggers” that stimulated the revision of selected pianoforte grades. Remarkably, among the common concerns is one we also share today, which is the quality of preparation for the Grade VIII exam. Alluding to and justifying the revision of that particular grade as “changing attitudes towards the standards and ideals in academic education,” Mould stressed the importance of reviewing what was considered a milestone grade yet “has become primarily a test in which a candidate must ‘scrape through somehow’ in order to win the prize of the Music Option” (now referred to as a high school credit, earned when the practical exam is paired with the theoretical; see Chapter 2).²⁷

The long-standing TCM/RCM Principal Ettore Mazzoleni (1945-68) was just as aware of the advantages that the examinations bring as he was of their disadvantages. In the system’s defence, Mazzoleni first took on the press for proclaiming that “there is no place in art for examinations,” arguing that “every art is a craft and as a craft must be studied and taught. [...] And examinations, one form or another, are unquestionably a part of the teaching method.”²⁸ Along with the advantages and real virtues of the exams (i.e., being “an incentive work; [...] providing] the value of concentration; [...] discovering talent [...] and the way to determining

²⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/44. Ernest J. Farmer. “On Passing Examinations.” *Conservatory Quarterly Review* 13, no. 4 (February 1931): 151.

²⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/43. Warren Mould. “Point of View.” RCM of Toronto, *Monthly Bulletin*, Summer 1966, page unavailable, folded pamphlet.

²⁸ UTARMS, A1975-0014/42. Ettore Mazzoleni. “Examine 40,892 Music Candidates.” *RCM of Toronto, Monthly Bulletin*, September-October 1960, 2.

achievement, progress and potential”), Mazzoleni pointed out that “these advantages are fraught with dangers”:

Examinations can become an end in themselves rather than a means. The winning of another certificate can become the aim instead of music, first and last. Every effort is concentrated on the minimum requirements, and the pupil fails to learn that just as there is a time to concentrate so there is a time to browse around. His teacher is a drill-master whose attention is focused on the narrowest of goals, blind to the real purposes of music education.²⁹

Among the documents found in Principal Schabas’s files, presumably in his hand, there is an excerpt from a lengthy report in which “The Graded Examination System” section is listed, accompanied by several handwritten remarks along the margins. Yet to be determined are the origin of the report, the year of issue, and the authorship,³⁰ but these four loose pages contain invaluable statements as well as recommendations for improvements to the system—not, however, without harsh criticism:

[T]he Conservatory’s exercises and pieces have become stepping stones, not to realize the potential of the student to make music on his or her instrument, but to negotiate the hazards of the next examination. We are convinced that in order to achieve the goals of the Community Music Division new directions in curriculum planning must be adopted. We consider the present examination system an obstacle to truly creative planning.³¹

Nearly 50 years later, Jeff Warren, who holds a position at Trinity Western University in Langley (BC), and is also a columnist and music commentator, argues about the purposefulness of narrowly perceived and narrowly applied music education leading to exams, and the tendency to tailor music education to a template that includes no creative activities such as “composing in lessons, improvising a cadenza”—the activities that “won’t help you pass your next exam, [but

²⁹ Ibid., 3.

³⁰ The collection of files that is assigned to the principal’s office and stored under Schabas’s name is dated anywhere from 1978 to 1991: although Schabas was principal until 1983, the documents are stored in the box under his name, forming a collection under the overall title “Principal’s Office.”

³¹ UTARMS, B96-0013/16(04). Office of the Principal: Schabas’s files, unknown author and date.

are considered] the ‘real’ measure of your musicianship.”³² Warren redirects criticism from the teachers to the RCM itself for expecting and putting an emphasis on technical mastery and solo performance:

Unfortunately [the] RCM too often treats performance closer to an assembly line than an act of creation. Granted, there are many individual teachers who avoid this style of teaching. However, I have observed too many non-creative RCM students entering university to be comfortable with their system of music education (i.e., “I perform, I don’t compose”).

An integral part of musicianship is imagination; the ability to create new music or play a song by ear using improvisational skills and applied theoretical knowledge has been disappearing from the skill set of achievement-oriented pupils, leaving them at a disadvantage. Two demographics, however—teachers and parents—continue to benefit from the system:

Parents want quantified results that their kids are improving, and exams are one way for parents to see a return on their investment. [...] Private teaching is a regular part of the income of most musicians, and the RCM system helps supply those jobs, which is great for music school grads.³³

Warren stresses the underlying commercial aspect born from the synergy of the above two demographics, alluding to the “consumer system” of supply and demand: “they [the RCM] sell [...] a feeling of accomplishment of passing exams that may or may not be helpful for a career in music or the enjoyment of music.”³⁴ This contentious statement highlights the lopsided perception of exams, a system that can deprive music learners from many of the benefits of music education. The examinations historically derived from at least three initiatives:

1. To develop a national examination system independent from the British TCL and ABRSM;

³² Jeff Warren. 2011. “Is the Royal Conservatory Helpful Or Harmful to Musical Culture and Student Development?” [jeffwarren.wordpress.com](https://jeffwarren.wordpress.com/2011/11/02/is-the-royal-conservatory-helpful-or-harmful-to-musical-culture-and-student-development/), <https://jeffwarren.wordpress.com/2011/11/02/is-the-royal-conservatory-helpful-or-harmful-to-musical-culture-and-student-development/> (accessed April 6, 2019).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

2. To distribute examination centres nationwide with the dual purpose of a) alleviating lengthy travel to Toronto to take exams, and b) to disseminate music and music education, improving the quality of teaching in remote areas, and promoting sales of music publications throughout the country;

3. To support the Conservatory financially, as exams were shown to be a stable source of income for the institution.

The business side of the teaching and especially examinations is undeniable.

“Examinations were money earners,” remarked Schabas,³⁵ and as with any business venture, the goal is profit. However, without Examinations there would be no compass to measure student progress against: regardless of whether this compass is effective or advantageous or not, a point of reference is necessary to compare progress. The Examinations unites the country with a network spread throughout all regions, linking them together and creating a brand that is recognizable and uniform, similar to other recognizable Canadian brands operating coast to coast.³⁶

Evidently, the disadvantages of aiming for and taking exams are numerous, but these can often be linked to a type of teacher, who introduces students to the system and coaches them with a set practice routine and confined perception of the exam. Parental influence and their view of exams often derive from the teacher’s view, becoming a cross-pollinating process of forming a specific mentality in children, emphasizing and oriented towards the result rather than the journey. In this respect, Edward Fisher’s view is again relevant:

Music is an exacting muse and that to win her favour he must give her true allegiance without wasting too much thought on the prospective glory which is often associated with the winning of diplomas.³⁷

³⁵ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There’s Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 26.

³⁶ Canadian brands such as Shoppers Drug Mart (Pharmaprix), Tim Hortons, Canadian Tire, RBC or CIBC, and other banks, Petro-Canada (Suncor Energy).

³⁷ Edward Fisher. “Talks with Teachers: Examinations.” *Conservatory Bi-Monthly* 1, no. 2 (March 1902): 41. Digitized resource: 42/616, <https://archive.org/details/conservatorybimo01torouoft/page/n41> (accessed March 24, 2019).

The examination system does not dictate the means of education; it recommends a certain way to conduct a musical training through a set of rules, requirements, and expectations. There is no listed directive stating that one cannot study or build up knowledge or skills beyond the requirements: this is a self-implied and encouraged endeavour. In this respect, arguing about the usefulness of exams and the unintended side effects of the system, Mazzoleni concluded:

A summary of the basic advantages and handicaps³⁸ of music examinations reads like a list of clichés. It is no less valid for that reason. What must be acknowledged is the simple fact that over the years these examinations have made a unique contribution to the cause of music education in this country. Properly used, they will continue to grow in merit as well as in size.³⁹

The British examinations were conducted over the Empire with the objective of instilling Western music traditions throughout the colonies, thus ensuring their cultural growth and their attainment of European (i.e., British) standards. This system created a new type of market in music education, and consequently a demand-and-supply business format: it provided employment to musicians and created new professions, such as examiners and many administrative positions within the organization. It provided teachers with an opportunity for training and professional development that could lead to higher qualifications and affiliation with a particular institution. It was also a very profitable account for the publishing companies.

Similarly, the Canadian examinations ended up gradually covering the entire country, with some holdout pockets such as McGill; while French-speaking communities in Ottawa do take RCM exams (provided the examiner is qualified to conduct exams in French),⁴⁰ the French-

³⁸ The word “handicap” was used frequently throughout syllabuses and articles to describe students’ inabilities or lack of aptitude, now referred to as “limitation” or “weakness”; at the time it was not used to refer to a physical disability.

³⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/42. Ettore Mazzoleni. “Examine 40,892 Music Candidates.” RCM of Toronto, *Monthly Bulletin*, September-October 1960, 3.

⁴⁰ Basic proficiency in French can suffice when conducting exams in French communities, as the examiners are also supplied with necessary materials and support from the Academic Office. I conducted these exams in Ottawa Central, and West parts, as well as in Montreal. Regardless of whether the candidates are bi-lingual or not, the

speaking conservatories in Quebec retained autonomy from the RCM system. Although the British-inspired Canadian model has remained constant, over the past few decades the Canadian system has managed to absorb, slowly and timidly, some of the cultural characteristics that reflect the Canadian mentality—i.e., the exam procedures and policies have been gradually adjusted to suit multicultural Canada, and the repertoire expanded to an extensive catalogue of composers of diverse nationalities, though the European repertoire still prevails.

SECTION B

CONSERVATORY EXAMINATIONS IN THE PRESS

In the early years, the press provided a ready and simple means for TCM (RCM) publicity in the form of routine newspaper advertisements and through the even more effective promotion of annually printing the list of examination graduates and scholarship winners (when scholarships became available). A snapshot example of the routine advertising campaigns that were launched shortly after the inception (1887) shows how eager the TCM was to get the word out and attract new students (and consequently, Examinations candidates). The Conservatory spent significant at the time amounts on advertising in numerous papers:⁴¹ e.g., during the ten-month period from October 1905 to the end of July 1906, \$2,000 was budgeted to place ads in numerous newspapers, such as the *News*; *Daily Star*; *Saturday Night*; *Toronto World*; *Montreal Star*; *Globe*; *Mail & Empire*; *Spectator* (Hamilton); *Whig* (Kingston); *Free Press* (London); *Citizen* (Ottawa); *World, Province* (Vancouver); *Mercury* (Guelph); *Colonist* (Victoria); *Free Press*, *Telegram*, *Tribune* (Winnipeg); *Sentinel Review* (Woodstock); *Muskoka Tourist*, *Musical*

technical component (i.e., technical requirements) is learned by the candidates and administered by examiners exclusively in French. Interestingly, for Russian-speaking examiners administering these tests is not a problem as the terminology is similar (e.g., G sharp minor is "Sol dièse mineur"; D flat major is "Ré bémol majeur" etc).

⁴¹ The advertisements of the school, its programs or examinations gradually dissipated from the press as the media's means of outreach evolved due to the development of technology.

Journal,⁴² *Ont.Pub.Co. (C. Magazine)*; as well as in church publications of various denominations—i.e., *Presbyterian, Baptist, Christian Guardian, Church Paper, Canadian Churchman*, with no evident periodicals representing Roman Catholic denomination. The most expensive ads were in the *Globe* (\$93.86–104.00), *Mail & Empire* (\$75.20–139.00), and *Montreal Star* (\$54), especially in the summer months, versus the *Daily Star* (\$29.40), *Toronto World* (\$27.95), *News* (\$26.36), and *Musical Journal* (\$10–40). The overall cost of advertising for the ten months was \$1,723.29, well within the budget.⁴³ A typical newspaper ad, whether it was for the Conservatory as an educational body, or Examinations would look quite uniform, yet varied in content (see Figures 1-3):

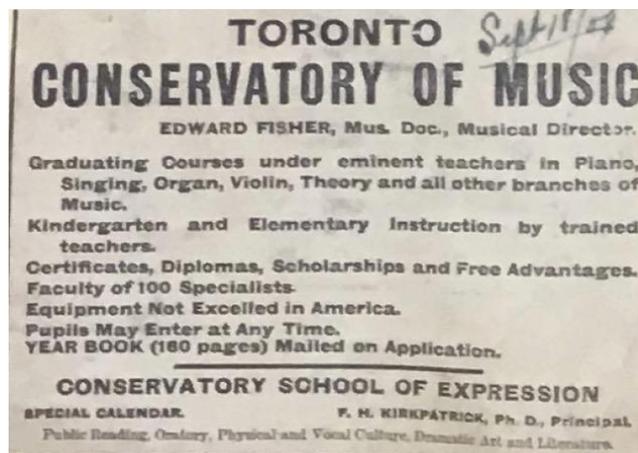


Figure 1: The TCM advertisement in the *Globe*, 1908.⁴⁴

⁴² This Canadian music periodical has an identically titled magazine in London (UK), http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/films-videos-sound-recordings/music-periodical-index/Pages/list.aspx?k=musical+journal&&p_ID=30 (accessed June 2, 2019).

⁴³ UTARMS A1975-0014/088. TCM Press clippings 1903-8.

⁴⁴ UTARMS A1975-0014/086. TCM Press clippings 1908-15.

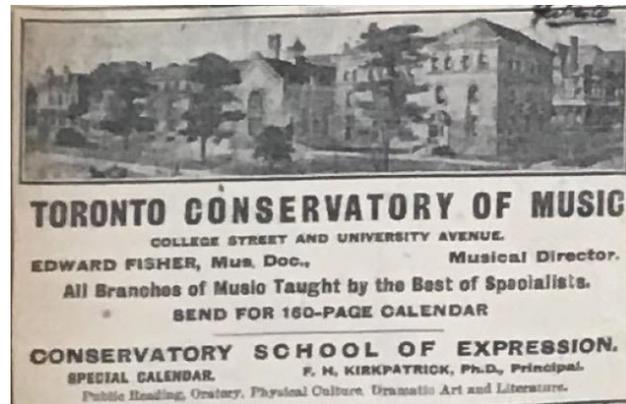


Figure 2: The TCM advertisement in the Globe, 1909.⁴⁵

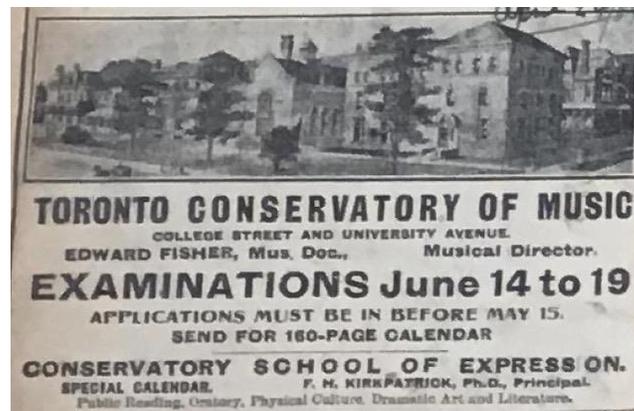


Figure 3: The TCM advertisement of the Examinations in the Globe, 1909.⁴⁶

A few decades since the inception, staff chronicles and music matters surrounding Conservatory life had the attention of the press and were frequently circulated in newspapers, whether in brief ads announcing student or teacher recitals, extensive articles featuring reviews of visiting artists' performances, ads for the Conservatory's programs, extensive obituaries of notable Conservatory executives or teachers, or even faculty member appointments.

Conservatory events were routinely portrayed in a favourable or, in some cases, even a lavish, celebratory, or exalted manner, despite some behind-the-scenes financial or internal administrative turbulence. Examination matters were covered by in-house publications such as

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

the *Conservatory Bi-Monthly* (later, the *Quarterly Review*, then *Bulletin*, *Monthly Bulletin*, and *Newsletter*). These newsletters were the primary source for readers to learn about the Conservatory's internal events, perspectives on composers' biographies, wise quotations from prominent figures, pedagogical aspects, and helpful advice for preparing for examinations, etc., all of which was usually written by faculty members.

The Examinations occasionally came under press scrutiny, and were criticized for the drastic increase in fees in 1972-4, which caused concern to private teachers and families all the way to the top—the Conservatory's principal at that time, David Ouchterlony, wrote:

I must ask all teachers and parents to believe that we have earnestly held the line concerning examination charges as long as possible. We simply cannot do so any longer. My great worry in this connection is that we may deprive some young student of the advantage of music examination. However, my concern is alleviated by knowing of the splendid services being offered by other Canadian examining boards which operate regionally.⁴⁷

Issues pertaining to the Conservatory's buildings⁴⁸ and their deteriorating state were mentioned throughout the century several times, drawing the public's attention to the institution's needs and its struggles in the decaying facilities, forcing the funding and the relocation. By 1983, the Bloor Street West building required renovations, provoking the following comment, drawing attention to the precarious financial state of the institution:

The Conservatory is now in a building on Bloor Street West, near Bedford Road, that has fallen into disrepair and which would require several million dollars worth of renovation if the conservatory were to remain there.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. W.J. Pitcher. 1972. "Price Increases Hit Music Lessons, Tests." *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 22. Canadian Press Clipping Service.

⁴⁸ The state of the Conservatory's branches and the necessity to sell them to improve the institution's financial stability after President Simon's appointment in 1991 are discussed in Chapter 3.

⁴⁹ UTARMS, B96-0013/16(4). Office of the Principal: Schabas's files. "U of T Hopes New Conservatory Will Let It Move Its Grand Pianos." *Globe and Mail*, June 2, 1983.

The historical McMaster Hall was about to be turned into a commercial development—offices, retail shops, even a hotel or condominiums—to raise money for the university with which the RCM was affiliated at the time, which would be spent on restoration.⁵⁰ Principal Schabas shares in an article that “[s]treet noise sometimes leaks into the concert hall,” with “radiators intervening at crucial moments in a concert,” in addition to the building having an “archaic heating plant and the conservatory has had to install humidifiers in every room.”⁵¹

The Examinations office had also seemingly experienced some crisis a decade before, and the system was frequently accused of “impeding students’ progress”—depriving them of developing real musical skills. Wayne C. Vance of Trenton, an editor of the *ORMTA Bulletin*, is quoted in a *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* article:

Conservatory examinations [...] allow virtually no room for individual differences but force everyone to fit into the same mould. Many teachers spend far too much of their time instructing pupils how to pass music examinations [...]. As a result, many pupils pass examinations, sometimes with high marks, and learn very little music. [And] sometimes the students with the most fluent fingers and the most musical minds score the lowest marks on the technical requirements of examinations. This, of course, is a reflection on the examination system, not on the students’ abilities.⁵²

Undoubtedly, examination results are a barometer of the quality of teaching and, in turn, stimulate a teacher’s ambition to achieve better marks. Thus, “many [teachers] are tempted to concentrate solely on this aspect and ignore a student’s overall musical and personal development,” wrote Howard Janzen of the Medicine Hat College Conservatory of Music.⁵³ This can turn into a necessity for teachers, working towards securing, establishing, and elevating their rating and reputation through “drilling” to expectations and thus acquiring the results required

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. Wayne C. Vance. 1973. “Music Exams Impede Students, Editor Claims.” *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*. June 1, 1973.

⁵³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. Howard Janzen. 1974. “Conservatory of Music.” *Medicine Hat News* (October 2, 1974).

for their portfolios. “Drilling” a uniform scheme and moulding each student to the same repertoire selections, treating the process as an assembly line, draws away from “teaching” and towards mere “training.”

Without a customized approach, teaching in this manner becomes a habitual routine—the production of uniformly coached students who are unaware of the art and the vast knowledge existing beyond such routine. To argue against Vance’s statements, in particular the core issue of blame being placed on the Examinations for imposing a “mould” on candidates really lies in the teaching itself: the curriculum works for the benefit of the student if the teacher invests experience, energy, and creativity, and demonstrates genuine pedagogical inclination, willingness, and ability to identify, explore, and bring out the potential in every pupil. In the absence of the above, the curriculum will confine both the student and the teacher.

Arguably, no system is deemed to be perfect, and the Conservatory’s curriculum, bound by a century of established tradition, has not been revolutionized. Although improved for efficiency and altered gradually according to prevailing demands and broad population, the RCM Practical Piano Examinations still lacks certain aspects of a more comprehensive set of requirements that would introduce creative components and foster more practically applicable musical skills (e.g., improvising, composing, harmonizing a melody from the early levels/grades within the practical portion of the exam).⁵⁴ However, as a brand the examinations are considered “one way for parents to find out from a knowledgeable professional whether their child has been properly

⁵⁴ Harmonization, short composition are integrated into the Keyboard Harmony requirements in Level 9, however, these skills are not fostered by the practical curriculum until then, which at that point seems more effortful for the student/candidate to develop.

taught,” remarks Janzen. Notably, he adds, “Exams are only a random sampling to see that a well-rounded program of study is underway.”⁵⁵

However, not only unfavourable or problematic topics were appearing in the press headlines. The routinely published extensive lists of candidates of various examination standings, including “pass,” had been an effective and strategic advertisement campaign on their own since the commencement of the Conservatory. The list of graduates or examination certificate recipients kept expanding over the decades, taking more space in newspapers, until the 1980s when there was simply not enough page space (or perhaps not enough budget to publish all the names. Now, the names of graduates and their teachers are listed on the RCM website shortly before convocation.

In the early years of the Conservatory and throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century, the predominance of female over male students was quite apparent, confirming the impact on women’s socialization made by the RCM’s forerunner, Trinity College London, and later the ABRSM. Wright, chronicling the history of the ABRSM (UK) notes that in general:

[The exams] encouraged more middle-class families to see music teaching as a respectable career for their children (particularly daughters), and so made them more inclined to invest in the fees to buy a conservatoire training.⁵⁶

A curious letter, purported to have been received by Principal Charles Peaker, was published in the Conservatory’s *Bulletin* in 1946, featuring Peaker’s open response to a group of sixteen-year-old girls who inquired about their future should they devote their careers to music:

⁵⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. Howard Janzen. 1974. Conservatory of Music. *Medicine Hat News* (October 2, 1974).

⁵⁶ David C.H. Wright. 2013. *The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music: A Social and Cultural History*. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 5.

This is our problem. We have chosen music as our occupation. But what kind of work is there in this at which we could make good money? After we have our ATCM where can we obtain a good job? We would very much like to teach music. Is this possible? Or play the piano in stores etc.? Our parents have spent a great deal of money on us to pay for music lessons. Now, we would like to pay them back. How can we? We have not finished our course in music yet, but we would like to know our job when we finish, to give us an idea what to work for. [...] What are the different ways of teaching music other than at your home?⁵⁷

The letter concluded by asking Peaker to list all the possible jobs in the music industry along with estimated prospective salaries and the recommended schooling that these jobs would require.⁵⁸

Evidently a profession in music, especially for female students, was attainable, yet was a source of unsettledness and uncertainty: the choices revolved around either getting married and being proud of one's diplomas and certificates while teaching one's own children; teaching at a public or private school; becoming an accompanist or a concert pianist (if one had the aptitude); or even becoming a teacher at the RCM, as Peaker mentioned in his public response to the letter.⁵⁹ The lists of graduates and scholarship winners comprised mostly female pupils, some of whom would emerge as acclaimed pianists: young and promising artist, the twelve-year-old pianist Ellen Ballon (1910);⁶⁰ Jessie Binns (1911) the Adamson family (presumably, the donors of the estate situated on Lake Ontario in Mississauga that became the Conservatory's branch

⁵⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/042. Charles Peaker. 1946. "Editorial Notes." *TCM, Bulletin*, no. 97 (February-March 1946): 1.

⁵⁸ It is possible that these young women were aware of their limited career possibilities, even with the existing additional options to pursue accompanying or play chamber music, went unmentioned. Taking into consideration the time of this correspondence (1946), the women may have been working during the war, although their status may have changed, as the marriage rate and migration to the suburbs increased in the 1950s. It is also possible that the letter was in fact a composite version of correspondence Peaker had received.

⁵⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/042. Charles Peaker. 1946. "Editorial Notes." *TCM, Bulletin*, no. 97 (February-March 1946): 1.

⁶⁰ University of Toronto, digital resource. Edward Johnson Music Library (45.529). *Musical Canada*, 1910. "Miss Ellen Ballon." (June, Vol. 5, no. 2): 50, <https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/music/musicalcanada05.pdf> (accessed May 21, 2019).

until quite recently)—Mrs. Adamson and her daughters Elsie and Lina (1915);⁶¹ prodigy Gloria Morgan, the eight-year-old pupil of Boris Berlin (1932);⁶² Margaret (Miller) Brown (1935); scholarship winners Ellen J. Twiss, Lily Washimoto, and Amy Fleming (1936); Joan Lafferty (1959); the blind pianist Susan Small (1962). All of these artists or prodigies exist only in newspapers of the day and are unknown to the audience today. However, Margaret Miller Brown had taught from 1924 to 1969 at the TCM (RCM) and for many years at the University of Toronto, numbering among her students Brian Cherney, John Coveart, Anna Drake Dembeck, Sheila Henig, Gordon Macpherson, Clifford Poole, Sydney Young McInnis, Doug Riley, and Clifford von Kuster.⁶³

After the Second World War, demographics shifted notably when returning veterans resumed their education, made affordable with the benefits received after their discharge. Enrolment grew at an “unprecedented rate” during the administration of Mazzoleni.⁶⁴ It was not specified in the article whether the veterans themselves resumed their music studies or could afford to send their families to do so.

In the 1970s a more balanced mix of male versus female pianists poured onto the musical scene: press articles throughout the country (e.g., *Montreal Star*; *Ottawa Citizen*; *The St. Vital Lance and Fort Garry Lance*; *Winnipeg Free Press and Winnipeg Tribune*; *North Bay Nugget*; *The Intelligencer Belleville*; *Penticton Herald BC*; *Timmins Press*, *Toronto Globe and Mail*; *St.*

⁶¹ Bertha Drechsler Adamson was a violinist, her daughters were pianists. “Bertha Drechsler Adamson.” 2007. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/bertha-drechsler-adamson-emc> (accessed July 23, 2019).

⁶² UTARMS, A1975-0014/015. Toronto Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1931-6. *Saturday Night* (April 16, 1932): 88.

⁶³ William Schabas. 2007. “Margaret Miller Brown.” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/margaret-miller-brown-emc> (accessed June 2, 2019).

⁶⁴ J. Paul Green, Patricia Wardrop, and Jennifer Higgs. 2012. “The Royal Conservatory of Music. Postwar Expansion.” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/royal-conservatory-of-musicconservatoire-royal-de-musique-emc> (accessed April 20, 2019).

Catharines Standard; Moncton Times and Transcript; Oshawa Times, etc.) refer to performers' backgrounds either as alumni of the RCM or with mention of the examinations: these include male pianists Andrew Markow (1972); Andrew Gallardi,⁶⁵ Fredrick L. Pritchard,⁶⁶ Samuel Levitan⁶⁷ (1973); Arthur Ozolins⁶⁸ (1973); Paul Helmer,⁶⁹ Raymond Dudley (an active performer from 1949),⁷⁰ and Ray Vacchino⁷¹ (1974); and female artists, who still outnumbered them, Sydney Young McInnis;⁷² Sheila Henig (1971); Mari-Elizabeth Morgen⁷³ (1972-4); Sharon Krause⁷⁴ (1973); Christina Petrowska⁷⁵ (1973-74); Irene Woodburn Wright,⁷⁶ Anahid Alexanian,⁷⁷ and Diana McIntosh⁷⁸ (1974). Mixed-duo pianists also circulated the stages: Ann

⁶⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. "Youthful North Bay artist to present first local concert." *North Bay Nugget* (April 23, 1973). See also: "Scholarship worth \$1,000 to N. Bay pianist." *North Bay Nugget* (May 15, 1973). See also: "Andrew Gallardi named feature soloist in US." *North Bay Nugget* (date unavailable).

⁶⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. Eugene Lang. "Young Pianist Deserves Better Audience Support." *The Intelligencer Belleville* (May 29, 1973).

⁶⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music, Press clippings 1972-5. Carl Cunningham. "A charming performance by pianist Samuel Levitan." *Toronto Star* (July 26, 1973).

⁶⁸ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. Myron Galloway. "Top pianists consistently off mark." *Montreal Star* (April 17, 1973).

⁶⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. John Kraglund. "Pianist gratifying, size of audience not." *Toronto Globe and Mail* (July 18, 1974).

⁷⁰ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. "Canadian Pianist plays at Thistle Theatre Monday." *St. Catharines Standard* (November 30, 1974).

⁷¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. "Timmins Pianist Returns For First Lions' Program." *Timmins Press* (April 15, 1974).

⁷² UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. "Piano Recital." *The St. Vital Lance and Fort Garry Lance* (March 28, 1973); "Local Pianists in recital.: *Winnipeg Free Press and Winnipeg Tribune* (March 31, 1973).

⁷³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. "Mari-Elizabeth Morgen Very Talented Artist." *Moncton Times and Transcript* (March 30, 1974).

⁷⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. "Vancouver pianist to play on Sunday." *Pentincton Herald* (November 21, 1973).

⁷⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. John Kraglund. "Spectacular labor by pianist Petrowska." *Toronto Globe and Mail* (July 23, 1974).

⁷⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. "Renowned musician to lead piano workshop in N. Bay." *North Bay Nugget* (February 28, 1974).

⁷⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. "Anahid Returns For Solo Concert." *St. Catharines Standard* (March 23, 1974).

⁷⁸ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. Phyllis Freedman. "Pianist Promotes Music By Canadian Composers." *Free Press* (date unavailable).

and Harold Lugsdin (1973);⁷⁹ Evelyn and Reginald Bedford;⁸⁰ and Clifford Poole and Margaret Parsons.

In the 1970s, a shift occurred in the demographics as more Asian (in particular, Chinese) students claimed the spotlight among the graduates. About the time Patrick Li entered the scene in 1972 as a teacher, promising pianists and scholarship recipients from Asia began to emerge, after which there was a steady and significant flow of Asian students (mostly from China), and some from Korea, although the proportion of Korean students is still relatively small, compared with Chinese pupils.

Throughout the years, articles in the press or magazines were often dedicated to an invaluable contributor—a prolific teacher, an examiner or adjudicator, an author of a book series, or the Conservatory’s ambassador Boris Berlin, drawing attention to the prominent teacher who had had a long career with the RCM.⁸¹ One article included coverage of the January 21, 2001, convocation that was attended by Jean and Aline Chrétien, and Robert Rae (the ceremony at which I received the Artist Diploma Solo Piano in performance from the Glenn Gould School), see Figure 4:

⁷⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. “Piano Recital.” *The St. Vital Lance* and *Fort Garry Lance* (March 28, 1973); “Local Pianists in recital.” *Winnipeg Free Press and Winnipeg Tribune* (March 31, 1973).

⁸⁰ UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1972-5. Classical Treat At Ladies’ College. *Oshawa Times* (February 28, 1974).

⁸¹ UTARMS, B96-0013/16(4). Office of the Principal: Schabas’s files. Kenneth (Ken) Winters. 2001. “Music Master Taught Canada’s Great.” *Globe and Mail* (March 28, 2001).



Figure 4: RCM's convocation ceremony, January 21, 2001: left to right, Aline Chrétien, Boris Berlin, and Robert (Bob) Rae.⁸²

While the recent publications in *Toronto Star* or *Globe and Mail*, presumably instigated by the Conservatory itself, revolve around the revamped community school and Koerner Hall, the press rarely covers the Examinations matters, nor does it continue to publish the names of Certificates or Diploma recipients.

SECTION C

WOMEN AND THE EXAMINATIONS

Inevitably, the Examinations could not exist outside Toronto's life and its operations should be perceived in the context of the Conservatory's and musical activities in general. The period of growth of the Conservatory coincided with the continuing popularity of the piano culture, an outgrowth from the Victorian period, and the desire of young women to devote some of their time to becoming reasonably accomplished pianists. Such interest can be seen in the list of the TCM (RCM) graduates, in press coverage of female pianists, scholarship winners, notable prodigies, numerous recital reviews or success stories in the newspapers or Conservatory's newsletters. We have already noted the female students who expressed concerns about their

⁸² Ibid.

prospective jobs in the musical field (mentioned above) and the Conservatory's Residence for out-of-town female students. Names of female music teachers can be found in Toronto's city directory listings,⁸³ evidence of their presence is found in organizations such as the Association of Women Music Teachers,⁸⁴ and the Women's Morning Musical Club (WMCT);⁸⁵

As a reference guide, in the 1920s female school teachers in Toronto earned \$1,000.00-\$2,000.00 per year while male teachers earned \$1,625.00-\$2,500.00, as women workers was still considered 'cheaper' compared to men with the same qualifications."⁸⁶ Evident from one of the routinely disclosed "faculty and fees" list in the RCM's Year Book of 1958-9, the fees were seemingly distributed based on the accomplishment, merit, experience and presumably seniority, rather than on one's gender: e.g., fees for nine half-hour lessons (one term) could vary from \$60 (Alberto Guerrero, Boris Roubakine, and Pierre Souvairan), and \$50 (Boris Berlin, Margaret Miller Brown, Bertram Hayunga Carman, Weldon Kilburn and Greta Kraus), \$40 (Myrtle Rose Guerrero and Earle Moss), to others who were paid anywhere from \$17.50 to \$35.⁸⁷ Except for the upper salary level teachers, the faculty overall was well-balanced, although with the female gender slightly prevailing.

In a photograph that captured a theory exam being written in the recital hall and seemingly being invigilated by a professor, one can decipher only four male students at most (in the dark suits, three figures on the right, and one on the left). The overwhelming majority of the students' population before the Second World War was evidently female (see Figure 5):

⁸³ Toronto Public Library. Digital resource, call number: 910.7135 T59 – 406707. The Toronto City Directory, 1906, <https://archive.org/details/torontodirec190600midiuoft/page/n15> (accessed June 2, 2019).

⁸⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/043. Conservatory Quarterly Review, Vol. 5, no. 2, (February 1923): 39.

⁸⁵ WMCT website, <https://www.wmct.on.ca/about-wmct/history/> (accessed June 2, 2019).

⁸⁶ Internet Archive, Open Library. Janet Ray. 1981. Towards Women's Rights, Toronto, Grolier Ltd, 15 (access by membership).

⁸⁷ UTARMS, P78-0826(1). RCM Year Book, 1958-9, 9-10.

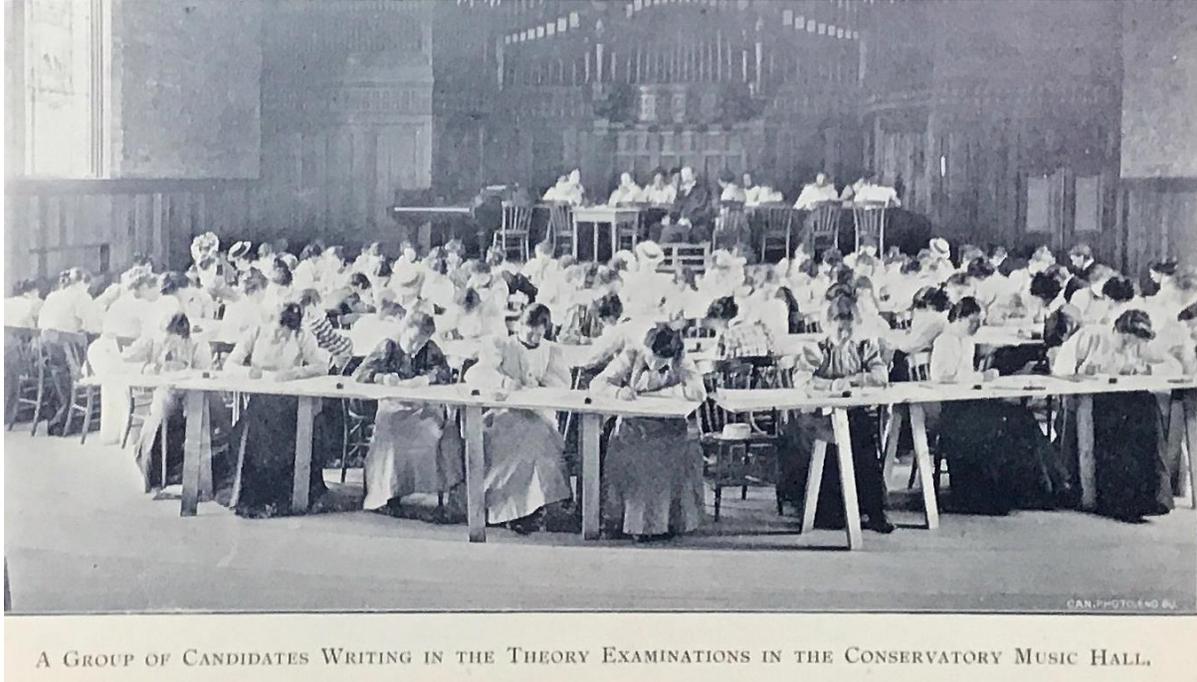


Figure 5: The theory examination taken in the TCM Music Hall, as shown in the 1900-1 Syllabus.⁸⁸

Notably, one of the Local Examination Centres was The Ontario Ladies' College in Whitby, advertised not only in the Conservatory's Syllabus (1909-10),⁸⁹ but also in the Western Ontario Gazetteer and Directory (1898-9). The latter gave a lavish description of the facilities, attractive to middle or upper-class young ladies which included "palatial buildings, beautiful grounds, magnificent site overlooking Lake Ontario, steam heating, electric lighting, modern sanitation, new gymnasium, large pipe organ, concert grand pianos [...]. Proximity to Toronto enables students to hear the best talent that visits that city. Several special trains from the city during the year" (see Figure 6):

⁸⁸ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, Fourteenth Annual Calendar, 1900-1, photo insert.

⁸⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, Syllabus 1909-10, 29.

ONTARIO LADIES' COLLEGE

— AND —
Ontario Conservatory of Music

WHITBY, - - ONTARIO.

**The Largest and Best Equipped College
for Women in Canada.**

Palatial buildings, beautiful grounds, magnificent
site overlooking Lake Ontario, steam heating, electric
lighting, modern sanitation, new gymnasium, large
pipe organ, concert grand pianos—in short, a pleasant,

Healthful Home of Christian Culture,

as well as a live, progressive institution offering the
highest facilities for the study of

**Literature, Music, Art,
Oratory, Commercial
and Domestic Science.**

Proximity to Toronto enables students to hear the
best talent that visits that city. Several special trains
from the city during the year.

Write for calendar or further information to

REV. J. J. HARE, Ph D., Principal.

Figure 6: Ontario Ladies' College in Whitby ad in the Western Ontario Gazetteer and Directory, 1898-9.⁹⁰

Assuming it was genuine, the above-mentioned letter to Peaker from the group of teenaged girls, seeking advice on their career choices, demonstrates a remarkable confidence of ambitious young ladies, determined to make a sustainable living in the music field. Peaker published that inquiry in the Bulletin to attract the attention of many others facing a similar challenge, addressing “what a lot of sixteen-year-olds in Canada are thinking [...] throughout the Dominion”: taking it graciously and outlining the possibilities lying ahead (mentioned in Section B), Peaker added:

⁹⁰ Toronto Public Library. Western Ontario Gazetteer and Directory, 1898-99. Ontario Publishing & Advertising Co., Ingersoll, Ontario. Digital resources, <https://static.torontopubliclibrary.ca/da/pdfs/37131055372791d.pdf> (accessed June 1, 2019).

I know a good many ladies who have taken our Associateship diploma and have never made a penny out of music, but they are very happy that they have it (Diploma). They mix in society (and I don't refer to that society which is exclusively the moneyed class) –they conduct themselves there agreeably, and they have an intelligent outlook whether they are listening to a lecture on philosophy, a violin sonata an election speech, or reading the most recent biography. Some of these ladies help us run our concerts at the Conservatory. [...] In these days when missionary societies, churches, home and school music clubs, symphony orchestras, and welfare societies could not operate without women, we know that this axiom is as true about you and your sex, as it is about us. [...] Music can do a great deal to make you happy and to make you pleasant with other people, and perhaps that is quite as important as the matters dealt with so capably in your letter.⁹¹

Peaker then concluded his response with kind, though patronizing wishes:

Work hard, and do whatever you are doing as well as you possibly can, and don't worry too much about the future yet. When you get higher up the hill, you will find there is a lot more to be seen, and your ideas will change. I would very much like to hear from you when you are nineteen (or twenty).⁹²

Would Peaker have addressed his male students—the best of them likely destined to become church organists—the same way?⁹³

Young women could become private or school teachers, accompanists or possibly even concert pianists. Among the latter was Miss Jessie Binns, who made the headlines with her recitals in Toronto in 1911 as a “charming young artist” of West Indian extraction: after coming to Toronto while still young, Binns trained at the Conservatory with Miss Frances Morris and Dr. Edward Fisher. She extended her studies in Europe with Leschetizsky⁹⁴ in Vienna, and also “spent some time in Berlin.” Binns devoted her career to concert performance, received reviews of adoration for being “a very fine, capable and all round satisfactory player,” furthermore being described as a pianist who “has abundant reserve force, finished technique and possesses a most

⁹¹ Charles Peaker. “Editorial Notes.” *Toronto Conservatory of Music Bulletin*, No. 97 (February-March 1946): 1.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Peaker's daughter Marie, aged 9 at the time, eventually took up jazz piano and became a jazz pianist performing with Joan Fairfax All-Girl Orchestra. See Hugh Thomson. 1964. “All-Girl Band Among All Those Gamblers.” *The Globe and Mail*, February 25. Toronto, Ontario, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/docview/1282858561/957A9646718F4A72PQ/121?accountid=15182> (accessed August 8, 2019).

⁹⁴ As spelled in the newspaper, instead of Theodor Leschetizky.

attractive platform presence.”⁹⁵ After performing an impressive program in Toronto that included works by Chopin, i.e., B minor Sonata, Fantaisie in F minor; Schumann’s Scenes from Childhood; and Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsody (number not specified), Binns was going to return to Europe (see Figure 7):



Figure 7: Pianist Miss Jessie Binns, 1911.⁹⁶

Concluding with final accolades, the article (author unknown) assures the readers:

No doubt Miss Binns has profited by a lengthy sojourn abroad with respect to the traditions that mark the interpretation of the great European pianists, most of whom she has heard, and lovers of music may reasonably expect a very thorough and authoritative performance of the numbers on the programme.⁹⁷

About fifty years later (1962), the musical scene was introduced to a phenomenon—Susan Small, a visually impaired 19-year old pianist-prodigy, a native of Black Harbour, NB (with a population of 1,546 at the time), who was “transplanted [...] into a musical hothouse at the Royal

⁹⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/086. Toronto Conservatory of Music: Press clippings 1908-15. *Musical Canada* (January 1911). See also: University of Toronto, Edward Johnson Music library, *Musical Canada*, digital resource, vol. V (May 1910 to April 1911): 256, <https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/music/musicalcanada05.pdf> (accessed June 2, 2019).

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Conservatory,”⁹⁸ clearly impressed the critics: “There she flourishes and earns praise for a big sound, brilliant technique, fine musicianship and a fantastic memory.”⁹⁹ The latter received special admiration, as Small learned from braille music, her ability to remember the complex score and the orchestral parts to the point of citing the exact measure from where the rehearsal would resume seemed astonishing (see Figure 8):



Figure 8: Pianist Susan Small, 1962.¹⁰⁰

Small’s teacher Jacques Abram noted: “Her impairment of sight is almost an asset to her: it gives her an orientation to the world through her ears. [...] She does right, instinctively, without ever being told.”¹⁰¹ Sharing her perspective on the striding (not walking) style of approaching the piano on stage, Small notes, “I make it a matter of principle not to look as if I am blind.”¹⁰²

Verifying the pianist’s statement, the author of the article confirms, “In conversation, she (Small)

⁹⁸ UTARMS, A1975-0014/002. Royal Conservatory of Music: Press clippings, 1948-72. Blaik Kirby. “Susan Small Plays And Catches Fire.” *Toronto Daily Star*, March 31, 1962.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

looks directly at you, with eyes that are bright if unseeing. Only the wide-open pupils betray her blindness.”¹⁰³

According to the article, Small was scheduled to perform as a soloist in Beethoven’s Third Piano Concerto at Convocation Hall with the Conservatory’s symphony orchestra under Ettore Mazzoleni. Along with the pianist Small, the upcoming concert, mentioned in the article, would feature premieres of works by two Toronto composers, Nick Slater and Brian Cherney, as well as works by Godfrey Ridout and Carl Nielsen.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

THE SYLLABUS: BEHIND THE SCENES

SECTION A

MAKING THE SYLLABUS AND NEW BOOK SERIES: AN OVERVIEW

A piano syllabus is a comprehensive document that reflects the established curriculum: it lists a substantial number of regulations, information about the exam procedures, updates, and changes. Compiling a syllabus requires multi-sourced input, extensive research, revisions, verifications, etc., but foremost it requires pedagogical expertise, logical flow between the grades, and consistency in the outlined requirements to ensure gradual development in musical studies. An overview of the syllabuses throughout the century suggests that rigorous requirements would in due time be simplified and streamlined before regaining complexity once again—an inevitable part of the process in the pursuit of configuring the optimal and most effective method of administering piano education to pupils.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the frequency with which syllabuses were issued varied throughout the century: the second edition marked the launch of the examinations outside Toronto in 1898, the third was issued in 1904, the fourth 1908, the fifth 1911. The latter three were replicas of the preceding edition for the most part but with the repertoire greatly increased each time, reaching 5,000 works in the fifth edition.¹ The syllabuses were published and sold separately from the annual calendars, which contained an abbreviated version (almost in a digest-like format) of the extensive syllabus that existed separately.

¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, TCM Syllabus, 1915-6, 13.

The fifth edition lasted until 1925, after which the syllabuses started to include the information that used to be listed in the calendars, thus merging the contents of the two documents. Following 1925, the syllabuses appeared annually, though with less consistency during the Second World War, establishing a biennial pattern during 1947-74 and triennial during 1975-81. Particularly in the past two decades, owing to the increasing complexity of the work required to update the syllabus and publish the new series, the intervals between successive syllabus releases have become greater, resulting in a seven-year interval between editions: during the period 1988-2015, editions were released in 1994, 2001, 2008, and finally in 2015.

Detailed information about the syllabuses' compilers listed in the public documents, and the documentation providing such information, does sometimes exist and is accessible. The earliest evidence of the compilers involved is available in the retrospective note about the third edition (1904), printed within the fifth edition *Pianoforte Syllabus* (1911):²

[...] the Conservatory board of Directors appointing Committee consisting of Edward Fisher, Mus. Doc., A.S. Vogt, Mus. Doc., J.D.A. Tripp, J.W.F. Harrison and W.J. McNally,³ to revise the work and add thereto such compositions as they deemed desirable. The present greatly enlarged edition is the result of their labors. It has been the aim of the Committee that the best classical composers should be thoroughly represented, and that a liberal and judicious selection be made from the modern romantic school.⁴

For the fourth edition, Mr. T.J. Palmer, an English organist who first settled in Stratford (Ontario), and as an organ expert and musician in great demand later became a choirmaster of

² The most extensive collection of repertoire in the history of the Examinations.

³ As the Conservatory's first ATCM graduate under Edward Fisher's governance, J.D.A. Tripp studied in Europe with Moritz Moszkowski and Theodor Leschetizky, returning to Toronto as a concert pianist, conductor, teacher and the first West-Coast examiner. J.W.F. Harrison was an English-trained organist and also an editor of *The Conservatory Monthly* in the 1900s, while W.J. McNally was TCM faculty piano teacher (see: Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 25 for Tripp and Harrison; see: Robarts Library, University of Toronto. Ad for W. J. McNally. *The Conservatory Monthly*, February 1912, Vol. II, no. 2, call number: AAJ-1925, 38/690.

⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, *Pianoforte Syllabus* 1911, preface.

St. Paul's Anglican Church in Toronto, and incidentally a TCM syllabus compiler, was solely mentioned as the main contributor:

It is only just to say that in revising and enlarging this Syllabus as it appears in the present edition, the chief credit is due to Mr. T.J. Palmer, who has expended a great amount of time and labor in making it as reliable and helpful as possible to teachers of the piano, and especially to those engaged in preparing candidates for the Toronto Conservatory of Music examinations.⁵

Furthermore, Palmer's work was acknowledged in the introduction to the fifth edition as its sole compiler, even though his selection of the repertoire was an addition to an already existing collection of approximately 4,000 works:

The Conservatory has again been fortunate in having had the valuable services of Mr. T.J. Palmer in the arduous and important task of classifying the pieces and in the editing of the present edition of the Syllabus.⁶

The choice of Palmer, an organist, seems odd but it suggests that the original committee may have tired of their task or become too busy to exercise it properly and wanted to outsource the job to someone they knew and trusted. Palmer's "outsider" status (he was not employed by the Conservatory) may also have been a factor. Palmer's involvement (and eventually, a sole involvement) may explain such a large proportion of the unfamiliar repertoire, at least to modern educators. Evidently, as an English musician, he was exposed to European musical literature more than North Americans (i.e., Canadians) may have been in the 1900s, and this background might have been a factor in his selection.

Although a more detailed repertoire content of 1911 has been discussed earlier, as a brief sketch of Palmer's choices, seemingly popular composers at the time, singled out from the list of 5,000 works, revealed contemporary taste: e.g., Russian Anton Arensky, German Franz Behr, American-German Arthur Bird, French female composer Cécile Chaminade, Russian César Cui,

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

German-Polish Ludwig Scharwenka, and others not as widely known to the today's audience—J.C. Alden, R.H. Bellairs, G.W. Chadwick, T.F. Dunhill, W.H. Neidlinger, A.G. Salmon, T. Sturkow, among others.⁷

As the Conservatory's objective was to include "a liberal and judicious selection [...] from the modern romantic school" (see quotation on p. 134) the motivation behind Palmer's selections was seemingly to provide as many contemporary choices as his background and experience could afford. However, in the 1925 edition, although some of Palmer's repertoire was still respectfully utilized, much of it began to gradually disappear (presumably for simplicity and manageability, as the 1911 list was overwhelmingly large). By 1935 the list was downsized significantly—replaced almost entirely, giving priority and predominance to works by J. S. Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Clementi, Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann for all the grades/levels (not just the advanced ones as in Palmer's collection), with some interesting choices, i.e., Field, Paderewski, Sibelius, Grieg, Albeniz, Debussy, Brahms, Poulenc, et al. Also, the arrangements became quite popular, notably by Saint-Saëns and Grainger. Evidently, there was a wave of "fashion-awareness"—need for change that dictated the repertoire modifications after 1925.

It is notable that key positions at the Conservatory and on the Examinations committees were held by organists, pianists, composers or conductors,⁸ Palmer's choice of repertoire (1908 and 1911 combined) served the Examinations for seventeen years until the changes in 1925—an unprecedented term in the Conservatory's history.

⁷ Remarkably, besides Cécile Chaminade, the name of one more woman composer was identifiable on the list-- Bertha Metzler, while other first names were given with initials only, making it challenging to verify the gender. Additionally, Clara Schumann was not on the list either, presumably being considered only a performer and wife to Robert Schumann.

⁸ E.g., Fisher, Willan, Vogt, MacMillan, Neel, Mazzoleni.

Thereafter, explicitly giving credit to the authors of the syllabuses was compressed into a rather generalized summary, as evident from the 1936-7 edition:

The curriculum outlined in this Syllabus has received the approval of a Board of Studies composed of the Principal, the Vice-principal, and members of the Faculty representing the various departments, and the requirements in each department have been carefully prepared by subcommittees.⁹

The BOS members were mentioned in the 1938-9 Yearbook: all were well-known pianoforte teachers—George Douglas Atkinson, Boris Berlin, Margaret Miller Brown, Alberto Guerrero, Viggo Kihl et al.—and were appointed for the term of four years (1936-40),¹⁰ thus lending some continuity to the process.

The syllabus then and now represents the Conservatory's curriculum, and it is evident from the well-documented acknowledgements that its creation was entrusted mainly to the administrative circle and the faculty teachers, much as the examinations' management was monopolized by the examiners appointed by the Conservatory and the University of Toronto from within the faculty. It is logical to presume that such establishment has indeed been the case for a century (from 1898 to the 1990s), as the early committees included mainly upper management, faculty teachers, and examiners. Mazzoleni's article published in 1960 in the Conservatory's Bulletin shares insight into who is involved in the new curriculum, and in the syllabus in particular:

The syllabus, both in practical and written work, has been carefully prepared and graded and is constantly under revision by a Board of Studies made up of members of the Faculty of the Royal Conservatory selected for their performing skills, their teaching records, and their own background of musical training. They have had considerable experience not only as teachers preparing pupils for examinations at all levels but also as examiners, and as a result are just as well aware of the needs of the average pupil whose parents wisely want for him nothing more than that he should understand music more fully as they are of the talented pupil whose aim is definitely vocational. They [the compilers] represent an official

⁹ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM Syllabus, 1936-7, front page.

¹⁰ RCM Rupert Edwards library archival fonds A: 2: 1. TCM Year book, 1038-9, 5.

point of view which recognizes that a feeling for music is inherent in almost every child and that no one should fail of a fair chance to learn and understand the language of music.¹¹

To complete the work for the new 1966 graded books (Grades I-VI, IX-X),¹² making changes to the Technical Requirements (for each grade), and publishing the new Technical Requirements Graded Handbook, a Pianoforte Board of Revision comprised, once again, the Faculty and administration members: i.e., Warren Mould (Chairman, and Registrar), Earle Moss, Boris Berlin, Walter Buczynski, Margaret Brown, Madeline Bone, Douglas Bodle, Gordon Hallett, Elsie Bennett, Patricia Holt, and Clifford Poole (see Figure 9):



Figure 9: Pianoforte Board of Revision appointed to work on the 1966 Syllabus and the new graded book series.¹³

Over time, as the Examinations Department, with its own governing board, was formed and later renamed RCM Examinations, the compilers were still sourced from the confines of faculty members and the administrative circle. In notes for 1978-81 syllabus issue it is specified that “The curriculum outlines herein has received the approval of the Representatives of the

¹¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/53. Ettore Mazzoleni. 1960. “Examine 40,892 Music Candidates.” *RCM Bulletin*. Reprint from the *Globe and Mail*, June 8, 1960.

¹² The repertoire books for Grades VII-VIII, and Studies for Grades VII-X were issued two years later, in 1968.

¹³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/43. *RCM of Toronto Monthly Bulletin*, Summer 1966, front cover.

Teaching Faculty, the Administration, and the Assembly of the Royal Conservatory of Music,”¹⁴ however, no names of the compilers were disclosed.

Keeping the tradition alive, prior to his appointment as president, Peter Simon (then a director of academic studies, prior to his leaving for what turned out to be only a two-year appointment as president of the Manhattan School of Music in New York), Andrew Markow, Boris Berlin, and Dianne Werner compiled the 1988 series: as mentioned in Chapter 2, a modified version of the 1983 edition called “Celebration Series, Second Edition.”¹⁵ Once appointed in 1991, Simon marked the historical transition to the RCM’s independence in the same year with a drastic change in the syllabus’s appearance, and a new book series released in 1994.

With the maturing Certificate Program, the Examinations evolved as an integral part of a broader-spectrum body under the RCM umbrella. In the past two decades, the team has gradually expanded into a larger pool of human resources that involves not only the Academic Office and faculty members but also professionals with long-standing reputations or seniority status within the Certificate Program; reviewers, researchers, artistic advisors, the publishing team; performers who make the recordings of the repertoire and ear training, sound engineer; IT, marketing, copyright, and other experts; and other contributors who provide invaluable guidance and ideas, including teachers and examiners from both Canada and the US. Moreover, to assess the repertoire in terms of its demand and popularity among students and teachers, the Academic Office initiates data collection using three sources: the Electronic Marking Form (EMF) used by examiners to create exam reports, which provides information about the pieces most often

¹⁴ RCM Archives, RCM Syllabus, 1978-81, 7.

¹⁵ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There’s Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 224.

selected for the exams; the Teacher's Survey; and the Call for Submissions, "inviting them [teachers] to submit their favourite teaching pieces from Preparatory A through ARCT," explains Elaine Rusk, Vice President of Examinations. Thus, the bank of resources is expanded through reaching out to the population: "Over 1,000 titles were recommended for inclusion in the syllabus. Of those pieces submitted, many found their way into the [latest 2015] syllabus, and a few were added to the new [book] series."¹⁶

Information about how syllabuses were compiled between 1887 and 1991 is relatively scant, as few records, beyond official acknowledgments and the syllabuses themselves, exist. However, some of those who were part of the teams since 1991 are still working as Faculty teachers or in the Academic Office. Additionally, correspondence preserved in the RCM archives can provide an even more thorough insight into the "behind the scenes" processes of the work on the new series since Simon's appointment in 1991: i.e., focus group meetings, minutes and negotiations of the proposed changes; some contracts; payment slips; records of revisions; communication with composers, reviewers; tentative or final approvals of the projects, etc. An examination of the most recent editions (2008 and 2015) can give some insight into recent forays into the US market.

It is worth pointing out that along with the printed and filed email correspondence, where the senders and recipients are clearly identified, most of the documents pertaining to the project - outlines, list of suggestions etc., lack authorship, and some of them are in a form of either arranged as loose pages document, or a document with missing (or most likely misplaced) pages, creating a citation challenge for a researcher, and also being a target for speculative conclusions.

¹⁶ Elaine Rusk. Creating a New Edition of the *Celebration Series*, 2015 (Piano). Unpublished document.

However, my goal is to report the essence of the project, even if the document is unspecified or anonymous, as well to identify the contributors where possible.

SECTION A.1

2008 SYLLABUS: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

According to the RCM archival resources, the preparation for the 2008 piano series began in 2003. The complexity of such an undertaking can be witnessed through perusing the Projects Outline and Preliminary Committees spread sheet, which was divided into two main units: RCME-managed¹⁷ projects and FHMC-managed¹⁸ projects.

For the RCME-managed projects the subdivisions were listed as follows: Technical Requirements Revision, Syllabus Repertoire Compilation and Levelling Review; Syllabus Review (Ear Tests, Sight Reading, other); Repertoire Books and Studies Books Review (20% change); Technical Requirements books and American Composers Listings. For the FHMC-managed projects the subdivisions were designated as follows: Student Workbooks; Student Answer Books; Teacher Handbook, and CDs. Within each subdivision there were additional three categories that contained different groups/teams: i.e., Initial reviewers; Compilers, and On-going Reviewers, as well as the target dates intended for FHMC (presumably, the submission deadlines for publishing).

The appointment of the committee members into specific groups shows how elaborate the work on the new syllabus and books series really is. Although some of the responsibilities were slightly re-shuffled or added in the process (evident from the hand-written remarks), the core committee that oversaw the entire process at its different stages remained the same to the end,

¹⁷ Royal Conservatory of Music Examinations.

¹⁸ The Frederick Harris Music Company.

comprising mainly four faculty members: Christopher Kowal (Chief Examiner at the time 2001-7), Aasta Levene, Janet Lopinski, and Andrew Markow. A variety of other professionals appointed for different tasks comprised authors of piano method books; University and College professors from both Canada and US, and predominantly, RCM faculty teachers, both long-standing and of a younger generation: i.e., Lynda Metelsky, Peteris Zarins, Carolyn Jones, Peter Longworth, Maria Case, Marc Widner, Dale Wheeler, and Dianne Werner (from Canada); and B. Corley, M. Blickenstaff, A. Hisey, C. Albergo, R. Alexander, and M. Kolar (from the US).

Evident from the outline, the repertoire was planned to be replenished by only 20%, and instead, the main focus was directed towards making substantial changes to the Technical Requirements. The report dated April 5, 2004, included the strategies for this project:

1. Analysis of reviews of the existing technical requirements by leading teachers from across Canada (commissioned by RCM Examinations);
2. Analysis of technical requirements in syllabi of other examination boards;
3. Consultation with teachers of the RCM Keyboard Department. A questionnaire was distributed in November 2003 encouraging all Keyboard Department faculty to submit their ideas. A meeting was held on February 23, 2004 at which time suggestions coming from the survey were discussed and further developed.¹⁹

Additionally, a further intention was to take the discussion to other cities across Canada “to allow a wide cross-section of teachers the opportunity to contribute, at a stage when their ideas can still be incorporated,”²⁰ with a target timeline for a final draft for approval submitted by Academic Council in the spring of 2005. Moreover, the document contains elaborate description of General Direction, Overview of Proposed Changes and Detailed Work-up for Introductory Level and Grades 1-3 (suggestions given for Grades 4-9 in a similar document are not found), as well as proposal for Grade 10 changes.

¹⁹ RCM Archives, CL Box 12, CL 2, Series P. Creating the books series “Celebration Series, 2004. RCM Examinations, Piano Syllabus 2008 Edition, Technical Requirements Revision. April 5, 2004.

²⁰ RCM Archives, CL Box 12, CL 2, Series P. Creating the books series “Celebration Series, 2004. RCM Examinations, Piano Syllabus 2008 Edition, Technical Requirements Revision. April 5, 2004.

However, another document (authorship unspecified, although it appeared as a summary of a meeting) serves as a framework for Grades 1-10, pointing out the main objectives along with detailed suggestions: i.e., “[...] all scales in general should be played hands together as soon as possible (Grade 3),” or “The criteria, whether hands together [or separately], one octave [or two octaves] etc. should be based on the grade itself, rather than on the fact that the key has been learned previously.” Aside from conventional technique played hitherto (in a specified for the grade set of keys played scales, chords, arpeggios; except for the formula pattern, all played ascending and descending, etc.), some suggestions which were not implemented in the final draft of the syllabus are worth mentioning as they showcase the brainstorming processes and “probing” of the fields—the many pathways considered before the consensus was reached.

Among some interesting ideas, although occasionally marked with the question marks, were to start contrary motion scales of E and E-flat major in Grade 3 (presumably to prepare the students for the formula pattern scales); or chromatic scales in contrary motion in D and A-flat in Grade 4; or Dominant 7th 1 octave hands separately with their tonic *resolutions* in either tonic major or tonic minor, and Staccato²¹ 3rds, using fingers 2-4, 2-4 of selected keys in Grade 5; or C major scale played in solid 6ths, staccato, hands separately (to prepare for octaves) in Grade 6; or Scales in three octaves played in triplets, starting in Grade 7; or Dominant and Diminished 7th with resolutions in Grade 8; or Double 3rds, hands separately, 2 octaves at a slow tempo, and Arpeggios of tonic chords separated by 10th and 6th in Grade 9, and finally, Major scales in double 3rds, and Tonic chords followed by more complex cadences including Deceptive, and Octave scales (including chromatic) in staccato and broken form but now added *alternate hand solid* octaves (LH starts), and contrary motion octave scales in all keys, contrary motion

²¹ The capitalization of forms reflects the bullet points in the document, and also in some cases represents the technical requirement/form (i.e., a scale), rather than a type of articulation.

chromatic octave scales starting on D and G# only, arpeggio octaves including Dominant and Diminished 7th in Grade 10. From the latter requirements suggested for Grade 10, one can appreciate, yet negate an inevitable challenge for the teenagers assigned to practise the enormous amount of octaves just for the technical part of an exam: clearly, overtime this could lead to an injury, especially considering the demographic shift towards younger students with smaller hands undertaking Grade/Level 10 exam nowadays.

The above referenced excerpts from each Grade were seemingly the result of a crystallized summary acquired from the various focus groups: the paperwork dated 2004²² contains lengthy and creative lists suggested by a teacher²³ in Fort McMurray (AB), the teachers focus group in Vancouver (BC), and the RCM College of Examiners.²⁴ That collection of teachers' and examiners' proposals reveals serious scrutiny and scrupulous discussion of this aspect, and among the one that did not make the list yet are still worth noting were arpeggios in contrary motion; octave scales and triads in formula pattern; all technical items beginning either ascending or descending; chromatic scales in double 3rds; 2-note slur scales; alternate octave scales *only* for chromatic octaves, "because they are somewhat easier and occur more frequently in repertoire than regular major and minor scales," concluded and justified the choices the contributor from Fort McMurray.²⁵ The focus group from Vancouver had extensive recommendations which were echoing Fort McMurray, in addition to the recommendation of playing cross-rhythms, i.e., 2 against 3 rhythm scales in Grade 7 (to match the repertoire), and 3

²² RCM Archives, CL Box 12, CL 2, Series P. Creating the books series "Celebration Series, 2004. RCM Examinations, Piano Syllabus 2008 Edition. The focus group comprising RCM examiners.

²³ The name cannot be disclosed.

²⁴ The group of RCM examiners comprised Csaba Inokal, Elaine Broughton, Louise Milota, David Sharpe, Joan LeBlanc, David Vandereyk, Wendy Bachman, Barbara Siemens, Diana Ing, Marilyn Sinclair, Ruth Kazdan, James Olsen.

²⁵ RCM Archives, CL Box 12, CL 2, Series P. Creating the books series "Celebration Series, 2004. RCM Examinations, Piano Syllabus 2008 Edition. The focus groups comprising teachers from Fort McMurray and Vancouver.

vs. 4 in Grade 10, and a big “no” to octave arpeggios.²⁶ The examiners’ discussion seemed to absorb the focus groups’ proposals and it was more of a distilling process than a brainstorming one: one of the highlights was that the examiners “strongly recommended that the formula patterns in Grade 10 be limited to 4-5 of the most difficult keys but not [...] all 24 keys. [...] proficiency in only a few keys would be preferable and more useful than struggling with *many* keys.” The examiners’ group also felt that “Grade 10 arpeggios in 6th and 10th (were) too difficult.”²⁷ To clarify, the Level 10 exam in its entirety taken at once²⁸ can be quite lengthy, reserving more than a half of its time for the performance of the repertoire,²⁹ and the remaining portion—for technique, ear tests and sight reading, which the compilers bore in mind while discussing the technical components.

Overall, an impressive gamut of inventive ideas shows the enthusiasm of everyone involved: evidently, they all genuinely wanted to make an impact, elevating the technical component to a higher level. However, regardless of the focus groups’ proposals, the compilers had to balance reforming zeal with caution when designing the technical requirements, strategizing for not only diverse but also a very large Canadian population. To a certain extent, the technical elements also needed to align with corresponding theory requirements as well as support technical requirements commensurate with the repertoire.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ RCM Archives, Series P. Creating the books series “Celebration Series, 2004. RCM Examinations, Piano Syllabus 2008 Edition. The focus group comprising RCM Examiners.

²⁸ At Level 10, the candidates may opt for a split exam, i.e., completing the Repertoire and Technical portions in separate sessions: both segments and any supplemental examinations (to improve the mark) must be completed within two years of the initial examination segment (see Piano Syllabus 2015, Split Level 10 Practical Examination, RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/examinations/syllabi/s41_pianosyllabus_2016_online_f.pdf (accessed June 21, 2019).

²⁹ “The Program selected should not exceed 30 min in length,” in: Piano Syllabus 2015, Level 10 Repertoire, 80.

SECTION A.2

2015 SYLLABUS: REPERTOIRE

It is necessary to make a distinction between the syllabuses and the book series. From 1916, when the first piano repertoire book was published by The Frederick Harris Co., syllabuses were not coordinated with specific published materials: they listed available publications, and the Examinations accepted those or any legitimate edition, while not having a steady designated publisher until 1944.³⁰ Up until the graded books (i.e., the full spectrum of Grades 1-10) and corresponding syllabus were synchronized in 1981, the book series, although strictly following the syllabus, “lived” by their own agenda and were issued in sections, while the syllabuses were kept up to date to correspond with and reflect the modified repertoire. From 1981, the two entities representing the curriculum—syllabus and books series—comprised an inseparable structure. As mentioned above, the work involved in compiling the book series differs from that needed to produce a syllabus: the latter lists the policy and regulations, the entire repertoire for each level, technical and ear tests requirements, etc. while the former contains only a fraction of the repertoire and studies/études recommended in the syllabus.

The process of assembling the categorized lists (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Contemporary, etc.) requires specific approach: the collection for each book needs to be varied in genres, characters, tempi, dynamic scheme, textures—engaging and challenging, yet with a mixed difficulty level (i.e., some pieces are more suitable for an initial introduction to the level, or for learners with an average technical proficiency, or more relaxed pace of study).

³⁰ The Frederick Harris Music Company became the official publisher of the Conservatory’s materials.

The latest 2015 series was tasked with the goal to replace about 50% of the repertoire,³¹ infuse it with a bigger ratio of the American composers' works compared to the previous editions, and overall, aim for a replenished contemporary section in each level. To satisfy both Canadian and American markets, the latest series incorporated 30 composers from either country.

Approached rather creatively, the vision for the research was associated with poetry and prose—an insightful resource created by Elaine Rusk. Thus, List A (Baroque) is associated with the category Biblical Verse, List B (Classical) with Classical and Romantic Poetry, and List C (Romantic, or 20th and 21st centuries) with Contemporary Poetry. The selection of pieces, although using the literary reference, for Level 3 book proceeds using the following guidelines:

Imagine 25 or so different poems/readings taken from 25 different sources.

List A – Biblical Verse

- selection number one is a familiar old testament verse taken from a very old publication where all the “S’s are represented by the letter “F”
- selection number two is a new testament verse from the King James’ version of the bible
- selection three is a new testament reading from the *New International Version* of the bible
- the other three selections are a combination of the above

List B – Classical and Romantic Poetry

- selection one is taken from Homer’s *Odyssey*
- selection two is by William Wordsworth
- selection three is a sonnet by Shakespeare
- the other ten selections are from various classical and romantic sources

List C – Contemporary Poetry

- selection one is *Jabberwocky* by Lewis Carroll
- selection two is by Walt Whitman
- selection three is *To an Athlete Dying Young* by A.E. Housman
- selection four is an unpublished work one of the compilers found on the internet

³¹ Elaine Rusk. Celebration Series, 2015 Edition. Scope of the Revision. Unpublished documents.

- the other three selections are from various sources.³²

The selection of Level 3 repertoire (2015) shows a new and unique approach to repertoire selection, often ignoring the usual chronological limits on historical periods; this may have been due to Rusk's innovative approach:

List A: Baroque

- Harlequinade, by Johann Ludwig Krebs (1713-80)
- Musette in D Major, BWV Anh. 126, attr. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)³³
- Menuet in E flat Major, by Johann Mattheson (1681-1764)
- Polonaise in G Minor, BWV Anh. 119, attr. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
- Gavotte in G Major, HWV 491, by George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)
- Gigue a l'Angloise, by Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

List B: Classical and Classical-style

- Sonatina in C Major, op. 36, no. 1, by Muzio Clementi (1752-1832)
- Sonatina in A Minor, op. 94, no. 4, by Albert Biehl (1835-99)³⁴
- Sonatina in G Major, by Thomas Attwood (1765-1838)
- Sonatina in F Major, op. 257, no. 2, by Théodore Lack (1846-1921)³⁵

List C: Romantic, 20th, and 21st Century

- The Song of Twilight, Yoshinao Nakada (1923-2000)
- Arctic Voices, by Susan Griesdale (b. 1950)
- Variations on a Russian Folksong, Issak Berkovich (1902-72)
- Holiday Parade, by Rhonda Bennett (b. 1957)
- A Little Piece, op. 6, no. 11, by Alexander Gedike (1877-1957)³⁶
- Clowns, op. 39, no. 20, by Dmitri Kabalevsky (1904-87)
- Allegro Moderato, by Béla Bartók (1881-1945)
- Wild Mignonette, op. 205, no. 1, by Cornelius Gurlitt (1820-1901)
- Funny Puppy, by Anne Crosby Gaudet (b. 1968)
- Morning Prayer, op. 39, no. 1, by Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-93)
- Picnic 1920, by Mike Schoenmehl (b. 1957)
- Interlude, by Martha Mier (b. 1936)
- Zink Pink, by Dennis Alexander (b. 1947)

³² Elaine Rusk. Creating an RCM Piano Series (2015). Unpublished document.

³³ Anh. means "Anhang" or Appendix, which in Bach's works in BWV that are not fully authenticated where, for example, only the text or connection to Bach is evident, but the music is extant.

³⁴ Although composed in the nineteenth century, this piece resembles the Classical style idioms.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Also spelled Goedike.

- Summer Drought, by Janet Gieck (b. 1976)

At this point, the work involved in selecting the repertoire or replacement pieces tends to be quite elaborate, as several sources and editions or manuscripts are thoroughly researched for accuracy of text and details such as articulation, dynamics, fingering, and the correctness of notes (i.e., Urtext or scores altered by reputable editors), and edited if necessary to fit the pedagogical purpose while preserving the composer's ideas and customs of the specific musical era.

The intricate considerations involved in the research, review, and editing processes allow for the most stylistically genuine, precise, and authentic version of the pieces to be chosen for publication. Rusk shares the research outcome of the famous Minuet in G major by "Bach":

In the 1970s, scholars realized that the *Notebook for Anna Magdalena*, from which it is taken, is not a collection of pieces written by Bach, but a collection of teaching pieces by local composers *compiled* by Bach. And the *Minuet in G* is written by Christian Petzold. However, it still retains its BWV number [as Bach's work].³⁷

Unveiling more examples of challenges accompanying the research and review process, Rusk remarks:

Prior to the 1970s, many publishers [...] were notorious for simplifying or modifying pieces to make them suit the needs of the students. And many anthologies do not include source information. We discover through our research that sometimes the actual piece in its original form is not even suitable for the grade in question. [...] And some of the pieces weren't even written for piano.³⁸

The complexity of the process of compiling the series justifies the lengthy seven-year period between releases: the copyright contemporary repertoire selected for each book has to be licensed before it can be published by The Frederick Harris Music Company, which is usually extended for a seven-year period; the repertoire must be finalized, approved, and recorded; the

³⁷ Elaine Rusk. Creating new Syllabus Celebration Series 2015: RCM Piano Series. Unpublished document.

³⁸ Ibid.

crossover period of the previous and the new editions must be established (approximately a one-year overlap to accommodate students who commenced work on the exam prior to the launch of the new syllabus); the curriculum and new series are introduced through workshops/presentations and promoted across the continent.

From the 1980s onwards detailed acknowledgements of all the parties involved in the process were listed in subsequent series in each repertoire/études book, not the syllabus itself. The credits also included the performers, sound engineer, and artistic consultant, all of whom worked on recording the repertoire for the CDs that were paired with the books, when this additional resource became available in the 1980s.

SECTION B

POPULAR SELECTION LIST

The Popular Selection syllabus was launched in 2002 as part of an effort to bolster interest and enhance the learning and exam experience for Intermediate and Advanced students (Levels 3-9). This addendum-companion to the main syllabus was created to provide options for substituting one of the two mandatory études with popular idioms that were already circulating in studios, though not in the official curriculum; at last they were considered appropriate for inclusion in exams. Owing mostly to the quality of the arrangements that has rapidly improved over the years, these works are as exciting as the mainstream repertoire (Zarins, private communication, October 26, 2018). Although such an initiative appeared timely, it was in some respects long overdue, in the light of already existing programs through the CC³⁹ (Contemporary Idioms stream), the ABRSM (Jazz Piano), the AMEB (Piano for Leisure, Contemporary Popular Music),

³⁹ Conservatory Canada.

and Rockschool Exams in the UK (now teamed up with the AMEB), as well as theme-performance examinations that encourage jazz, Canadian, and contemporary idioms through the Canadian National Conservatory of Music (CNCM). Unlike other examination boards, RCM's examinations opted for incorporating popular music into the exam, rather than separating the style into a stream, as ABRSM or AMEB did (i.e., jazz exams, and rockschool or piano for leisure exams, respectively).

Notably, the 2008 syllabus had not one but two Popular Selection List addenda—2009 (192 works) and 2011 (360 works): the former contains an almost doubled number of works compared to the preceding 2002 edition (104 works), whereas the latter not only introduced a repertoire augmented by 47%, but also added Elementary Levels 1-2 to the already substantial range of works.

Likewise, the 2015 piano syllabus had the Popular Selection List as a companion (367 works), released in the same year. The repertoire was further amended in the 2017 version (341 works): this edition was recently modified, with the number of works in the repertoire reduced by 7% (26 works).

From a commercial viewpoint, staying current and allowing for flexibility in repertoire choices, as well as meeting the demands and tastes of the up-and-coming generations, translate into sustained or increased enrolment rates, while from the pedagogical viewpoint, such a trajectory represents an exciting opportunity to introduce a set of new idioms through a variety of styles and genres. Beyond all the advantages, what was considered an extracurricular exploration (e.g., learning sheet music from a favourite movie as an addition to the routine repertoire) has now become a valid and accepted option to include in the exam, encouraging students'

immersion in popular tunes and adding a “cool factor” to what was perceived as a strictly classical exam until almost two decades ago.

SECTION C

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS UTILIZED IN THE NEW SERIES

We have seen how working on the release of a new series gives an opportunity to introduce modifications to the curriculum, new repertoire pieces, new requirements, new concepts, etc., as well as to integrate the technology that now governs our way of communicating, learning, and teaching.

Traditionally, music published in books was mostly heard and experienced through the teacher’s performance, unless the student was willing to use the public library’s audio resources or invest in a recording of a celebrated pianist’s performance. Since the 1988 series, CDs were recorded and paired with the graded books.⁴⁰ A short remark from the 1994 syllabus acknowledges:

The complete works found in the New Piano Series and the Celebration Series, 2nd edition, performed by artists from The Royal Conservatory of Music.⁴¹

These branded recordings represented audible samples of the required standard and calibre of performance at exams: although not expected to be followed too literally, they contained as objective a rendition as possible, deprived of any interpretational touch, as it was presumed that the student and teacher would consider it as a most basic and stylistically accurate rendition, further enhancing it in the process of preparation for an exam (or recital/festival performance).

⁴⁰ Earlier evidence not found.

⁴¹ Private collection of Tatiana Voitovitch-Camilleri. RCM Piano Syllabus, 1994, 61.

Since the release of the new series in 2015, the Examinations launched an entire music library of repertoire featured in the repertoire books. These recordings are accessible online with a unique password to each book, eliminating the need for CDs, which were previously sold as an optional addendum to the repertoire. The recordings are usually made by RCM faculty members and the administrative staff of the Examinations, who are acknowledged in the repertoire and étude books.

It bears consideration that, while the staff and faculty members contribute invaluable to the recording process, living Canadian composers could potentially be involved, those who are part of the CLC⁴² and whose works are included in the series. Furthermore, freelance composers could be employed, or Canadian celebrity pianists: the composers could be commissioned to record their own works, or the celebrity pianists to record the works of others, thus creating a generational bridge, a sense of contemporariness, and a feeling for the students of belonging to the higher echelon of professionals they look up to.

Once the series are complete and ready for launch, the examiners get their first introduction at professional development sessions; the series are also taken on the road for promotional workshops across the continent. Notably, one of the first promotional tours at Local Examination Centres was conducted by Miss P.A. Hebden in 1950, and she produced a detailed five-page report to Dr. Mazzoleni (Principal) regarding her tour through the Maritime provinces, October 2-November 11:

During this period, I interviewed 92 teachers, already on our lists, contacted 71 new teachers, and found 18 names on my list obsolete. [...] As a result of this trip, I am confident that our examination centres already established will show decided increases in entries.⁴³

⁴² Canadian League of Composers.

⁴³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/23. Letter from Miss Hebden to Dr. Mazzoleni, November 28, 1950, typewritten document.

In-person communication is the most valuable means of retaining healthy, approachable, and meaningful business relationships, and trips like Hebden's are still undertaken by the governing members of the Academic Office and other specialists who are authorized to convey the RCM's branded policy and the vision on behalf of the organization. Equally, the twenty-first-century tours and workshops have evolved into broadcasts of webinars and professional development across Canada and the US, gathering large audiences behind computer screens and allowing for a more efficient and wide-reaching connection using multimedia resources, while alleviating travel and accommodation costs and creating bridges between examiners and teachers through live chat options and Q&A forums.

The technology also allows for introducing, promoting, and selling the curriculum publications online; access to the training segments (e.g., formerly, Four Star series; now RCM online ear training as of 2019); maintaining and building up RCM-certified teachers' portals; conducting promotional, as well as thematic and educational workshops and seminars for teachers; and posting video recordings of the examination process on the RCM's website (i.e., "sneak peek in the examination room," "ask an examiner," streaming and on-demand Naxos music and video library, Medici TV, Berliner Philharmonic digital collection, etc).

SECTION D

THE DESIGN OF THE SYLLABUS

It is interesting to note that although the syllabus can be seen as just a brochure with a wealth of miscellaneous information, its appearance has been indicative of certain changes, tendencies over time, or an intention to project a particular status or image or to communicate a message to a wide population of music learners. As much as its content is indispensable, the cover also tends to speak for itself, reflecting the time when the syllabus was issued.

For the most part, syllabus covers have been associated with a particular governing body or, in some cases, have reflected some notable change—such as the appointment of a new principal, a change in the administrative staff, the Conservatory’s relocation, its change of status after earning the Royal Charter, the merger with the University of Toronto, or revisions to some requirements.

Whereas the very first calendar (1887) was slightly larger than an iPhone 5s,⁴⁴ rectangular with an almost handcrafted design (see Figure 10), consecutive editions were square and approximately three-quarters the size of a letter sized paper, covered in various earthy colours with a rich golden font. The calendar retained this appearance until 1907-8 (see Figure 11).



Figure 10: The Toronto Conservatory of Music first Calendar, 1887-8.⁴⁵

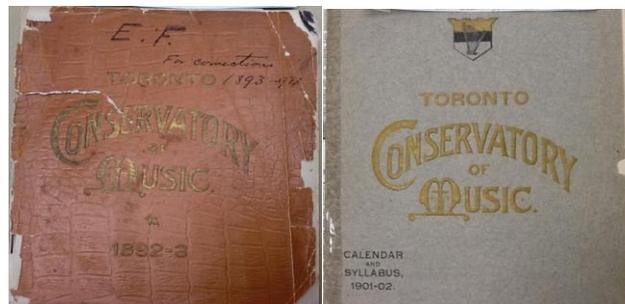


Figure 11: The Toronto Conservatory of Music: Calendar, 1892-3,⁴⁶ Calendar and Syllabus, 1901-2.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ iPhone 5s dimensions are 4.87 x 2.31 inches (123.8 x 58.6 mm).

⁴⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004. TCM booklet, 1887-8.

⁴⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004. TCM Calendar and Syllabus, 1892-3.

⁴⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004. TCM Calendar and Syllabus, 1901-2.

The brochures of 1908-9 and 1909-10 were of a different design, the size of a half letter page with simple font. These calendars described above were issued during the governance of the founder of the TCM, Dr. Edward Fisher (Music Director), and President Sir John Alexander Boyd, as were those for 1911-2 and 1912-3 (see Figure 12):

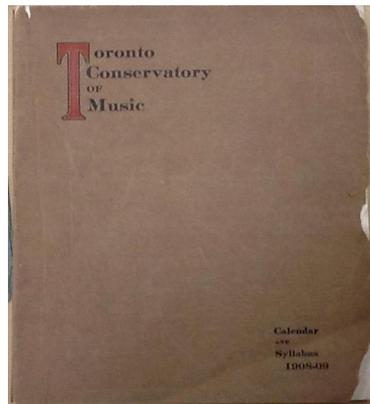
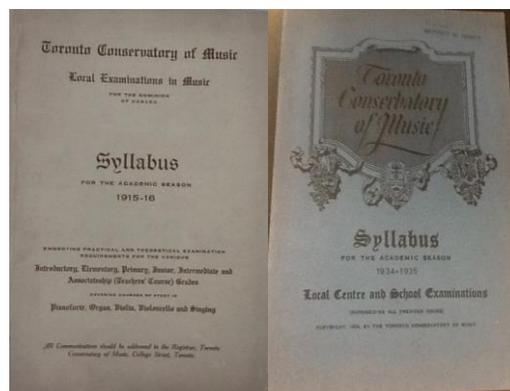


Figure 12: The Toronto Conservatory of Music Syllabus, 1908-9.⁴⁸

The latter editions are missing, as well as the 1913-4 issue—the year when Augustus S. Vogt was appointed as principal. Later issues (1915-35) were printed with various pastel coloured background yet had elaborate Gothic fonts throughout (see Figures 13 and 14):



Figures 13 and 14: The Toronto Conservatory of Music Syllabuses, 1915-6⁴⁹ and 1934-5.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004. TCM Calendar and Syllabus 1908-9.

⁴⁹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004. TCM Syllabus 1915-6.

⁵⁰ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004. TCM Syllabus 1934-5.

Sir Ernest MacMillan served as Principal from 1927 to 1942, during which time a variety of bold-coloured covers were issued starting with the Golden Jubilee Year Syllabus edition of 1936: the cover designed with a rather tasteful, minimalistic, vignette-like drawing of a Victorian-era building entrance that resembled the Conservatory's doorway. The font was chosen to be less severe and executive, appearing friendlier, cleaner, and spacious—more contemporary for the time. It was a fresh deviation from the previous syllabus editions. In subsequent decades the colour scheme followed a similar tendency—vivid and eye-catching (see Figure 15):

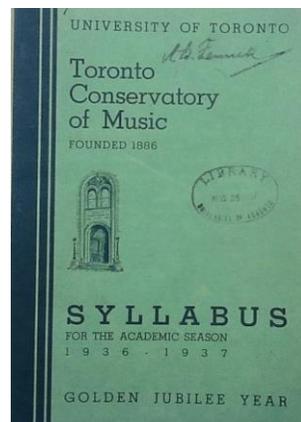
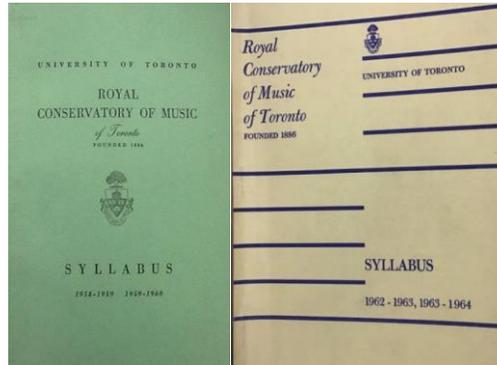


Figure 15: The Toronto Conservatory of Music Syllabus, 1936-7.⁵¹

Between 1944 and 1947 there was a reconfiguration of positions, though the school continued to be under the umbrella of the University of Toronto: Sir Ernest MacMillan remained as Dean of the Faculty of Music from 1927 until 1952, yet kept his position of Principal until 1942; Ettore Mazzoleni became Principal in 1945. From 1947 to 1952 the covers somewhat resembled the preceding designs, although in 1953-4 the syllabus's bright red colour with no graphics or lithography symbolized a significant change in the examinations' operations—from then on the examiners were appointed by the RCM, rather than by the university.

⁵¹ UTARMS, P78-0129-130. TCM Syllabus, 1936-7.

Still under the governance of Mazzoleni, the design at first remained lean and sophisticated, drastically switching to a more contemporary, linear in the 1960s (see Figures 16 and 17):



Figures 16 and 17: Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto Syllabuses, 1958-9; 1959-60,⁵² and Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto Syllabuses 1962-3; 1963-4.⁵³

With David Ouchterlony as acting Principal after the unexpected death of Mazzoleni in 1968, and then Principal, the appearance of the syllabus changed to something diametrically opposite to all previous editions, employing a typewriter font, spacious paragraphs, and a minimalistic approach: although they came in vibrant, appealing colours, yet with a simple and almost ascetic design (see Figures 18 and 19):

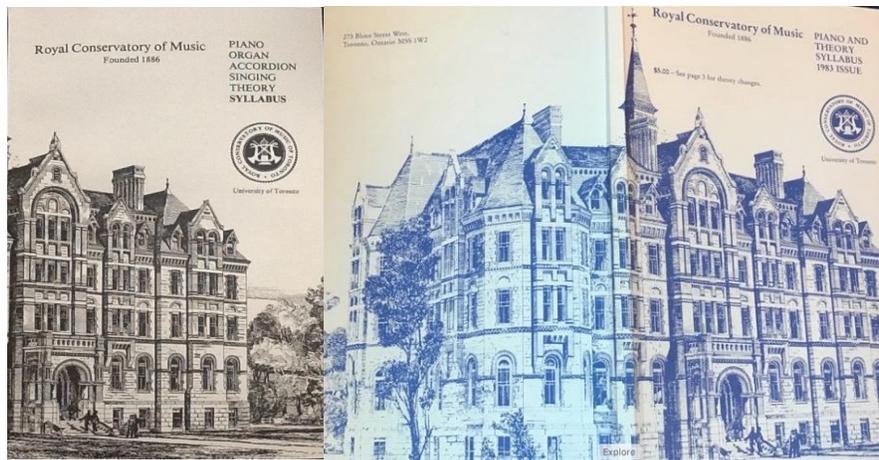


Figures 18 and 19: RCM Syllabus, 1968⁵⁴ and RCM Syllabuses 1970-1; 1971-2.⁵⁵

⁵² UTARMS, A1975-0014/038. RCM Syllabuses 1958-9; 1959-60.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, RCM Syllabuses, 1962-3; 1963-4.

With Ezra Schabas taking over the office in 1978 the cover did not change immediately, but that of the 1981 syllabus depicted an architectural rendering of McMaster Hall on a white background, representing the building at 273 Bloor St. West, where the RCM moved in 1964. The syllabus from 1983 retained the same design, but the graphics were now in blue ink. While the 1988 edition is inaccessible, its design is unknown but presumed to be similar or the same to the preceding ones in the 1980s, since the 1988 books series were mostly a replica of 1983 edition (see Figures 20 and 21):



Figures 20 and 21: RCM Syllabus 1981⁵⁶ and RCM Syllabus 1983.⁵⁷

Three years after the appointment of Dr. Peter Simon as President in 1991, a newly redesigned and entirely revamped syllabus, reviewed by Simon himself, reflected and marked a new beginning for the booklet, in a full-page size that recalls a music book: it had a luxurious appearance, in pastel-blue colour with marble-like corners, printed on a glossy paper cover.

Since then, subsequent syllabus designs, along with the overall appearance of the entire book series, varied completely from one edition to another. The 2008 syllabus was entirely

⁵⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/039. RCM Pianoforte, Singing and Organ Syllabus, 1968.

⁵⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/039, RCM Pianoforte, Organ and Singing Syllabus, 1970-1; 1971-2.

⁵⁶ UTARMS, P81-0264. RCM Syllabus, 1981.

⁵⁷ RCM Examinations library, RCM Syllabus, 1983.

different from the previous colour scheme and design and contained 142 pages versus 90 in the 1994 version, which resulted in a substantial book. Consequently, in 2015 the ARCT Pedagogy section was withdrawn from the hard copy (to alleviate the heavy look) and converted into an electronically accessed resource. The 2015 syllabus retained the violet-coloured variation from the previous issue, but had a much cleaner, streamlined look with images of piano keyboards across it (see Figure 22):

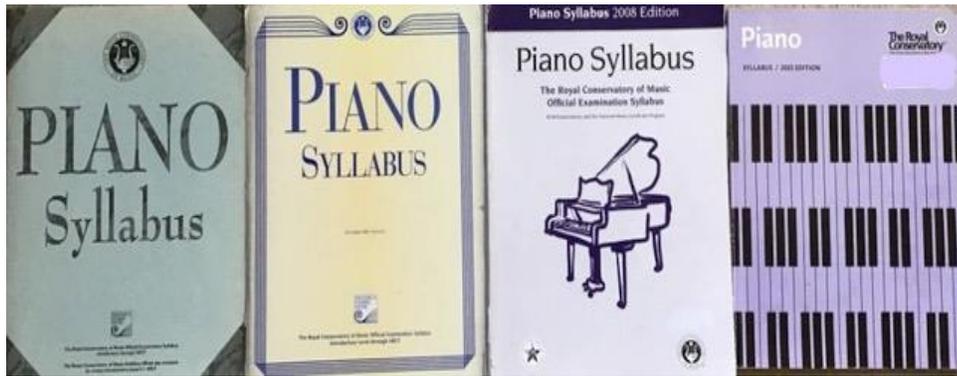


Figure 22: Four consecutive Syllabuses, from left to right: 1994; 2001; 2008; 2015.⁵⁸

Notably, from 1991 the syllabus for each examinable discipline was published separately, and thus the piano syllabus to this date has grown into a six-book constellation of resources: the main Piano Syllabus (2015), it alone comprising 111 pages, has five addenda: Associate Diploma in Piano Pedagogy, Licentiate Diploma in Piano Performance, Popular Selection List (published in 2015 as a companion to the main syllabus, and updated in 2017), Piano Resources, and Piano Syllabus Prerequisites and Co-requisites.

All of the current syllabus-related resources are available electronically through the RCM website, but the Piano Syllabus (2015) and the Popular Selection List (2015) books are also available in hard copy for purchase. Regrettably, old syllabuses are rarely preserved in teachers' libraries and have not been digitized; older versions have been archived.

⁵⁸ Private collection of Tatiana Voitovitch-Camilleri. RCM Piano Syllabuses 1994; 2001; 2008; 2015.

SECTION E

OVERVIEW OF RCM (TCM) EXAMINATION PUBLISHERS

The Examinations' current publishing arm, The Frederick Harris Music Company (FHMC), has a long history with the Conservatory and a competitive past with other publishing companies. Before 1915 the records hold no evidence of the Examinations collaborating with a particular publisher, but instead provide a list of publishers whose editions were accepted at exams: in 1911 (the fifth edition of the syllabus) the list was three pages long and included both North American and European publishers.

From the 1915-6 academic year, the publications for different grades were facilitated by various companies, seemingly committed to the Conservatory on an annual or regular basis, randomized even between the levels of study without a uniform, steady collaboration.⁵⁹ Thus, the 1915 Introductory Grade Repertoire was published by Augener & Co.; Technical Works by Hawkes & Harris Music Co.; Elementary Grade by Whaley, Royce & Co.; Primary Grade by Nordheimer Music Co.; and although the Junior and Intermediate Grades had no publisher listed in the syllabus, the Junior Grade Repertoire book (most likely from that time period) indicates Nordheimer Music Co.⁶⁰

For Frederick Harris, who worked for a London publishing firm before establishing his business in Canada in 1910, becoming one of the Conservatory's publishers was a result of his interest in music education.⁶¹ As stated in the 1916 syllabus, "The first piano repertoire book,

⁵⁹ Nordheimer Music Co., a prominent Toronto music publisher and dealer, was the recommended publisher for most of the books, including the Exercises and Studies book. UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, Local Examinations in Music, TCM Syllabus, 1915-6, 9.

⁶⁰ RCM Archives, TCM Junior Pianoforte Examination, Selected Compositions (compiled and edited by A.S. Vogt, Mus. Doc.). The Nordheimer Piano and Music Co., Limited, Toronto.

⁶¹ Bruce Farley Mowat, and Marlene Wehrle. 2006. "The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/frederick-harris-music-co-limited-emc> (accessed August 3, 2019).

based on The Conservatory's graded curriculum, is published by The Frederick Harris Music Company and distributed to music students and teachers throughout Canada.⁶² Even though the TCM continued to collaborate with other companies, including Nordheimer, this was the beginning of a century-long business relationship. However, Frederick Harris did not become the TCM's exclusive publisher until 1944.⁶³

Prior to becoming the Conservatory's wholly owned publishing company, The Frederick Harris Music Company (FHMC) withstood extensive competition from other companies employed to publish the routinely revised Examinations books of repertoire and technical work, as well as teaching and training materials—e.g., *Forty Lessons in Sight Singing*, by Thomas A. Brown (1938).⁶⁴ The Sight Singing was a compulsory requirement for several decades, regardless of the discipline of study. Other supplementary and indispensable resources were the ear training and sight reading publications by Boris Berlin (from 1939): though modified significantly with a modern spin and innovative ideas, they remain in print to this day.

Granting his shares to the TCM in 1944, the year before his passing, Harris provided scholarships and bursaries to students, funded through the profits from those shares. After separation from the university in 1991, the RCM still solely owned the publishing rights for the curriculum materials through The Frederick Harris Music Co. Ltd.⁶⁵ Additionally, and also coincidentally, the FHMC's former Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Thomas Green, currently serves as Chief Examiner. As the exclusive RCM publisher (and not publishing other works), the FHMC is now

⁶² UTARMS, P78-0130/03, Local Examinations in Music, TCM Syllabus, 1916-7, preface.

⁶³ During the decade preceding Harris's historic contract, among the companies competing with him to become exclusive publishers to the Conservatory were Augener, Boosey & Co. (later merging with Hawkes & Sons to form Boosey & Hawkes); Whaley, Royce & Co.; Anglo-Canadian Music Co.; Nordheimer Music Co.; Heintzman; Oxford; Fischer; Schmidt; Bosworth; Ashdown; Schirmer; Ditson; Warren and Phillips; Boston; Wood; Lengnick; Durand; and Peters.

⁶⁴ Thomas A. Brown. 1938. *Forty Lessons in Sight Singing in Three Volumes*. London, UK and Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Co.

⁶⁵ The company became "Limited" in 1941.

directly associated with the entire catalogue of the Certificate Program material, including theory. The company also provides all the promotional materials for the public, both teachers' and examiners' workshops, as well as distributing the books throughout Canada and elsewhere.

In the piano series, a standard set of four books is compiled to enhance the learning experience in each level: each set of books includes three mandatory collections of Repertoire, Études, and Technical Requirements, as well as one optional book, Sight Reading and Ear Tests (the publishing rights for the latter does not belong to Examinations and receives royalties).

Now in addition to selling books through music stores, piano dealers, and music schools, the Examinations' materials are also sold online, as an effort to maintain profitability and keep up with modern means of providing customer service. "While watching what progress has to offer it would be unwise not to utilize the technology," remarks Janet Lopinski, Senior Director of Examinations (Lopinski, private communication, January 20, 2017). Although the methods of book distribution are changing, and for much of the music literature electronic versions are now gradually replacing hard copies, the "Students must provide the examiner with an original, published copy of all music to be performed at the examination," and complying with the Copyright Act of Canada, the Conservatory states, "Photocopied music is not permitted in the examination room unless the student has a letter of permission from the publisher or website."⁶⁶

⁶⁶ RCM Piano Syllabus, Examination Procedures, 96, 99, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/examinations/syllabi/s41_pianosyllabus_2016_online_f.pdf (accessed August 3, 2019).

SECTION F.1

COST OF PRINTED MATERIALS

Notably, for approximately the first two decades from their commencement, the syllabuses and calendars were distributed free of charge upon application to the Registrar. Gradually, as evident from the 1911 syllabus, a \$1 fee was charged to teachers wanting a copy separate from the calendar, rising to \$7.95 by 1994, \$11.95 in 2001, \$19.95 in 2008, and \$21.95 before tax per syllabus in 2015.

Harris's Graded Piano Classics (1930) mentioned above had a dual objective: to acquire additional income for the Examinations through the sale of printed materials, and to assemble some of the pieces in a single edition, lowering the cost otherwise spent on multiple books. This was especially useful for those families and teachers in remote areas:

A number of compositions listed in the piano syllabus have been printed in sheet form [...] for the convenience of teachers and students who desire to obtain at reasonable cost and at short notice a standard edition of works which they feel may make an attractive choice for them in their work.⁶⁷

While the Examinations have not always experienced blooming prosperity, this step secured what has become a nationwide lucrative market and a big source of income for the examination system—clearly, a smart business decision.

The sheet music listed in the 1887 calendar was advertised as costing 40 cents for the cheapest and 75 cents for the most expensive publication. The 1933-4 syllabus lists publications issued by the Conservatory that were available for purchase (see Figure 23). Surprisingly, the syllabus here is offered free of charge, even though fees had been charged for it since 1911:

⁶⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/034, TCM Syllabus, 1930-1, front cover.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS ISSUED BY THE CONSERVATORY 1933-1934			
Year Book (1933-1934)	Free	Conservatory Review (per issue)	25c
Annual Syllabus	Free	(Issued semi-annually)	
Residence Rules and Regulations	Free		
PIANO—TECHNICAL WORK		SELECTED COMPOSITIONS	
	Net Postage		Net Postage
Introductory	\$.75	Introductory, two volumes, each	\$1.25
Elementary	1.00	Elementary	1.25
Primary	1.00	Primary	1.25
Junior	1.25	Junior	1.25
Intermediate and Associateship	2.00	Intermediate	2.00
Scales, Chords, Arpeggios and Octaves	1.25		
Questions and Answers illustrative of the Viva Voce Test in connection with the Associateship Piano, Violin or Singing Examinations. Price, each, 0.25.			

Figure 23: The advertised printed resources recommended for exam preparation in 1933-4.⁶⁸

As previously mentioned, routinely revised book series were renamed several times since the first official publication by The Frederick Harris Co. (1930). In 1981, “the former edition of sheet music for Piano entitled Graded Piano Classics has been revised and published under the title Conservatory Piano Series” (see Figure 24):

When ordering please include \$1.25 for the cost of postage and handling. This amount covers 3rd Class Mail only.

Piano 1981	
Grade 1 Compositions	\$3.95
Grade 2 Compositions	3.95
Grade 3 Compositions	3.95
Grade 4 Compositions	4.95
Grade 5 Compositions	4.95
Grade 6 Compositions	4.95
Grade 7 Compositions	4.95
Grade 8 Compositions	5.95
Grade 9 Compositions	5.95
Grades 7 & 8 Studies in one volume	\$5.95
Grade 9 & 10 Studies in one volume	5.95
Scales, Chords and Arpeggios "Brown"	\$3.95
Complete Technical Requirements (all keys)	5.95
Pedagogy Written Papers from past examinations50

Figure 24: The publication fees listed in the 1981 Syllabus.⁶⁹

As for the 2015 edition pricing, all the recommended books for up to Level 8 and for Practical Examinations only (excluding the extensive Harmony, Counterpoint, Analysis, and History publications) will result in an investment of around \$65-80 or more for the four-book package assembled from the Repertoire, Études, Technical Requirements, Four Star Sight

⁶⁸ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM Syllabus, 1933-4, the reverse side of cover.

⁶⁹ UTARMS, P81-0264, RCM Pianoforte Syllabus, 1981, 29.

Reading and Ear Training, and Theory).⁷⁰ The more advanced level books contain a significantly greater selection of pieces, and thus these books are more voluminous and the price is accordingly higher: as of 2019, for Levels 9-10 the optional package⁷¹ of only two books in each level (i.e., Repertoire and Études) costs around \$118 (regular price), \$95 (sale).⁷² The ARCT repertoire is compiled from either a teacher's personal library or by purchasing all the volumes separately.

Aside from the money spent on printed materials, the investment also involves the purchase of an instrument, most often an acoustic piano, and for most students a long-term financial and learning commitment, including costs for travelling to the teacher, school expenses, and applying for annual festivals, etc. While all of the above may appear to be a hefty investment, one should recall the cost of other activities that young people of the twenty-first century are involved in. Activities such as hockey, figure skating, or dance have considerable costs for things such as equipment, custom outfits, enrolment in teams, rink rental, hiring of coaches, competitions, and travel. In comparison, the price of music education stands equal or below these costly activities.

SECTION F.2

EXAMINATIONS' FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Since its foundation, the Toronto Conservatory has sought to maintain the historic continuity of the European conservatoire tradition based mainly on the nineteenth-century model. In the

⁷⁰ RCM Bookstore, "Celebration Series Level 5 Set," <https://shop.rcmusic.com/products/celebration-series-level-5-set> (accessed December 11, 2019).

⁷¹ It is not compulsory to purchase all the books that represent the Level of study. For pricing, see RCM Bookstore.

⁷² RCM Bookstore, "Celebration Series Advanced Set," <https://shop.rcmusic.com/products/celebration-series-advanced-set> (accessed December 11, 2019).

francophone part of Canada, the tradition of a cost-free education was initiated and established in 1942 by conductor Wilfrid Pelletier and composer Claude Champagne: they created a network of state-subsidized music schools that provide free of charge “professional training of composers, singers, instrumentalists, actors and theatre technicians”—The Conservatoire de musique et d’art dramatique du Québec (CMADQ) with the Ministry of Culture and Communications of Québec as its governing body.⁷³ The music conservatories of Gatineau (Hull, at the time of inception),⁷⁴ Montreal, Québec City, Saguenay (Chicoutimi, at the time of inception),⁷⁵ Trois-Rivières, Val-d’Or, and Rimouski are the part of the organization and as post-secondary institutions offer university programs and Diplomas. Notably, the training at CMADQ was completely cost-free until 1996.⁷⁶

In contrast, the anglophone McGill University adopted the ABRSM examination system (1902),⁷⁷ while the francophone community did not, later establishing their own examination body as a result of that influence (1909),⁷⁸ detaching from the British board. Summarizing the report of Campbell Trowsdale, a concertmaster of the CBC Vancouver Orchestra and a professor at the University of British Columbia, who was commissioned a report on Canadian music schools in 1988, Ezra Schabas observes:

⁷³ “Conservatoire de musique et d’art dramatique du Québec,” <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/conservatoire-de-musique-et-dart-dramatique-du-quebec> (accessed July 26, 2019).

⁷⁴ Margaret Ann Babin. 2005. “Music conservatories in Canada and the piano examination system for the preparatory student: A historical survey and comparative analysis.” MA thesis, University of Ottawa, 25.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Conservatoire de musique et d’art dramatique du Québec website: Conservatoire brochure, 13, http://www.conservatoire.gouv.qc.ca/IMG/pdf/cmadv_brochurefinale_ang72.pdf (accessed September 16, 2019).

⁷⁷ Turbide, Nadia, Chantal Gauthier, Annick Poussart, and Richard Haskell. 2011. “Music at McGill University,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/music-at-mcgill-university-emc> (accessed September 16, 2019).

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Little or no public money goes to English speaking Canadian conservatories. The opposite is the case in Québec, where music education is completely funded by the province.⁷⁹

Today's Canadian conservatory and its integral part—the RCM Examinations—is definitely a commercial venture and will remain so.

The finances of the TCM/RCM were always a concern, in contrast to its Quebec counterpart. Incorporated under the “Ontario Joint Stock Companies Letter Patent Act” on November 20, 1886, the Toronto Conservatory of Music was first opened to the public in September 1887. The amount of its capital stock was placed at \$50,000, thus putting the institution at once on a solid financial basis. “The corporation contained fifty-seven shareholders, among whom are many of the most influential citizens in Toronto, all desirous of developing in our midst a Canadian Music School of superior excellence.”⁸⁰ Evident from the early syllabuses, the Conservatory, not being funded by the government, historically relied on shareholders, donors, patrons, and advertisers listed in the annual calendars and other sundry publications. Through an act of the Ontario legislature of 1919, the University of Toronto formally assumed authority over the TCM in 1921, which was reflected in the appearance of the 1921 syllabus cover—the university's title was added, “announcing” the merger.

This historical affiliation raised the Conservatory's status, adding to its prestige in the public eye and, presumably, bringing in more revenue through enrolment. Dr. A.S. Vogt, TCM Music Director at the time and a member of the team that initiated the merger along with Sir (Byron) Edmund Walker, president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce and chairman of the University of Toronto's board of governors, noted:

⁷⁹ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 218.

⁸⁰ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, Sixth Annual Calendar: Toronto Conservatory of Music, 1892-3, 9.

[The Conservatory] would elevate local musical life and at the same time obviate the necessity of professional students going abroad to complete their musical education. Its reputation and usefulness would be greatly enhanced as a part of the University of Toronto. Such a step would also facilitate the standardization of musical examinations throughout the province. The dignity, permanency, and further development of the Conservatory along the highest artistic lines, would unquestionably be assured.⁸¹

However, the underlying reasons for the merger were not as glorious as they appeared: the TCM sought to resolve the issue with its 184,000 bonds, the resources for which would otherwise be unredeemable. With the university's patronage the problem would be solved. Furthermore, the tension between the competing examination bodies was becoming overwhelming for the TCM and the university: the latter planned to initiate its own examinations rather than withstand the competition from the Conservatory and the Toronto College of Music, both of which conducted advanced examinations, as well as the Hamilton Conservatory, which was about to initiate its own examinations. To the university it appeared as a devaluation of their diplomas.

With Trinity College London and the ABRSM dominating the market in the Maritimes, and McGill and the ABRSM in Quebec, this was the time to join forces and eliminate competition by dissolving the university's affiliation with the Toronto College of Music and Hamilton Conservatory, and build a united body with the TCM, sharing "the market for examinations, examiners, and, ultimately, teaching faculty."⁸²

Most pertinent, the examinations and the appointment of the examiners were then controlled by the university-appointed board of trustees.⁸³ Thus, metaphorically speaking, for the next 70 years, until the Conservatory regained its independence in 1991, its relationship with the

⁸¹ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 46.

⁸² Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 46.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 45.

university could be perceived as a model of the country's form of government—a constitutional monarchy: a “colonial” institution (i.e., the TCM/RCM) partially supervised and governed by a more supreme body (i.e., the university).

Besides promoting the value attached to the TCM/RCM's certificates of proficiency and musical profession in general, the Examinations' financial objective was (and still is) to generate revenue from two main sources—the candidates' exam registrations and sales of the branded publications. Because of the common objective (i.e., financial gain) these two aspects were historically bound, which is shown in the statistical data made by The Frederick Harris Music Company to “monitor and perhaps forecast the sales. Evident from the graph, the students' registration (presumably, enrolment at the Conservatory, which also implied purchasing the books as well) tied to books sales. The statistical data shows the span 1925-46 and slightly beyond, with a distinct drop in registration during The Great Depression, and a subsequent rise in the years followed the end of the Second World War (see Figure 25):

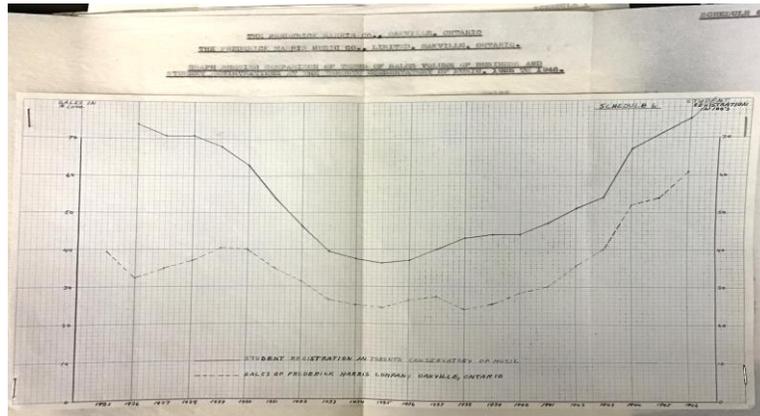


Figure 25: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, Oakville, ON. Graph showing comparison of sales (volume of business) and student registration at the Toronto Conservatory of Music in 1925-46. Student registration is measured in 100s, sales is measured in \$1,000s.⁸⁴

The latter aligns perfectly with Mazzoleni's statement of the impressive statistics for that time:

⁸⁴ RCM Archives, FHMC fonds, 1925-46 financial records.

The striking upsurge of musical interest across the country in the years since the Second World War has nowhere been more clearly reflected than in the rising number of candidates who enter each year for music examinations. [...] Last year 40,892 candidates were examined in more than 400 different centres ranging from Port Alberni B.C., to Sydney N.S.; and it is anticipated that this year the total will exceed 44,000.⁸⁵

Over the decades, the costs of both exam registration and books sales have inevitably kept rising, at different rates and frequencies, and continue to increase.

Exam registration has always been monitored annually since the commencement of the Examinations, as it is the most direct indication of the system's long-term sustainability and profit. To my knowledge, the annual registration data does not distinguish between the disciplines now, and therefore it is unknown what the enrolment for piano alone is; however, based on the data from 1922 and also common knowledge that the piano discipline is the most popular, it is safe to estimate that piano exams account for approximately two-thirds of the overall revenue:

Students in attendance during the year represented every province of the Dominion, some five of six States of the adjoining Republic, some of the West India Islands and Newfoundland, besides several students from the Orient. The number of candidates enrolled during the year in connection with the Conservatory's Local Examinations totalled 9,941. Of these 6,641 were examined in piano playing, 2,132 in the theory of music, and the remainder were distributed amongst candidates in singing, violin playing, organ playing, sight-singing, etc.⁸⁶

Thirty five years later after Mazzoleni's report, Simon's report announced:

At the 1995 fall meeting of the board, President Simon summed up the accomplishments and innovations implemented in his first four years. He noted that the number of examination candidates were at an all-time high of 111,500, a growth of 26 percent since independence.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ UTARMS, A1975-0014/53. Ettore Mazzoleni. 1960. "Examine 40,892 Music Candidates." *RCM Bulletin*. Reprint from the *Globe and Mail*, June 8/60.

⁸⁶ UTARMS, A1975-0014/043. "Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Conservatory." *The Conservatory Quarterly Review* 5, no. 1 (November 1922), 5.

⁸⁷ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 238.

Despite the Conservatory's desperate financial situation that almost left it on the verge of bankruptcy in 1992,⁸⁸ the Examinations continued to contribute to the school's revenue even while going through some unfavourable times itself: after the revitalization of the curriculum and pairing it with study guides and recordings,⁸⁹ promotional campaigns, and effective marketing, book sales were on the rise and along with it, exam enrolment. In a retrospective assessment, the commercial success that the RCM Examinations have attained in the past 28 years could be attributed to Simon's initiative to restructure and revitalize the Examinations Department by converting it into a new division of the Conservatory School.⁹⁰

Registration has occasionally fluctuated in the past few years due to various reasons (e.g., educational shifts in schools; the favouring of pop/rock over classical music; shifts in public interests, tastes, priorities, the status of music lessons in families, etc.), but even now the numbers remain stable, in the 100,000 range.

SECTION F.3

EXPENSES

The Examinations bears substantial expenses, most of which are incurred by the examiners' travels across Canada and the US. Additionally, as a fulfillment of their contracts, examiners are reimbursed for their work, paid per diem, and provided with the examining materials, shipped to them prior to a given session.

⁸⁸ The prospective and approaching bankruptcy forced Simon towards radical business decisions that involved selling four Toronto-area branches; although the market price was depreciated at that time, modest revenue was gained for the school to salvage the situation (Schabas 2005, 230).

⁸⁹ "Peter Simon, mainly assisted by Andrew Markow, Boris Berlin, and Dianne Werner, edited the series" (Schabas 2005, 224).

⁹⁰ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 228.

There is also an ongoing (in some cases, decades-long) commitment to rental of the exam centres; reimbursement of centre representatives; provision of appropriate instruments and their tuning, plus hiring of staff. Moreover, the Academic Office conducts Professional Development workshops for all the examiners of all disciplines, which carry associated costs.

SECTION F.4

PRACTICAL EXAMINATION FEES

In North America, formal higher education for both citizens and non-citizens is acquired through substantial tuition costs, in some cases subsidized by scholarships based on achievement or excellence, unlike the free education provided in other countries around the world.⁹¹ The cost of the Conservatory's piano exam a hundred years ago withstands no comparison to the cost a candidate pays today, but huge economic changes throughout the century—plus the Conservatory's status as a non-profit institution—must be factored in. On the whole, music and particularly piano education was and still is an activity for the middle to upper class. Should it really be as such? Could we be overlooking an undetected talented youngster who simply cannot afford lessons or exam fees? Although the University Settlement Music and Arts School provides music lessons at reduced rates (e.g., 30 minutes \$24.00; 45 minutes \$36; 1 hour

⁹¹ The free higher education granted in Scandinavian countries, Western Europe (Germany, Austria, France, Belgium, Spain), Eastern Europe (Czech Republic and former USSR block countries), Turkey, Greece, South America (Argentina, Brazil), Cuba; or China, where the scholarships are based on the GaoKao examination results. The National College Entrance Examination (NCEE), or GaoKao, is ranked as the most challenging, stressful and life-altering examination in the world. It is held in China annually: the results determine whether the placement of the applicants in the University is advantageous or not. According to Chinese residents, this exam causes an overwhelming level of anxiety among both students and parents, as the fate of their future education and prestige of prospective University are being decided based solely on GaoKao examination's outcome (private communication with East Asian parents, 2015-9).

\$48.00),⁹² compared to the privately owned North Toronto Institute of Music, where the cost of a 30 minute lesson is \$36.50, in addition to a non-refundable annual registration fee of \$45.00,⁹³ the former appears to be more attainable, and yet can still present a financial challenge for some disadvantaged families. There are philanthropic teachers who on occasion choose to provide charitable lessons and pay for their students' exams or festival participation, but currently the Examinations do not offer discounts or incentives during the registration process.

The table of the exam fees from 1901-2 shows the differentiation between fees for Conservatory pupils, non-Conservatory pupils, and Local Centres applicants (see Table 17):

For Examinations in Toronto:	\$
Primary	2
Junior	3
Intermediate	4
Senior	5
Post-Graduate	10
Entrance Fees for Candidates who are not Pupils of the Conservatory:	
Primary	1
Junior	1
Intermediate	2
Senior	3
Post-Graduate	5
Certificates, Junior and Intermediate	1
Primary	0.5
Diplomas	5
The Local Centres Examinations:	
Primary	3
Junior	4
Intermediate	6
Certificates, Junior and Intermediate	1
Primary	0.5

Table 17: Practical Examination Fees listed in the 1901-2 Syllabus.⁹⁴

⁹² University Settlement, Music and Arts School, <http://universitysettlement.ca/music-arts-school/> (accessed June 19, 2019).

⁹³ Fees valid as of 2018. Fees have subsequently been changed in 2019. NTIM website, <http://www.ntimusic.com/learn/> (accessed June 23, 2019). The owner of the school Mary Kenedi is a pianist, adjudicator and a former, long-standing RCM teacher.

⁹⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, Calendar and Syllabus, Fifteenth Annual Calendar: Toronto Conservatory of Music, 1901-2, 43.

A remarkable nota bene that follows the list of fees in the 1901-2 Syllabus states a long-extinct policy feature that is not practised today:

Fees for Certificates and Diplomas must be paid together with the Examinations. In cases where candidates fail to pass, the amount of the Certificate and Diploma Fee will be refunded.⁹⁵

Evident from this reference, exam fees did not include the cost of certificates, whereas now certification is included in the cost and provided upon completion of all the required components. The policy that allows a refund for a failed exam no longer exists.

As of the 1915-6 academic year, the fees for Introductory⁹⁶ to Intermediate Grades ranged from \$3 to \$6, while the ARCT exam fee was \$12, with the certificate cost of \$1 at each grade, and \$5 at ARCT. In the 1921-2 Syllabus, the fee table remained similar to the previous scheme, although refunds for failed exams were no longer mentioned (see Table 18):

Grades	\$
Introductory	3
Elementary	4
Primary	5
Junior	6
Intermediate	7
Associateship	12
Fee for Associateship Diploma	5
Detailed report of Examiner's marking (when required)	0.25

Table 18: Practical Examination Fees listed in the 1921-2 Syllabus.⁹⁷

The 1935-6 Syllabus introduced a new grades system: instead of Introductory, Elementary, or Senior, the grades were classified by numbers (i.e., I to X), see Table 19:

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Introductory Grade was added in 1915.

⁹⁷ UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, TCM Syllabus, 1921-2, 9.

1935-36 EXAMINATION FEES						
LOCAL CENTRE AND SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS INSTRUMENTAL, SINGING AND ELOCUTION						
(No additional charge is made for certificates or diplomas)						
PIANO	VIOLIN	CELLO	ORGAN	SINGING	ELOCUTION	FEES
Gr. I	Intr. Lwr.					\$2.50
Gr. II	Intr. Hr.	Intr.			Intr.	\$3.00
Gr. III						\$3.50
Gr. IV	Elem.			Elem.	Elem.	\$4.00
Gr. V						\$4.50
Gr. VI	Prim.	Prim.	Prim.	Prim.	Prim.	\$5.00
Gr. VII						\$5.50
Gr. VIII	Jr.	Jr.	Jr.	Jr.	Jr.	\$6.00
Gr. IX	Interm.	Interm.	Interm.	Interm.	Interm.	\$7.00
Gr. X	Sr.					\$8.00
Piano Accompaniment (for Students of Singing and Violin)						\$5.00
A.T.C.M. VIOLIN, CELLO, OR ORGAN						\$15.00
A.T.C.M. (Teachers or Performers) PIANO, SINGING OR ELOCUTION						\$15.00
A.T.C.M. (Teachers and Performers) PIANO, SINGING OR ELOCUTION						\$18.50
A.T.C.M. Supplemental Examination						\$6.00
Unsuccessful candidates may re-enter for the Associateship examination within a period of two years on payment of a fee of \$8.00 for the single, and \$10.00 for the double examination.						

Table 19: Practical Examination fees listed in the 1935-6 Syllabus.⁹⁸

The examination fees, stable for decades, over time kept rising by 50 cents to \$1, although the more obvious shift began to happen after the Conservatory received the Royal Charter in 1947. Starting from 1947 gradual fee increases gained momentum for the next several years. The increase was not substantial and did not affect all the grades at once:

Owing to the increased cost of conducting examinations, some revision has had to be made in the fees, but the increase has been confined to grades IX, X, and ARCT, all other fees remaining the same as before.⁹⁹

A new fee scale was implemented in 1949, then 1951 (see Table 20), and 1954 (see Table 21):

⁹⁸ UTARMS, P78-0129-130, TCM Syllabus, 1935-6, 19.

⁹⁹ UTARMS, P78-0131-0138, RCM Syllabus, 1947-9, 1.

1951-53 (No additional charge is made for certificates or diplomas)

PIANO	VIOLIN	'CELLO	ORGAN	SINGING	SPEECH ARTS	FEES
Gr. I	Gr. I			Gr. I	Gr. I	\$3.00
Gr. II	Gr. II	Gr. II		Gr. II	Gr. II	\$3.50
Gr. III	Gr. III				Gr. III	\$4.50
Gr. IV	Gr. IV			Gr. IV	Gr. IV	\$5.00
Gr. V	Gr. V				Gr. V	\$6.00
Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI*	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	\$7.00
Gr. VII	Gr. VII				Gr. VII	\$8.00
Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	\$9.00
Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	\$10.00
Gr. X	Gr. X		Gr. X	Gr. X	Gr. X	\$12.00
Piano Accompaniment (for Students of Singing or Violin)						\$7.00
A.R.C.T. 'CELLO, or ORGAN						\$20.00
A.R.C.T., Teachers and Performers PIANO, SINGING or VIOLIN						\$25.00
A.R.C.T., Performers PIANO, SINGING, VIOLIN or SPEECH ARTS AND DRAMA						\$20.00
A.R.C.T., Teachers PIANO, SINGING, VIOLIN or SPEECH ARTS AND DRAMA						\$20.00
A.R.C.T. Supplemental Examination						\$ 8.00
A.R.C.T. Supplemental Examination in Ear Test and/or Sight Reading						\$ 4.00

Unsuccessful candidates may re-enter for the Associateship examination within a period of two years from date of original examination on payment of a fee of \$10.00 for the single, and \$12.00 for the double examination.

Table 20: Practical Examination fees listed in the 1951-3 Syllabus.¹⁰⁰

1954-55 (No additional charge is made for certificates or diplomas)

PIANO	VIOLIN	'CELLO	ORGAN	SINGING	SPEECH ARTS	FEES
Gr. I	Gr. I			Gr. I	Gr. I	\$3.50
Gr. II	Gr. II	Gr. II		Gr. II	Gr. II	\$4.00
Gr. III	Gr. III				Gr. III	\$5.00
Gr. IV	Gr. IV			Gr. IV	Gr. IV	\$6.00
Gr. V	Gr. V				Gr. V	\$7.00
Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	\$8.00
Gr. VII	Gr. VII				Gr. VII	\$9.00
Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	\$10.00
Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	\$11.00
Gr. X	Gr. X		Gr. X	Gr. X	Gr. X	\$13.00
Piano Accompaniment (for Students of Singing or Violin)						\$8.00
A.R.C.T. 'CELLO, or ORGAN						\$22.50
A.R.C.T., Teachers and Performers PIANO, SINGING or VIOLIN						\$27.50
A.R.C.T., Performers PIANO, SINGING, VIOLIN or SPEECH ARTS AND DRAMA						\$22.50
A.R.C.T., Teachers PIANO, SINGING, VIOLIN or SPEECH ARTS AND DRAMA						\$22.50
A.R.C.T. Supplemental Examination						\$10.00
A.R.C.T. Supplemental Examination in Ear Test and/or Sight Reading						\$ 5.00

Unsuccessful candidates may re-enter for the Associateship examination within a period of two years from date of original examination on payment of a fee of \$12.00 for the single, and \$14.00 for the double examination.

Table 21: Practical Examination fees listed in the 1954-5 Syllabus.¹⁰¹

Hebden’s report, mentioned above, from her trip to the Maritime Provinces, frankly reports the dissatisfaction with exam fees—evidently a century-long source of complaints and concerns:

¹⁰⁰ UTARMS, A1975-0014/37, RCM Syllabus, 1951-3, 11.

¹⁰¹ UTARMS, A1975-0014/37, RCM Syllabus, 1954-5, 11.

Many teachers expressed the opinion that the theory fees are too high, in addition to the practical fees. Parents object to paying these fees, particularly when more than one child in a family is studying music. While the economic picture is still quite good in the Maritimes, I heard one prominent Nova Scotian make the statement that “Maritime people are beginning to look at a dollar twice before spending it.”¹⁰²

In 1964, the RCM’s move to its new location at 273 Bloor St. West in Toronto was associated with another fees increase, followed by another in 1970. Evident from the syllabus example dated 1962, the handwritten remarks proposing new fees were the result of the upcoming revision of fees and preparation for their increase to coincide with the RCM’s relocation to the new building (see Table 22), and sure enough, the handwritten fees were implemented in the 1964-6 academic years:

(No additional charge is made for certificates or diplomas)

*Proposed
charges*

PIANO	VIOLIN	CELLO	ORGAN	SINGING	SPEECH ARTS	FEES
Gr. I	Gr. I	Gr. I		Gr. I	Gr. I	\$4.00
Gr. II	Gr. II	Gr. II		Gr. II	Gr. II	\$4.50
Gr. III	Gr. III				Gr. III	\$5.50
Gr. IV	Gr. IV	Gr. IV		Gr. IV	Gr. IV	\$7.00
Gr. V	Gr. V				Gr. V	\$8.00
Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	Gr. VI	\$9.00
Gr. VII	Gr. VII				Gr. VII	\$10.00
Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	Gr. VIII	\$11.00
Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	Gr. IX	\$12.00
Gr. X	Gr. X	Gr. X	Gr. X	Gr. X	Gr. X	\$14.00
A.R.C.T. CELLO or ORGAN						\$25.00
A.R.C.T. Teachers and Performers PIANO, SINGING or VIOLIN						\$30.00
A.R.C.T. Performers PIANO, SINGING, VIOLIN or SPEECH ARTS AND DRAMA						\$25.00
A.R.C.T. Teachers PIANO, SINGING, VIOLIN or SPEECH ARTS AND DRAMA						\$25.00
A.R.C.T. Supplemental Examination						\$11.00
A.R.C.T. Supplemental Examination in Ear Test and/or Sight Reading						\$6.00

15.00

No change

Unsuccessful candidates may re-enter for the Associateship examination within a period of two years from date of original examination on payment of a fee of \$18.00 for the single, and \$15.00 for the double examination.

Table 22: The 1962 Syllabus in the process of altering the fees for the 1964 edition.¹⁰³

Interestingly, the table of fees began to gradually disappear from the syllabus, and prior to the all-online services implemented several years ago, the information was available only through the registration application forms that could be obtained at the Conservatory or from the

¹⁰² UTARMS, A1975-0014/23. Letter from Miss Hebden to Dr. Mazzoleni, November 28, 1950, typewritten document.

¹⁰³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/38, RCM Syllabus, 1962-4, 11.

Examinations local representative, or at music retailers.¹⁰⁴ Nowadays, the list of fees is available online and ranges from \$59 for Preparatory A and B (the replacement for Introductory), rises to \$99 for Level 1, \$120 for Level 2, and reaches \$425 for Level 10. Registration for the ARCT Performer’s Diploma exam is \$725, and Licentiate is \$895.¹⁰⁵

Comparing these to Conservatory Canada’s fees—\$121-129 covers Levels 1-5, and fees for Level 6 appear to still be significantly lower than the RCM’s—it should be noted that one fifth of CC exams are conducted online (eExams),¹⁰⁶ and occasionally, In-person Flex Practical Exam can be arranged,¹⁰⁷ which substantially lowers the expenses. Furthermore, the fees at the Canadian National Conservatory of Music (CNCM) can be considered competitive for the most part, yet in the lower grades they are higher than in both the RCM and CC (see Table 23):

RCM	\$	CC	\$	CNCM	\$	Mus-ship \$	CNCM Total \$
Preparatory A-B	59	Pre-Grade 1	75	Introductory	78+	-	78
Level 1	99	Grade 1	121	Grade 1	do+	57	135
Level 2	120	Grade 2	124	Grade 2	do+	do	do
Level 3	145	Grade 3	129	Grade 3	do+	62	140
Level 4	155	Grade 4	139	Grade 4	do+	64	142
Level 5	165	Grade 5	149	Grade 5	do+	65	143
Level 6	175	Grade 6	159	Grade 6	84+	66	150
Level 7	185	Grade 7	171	Grade 7	94+	74	168
Level 8	230	Grade 8	199	Grade 8	110+	78	188
Level 9	260	Grade 9	235	Grade 9	133+	90	223
Level 10	425	Grade 10	355	Grade 10	162+	111	273
ARCT	725	ACCM	539	Associate	464+	Co-req	TBD
LRCM	895	LCCM	592	Licentiate	464+	Co-req	TBD

Table 23: Comparative table of fees between RCM,¹⁰⁸ CC,¹⁰⁹ and CNCM.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ “Application Forms,” RCM Piano Syllabus, 1994. Mississauga: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, 5.

¹⁰⁵ Fees valid as of 2018.

¹⁰⁶ Conservatory Canada “All about eExams,” CC website, <https://conservatorycanada.ca/all-about-eexams/> (accessed December 11, 2019).

¹⁰⁷ Conservatory Canada, “Exam session dates and deadlines, In-person Flex Practical Exams,” CC website, <https://conservatorycanada.ca/examination-information/> (accessed December 11, 2019).

¹⁰⁸ Fees in table valid as of 2018. Fees have subsequently been changed (increased for some levels) in 2019. RCM, “Examination and Other Service Fees—Canada,” RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/examfeesca#PracticalExaminationFees-6> (accessed December 11, 2019).

¹⁰⁹ Conservatory Canada, “Examination fees,” CC website, <https://conservatorycanada.ca/examination-information/examination-fees/> (accessed February 3, 2019).

Additionally, the CC's time allotments to conduct each examination are almost twice as long as the RCM's.¹¹¹ For further comparison, the CNCM structures their examinations as a recital with a separate and compulsory Musicianship component that completes certification for the selected grade: "A complete grade examination is comprised of both a performance examination AND a corresponding musicianship examination."¹¹²

Many teenagers who pursue music are still eager to complete the ARCT exam in order to enhance their credentials, and they often deliver a mature, sensible, and even masterful performance. However, occasionally the ARCT exam ends up falling too closely to their first-year academic studies, giving the candidates little reason to pursue an expensive \$725 exam (\$740 as of 2019), as the bachelor's degree they aim to obtain in four years will eventually supersede the ARCT Diploma. This is an ongoing dilemma for many students, for whom the fees for the high-level exam may become an obstacle and, in a way, the achievement may turn out to be redundant and not always practical, as they will inevitably be studying the identical or similar repertoire at university level. If the ARCT Diploma is obtained prior to applying for higher education, it can undoubtedly place the applicant in a more advantageous position for consideration by the admissions committee.

Fortunately, the goals the students set for themselves are not necessarily impeded by merely practical decisions. For many it is a milestone, a manifestation of self-motivation, closure of a crucial developmental stage, and most importantly, a purposeful means of achieving self-fulfillment.

¹¹⁰ CNCM Examination Application fees, file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/examination_application_fees_2018-2019.pdf (accessed February 3, 2019).

¹¹¹ Practical exams duration found in: Conservatory Canada, "Examination fees," CC website, <https://conservatorycanada.ca/examination-information/examination-fees/> (accessed February 3, 2019).

¹¹² CNCM Examination Application fees, file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/examination_application_fees_2018-2019.pdf (accessed May 26, 2019).

CHAPTER 5

PRESENT VOICES

SECTION A

EXAMINATIONS THROUGH THE EYES OF EXAMINERS AND TEACHERS:
THEIR IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Examination is:

-a test of a student's knowledge or skill in a particular subject; a formal test that you must pass in order to earn a particular qualification or be allowed to do a particular job (Cambridge Dictionary).

-a formal test that you take to show your knowledge or ability in a particular subject, or to obtain a qualification (Collins Dictionary).

-a formal test of a person's knowledge or proficiency in a subject or skill (Oxford Dictionary).

-an exercise designed to examine progress or test qualification or knowledge (Merriam-Webster).

The concept of the typical graded piano examination practised in Canada for the past 130 years is owed to Trinity College London (TCL), which launched its examination institution in 1877: the exam proceeds in either a one-on-one setting involving a candidate and a single examiner, or with the two-examiner panel assigned for the Diploma level. The TCL examination system was duplicated by the Royal College of Music (1882), and following the extensive competition and even rivalry between the latter and the Royal Academy of Music (1822), both united their forces under the ABRSM's umbrella to conduct the exams collaboratively. As the British Empire expanded throughout the globe, the examination system was eventually in effect in the majority of British colonies, with the most popular exams being those offered by ABRSM. To this day, the system is the most widespread examination body around the world, administered in 90 countries. The examination system was adopted, or later replicated, by some countries as they

gained sovereignty from the empire, and used as a template for developing a nation-specific examination body.¹ And post-Confederation, in the new Dominion of Canada, the Toronto Conservatory of Music (TCM) was established in 1886 and, likewise, it adopted the model of the reputable European music institution (TCL).

Preserved to this day, the exam's layout comprises a series of tests of different nature, categorized as motor-cognitive and aural: it includes performance of the repertoire, preferably from memory, followed by non-memorized études; demonstration of technical proficiency (scales, chords and arpeggios); aural tests comprising the identification of intervals, chords, chord progressions and so forth; and finally sight reading—both rhythm-tapping and playing an unfamiliar excerpt after a few moments of *audiation*.²

Varying little from one country to another, the order of an exam typically is determined by the candidate, although within the Canadian system two options are permitted: either the repertoire is followed by études, then technique, ear tests and sight reading; or technique is followed by études, then repertoire, and concluded identically to the first option with ear tests and sight reading. Known beforehand and rehearsed by the candidate and teacher many times as a mock exam, the order of the tests registers in the student's memory as an automated action that is anticipated during the actual event—the exam.

For generations of students, undertaking a piano examination has been and remains a serious and stark experience that has no resemblance to a stage performance. Despite the complete transparency of the exam's components and requirements, which are outlined in detail in the syllabus, the vast majority of students perceive it as quite an intimidating experience, and not remotely conducive to creativity or inspiration. Dale Wheeler, a long-time educator at the

¹ I.e., AMEB, NZMEB.

² The ability to process and hear music without physically playing the instrument.

post-secondary level, senior examiner, pianist and teacher, recalls his childhood impression of the RCM examinations, which can be shared by many peers:

My impression was that the examiners were all old, looked over their glasses and had a British accent or some foreign accent: there was always this very archaic image of the Conservatory. [...] Moreover, even the syllabus had the picture of the old building's fragment that aimed to represent an antiquated system. [It] is changing to some degree, as The College of Examiners is working hard to recruit younger examiners, and some of the advances in technology with the EMF³ helped to transform its image. (Wheeler, private communication, September 13, 2018)

The nineteenth-century model of assessment—instilled with courteous protocol, a uniformly minimalistic approach to the conducting of the exam, strict demand for high-standard preparation of a versatile repertoire supported by well-rounded technical adequacy—has undergone many changes in the past century. While the exam structure has remained unaltered, modernizing the approach to the exams for the twenty-first century necessitated a deviation from the traditionally neutral, even ascetic, examiner's demeanour.

The image of the examiners began to steadily transform in the past decade: continuous efforts were made to infuse the examination's procedure with a more welcoming, encouraging atmosphere to provide a less stressful experience for the candidates. Evident from the bolstered marketing with inspirational slogans—"The finest instrument is the mind" and "Developing human potential"—and the recently revamped and revitalized website, both music studies and the examinations are promoted under the same umbrella of an enriching and fulfilling experience that cultivates a life-long enjoyment of music. Exams, as part of music studies, are meant to provide a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction through a positive and meaningful experience created during the actual exam, which is facilitated mainly by the examiner's conduct.

³ Electronic Marking Form.

However, despite intentions to alleviate candidates' psychological stress associated with exams, the inherent model of playing in a quiet, enclosed room in front of a single⁴ laconic examiner still contributes to their nervousness or, at times, even explicit anxiety. Dorothy Stavrinou, a retired piano teacher and the Toronto Central representative of the RCM exams, mentions her friends' overall recollections of past exams as being "very scary" and of themselves being "incredibly nervous," as the Royal Conservatory conveyed an extremely authoritative, unapproachable image back in the 1970s (Stavrinou, private communication, October 26, 2018).

The exams' "less than ideal circumstances," notes RCM examiner Frances Saxby, cause a vast majority of candidates to feel "petrified" by the experience (Saxby, private communication, July 30, 2018). Saxby, after receiving a 100% standing for her ARCT Pedagogy exam, made it her goal for her entire career as a teacher and examiner to provide a nurturing environment through a kind, compassionate demeanour and an approach tailored to the candidates, who in her view "can then thrive at the exam, and walk away liberated from all the fears and prejudices" (Saxby, private communication, July 30, 2018).

Undeniably, an examination can be a stressful event, and while many teachers, especially teacher-examiners, make every effort to prepare their students through frequent and objectively judged mock assessments, conversations about realistic expectations, and thorough practice of all the exam components to build their confidence, the exam is still seen as a challenge—surmountable, but arduous. Even if, in a teacher's opinion, a student is ready for an exam, anxiety can still be caused by factors other than just the performance.

⁴ With the exception of the special needs candidates and Diploma-level exams: in the former, a parent or moderator might be allowed in the examination room with permission from the Academic Office; in the latter case, a panel of two examiners is present during ARCT or LRCM exams.

With regard to the ABRSM exam system, which was adopted and widely popularized in Hong Kong and is the most widely used in Asia since the mid-twentieth century, Michelle (not real name) states:

The students may well be scared of an interaction with a foreigner, or an unfamiliar person—a professional who is assigned to conduct the exam; or the atmosphere might be tense due to the language barrier, or the candidates might be obliged to earn a passing mark out of fear of being penalized by the parents. However, the most common reason for anxiety is not being properly prepared for a required standard and being aware of one's own insecurity. (Michelle, private communication, August 2, 2018)

In Canada, similar reasoning underlies the pressure that students are exposed to from a young age—the anticipation of meeting the examiner, an unfamiliar professional who is authorized to assess their progress and file an unbiased report, the outcome of which is unknown until it is received a few weeks after the exam's completion.

The prospect of performing in front of a professional who is thoroughly familiar with the repertoire and who won't be as "forgiving" as a live audience can play a crucial role in a candidate's anxiety. Students often share that whereas playing in recital for an appreciative audience is pleasant and rewarding, a so-called informed audience (in this case—an examiner), in the student's mind, is a source of tension that causes acute self-awareness, resulting in intimidation and insecurity—and, consequently, a greater probability of failing to deliver the best version of their preparation. Conversely, a listener with the professional insight of a career pianist and a wealth of pedagogical experience can be just as appreciative of the candidate's effort as any audience member: primarily, examiners listen for, embrace and encourage good qualities, trying to extract, amplify and appreciate the acquired skills in every candidate. This aspect of the examiner's role is often overlooked or suppressed in the students' perception, overridden by dread. Indeed, the examiner's purpose is to evaluate progress, not to plant the fear of harsh judgment in students.

Despite the best intentions, there can still be disadvantages for exam candidates. The exams often become a disciplinary tool used by parents: as fellow examiners and I have observed, parents often impose an exaggerated responsibility on children undertaking exams as early as Elementary level (Preparatory A-B, and Levels 1-4). Anxiety results, fuelled by possible punishment in the form of restrictions, or denial of promised material rewards. Wheeler shares his thoughts on underlying reasons that some students take exams: it could be “out of duty to their family”; or, for example, to fulfill the grandparents’ dreams as they themselves never had the opportunity to study music in their youth; or because of the parents’ pressure on the student to complete the program to ARCT certification before they finish high school (Wheeler, private communication, September 13, 2018).

The stress factor surrounding exams seems to infiltrate students’ minds on a phonic level: the word “exam” itself is associated with a task requiring lengthy preparation, constant repetition of the same pieces, practising of technical components, working on ear tests and, finally, encounter with a third party—a visiting expert who intrinsically represents the figure of a “judge.” Helen Hardy, a decades-long examiner and devoted teacher, notes, “Unnecessary stress or fear, or intimidation suggests that certain individuals should not participate in the exam process. It can always change as a student grows” (Hardy, private communication, August 10, 2018).⁵

The excitement associated with anticipation of the performance day that often converts into or equates to anxiety is an integral attribute of the musician’s life: those who pursue a career as performer, whether for life or just temporarily, must skillfully channel their emotions and control

⁵ A former Director of Examinations Daryl Irvine (1986-1990) co-authored a book designed to demystify the exam process. It is written in a reassuring style and concentrates on giving practical advice with a personal touch. See Daryl Irvine and R.G. Condie. 1984. *How to prepare for and take a practical music examination*. Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.

their nerves. Neglected anxiety, if the issue is not properly and conscientiously dealt with, can further transform into chronic and at times psychologically debilitating stage fright, whereas reflection, self-analysis and determined effort to convert weakness into strength can transform one's perspective on stress, and significantly improve one's level of confidence on the stage or at an exam. Seymour Bernstein, an American pianist, composer and teacher, describes his method of conquering stage anxiety:

All performers are striving to do their best on the stage, and all performers no matter what they may tell you, they all always suffer from stage fright. [...] Well, you have to be able to play through your stage fright. So, in the final analysis, we perform the way we practise, and then sometimes stage fright enters in and ruins everything, and we pick ourselves up and we practise harder again, trying to do better each time. Finally, around the age of 50, I was able to walk across the stage carrying my stage fright [...] not as an enemy, but as my best friend. And I was able to play my best and actually use the adrenalin from the stage fright to my benefit.⁶

Alleviating such a perceptual issue can start at a much earlier age with honest teacher-to-student conversation about the benefits and limitations of doing an exam, by outlining realistic expectations and by justifying the choice, the reason and the purpose of such an undertaking. As an experienced examiner and teacher Nina Bielawsky-Schipani notes, "The stress does not have to be a part of an exam preparation and it can be mitigated by the way we teach: we do not necessarily have to teach to the exam, making it the point of the whole year," but instead, while preparation of the requirements underlies daily practice, some extra repertoire can be explored without taking away from the exam-designated pieces (Bielawsky-Schipani, private communication, July 5, 2018). Furthermore, when a conscious and collaborative decision to pursue an exam is made as a result of a discussion with the teacher, it can provide a sense of awareness of "what the student is getting into" and accountability for all the stages of the

⁶ Seymour Bernstein. 2015. *Seymour: An Introduction*. Documentary directed by Ethan Hawke. DP/30: YouTube video, 41:18. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePZF7cTugP4> (accessed October 25, 2018).

process. Teacher, pianist and examiner Paul Dykstra shares that there are those who need the motivation of preparing for an exam, who say, “If I don’t set the goal I wouldn’t work as hard” (Dykstra, private communication, July 15, 2018). A conscious decision to take an exam translates into a conscious commitment, which can then lead to a more controlled state of anxiety when the exam time arrives. When a collaborative relationship between a parent and child is formed in the early stages of music education, the parental impact on the attitude towards an assessment can shift from being preachy to inspiring, similar to the Suzuki philosophy where the parent becomes a coach at home and a collaborator in the classroom.

Admittedly, there are many reasons for a candidate’s elevated stress level prior to and during an exam: the nervousness experienced by any concert pianist prior to a performance most often lies within their fear of forgetting—no calibre of pianist is ensured against memory lapses. Since Clara Schumann’s and Franz Liszt’s first memorized recitals in the mid-nineteenth century, the custom—and later, tradition—of playing from memory⁷ has enhanced the performing experience, establishing a new standard of how music is communicated and commanded in a formal solo performance. Simultaneously, memorization has elevated such performance to a substantially higher, more demanding level, adding a new element of conceptual difficulty to the profession of concert pianist.

Becoming a source of heightened anxiety due to its complex cognitive mechanism, playing from memory has caused a wide range of issues even among renowned artists. However, today it seems inconceivable that a musician seeking a bachelor’s degree in performance could graduate from an academic institution, or an aspiring young pianist could compete on the international scene without memorizing extensive repertoire. Regardless of the recent, more permissive

⁷ Nancy B. Reich. 2001. *Clara Schumann, The Artist and the Woman*. Rev. ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 271–2.

approach to non-memorized performances, and fine examples of distinguished pianists such as Clifford Curzon, Sviatoslav Richter, Arthur Rubinstein,⁸ Alexandre Tharaud, Peter Serkin, Olli Mustonen, Gilbert Kalish, Andras Schiff, Emanuel Ax,⁹ Artur Pizarro, Richard Goode,¹⁰ using a score on stage, the expectation of a memorized performance remains, and it is still a required norm.

As to “why memorizing is necessary” in education, psychologist Francis S. Bellezza explains, “Memorization seems necessary in the early stages of learning about a topic. Vocabulary must be memorized to understand and speak a second language, technical terms must be memorized to begin to read in the sciences, proper nouns must be memorized to understand writings in history and geography, and so on.”¹¹ Likewise, memorization of a poem, rhyme or tongue-twister employs primarily rote memory, a type of memorization currently and increasingly witnessed at piano exams: rote memory is manifested through the candidate’s inability to continue playing a piece after a minor stumble—an unfortunate lapse that forces them to start over or come to a complete halt. Such memorization does not translate to comprehension of the content being played, but to mere familiarity with habitual finger movements and the uninterrupted tune, sequentially “recorded” in the mind in a solid, unbreakable order. A consciously practised fragmentation of the phrases, sections and even motifs, and a thorough awareness of the harmonic transitions, bass note shapes and constituents of the accompaniment patterns lead to meaningful learning and comprehension of the memorized material, resulting in

⁸ Susan Tomes. 2007. “All in the Mind.” *Guardian*, April 19. Source active, last accessed April 29, 2019” <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2007/apr/20/classicalmusicandopera1>.

⁹ Anthony Tommasini. 2012. “Playing by Heart, With or Without a Score.” *The New York Times*, December 31. Source active, last accessed April 29, 2019: <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/01/arts/music/memorizations-loosening-hold-on-concert-tradition.html>.

¹⁰ The Cross-Eyed Pianist. 2019. Memorisation and the ‘proper’ pianist. April 12. Source active, last accessed April 29, 2019: <https://crosseyedpianist.com/tag/concert-pianists-playing-from-the-score/>.

¹¹ Francis S. Bellezza. 1996. “Mnemonic Methods to Enhance Storage and Retrieval.” In *Memory*, edited by Elizabeth L. Bjork and Robert A. Bjork, 345-80. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 364.

long-term retention and insurance against “blacked-out” moments, facilitating continuous performance through skillful and swift recoveries.

The issue of employing rote memorization versus meaningful learning is something to be discussed at an individual basis within each studio, and cannot be monitored, evaluated or observed for quality and consistency by other than immediately involved parties—student and teacher. Whether achieved visually, aurally, by muscle or analytically—or ideally a combination of all four—memorization is a stimulating process for the brain to sustain and can prevent premature decline in the future. Regardless of the student’s musical aptitude or predisposition to memorize, memorization is considered a life skill that teachers introduce and foster through a personalized approach.

The RCM examinations reward this cognitive task by granting two marks per repertoire piece throughout Preparatory A to Level 7 (a total of six marks per program can be earned). However, “the marks are awarded for memory based exclusively on the physical non-use of the book, which quite often has nothing to do with secure memorization,” states Jennifer Knelman, former RCM examiner and current Conservatory Canada examiner, teacher and adjudicator (Knelman, private communication, September 12, 2018). A performance that is flawed with mistakes and re-starts, multiple stumbles and hesitations yet proceeds without a score will earn memory marks according to regulation, whereas a well-prepared piece with an unfortunate lapse that forces the candidate to continue the performance with the book will inevitably qualify for official deductions. Paradoxically, the explicit insecurities of the former that impeded the flow yet allowed the performance to continue and bravely proceed to the end—evidence of meaningful learning through mental mapping of the piece—might receive a lower mark in general. The latter performance, although likely a result of rote memorization that led to a halt

and use of book, will be deducted only two marks, commanding a higher overall mark for a seemingly secure preparation. As another example of a variable, in the former case, the constant memory insecurities could also be caused by rote memorization forcing the candidate to start from the beginning multiple times with the same result—a halt at a certain spot without any sign of resolving the issue other than resorting to the first measure all over again. Thus, the exam marks granted for memorization reflect neither the quality nor longevity of memorization, and certainly do not reflect the type of memory through which it was achieved.

Starting from Level 8, memory marks are not listed separately, but factored in and integrated into the mark for overall performance. Notably, non-memorized pieces often appear overlooked, poorly learned or seemingly caught up in the sight-reading stages, which translates into weak preparation. Conversely, a compelling and technically secure performance delivered with the book might not necessarily yield to a memorized but average playing, and in fact, may even gain appreciation for interpretive decisions, overriding the lack of memorization component. However, with an acceptable liberal approach to memorization in the earlier levels, the ARCT ultimately reinforces memorization as a requisite: the repertoire is expected to be fully memorized, and the performance of a non-memorized piece, regardless of the degree of persuasiveness, is penalized with a mark of zero. Thus, memorization is an additional cognitive skillset and a time-consuming process imposed on piano candidates. Some teachers choose to back away from the obsession with this cognitive task, allowing students under Level 10 to instead spend more time exploring a wider repertoire rather than memorizing exam pieces. However, with this approach there is a risk that, should such students pursue Level 10 and higher, the absence of consistent memory training might result in a much greater, if not

insurmountable, challenge of memorizing the extensive repertoire—a considerable issue for an aspiring pianist.

Research in psychology has produced a wealth of knowledge relating to memory training in music, and young musicians can apply these findings to their own music learning and memorization. The concept of learning through “difficulties” (i.e., recalling the memorized context in various circumstances or settings) is useful and applicable to musicians, as it promotes sustainable long-term memory retrieval. In this respect Bjork and Bjork remark:

Such desirable difficulties include varying the conditions of learning, rather than keeping them constant and predictable; interleaving instruction on separate topics, rather than grouping instruction by topic (called blocking); spacing, rather than massing, study sessions on a given topic; and using tests, rather than presentations, as study events.¹²

Practising the performance of the repertoire in various settings—that is, creating “desirable difficulties”—promotes the forging of the memorization process that in turn provides the longevity of data (i.e., the repertoire). “Desirable difficulties” are circumstances such as performing at different concert venues (friends’ houses, a school talent show, etc.); performing for varied sizes of audiences; performing on a large stage with the audience at a distance, or in a cozy room with the audience close by; performing with an equal level of involvement while being in a different mood; playing with the hands’ temperature varied; playing during various times of day or night, being sleep-deprived or fully rested, hungry or well fed; playing with the eyes closed; or processing and visualizing the performance mentally without physical playing, and so forth. Memorization attained through such method is not only lapse-proof on stage, but also easily retrievable decades later if needed.

¹² Elizabeth L. Bjork, and Robert A. Bjork. 2011. “Making Things Hard on Yourself, But in a Good Way: Creating Desirable Difficulties to Enhance Learning.” In *Psychology and the Real World: Essays Illustrating Fundamental Contributions to Society*. Ed. Morton A. Gernsbacher, Richard W. Pew, Leaetta M. Hough, and James R. Pomerantz, New York: Worth Publishers, 58.

While the effects of meaningful learning and critical thinking stimulated by “desirable difficulties” are undeniable, rote memory in piano practice still has a function in children’s development and plays an important role in cognitive advancement, as it remains a stimulus and a valuable contributor to the learning process. Emphasizing the role of memory in any field of learning (considering music examination as an integral part of education), Elizabeth and Robert Bjork note:

It would be hard to imagine a component of human cognition more fundamental than memory. Without a functioning memory, other cognitive functions—such as perception, learning, reasoning, problem-solving, and language—would be impossible.¹³

Conversely, if not occurring naturally or with training through a tempering process in different circumstances, memorization is a time- and energy-consuming task added to exam preparation and leads to so-called compressing or cramming of the material in a relatively short time (i.e., one-two weeks). At a glance, it seems that a student’s learning ability is stimulated when the stress factor, or the pressure of a deadline, is present in the educational process. However, memorizing “last minute”—at first appearing as an effective process filled with instant gratification, deadline-driven and fuelled by adrenalin—deprives the program of gradual maturation and a settling in the student’s mind, and a chance to test it on many occasions before the actual performance. Moreover, it is the most unreliable and, to some extent, irresponsible method of preparation: rarely, if ever, does such memorization withstand a performance without surprising lapses. On this account, Bjork and Bjork note, “Conditions of learning that make performance improve rapidly often fail to support long-term retention and transfer, whereas the

¹³ Elizabeth L. Bjork, and Robert A. Bjork. 1996. *Memory*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, xix.

conditions that create challenges and slow the rate of apparent learning often optimize long-term retention and transfer.”¹⁴

To appeal to a much wider population that does not consider music as a future career, or to alleviate the challenge of this cognitive task, or to allow a student to rather spend more time exploring a broader repertoire than memorizing exam pieces, the ABRSM’s more relaxed approach to memorization eliminates this stressful factor, allowing the candidate to focus on the musicianship aspects instead. As a former examiner for ABRSM and a current examiner for RCM, Daniel Webb states that within the ABRSM, “candidates can play from memory if they wish, though it does not attract higher marks” (Webb, private communication, August 10, 2018).

Furthermore, according to Lilian (not real name), schools and universities in the US also tend to be more lenient towards the memorization requirement, valuing the uniqueness of the interpretation and encouraging performers to offer a new concept rather than spend time memorizing (Lilian, private communication, August 26, 2018). And, regarding an emerging trend of the past decade in the US, chief music critic for the *New York Times*, Anthony Tommasini, notes, “Today the artistic staff at Carnegie Hall would never think of compelling any artist to play from memory. This is a personal artistic choice.”¹⁵ Alluding to his specialization mostly as a collaborative pianist, Webb remarks:

I find that the ABRSM philosophy fits with my reality as a pianist and reflects the reality of most piano playing. Across other instruments, this also accords with reality: orchestral players do not memorize; organists scarcely ever memorize music; string quartets play with music. So, I do not have any philosophical difficulty with the absence of a memorization requirement. [...] I fully understand the benefits of being released from the

¹⁴ Elizabeth L. Bjork and Robert A. Bjork. 2011. “Making Things Hard on Yourself, But in a Good Way: Creating Desirable Difficulties to Enhance Learning.” In *Psychology and the Real World: Essays Illustrating Fundamental Contributions to Society*, edited by Morton A. Gernsbacher, Richard W. Pew, Leaetta M. Hough, and James R. Pomerantz, 56-64. New York: Worth Publishers, 57.

¹⁵ Anthony Tommasini. 2012. “Playing by Heart, With or Without a Score.” *New York Times*, December 31, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/01/arts/music/memorizations-loosening-hold-on-concert-tradition.html> (accessed April 29, 2019).

constraints of sheet music and the expressive freedom that allows in performance: [...] any good musician and teacher would recognize this. (Webb, private communication, August 10, 2018)

However, one should not underestimate the benefit of memorizing the repertoire, especially when aiming for the Diploma levels, as well as in preparation for the career of a concert pianist—a pursuit in which memorization is automatically included as an implied skill.

Whether the anxiety is caused by anticipation of an exam as an intimidating event, or parental influence, or fear of memory lapses and so forth, many teachers agree that the exam experience provides a simulation of stress-induced situations that the students will inevitably encounter in their lives. “Working and learning to cope with stress in our lives is an important skill. And that’s a benefit of exams right there. Exams will never be without stress, no matter how prepared you are,” remarks Wheeler, noting further, “You can’t blame the exam system for making you stressful: if you haven’t prepared, that’s not the exam’s fault” (Wheeler, private communication, September 13, 2018).

Both the challenges and the advantages of a comprehensive test (i.e., exam) should stimulate the learning aspects and become a driving force towards excellence: as much as it is a learning and enriching experience for the teacher and the examiner, it is more so and primarily for the examinee, in which respect Bjork and Bjork note, “Unfortunately, the effectiveness of tests as learning events remains largely under-appreciated, in part because testing is typically viewed as a vehicle of assessment, not a vehicle of learning.”¹⁶ Perceiving an exam merely as an assessment prompts the candidate to focus on the numerical values—the marks—rather than on the opportunity to demonstrate their progress through acquired skills and seek informative and helpful feedback. While the “pupils care about the numbers,” rarely attending to the comments,

¹⁶ Elizabeth Bjork, and Robert A. Bjork. 1996. *Memory*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 62.

especially if they are illegible (Webb, private communication August 10, 2018), then “at least, the [...] immediate feedback forces the participants [the students] to sit and listen to the adjudicator’s comments, learning about their individual performances” (Tkachenko, private communication, June 7, 2018).

To illustrate a student’s recognition of the value of both an exam as a source of guidance and an examiner as an expert, Dykstra shared a moment from his examining session in Calgary: “During the exam, the candidate specifically asked me to write more critique as a helpful resource in his strive for improvement” (Dykstra, private communication, February 2017). When the exam, combined with the examiner’s feedback, is recognized as a learning experience, the event transforms into a collaboration and exchange of ideas in pursuit of advancement—a true achievement day. Coincidentally, with the RCM’s expansion into the US, in some states the assessments are also referred to as an “Achievement Day” instead of an “Exam,” remarks Scott Price, an American teacher with a wealth of experience of working with the students with special needs.¹⁷

Aside from serving different purposes and varying in format, the means of assessment—exams, competitions and recitals—inevitably share three common denominators: a stress factor (discussed above), a lengthy preparation process, and competitiveness leading to ranking. Notably, in contrast to an exam, recitals and competitions offer a preferable environment for improving self-esteem owing to the involved, instant feedback received from the audience—applause, or even supportive shouts or whistles. Even so, competitions, as performance opportunities favoured over exams by many teachers, are not exempt from qualifying as stressful

¹⁷ Scott Price, RCM Teacher Portal, webinar “Introducing Repertoire, Recitals, and Performances to Students with Special Needs,” August 16, 2017. Access through RCM teacher portal, account password protected.

experiences. Performing in recitals of various formats can also cause anxiety and memory lapses on stage, as do exams.

“The nervousness underlies the student’s consciousness, signalling that something is not being done properly, or not learned thoroughly, or not prepared timely: it is a sense of guilt, an unfulfilled duty, the lack of diligent preparation that generates this anxiety, and the students are aware of that,” reasons Diana Kazumyan, a concert pianist with an extensive performance history in Europe and a considerable teaching record in Canada, who believes in the organizational value of the examination practice (Kazumyan, private communication, July 2, 2018). On that note, Wheeler adds, “At the end of the day stress is caused by lack of preparation, and students come to an exam unprepared and wonder why they are stressed. It’s kind of obvious!” (Wheeler, private communication, September 13, 2018).

Preparing for an exam, competition or recital involves extensive practice: the downside of such a process is the monotonous practice of the same pieces that for some becomes an obsession, confined as they are in the pre-performance or pre-exam mentality, focused solely on no more than the designated repertoire for a long period in pursuit of “drilling” to a desired parameter. For some students, such an approach can be a result of their learning limitations, although in most cases, those with the potential to embrace a more extensive repertoire but opt for the “drill” instead, tend to miss the opportunity to grow as musicians. But in defence of this focused repetition, winning competitions requires excellence, and polished playing invariably attracts high marks with distinction, justifying the “sacrifice” and effort.

Hence, the stress factor has a role in exams and performances. Despite some negative outcomes related to it, and it being interpreted by many as an obstacle to an effective performance, such an elevated emotional state can be considered an artistic, stimulating fever

that, once conquered, fuels an unforgettable musical journey. Bernstein shares that upon reviewing recordings of his performances, he discovered that his performance benefited from the anxiety he was experiencing: “I realized [...] that the adrenalin [associated with nervousness] heightens my emotional intensity, it makes my thinking sharper, and I noticed when I am nervous I trill my best: it’s exhilarating!”¹⁸

SECTION B

THE TEACHERS AND THE SYSTEM

In 1992-3, following its independence, the RCM struggled to restore its financial stability, which had long been in decline. Pressured by circumstances, the institution underwent some radical restructuring, reducing the teacher body of the Community School, and as a result, significant staff and teacher layoffs left many faculty members without jobs, exacerbated by the selling off of valuable branch properties to help alleviate a substantial debt.¹⁹ Despite these difficulties the Community School continued to operate in a revised way.²⁰ To alleviate the inevitable bitterness over job losses the Teacher Services Program was initiated. A more elaborate concept of the teachers network crystallized and emerged in the form of the Affiliate

¹⁸ Seymour Bernstein. 2015. *Seymour: An Introduction*. Documentary directed by Ethan Hawke. DP/30: YouTube video, 41:18. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePZF7cTugP4> (accessed October 25, 2018).

¹⁹ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There’s Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 230-1.

²⁰ The Royal Conservatory has several programs that serve the Toronto area (and beyond), housing under one roof the Community School (private lessons or group classes, ensembles, for ages 4-17), Theory courses, Music Enrichment Programs (i.e., Smart Start for babies 0-24 months, toddlers and pre-school children for ages 2-5; also available in French; Suzuki Strings); The Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists intended for the gifted students aged 9-18; Glenn Gould School (offers a four-year Bachelor of Music, Performance (Honours) program, and a graduate diploma, i.e., Artist Diploma); Learning Through the Arts initiative to improve knowledge acquisition through the arts in schools across the country. See RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/royal-conservatory-school>, and <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/royal-conservatory-school/music-lessons-for-children-and-teens> (accessed October 3, 2019). The Examinations is a separate entity/organization within the RCM, and its curriculum supports/serves preparatory music education provided by the Community School.

Teachers Network in 1995, offering “access to services designed to enhance their teaching, a toll-free telephone number to reach RCM resource people, workshops, RCM master classes, digital keyboard instruction, a Guide to Music Education, and two newsletters” for an annual fee of \$125.²¹ Furthermore, Schabas recalls the short-lived destiny of this seemingly successful venture:

Affiliate membership also included a \$2 million liability insurance coverage, optional group insurance benefits, and an annual luncheon at the RCM. The well-intentioned program had reached a membership level of 950 by 1997, when it closed because existing teachers’ organizations²² were concerned about competition from the RCM.²³

The concept of the Affiliate Teachers Network that combined teachers’ accessibility with their membership has been split into two entities—the search engine titled the National Teacher Directory, and the system of accreditation titled the Teacher Certification Program (the latter will be discussed further).

The first stage of the revamp of the Affiliate Teachers Network began with developing and building up the National Teacher Directory, from around 2011-2. Formerly, teachers were found through the Yellow Pages; the new modernized digital directory is featured on the RCM website and helps families efficiently locate and contact teachers in their area. The search engine is equipped with an option to set up a desirable radius, within which the search is initiated, and once processed the data provides a list of teachers working in the area. Symbiotically bound with the RCM Teacher Certificate Program, Certified Teachers are given priority in the listings and appear first, regardless of their proximity from the inquirer. Conveniently, this method of looking for a teacher provides transparency about the teachers’ credentials, allows for a wealth of

²¹ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There’s Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 232.

²² Presumably ORMTA (established in 1936) that offers similar incentives to its members.

²³ Ezra Schabas. 2005. *There’s Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn, 232.

information, and, although word of mouth still is the most effective search engine for many families, the Conservatory's directory in a way replaced classified ads and bulletin boards, alleviating or even eliminating a lengthy research process. It also enlarges the pool of options for connecting with various teachers, in pursuit of finding the most suitable professional.

Mentioned above, the RCM Teacher Certification Program was launched in the year 2015: the program raises the ranking of the novice as well as the accomplished teachers already actively supporting the system, and grants them additional credentials and benefits. Provided the teacher has met the qualifying criteria,²⁴ completed a ten-week Piano Teacher Course (depending on the credentials of the applicant) and paid a biennial fee of \$249,²⁵ the Program gives access to its designated Teacher Portal—a gamut of online teaching resources, webinars, free access to Medici TV, Naxos Music/Video Library, online theory courses, and RCM online ear training; discounts on books, one complimentary Elementary level exam to a first-time RCM exam candidate (\$145 value),²⁶ as well as RCM marketing materials, etc. While the Program's objective is to bring a wealth of experience to teachers seeking professional improvement and also to facilitate those who wish to upgrade their credentials to improve their position in the national teacher directory,²⁷ few teachers can achieve a status of financial stability to afford the membership fees, particularly those who might have a modest studio, working in the economically challenging field of the arts, or remote/rural areas. This presupposes that the Program reserves its membership for an elite group of well-established professionals.

²⁴ RCM, "Teacher Certification. How to Qualify to RCM Teacher Certification," RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/teaching/rcm-teacher-certification/how-to-qualify-for-rcm-teacher-certification> (accessed December 11, 2019).

²⁵ Once granted the RCM Certified Teacher title, a teacher has the option to maintain the membership biennially.

²⁶ RCM, "Teacher Certification, Transform Your Teaching," RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/teaching/files/teacher-chart2019_1.pdf (accessed December 11, 2019).

²⁷ In the RCM nationwide teacher directory, certified teachers' names are given priority placement on the search list.

Aside from the Teacher's Certification, fees for ARCT Pedagogy exams—Elementary (\$370), Intermediate (\$390), Advanced (\$495);²⁸ or Teacher Online Courses (i.e., Elementary \$499;²⁹ Intermediate \$499;³⁰ Advanced \$499³¹) that may or may not lead to certification—are still quite steep for a piano teacher, especially an aspiring, eager to embark on a teaching career teenager. Moreover, many teachers who are experienced, knowledgeable, and cognizant of the curriculum, or those who acquired their qualifications through Universities or other global systems and educational institutions, continue to work and supply the examinations with well-taught students without being officially certified through the RCM system, as for many, true quality is represented in their pupils' achievements.

In addition to recognizing the teachers' work through The Teacher of Distinction Award initiative,³² a pioneering program, the first of its kind, bears consideration here: The Teacher Reward Program is a system of points that can be used as discounts towards online teacher courses, pedagogy exams, RCM Certified Teacher membership fees, or The Summer Summit registration fees (see Chapter 7, Section F). Essentially, teachers are the main pillars of the examination system, and if the teachers prosper, so will the system.

²⁸ Fees valid as of 2018. Fees have subsequently been changed in 2019. RCM, "Examination and Other Service Fees—Canada," RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/examfeesca#PracticalExaminationFees-6> (accessed December 11, 2019).

²⁹ RCM, "Teacher Online Courses, Teaching Elementary Piano Course," RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/teaching/documents/ele_details2020.pdf (accessed December 11, 2019).

³⁰ RCM, "Teacher Online Courses, Teaching Intermediate Piano Course," RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/teaching/documents/int_details2020.pdf (accessed December 11, 2019).

³¹ RCM, "Teacher Online Courses, Teaching Advanced Piano Course," RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/teaching/documents/adv_details2020.pdf (accessed December 11, 2019).

³² RCM, "RCM Teacher of Distinction Award," RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/convocation/teachers-of-distinction-awards> (accessed December 11, 2019).

SECTION C

CREATIVITY AND EXAMS: A COMPATIBLE REALITY?

I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.
— Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

The examination syllabus is designed to provide the widest possible spectrum of music literature available to this date for studying and exploration. Much effort is directed towards assembling the repertoire in pursuit of providing educational resources for a diverse Canadian musical population, satisfying the preferences of learners of the Western music tradition, no matter if they are Canadian-born or naturalized citizens, or where they are from or what musical background they have. It is understood that creativity is embedded in the process of studying music and presumed that teachers integrate it into lessons; it is also presumed that creativity-related activities happen prior to the actual preparation for exam season.

The exam itself, however, does not contain a single creative component and is, indeed, reminiscent of an orderly drill: although there is some friendly and positive interaction, deviation from the established practice is minimized, as is engagement with the candidate, and the procedure is kept as efficient and streamlined as possible. A rare chance for a candidate to demonstrate creativity during an exam would be if their performance became one of a truly emotionally charged and compelling nature, unique and captivating in its immediacy and spontaneity. Otherwise, as teacher Stephanie (not real name) notes, “There is no such thing as showcasing one’s creativity at the exam: imagine, as if a candidate would announce to the examiner ‘I came up with a new scale!’ and actually would be allowed to play it as one of the examinable components” (Stephanie, private communication, August 14, 2018). Although creativity in its genuine sense implies the ability and activity of creating something new, owing

to its subjective and non-quantifiable nature, including such a category in the exam would be highly debatable, challenging, and likely impossible.

Sight reading could be categorized as a relatively creative process, and an explicitly fluent and proficient sight reading with infused creative solutions as a quick response to temporary insecurities can impress an examiner, earning high praise and maximum marks for achievement. However, such cases are quite rare, and for the majority, the sight-reading test remains an arduous and dreaded task. As a result, an awkwardly embellished or unconvincingly altered version of a tested excerpt (if evident) might not just earn no bonus marks, but quite the opposite—it could work against the candidate, transpiring as an overall inaccurate or even inattentive reading.

Students commonly become fixated on learning only one piece from each list (i.e., musical era), and tend to dismiss the benefits of exploring a more extensive repertoire and potentially gaining a broader perspective of the level of study and technical variety, as they work predominantly on the exam requirements—precisely on what is “required.” A more creative approach to one’s musical studies could be achieved by compiling three namesake pieces (e.g., “Dragonfly,” “Dragonfly Scherzo” and “Dance of Dragonflies”) from adjacent levels to create a *Dragonfly Suite* for an upcoming performance; or employing additional ornaments to the ones indicated in a Baroque score; or improvising the cadenza in a classical concerto at LRCT Level; or adding an entirely improvised section at the end of a contemporary or jazz-style piece; or reinventing a familiar composition, from slow to fast, and vice versa; or adding a swing to a classical or romantic piece; or using “Joy to the World” for composing a series of short miniatures, varying in style—quasi-variations on the theme across the musical eras, and so forth. These are elements that do not fit the scheme of a traditional exam. Theorizing on a possibility to

even suggest such activities to a student, especially to those who are fixated on exam preparation, nowadays seems excessive: I have noted in my practice that any activity that does not pertain to the exam modules is considered “not useful” by both parents and students, especially in the past several years. Thus, the fate of creativity in a way lies in the hands of the clients: the lesson scheme is bound by the demands and ambitions of the families—exclusively to study for and complete the exams.

The vast majority of students are presented with a structured scenario of progressing through the exam levels, and in my (and others’) experience many presume that music education is acquired only through the means of preparing for an exam. However, as Webb acknowledges, “To expect one’s pupils obediently to follow examination curricula as though it were self-evidently the only valuable pathway would be wholly misguided” (Webb, private communication, September 2, 2018). The exams’ intent, often neglected yet worth noting, is to give the eager and aspiring learner a foundation on which to expand upon; and to recreational learners they provide the most condensed set of the essentials.

There are generally accepted components in music education, which should be part of exam preparation as well: developing musicality; awareness of context, traditions and period performances; exploring programmatic ideas implied by titles, and fostering imagination; stimulating critical thinking; comparative analysis of musical eras, styles and genres; building awareness of the architectonic structures in musical compositions, and so forth. Applied competently, these components can provide the groundwork to inspire creativity. The description of the benefits of the RCM Certificate Program states, “Musical creativity, artistry, personal expression, and a love of music are fostered in the program,” further amplifying the “creative

process” as one of the outcomes achieved through participation in the program.³³ Arguably, no matter how well designed, innovative and far-reaching the certificate program or curriculum or examination system is, creativity still cannot be achieved without the human factor—an interaction and influence through an interpersonal relationship with a role model, that is, an inspiring teacher figure or mentor possessing a wealth of knowledge. Practising also can be creative, but how often can it be so? And realistically, how many students are apt to incorporate creative approaches in daily routines?

SECTION D

ARE EXAMS FOR EVERYONE?

For a teacher, a big part of lesson planning lies in determining whether pursuing the exam(s) is suitable and beneficial for a student, including the parents in the process, and to get acquainted with the assessment system. The decision to take an exam is usually made by two parties—the parents and the teacher: some teachers go to the extent of offering annual group info-sessions to educate parents about the certificate program. As Aline Banno recalls:

One time, when I had a lot of Asian students, that came directly from China, I would translate my studio policy into Mandarin, so they understood it. Then I would get all the families together in the studio and had a workshop for them, where I explained all about RCM examinations, about why it is important to take an exam, how the levels work, the rules and regulations, and that gave them a really good background. They were very responsive, they all came, and they appreciated it very much. (Banno, private communication, June 27, 2018)

Once informed and aware of the outlined framework, whether learned from the teacher, friends or colleagues, parents get involved in their children’s progress and motivated by the

³³ RCM, “What Are the Advantages of The Royal Conservatory Certificate Program for Students?” RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/about-our-program/certificate-program-faqs> (accessed November 3, 2018).

graded structure and opportunities to earn merits—tokens of acceptance into the system. Having a unit of measurement or point of reference as to how one compares to one's peers is a natural motivation for all humans—competitiveness has an evolutionary survival value. Many goal- and result-oriented families tend to measure their progress status by resorting to the accreditation system (CP) to monitor the children's work, the investment in lessons and the teacher's effectiveness.

On one side of the motivational spectrum, some families do not see the value in certification, opting for a relaxed pace of recreational learning and exploration, committing to minimal (i.e., 20 minutes or less, and not even as a daily routine) to no practising at home and with no goal to pursue any exposure to performances, let alone exams. Conversely, some families consider lessons taken for leisure and fun as a waste of time, and seek validation of the investment made in their children's music education that is tangible and applicable in the future (Michelle, private communication, August 2, 2018). Warren alludes to the parental motivation in the commitment to and the ambitions set for exams, noting "Pass exams at a quicker pace and your child might even be considered gifted, providing great parental pride."³⁴

Although the pursuit of an exam and the procedure itself are not suitable for everyone, owing to various factors (e.g., the structured format, the comprehensive approach to scales, anxiety, etc.), teachers unanimously remark that the level of a student's preparedness needs to be adequate for the exam to have a positive impact and encourage their further progress. Such a vision of the exams' purpose explains the teachers' tendency to send their pupils to exams only when the students are ready and prepared to a certain standard. This standard may vary significantly and depend on the teacher's familiarity with the exam expectations: teacher-

³⁴ Jeff Warren. 2011. "Is the Royal Conservatory Helpful or Harmful to Music Culture and Student Development?" *Jeff R. Warren* (blog). November 2, 2011, <https://jeffrwarren.wordpress.com/tag/rcm/> (accessed October 25, 2018).

examiners inevitably have the advantage of an insider's view, while others learn the procedures as they become acquainted with the system over the years.

In discussions about the applicability of exams to all piano students—potential or existing exam candidates—the teachers' outlook revealed solidarity on the account of the exams' transient point in the overall span of music education. “The exam would be one (important) aspect of the students' musical adventures,” shares Hardy, while Olivia (not real name), an experienced teacher with philosophical views on music education remarks, “Exams are not a measuring stick to assess one's abilities or aptitude,” and Webb adds that examinations are “not a context for development that suits all personality types, ages, and aspirations” (Hardy, private communication, August 10, 2018; Olivia, private communication, July 24, 2018; Webb, private communication, September 5, 2018). Encouraging her students' ability to evolve independently from the obligation to do an exam, Kazumyan concludes:

The students with a strong self-motivation who prefer to explore the repertoire without having to do exams accomplish prolific results in performance, but those who need discipline and a goal, and an organized way of practice need the exams most definitely. (Kazumyan, private communication, July 12, 2018)

Admittedly, the exams' concept and format do not suit every student—and it does not have to—although a misinterpretation of the exams' purpose sometimes results in hesitation in taking them. As an alternative to the RCM exams, Conservatory Canada conducts exams online, allotting a much more generous timeframe for each level and allowing more social interaction between the examiner and the examinee, known to be conducive to a less stressful environment. However, regardless of the differences between the examination systems, all of them have—or should have—a single goal in common: to evaluate and report a student's current progress, avoiding judgement or negation of the teacher's methods. Understanding the exam's constructive

mission helps to resolve ambiguities and allows the examiners' conduct and the underlying reasons for the established procedures to be seen from a different, more insightful angle.

The Conservatory's exams have been on a lengthy journey of moving away from a niche market—professional training of future musicians—and towards adapting to and accommodating a growing, diverse population of musicians, aiming to appeal to every learner, regardless of musical aptitude or age. From this angle, the exams certainly *can* be for everyone, as they are intended to be. Ultimately, it all depends on how one perceives, learns and applies the experience, and what one is looking to achieve through the learning.

SECTION E

WHY TAKE EXAMS?

The teachers interviewed expressed a consensus on the value of participating in the exams, seeing them as an effective educational tool. However, the annual commitment of preparing students for exams did not meet much enthusiasm, owing to several factors: a student's work ethic that can facilitate or hinder timely preparation (e.g., regular practice, time-management skills, the ability to progress steadily under the teacher's directives, etc.); a student's personal motivations; parental influence/encouragement; and meeting the teacher's standards. A student's extracurricular workload can be considered either a favourable factor or a hindrance; their aptitude for steady learning can determine whether the preparation can be integrated into their schedule without overloading them. Most teachers admit to seeing more value in sending their students to exams once at the Elementary level (RCM Preparatory A-B, and 1-4), and then for one or two exams at the Intermediate level (RCM 5-8), putting an emphasis on Levels 7 and 8, which are eligible for high school credits when paired with the corresponding theory exams; if

the students have progressed far enough and desire to pursue music studies at higher levels, they are sent to the Advanced-level exams (RCM 9-10), or even ARCT, and/or LRCM.

The teachers who practise the Suzuki method or adopt the Conservatory Canada system have a combined approach to exams: for example, in the early stages of music education, Suzuki students would benefit from group lessons, group recitals and competing in festivals, while Conservatory Canada students are less intimidated by the namesake exam system, conducted online with a more generous time allotment for each exam and flexibility in booking times, including the option of scheduling an examiner for an at-home exam. Such students feel more relaxed, having an opportunity to socialize with the examiner and perform in a less intimidating setting.

Considering the exam concept as only a tool for providing strict guidelines and a goal for lessons, the teachers unanimously admit favouring festivals and competitions and off-exam years, regardless of the exam system they use, as a greater opportunity to expose students to a wider repertoire. Furthermore, the teachers prefer to send their students to fewer exams to avoid the symptomatic fixation on exam preparation requirements, while rendering periodic progress reports and maintaining a comprehensive lesson structure, which is much needed for young minds.

While preparation for exams does not (and in reality, should not) limit an inquisitive student to the repertoire exploration, many teachers share the opinion that the preparation season (approximately three-four months prior to the exam date, or at times even the entire year) does result in a fixation on a preselected repertoire—confinement within the exam mentality inhibits the expansion of the repertoire and impedes the acquisition of “outside-the-exam-requirements” concepts during that period. Evident from exam performances that conspicuously lack stylistic

understanding, some teachers adhere to the limited choices of the repertoire and seem not to introduce any extra material. This is a common practice in schools and especially in post-secondary academia, where what is taught “outside-the-exam-requirements” is not valued enough in today’s education environment—that is, if the information the teacher communicates is not included on the exam, the necessity of learning it is negated by the students and eventually neglected as an unnecessary knowledge (Wheeler, private communication, September 13, 2018). Wheeler also shares his observations from teaching at the post-secondary level: “The students would always ask ‘Is this going to be on the exam?’ or ‘Do I need to know it for the exam?’, to which I would reply, ‘You just need to know it because it is important whether or not it is going to be on the exam’” (Wheeler, private communication, September 13, 2018).

Students deciding to limit their information intake, whether it is a theoretical subject, repertoire or technical requirement, confine themselves within a narrow range of parameters, where the extent of their specialized knowledge becomes the size of the theory worksheets, repertoire book or list of required items, with no chance to add extra information that could potentially enrich the existing “inventory,” broaden their learning horizons and add to their general erudition. Why not learn what a *tritone* is, even if it is not included among the intervals designated by the curriculum in the given year? Or learn to play a major pentatonic scale, realizing that the alignment of black keys on the piano keyboard forms a major pentatonic scale if you begin playing on F-sharp? Why not sight read the minuets and dance along to gain an understanding of the movement, elegance and stylistic tempo? The possibilities are endless, from reading about composers to investigating early keyboard repertoire.

Among avid music learners, these pursuits translate into enrichment of the learning experience, broadening their musical vistas of imagery and contextual depth, and providing a

more profound comprehension of styles and ideas behind the compositions. Although the aim of the examinations is to set the foundation for students' further exploration of all areas of music literacy, few go the extra mile and explore beyond designated technical requirements, published exclusively for the RCM repertoire and études books, let alone try to learn pieces listed in the syllabus that are not included in the book series.

In the teachers' unanimous view, the exams do not necessarily bring out a great musician in everyone; however, they undoubtedly make a more disciplined musician—an essential constituent of any performance, hence the value of the exams' framework. "I do not believe in education without evaluation," teacher and examiner Olga Tcherniak states with conviction, implying that structured education creates building blocks in the formation of the student's awareness of their own achievements measured against the designated standard, and these building blocks need to be occasionally checked for quality (Tcherniak, private communication, July 17, 2018).

The indispensability of the exam experience also lies within a candidate's self-discovery—that is, learning about one's ability to conduct oneself during an exam; dealing with nervousness and communicating with an examiner, who is actually a stranger; realizing one's behavioural strengths and weaknesses, learning from the latter, and feeling confident and inspired by the former. In motivational pep-talks just before the exam, students are often told something like "your only contender here is yourself."

As with the heightened level of tenacity and stamina needed to succeed at competitions and festivals, the exams' competitive nature exercises the candidate's ability to preserve and even elevate their self-esteem, despite the intimidating setting. "There are not a lot of opportunities for the students to be in that kind of environment," shares Alison Bell, noting further that the

students should feel pride and also privileged when undertaking such comprehensive testing: “I did it all (requirements), and in one exam” is a satisfying feeling, adds Bell (Bell, private communication, August 17, 2018).

In the era of instant messaging, with expectations of fast responses and services, the exams provide no instant feedback: the report submitted at the end of the exam is not seen by the candidate until a few weeks later. This aspect fosters patience in the student, while they internalize and reflect on the experience.

Today’s reality of professional, social and legal standings being built on certificates of completion or participation, diplomas, endorsements, recommendation letters and so forth, imposes the obligation of proving one’s proficiency at every stage of an educational path or career climb. Hence the value of certification—and why not begin with music examinations? Pointing out this phenomenon of a societal motivation for pursuing exams, Michelle notes that “everyone seems to be eager to take them [examinations] because of the opportunity to obtain certification” (Michelle, private communication, August 2, 2018).

In the modern world, the approach to exams and music lessons is changing rapidly (and has been for the past two decades), as now they are seen as an effective way to acquire valuable skills and, at the same time, obtain certification from a reputable institution that might be advantageous when applying and in preparation for postsecondary education. Scientific evidence increasingly supports the claims of the beneficial value of music education, particularly on human cognitive abilities. This knowledge is spreading rapidly throughout music institutions, elevating the awareness among parents about the effectiveness of music lessons, and raising their marketability, as schools seek to increase enrolment. In pursuit of strategies that appeal to the public—and, consequently, achieve higher lesson enrolment and boost book and pianos sales—

the music education industry readily utilizes scientific data to emphasize the value of lessons to parents—a strong selling point that is hard to resist in today’s competitive and high-achievement-driven world.

Studies in music and neuroscience, much of it in the wake of the now discredited “Mozart effect” posited by Rauscher, Shaw and Ky (1993)³⁵ have continued over the past two decades, including research by Chabris (1999),³⁶ Hodges (1999),³⁷ Steele, Brown, and Stoecker (1999),³⁸ Schlaug (2001),³⁹ Schellenberg (2004, 2005),⁴⁰ Johnson and Memmott (2006),⁴¹ Moreno et al. (2009),⁴² and George and Coch (2011).⁴³ Although extensive research in music and science has been conducted for at least 40 years now, the transparency between the two fields really began to emerge and shape public awareness in the past decade.

Occasionally a wealth of scientific findings is condensed to a more comprehensible summary, such as a slogan—“Music makes you smarter!”—or a picture of a calculator on a poster for a music school, aimed to attract a wider population of potential students, barely evoking any semblance of music’s primary purpose, the facilitation of cultural enrichment and aesthetic nourishment. At the core of such a visual message is an intent to promote music as a

³⁵ Frances H. Rauscher, Gordon L. Shaw, and Katherine N. Ky. 1993. “Music and Spatial Task Performance.” *Nature* 365 (6447): 611.

³⁶ Christopher F. Chabris. 1999. “Prelude or Requiem for the Mozart Effect?” *Nature* 400 (6747): 826-27.

³⁷ Howard Hodges. 1999. “Does Music Really Make You Smarter?” *Southwestern Musician* 67 (9): 29-33.

³⁸ Kenneth M. Steele, Joshua D. Brown, and Jaimily A. Stoecker. 1999. “Failure to Confirm the Rauscher and Shaw Description of Recovery of the Mozart Effect.” *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 88 (3, pt. 1): 843-48.

³⁹ Gottfried Schlaug. 2001. “The Brain of Musicians. A Model for Functional and Structural Adaptation.” *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 930 (1): 281-99.

⁴⁰ E. Glenn Schellenberg. 2004. “Music Lessons Enhance IQ.” *Psychological Science* 15 (8): 511-14; E. Glenn Schellenberg. 2005. “Music and cognitive abilities.” *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 14 (6): 317-20.

⁴¹ Christopher M. Johnson, and Jenny E. Memmott. 2006. “Examination of Relationships between Participation in School Music Programs of Differing Quality and Standardized Test Results.” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 54 (4): 293-307.

⁴² Sylvain Moreno, Carlos Marques, Andreia Santos, Manuela Santos, São Luís Castro, and Mireille Besson. 2009. “Musical Training Influences Linguistic Abilities in 8-Year-Old Children: More Evidence for Brain Plasticity.” *Cerebral Cortex* 19 (3): 712-23.

⁴³ Elyse M. George, and Donna Coch. 2011. “Music Training and Working Memory: An ERP Study.” *Neuropsychologia* 49 (5): 1083-94.

venture “not worth pursuing unless one can get something out of it,” notes Charles (not real name), a life-long devoted teacher and examiner. In the instance of the poster mentioned above, it appears to be an advertisement for music lessons that stimulate proficiency in mathematics, statistics or accounting, instead of a promotion of music as “something that is inherently valuable in itself [that] doesn’t need to justify itself on these grounds,” argues Charles (Charles, private communication, August 8, 2018). Admittedly, a musical upbringing is generally revered and credited with academic achievement and numerous cognitive benefits⁴⁴ for those taking lessons from a young age. The pursuit of learning the piano and, along with it, taking exams, seen as a credible guarantee of a child’s future overall academic success, prompts parents to enrol their children in music lessons. Socioeconomic factors and parents’ aspirations have contributed to a shift in how the arts are viewed and valued, as priority is placed on acquiring high-paying jobs and status. Olivia notes:

The expectation of what constitutes beauty has been gradually disintegrating. They [parents] put their children in piano lessons or ballet; it is for a different purpose than it once was, it’s not as pure, not for the sake of acquiring culture and acquiring beauty, and expressing yourself, or seen as an outlet of emotion. Nowadays, it’s about rounding out the child so he can have a better job, what would look good on the resume, how will this impact a student when he is looking for a job, whether he will be broad-based culturally; so right up there with music it will be golf or tennis, because when you take clients out, he [current student] can impress them, conduct business on the field and close a big deal. It can be paired with taking them [prospective clients] to a concert, or play for them an instrument to “tickle” and delight their ears. (Olivia, private communication, July 24, 2018)

An unfortunate aspect of the wide interest in music education is an underlying, almost inverted motive: taking lessons not for art’s sake, but for the sake of accumulating certificates—assets to impress a future employer.

⁴⁴ Cognitive benefits include elevated IQ, and improved attention and memory, which potentially lead to enhanced academic development.

Olivia alludes to a teacher's crucial role, or even destiny, in superseding the obsession with material assets, and salvaging the “lagging arts” by “opening up not just that one particular student, but that whole family to the idea that beauty speaks to our soul; the acquisition of beauty [nurtures the ability] to produce something gorgeous that is worthy all on its own” (Olivia, private communication, July 24, 2018).

Understanding aspects of music theory and history and applying them to one's performance—such things as the architectonic proportions within musical structures, and the encoded symbolism⁴⁵ of the Baroque era or so-called allegory or emblems (Bukofzer 1939);⁴⁶ the refinement and sophisticated elegance of the Classical style, its harmonious sonorities and balanced proportions; and the compelling warmth and emotional prevalence of Romanticism, and so forth—inevitably provides a template for one's outlook on all aspects of life and equips an individual with timeless virtues: which is the primary benefit of music lessons that should be factored in before any others.

⁴⁵ I.e., the symbolic, or emblematic, representation and meaning of the intervals, chords, scale-quality, melodic direction, major vs. minor key, etc., that defined the composer's thematic choices. Not to be mistaken for Symbolism: an artistic and poetic movement or style using symbolic images and indirect suggestion to express mystical ideas, emotions and states of mind. It originated in late 19th-century France and Belgium, with important figures including Mallarmé, Maeterlinck, Verlaine, Rimbaud and Redon.

⁴⁶ Manfred Bukofzer. 1939. “Allegory in Baroque Music.” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 3 (1/2): 1-21.

CHAPTER 6

CHALLENGES FOR MODERN PEDAGOGY

SECTION A

EXPECTATIONS AT EXAMS AND PERFORMANCE CONVENTIONS:
PRESERVED OR SHIFTING?

Those who know, do. Those who understand, teach.
—Aristotle,
Greek Philosopher (384-322 BC)

The Conservatory's approach to teaching and examining can be described as traditional, or classically oriented, clearly fulfilling the derivative of its name, *conservative*. It entails the use of familiar, often canonic repertoire and adherence to the performance and teaching conventions passed along by generations of teachers. The exams are highly reliant on established teaching practice, which means that any preparation without personal teaching is likely to have a poor or unpredictable result. Consequently, the mutually dependent educational bodies—teaching and assessment—are bound to be in constant symbiosis: under the Conservatory's umbrella, the examinations body establishes a set of requirements, which the teachers implement through their studio-specific routine. And, through supplying the candidates for exams and receiving their reports, the teachers accordingly gather information regarding acceptable standards from the examiners' feedback. As the report is a source of guidance and information about a student's current level of ability, the teacher can apply the information therein to their own pedagogical skills. Likewise, they also learn how their teaching measures up against or differs from the examiner's perception, and make any necessary changes to improve future assessments of their students, aiming for a grade at the higher end of the Honours classification (e.g., First Degree Honours, 80-89% or First Degree Honours with Distinction, 90-100%). Since the examinations

body does not coach teachers on examination-specific pedagogical principles, the examiner's report remains a valuable source of such information.

It is presumed that the teachers—who acquired their own music education either through the same system they are now teaching (RCM), through a university or else abroad—are familiar with the pedagogical requirements for a stylistically aware performance of works from various musical eras. Admittedly, teachers and examiners with 40-50 years of experience unanimously report a relatively stable ratio of average to excellent playing throughout the generations of students they have taught. However, the same population of professionals has observed in the past several years a decline in musical excellence, with fewer students in genuine pursuit of multifaceted musical knowledge; for some, such as Rigaudie-MacIsaac, this observation goes as far back as two decades: “Since the mid-90s, I find there has been a real shift of students not really knowing what musical excellence is” (Rigaudie-MacIsaac, private communication July 17, 2018). So what *is* considered a good, or a standard, performance that derives from musical excellence, commendable within the Canadian examination body? And is this standard being routinely met and currently maintained?

Owing to the absence of sound-recording technology during the Baroque and Classical eras, an “authentic” musical interpretation is virtually impossible, deriving only from the little information we have from historical treatises on ornamentation, documents such as Czerny's “On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for Piano” (1846),¹ academic musicological research, or *Urtext*, an edition based on autograph or similar sources. Even with this information to hand, we can only presume much of how the music was performed in those

¹ Carl Czerny. 1846. “On the Proper Performance of All of Beethoven's Works for Piano.” Edited with a commentary by Paul Badura-Skoda. Vienna: Universal Edition (1970).

times, let alone know how the performances were perceived or appraised by audiences. The debate over authenticity is now pretty much exhausted, owing to the early music and the “historically informed performance practice” movement with the goal of a stylistically aware performance. With the technological developments in pianos in the 18th and 19th centuries, and changing conventions regarding pedalling and performance practice in the works of Bach, Domenico Scarlatti, Mozart, Beethoven, or Schubert are changing. Much of the awareness of the authentic approach has come through the discovery of early pianos (pianofortes/fortepianos), observations, studying and performances by pianists such as Malcolm Bilson. “It had become my firm conviction that the particular expressive markings of many of our most important composers of the past were simply no longer properly understood,” says Bilson.² Furthermore, in order to achieve authenticity, the interpretations need to be rooted in their historical context and take into account the development of pianistic style and, more importantly, the instruments for which the composers created their pieces, and on which they themselves played. Bilson shared his discovery about Mozart’s music as “eminently realizable” on the instrument of the eighteenth century he practiced and performed on:

The small articulation slurs to be found everywhere in his [Mozart’s] music came out so naturally on the fortepiano, which strove, as did Mozart’s music itself, not for richness of sound, but for lightness, clarity and elegance. [...] I realized I was hearing Mozart’s music as I had never heard it before. [...] The five-octave fortepiano is often referred to as “Mozart piano” and is, of course, ideally suited to his music.³

Although performance conventions have fluctuated since the Second World War and, especially recently, a candidate’s performance at an exam had to (and still has to) demonstrate what Michelle refers to as “all the essentials that are expected from most of the professional

² Malcolm Bilson. 2019. “Performing the Score.” Cornell SCE, March 14. YouTube video, 2:44:37, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qTN7JdiRJQ> (accessed June 16, 2019).

³ Malcolm Bilson. 1980. “The Viennese fortepiano of the late 18th century.” *Early Music* 8, no. 2: 158.

musicians: i.e., a technically accomplished and fluent playing while observing all the details in the music, following the articulation and depicting the characters through shaping, expression, and dynamics contrasts” (Michelle, private communication August 2, 2018). Moreover, a traditionally schooled performance was and is represented by a student expressing a clear distinction between composers’ stylistic traits and musical eras, a variety of touch and tone colour, structural awareness, and an engaged and even artistic delivery. While many aspects within and around the examination body have been modified and reformed over the course of 130 years, the single component that represents the numerical appraisal of musical achievement—the marking scheme—has not changed since its first mention in the Calendar that was combined with the Syllabus for the first time in 1901-2.⁴

Appreciating the conservative approach to the marking scheme, Bell tells her students ahead of exams, “The marks you receive at your exam are not inflated, as they are in school nowadays, and the marks are not just given away: at the RCM you will know that every mark is earned,” implying that the marks clearly define where the students’ accomplishments belong in the ranking (Bell, private communication, August 23, 2018). To the four parties actively involved in the exam process—the student, the teacher, the parents, and the examiner—the marks are earned and deserved, and they convey valuable information to all about the child’s current standing among their peers across the country.

From my observation as both a European and North American citizen, European music audiences generally expect more than just a clean execution of notes or impressive passagework. Technical proficiency is an asset believed to provide the path to great expression: a versatile pianistic apparatus and effortlessness in performance of the repertoire are considered given, and

⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Fifteenth Annual Calendar, 1901-2, 22.

the essential constituents of a “formula for success.” Thus, it is not the technically secure, even dazzling, performance that will be focused on at a European recital, but the individuality, conceptual sense, soulfulness and dramatic conveyance, which are valued more highly and will be noted more than a few incidental slips among the artful ideas.

Quoting James Anagnoson, an internationally acclaimed pianist, pedagogue and Dean of the Royal Conservatory’s Glenn Gould School, Peteris Zarins, who is a Senior Examiner and Emeritus Chief Examiner of Training and Development, acknowledges that “for an examiner, an extraordinary performance is the one when you would put your pen down and just listen” (Zarins, private communication October 26, 2018). Considering that the examiner must produce a balanced report, in reality, “putting a pen down,” or ceasing to type on a laptop, would be inconceivable during an exam, although metaphorically speaking, such comment defines the much sought-after level of artful communication—essentially to transport a listener to a state of “surrender” to the music. It is all the more remarkable if that “surrendered” listener is an acknowledged expert in the field.

In Canada from my observation, the standard of performance and expectation at exams can generally be defined as a technically clean performance, stylistically accurate articulation, and well-shaped phrases complete with a pleasant tone, appropriate dynamics, and expressiveness. Along with the expectation of emotionally charged, technically polished playing is a sign of well-established proficiency, especially at festivals, which can sometimes outweigh expressiveness.

Despite the celebratory spirit of festivals and the encouraging intent of exams, in reality performance assessment can be compared with judging competitive figure skating routines: the cleaner the skate, the more points are earned, whereas the artistic component might be judged

more subjectively and not influence the score notably. In competitive sport relying on judges and a points system, the artistic component is likely to be weighted less heavily than technical execution.

To some degree, the performing arts impose more demands on pianists, and consequently preparation for exams and competitions now adopts an approach similar to that of sporting competitions, as both, physiologically, rely on technique and athletic endurance. I call the latter, applied to the musical arts, *sophisticated athleticism*, and is developed through hours of practice—training—per day, the purpose of which is not always fully understood by many students, or parents. “The piano muscles need the same practice as the hockey muscles,” Bell tells her students, to convince them of the need for practice time to achieve satisfying results (Bell, private communication, August 23, 2018).

While a performance can indeed be quantifiable, an examiner who is capable of detecting a greater level of preparation despite incidental memory slips or stumbles might examine the performance holistically, with a wider perspective in mind. Especially during Advanced- or Diploma-level exams, the artistic delivery often overrides the technical flaws, resulting in an appreciative mark that implies an assessment such as the following: “The creative concept came across persuasively, and although technically this contained some minor inaccuracies, the aesthetic value in its immediacy and spontaneity made the performance artistically precious and memorable.”⁵ Undoubtedly and understandably, the examiners take nervousness into account, although an obviously secure degree of preparation, well-conceived and technically confident performance is rarely overshadowed by nerves.

⁵ This is a composite feedback.

Based on my own observation and a comparison with the aesthetics of the European performance culture and traditions, with which I am also familiar, in Canada emotional input is often overlooked or relegated to secondary status, an exception rather than a desired and integrated co-requisite, as it is cultivated in Europe. Diana Kazumyan, who trained in Geneva and Yerevan and is director of the Arcadia Academy of Music in Richmond Hill, concurs: “In Europe, a pianist has to be spectacular to emotionally impact and move the audience, whereas here in Canada a technically proper, clean and stylistically appropriate performance is often enough,” pointing out the cultural differences and motivational qualities between the continents (Kazumyan, private communication, July 12, 2018).

A lack of persuasiveness, caused by the lack of emotion in the playing of many young players, gradually transfers to the students’ more technically advanced repertoire as they grow, leaving their performances deprived of expressiveness and with little room for individuality to emerge. In the Advanced and Senior levels (i.e., higher grades and diploma level) —when the interpretational aspects need to take a significant, meaningful turn through what Wheeler calls “creating a shape of an architecture, or saying something individual, i.e., conveying a new idea,”—an insufficient emotional, and even conceptual, outlet produces a performance that is “monochromatic, lacking personal connection,” limited by technical execution, and thus deemed “safe” and “non-offending to the judges” (Dale Wheeler, private communication, September 13, 2018). Kazumyan continues on this notion: “In the past several years, the performances have become so standardized and deprived of a personified approach that they tend to be all alike, without any audible distinction one from another,” emphasizing the ongoing and increasing difficulty of promoting the development of expressiveness in today’s students (Kazumyan, private communication, July 12, 2018).

In fairness, not only every individual, but also every *culture* has a specific way to manifest emotion, as well as to perceive both the emotion and its intensity. Marianna Pogosyan, a psychologist and expert in cross-cultural transitions notes, “Almost everything about emotions is cultural: what we call them, how we think about them, how we regulate them. [...] We learn prescriptive norms that include rules about when to have what emotions.”⁶ With notable exceptions (e.g., the explicit facial expressions of Mitsuko Uchida, or Lang Lang), the emotional reservation in Asian students playing Western music can be justified by the possible transfer or influence of their cultural background—i.e., controlled or even suppressed emotions, proper manners, overall discipline and strict “display rules.”⁷ In this respect Pogosyan further acknowledges “the Japanese tendency to conceal negative emotions in social settings in order to maintain group harmony, and the tendency to endorse emotion expression among individualistic cultures such as the US.”⁸

For millennials and the slightly younger generation, the vast accessibility of and exposure to online recordings of numerous world-renowned celebrity pianists have given rise to another trend: some young aspiring players idolize such celebrities and aim to become equally skillful and renowned. As an example, *The Spectator*’s journalist Robert Turnbull notes how Yundi Li’s

⁶ Marianna Pogosyan. 2018. “How Culture Shapes Emotions.” *Psychology Today*, March 30, 2018, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/between-cultures/201803/how-culture-shapes-emotions> (accessed May 2, 2019).

⁷ Display rules are “cultural norms that dictate the management and modification of emotional displays depending on social circumstances.” Paul Ekman, and Wallace V. Friesen. 1969. “The Repertoire of Nonverbal Behavior: Categories, Origins, Usage, and Coding. *Semiotica* 1 (1): 49-98. In David Matsumoto, Seung.Hee. Yoo, and Johnny. Fontaine. 2008, 58. “Mapping Expressive Differences around the World: The Relationship between Emotional Display Rules and Individualism Versus Collectivism. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 39 (1): 55-74.

⁸ Marianna Pogosyan. 2016. “Emotion Perception across Cultures.” *Psychology Today*, October 9, 2016, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/between-cultures/201610/emotion-perception-across-cultures> (accessed May 2, 2019).

winning of the Chopin Piano Competition in 2000 and becoming a celebrity has glorified his hometown, Shenzhen, such that “Every piano student wants to emulate him.”⁹

In pursuit of sounding like a celebrity, the young musicians post performances on YouTube, seeking instant fame. Observation also suggests there is a tendency for these players to seek finesse in their own playing by embodying the individuality or interpretative skills of a pianist they deeply admire: the lack of their own expressiveness is replaced by slavish copying of the favourite performer’s recordings or videos downloaded from the internet. These young people idolize these pianists to the point of wanting to sound and look like them and thus gain instant public approval, given that the celebrity pianist has already earned such approval. As an examiner, I have seen the mimicking of Lang Lang’s flashy, flamboyant gestures and Glenn Gould’s lower-positioned chair and an attempt to emulate his distinct articulation; heard the borrowing of Evgeny Kissin’s interpretations; or watched Yuja Wang’s minimalistic appearance but striking virtuosity; or Khatia Buniatishvili’s commanding movements and explicit facial expressions— conventional artists breaking boundaries and bending stage fashions.

Furthermore, this phenomenon of copying performances down to the finest details through diligent study of recordings has become more prevalent: on occasion, a clone-like performance can be heard at an exam or recital, or especially competition, wherein the individuality of a student has been dissolved in pursuit of reproducing all the attributes of someone else’s playing, delivering a carbon copy of another performer. In this regard, another remark by Turnbull comes to mind, as he describes the tendency of Chinese competitors to follow “recorded performances of the greats with diligent extremes of speed and technical discipline but with theoretical

⁹ Robert Turnbull. 2006. “The Rise of Chinese Pianists.” *The Spectator*, November 15, 2006, <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2006/11/the-rise-of-chinese-pianists/> (accessed May 26, 2019).

knowledge so weak they can scarcely tell the difference between a rondo and a fugue.”¹⁰ Notably also, Turnbull shares some astonishing statistics:

Shanghai’s schools have 40,000 students aged five and upwards who are taking piano exams every year. In Hong Kong, the figure rises to 100,000. The craze for piano-playing has become big business: 600 private centres—McPiano outlets, according to one wag—have spread throughout China, not to mention innumerable privately sponsored competitions.¹¹

Once witnessed at an exam or recital, these “copies” are easily recognizable by professionals. While all the aspects of such a performance seem flawless, and the audience is delighted to hear a well-polished program, it contains an element of detachment—a consciously withdrawn affectation, or, more precisely, a borrowed one. The intent to communicate genuinely from one’s own heart is “becoming a lost art,” shares Wheeler (Wheeler, private communication, September 13, 2018). However, communicating “from the heart” should not be mistaken for the term “self-expression,” argued by MacMillan in his response to Hill (1933):

But is not “self-expression” as applied to a performer a misleading term? A musician should aim in performance, not at expressing himself, which is liable to result only in a primadonna-like vanity, but to expressing Beethoven, Chopin, Bach, Debussy, Ravel or George Gershwin.¹²

From a pedagogical perspective, listening to and learning from as many good recordings as possible and occasionally copying others, including the teacher, builds a structural core of rules in the young mind—i.e., proper phrasing, accurate attention to articulation, adequate tempo choice, stylistic aspects, characterization, and so on. In the performing arts, what is at first seen as an honest intention to follow the steps of a celebrity’s traits can in fact result in the

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ernest MacMillan. 1933. “Those Music Exams! A Stumbling Block or a Stepping Stone?” *Chatelaine*, November, 48. Toronto.

development of undesired, unhealthy habits and unnecessary mannerisms. Such behaviour prematurely unleashes the freedom to ignore and then neglect performing conventions.

Conversely, we might owe to technology the unleashing of new possibilities in playing the piano: the level of proficiency—i.e., the level of performance and, along with it, the technical standard of playing—has been elevated and increasingly enhanced by an approach that overall is more commanding, powerful, dexterous, daring, rule-twisting, convention-challenging, and consequently, reality-bending. However, performance conventions need to be established in the early stages of learning as a compass that can later transform that individual from a pupil to an artist through the process of self-discovery: to a dynamic personality with a solid acquisition of conventional rules, the concept of “breaking the rules” through creative evolution can lead to artistic eccentricity and stage magnetism.

In this present age, with opportunities arising from global music education, networking, cultural cross-pollination and pedagogical influences, the demand for uniqueness and the ability to communicate “from the heart” has a much greater value than ever before. Since the examination system is a national arena for showing the country’s blueprint of music education, staying true to oneself and not impersonating others, preserving certain traditions yet cultivating individuality from within, can profoundly change entrenched pedagogy and expectations, allowing each voice to be heard in a unique way.

SECTION B

THE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY ON MUSIC EDUCATION: TRANSITIONING TO “NEW” CREATIVITY?

During the rapid rise of technology in the past two decades, older generations have faced challenges for which they might not have been ready or unable to cope with; while some have

adapted and gained the skills necessary to move on with ever-evolving technology. Those of younger generations were born into the e-learning environment and have never known or experienced otherwise. Even the abbreviations and vocabulary are changing rapidly, making a youngster wonder, “What does “dial” a number mean, anyway?”¹³ Marc Prensky, who coined the term “Digital Natives” in 2001, states:

It is now clear that as a result of this ubiquitous environment and the sheer volume of their interaction with it, today’s students think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors. [...] It is very likely that our students’ brains have physically changed—and are different from ours—as a result of how they grew up. But whether or not this is literally true, we can say with certainty that their thinking patterns have changed. [...] Our students today are all “native speakers” of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet.¹⁴

Digital technology now governs the ways we function in modern society: how we communicate, learn, work, travel, shop—live. Thus, it would be an oversight not to acknowledge its impact on music education, although this impact has been noted on an observational level throughout my teaching and examining experience, repeatedly mentioned and outlined in the interviews with colleague-teachers. Indeed, Prensky’s statement should not be taken at face value, for although the phenomenon of young brains “very likely” having physically changed has been noted in various fields, there is unfortunately no scientific evidence to support such a claim. But Prensky’s (and others’) observations alone are suggestive.

The process of learning in a digital world is a venture for both students and teachers, to which Margaret attests:

It’s a very new time, it is creating so many opportunities, and as a teacher I am not always sure how to meet these opportunities; as a teacher you have to know what to do, and so often we are kind of lost with how to deal with that reality. (Margaret, private communication, September 12, 2018).

¹³ Marc Prensky. 2001. “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, part 1.” *On the Horizon* 9 (5): 2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

Smart technology has entered and changed almost every field, and how music-related information is processed by the younger generation—the digital natives—has also changed. Over the years, the methods of exchanging knowledge, teaching, practising, and listening to music remained constant: you would learn the art of playing the piano with a teacher-mentor; bring the piles of music scores (often borrowed from a physical, not digital, library) to the lessons; practise for hours with a genuine determination to aspire to excellence; shop for vinyl records (or later, CDs) when these resources became available and books on music history, composers' biographies or letters, encyclopedias, treatises on pedagogy; go to live performances to enrich your musical vocabulary, auditory experiences and discuss interpretations with the teacher, and so on. The formula for an effectively applied education ensured quality and longevity of received knowledge and acquired skills.

Now, being born into and surrounded by technology, children rarely (if ever) find the need to refer to the past, preferring to immerse themselves in the present and anticipate the future, as the future intrinsically holds more excitement and opportunities than the distant past. To offer an anecdote: on sharing my impressions about Beethoven's letters¹⁵ with some younger students, they reacted with genuine surprise to learn that Beethoven did not use email, nor did they expect to learn that the composer wrote music by candlelight instead of an electric lamp. There is a generation of students who cannot imagine the world without the internet—they struggle with the concept of a radio, let alone inquire about the construction of the harpsichord or the opulence of eighteenth-century fashion.

¹⁵ Ludwig Van Beethoven, Alfred Christlieb Kalischer, and J. S. Shedlock. 1972. *Beethoven's Letters: A Critical Edition with Explanatory Notes*. New York: Dover.

Furthermore, teachers have also observed students' resistance to participate in other activities that they introduce to lessons to enhance musical training, such as singing with affect (to develop expressive melodic shaping), moving the body to the beat of the metronome (to develop beat steadiness), walking with a buoyant step (for rhythmic accuracy), or communicating through eye contact (maintaining focus throughout the piece, to learn to communicate ideas). It is becoming more difficult to engage students in these exercises, which are at times met with surprise about their relevance to actual piano playing. "I wish that piano students would be obliged to take dance lessons; singing lessons or enrol in a choir; and also acting lessons to help with the body movements and expression," suggests Margaret, as these basic skills would allow students to incorporate the movements and shapes of the music they play into their bodies, making the music part of their internal world, their essence (Margaret, private communication, September 12, 2018).

It is worth mentioning that in 1887, regardless of their focus of study, all TCM students were offered additional courses in Elocution and Dramatic Action, foreign languages (Italian, Spanish, German, French), Sight Singing, Acoustics, Mental Philosophy, Physiology, and Piano and Organ Tuning; in 1906 courses were added in Expression that included Reading, Oratory, and Physical Culture. For training involving body movement, Madeleine Boss Lasserre joined TCM in 1927 as an instructor in Dalcroze Eurhythmics, solfège, and improvisation (Lasserre would continue to teach at TCM/RCM for more than 50 years). Courses in Anatomy of the Vocal Organs, Vocal Hygiene, and Health Principles were mandatory for vocal students. The investment in—let alone the existence of—such courses indicate the conscientious and thorough planning of the Conservatory's curriculum from the very beginning. Regrettably, with the exception of a recently adopted Alexander Technique class through the Glenn Gould School,

none of the above courses remains, and many of them were in fact discontinued long ago. One can only hope that at least some of these activities have been taken over by private teachers or other organizations, such as Dalcroze Canada.¹⁶

Many teachers fear that some basic skills and learning methods—such as singing the melodic line for effective phrase shaping, or using movement to develop awareness of rhythm,—are soon to become extinct, as digital devices continue to replace the realm of the real world with that of a tablet’s screen, leaving the pursuit of conveying meaningful context through musical sounds without purpose. Remarkably and paradoxically, while children are committed more than ever to extracurricular classes and are exposed to endless choices of entertainment and opportunities to learn an abundance of skills, some basic facets of recreational activity, such as singing and moving to a beat—essential skills for effective phrase shaping and rhythmic accuracy—are absent and likely to gradually disappear. These observations, however, are anecdotal, based on my own personal experience and those of colleagues teaching a fairly representative group of piano students in the past several years: it does not apply to those students who are directly involved in singing or dancing classes, and is subject to numerous exceptions and variables.

The effects of rapid technological changes, which will be discussed later in this chapter, cannot be underestimated or denied, and in some ways they are beginning to interfere with the traditional approach to teaching, even causing harm, as certain skills may head to extinction.

This seeming unwillingness to honour old-school methods is in reality a symptom of a mindset directed towards the future rather than the past. Children are very skilled and fluent with

¹⁶ Dalcroze Canada is an organization that promotes artistic principles of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze in Canada, <https://www.dalcrozecanada.com/index.php/en/> (accessed June 16, 2019).

technology, which is second nature and appealing to them. Today's learning paths are quite different from ours, to which Marc Prensky testifies:

They [Digital Natives] have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age. Today's average college grads have spent less than 5,000 hours of their lives reading, but over 10,000 hours playing video games (not to mention 20,000 hours watching TV). Computer games, email, the Internet, cell phones and instant messaging are integral parts of their lives.¹⁷

Russian neuropsychologist and psycholinguist Tatyana Chernigovskaya remarks with some urgency:

The issue pertaining to the already prolonged education that continues to be administered to younger generations is not going to go away, it is rapidly growing, and it is in the air that something needs to be changed in all fields of education. There is talk of the teacher needing to play a different role, and lessons need to be structured accordingly.¹⁸

Additionally, Prensky concisely highlights the features of today's students, which can be considered as useful guidelines for teachers:

Digital Natives are used to receiving information really fast. They like to parallel process and multi-task. They prefer their graphics before their text rather than the opposite. They prefer random access (like hypertext). They function best when networked. They thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards. They prefer games to "serious" work.¹⁹

These skills and the different type of work ethic "are almost totally foreign to the [old-school] educators, who themselves learned—and so choose to teach—slowly, step-by-step, one thing at a time, individually, and above all, seriously," notes Prensky.²⁰ Seriousness and full commitment is still expected from students, as these traits were expected of us, but some things that were once imperative seem to be gradually losing importance. The craving for shortcuts in practice and for

¹⁷ Marc Prensky. 2001. "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, part 1." *On the Horizon* 9 (5): 2.

¹⁸ Tatyana Chernigovskaya. 2017. *Zima Magazine*. December 7. YouTube video, 10:48. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18ytHSO7Ez0> (accessed October 27, 2018), video source in Russian, translation mine.

¹⁹ Marc Prensky. 2001. "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, part 1." *On the Horizon* 9 (5): 2.

²⁰ Ibid.

quick results with minimal effort lie within the desire for overnight success, fame, popularity, exposure on social media, going viral—easily achieved gratification.

Among the downsides of technological advancement is the tendency of “mediocrity taking over,” says Knelman, further adding: “Everyone is on YouTube, listening to others [...] or recording 600 versions of one song” (Knelman, private communication, September 12, 2018). YouTube gives everyone the opportunity to climb onto the global stage and become an internet star. Flooded with a multitude of versions of a single piece, the unfiltered stream of audio-video information becomes increasingly overwhelming.

While technology is utilized to advance learning, some of the above-mentioned skills crucial for the musical arts gradually dissipate, which has been evident in teaching studios over the years. Additionally, there are some growing concerns over the downside of technological usage and its implementation within educational programs. Excessive use of smartphones and playing on video games platforms is also suspected to be a source of harm for the students’ thumbs, causing temporary finger impairment, which was witnessed in his teaching by Dr. Thomas Green, Chief Examiner of the College of Examiners (Green, private communication, October 17, 2018). Having the neck constantly bent forward while playing with or texting on these devices may also cause premature neck strains and a slouched posture in children (in general, and also during piano performances), which can potentially lead to spine deformities in still developing and growing bone structures of the youths. Staring at a brightly lit screen, using excessively agile eye movement while processing numerous texts and information, forces the eye muscles to move faster and react to glare, contrasts, moving images which can lead to Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS), or even possibly eventual damage to the retina. In addition, children are more prone to the harmful effects of Electromagnetic Radiation (EMR) emitted by

smartphones and other devices: while the industries are continuously working on improving the safety factor, the long-term exposure to the EMR inevitably presents health risks. Notable also is the decline in the teaching of cursive writing, yielding to and thus privileging printing (which is actually slower than writing in cursive), computer typing and keyboard proficiency courses: “Sadly, this initiative significantly affects the fine-motor skills in piano players, impeding the fluidity of the finger action in trills or embellishments, which results in an overall awkward movement: somehow I have begun to notice a correlation,” mentions Olivia (Olivia, private communication, February, 2018).

With the evolution of visual media, apps and online tutorials and options for lessons for learning almost any subject, and the vast variety of entertainment industries, etc., the value of the so-called old school of traditional, fully committed immersion in learning classical music seems to be gradually depreciating in the public’s view. Teaching piano online was not a feasible option until the cross-messaging platforms for multimedia streaming had circulated in public use for a substantial time, becoming sophisticated enough to provide a near perfect synchronized broadcast. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) transmission was launched in 1973 but did not reach the general public until 1995, when Vocaltec (Internet Phone Software) gave rise to an industry—which now includes ICQ (of AOL), Skype, PBX (platform for business communication), Ring Central, Face Time (Apple), Workplace by Facebook, Viber, Jabber, WhatsApp—gradually putting long-distance phone companies out of business, while at the same time breaking all the barriers of communication and providing vast opportunities, including those for learners.²¹

²¹ Many teachers expand their coaching business by utilizing some of these platforms.

In 2004, the first official lesson arranged over the internet and featured by the RCM demonstrated the prominent and in-demand Canadian teacher Marc Durand's long-distance broadcast to Acadia University from the Toronto headquarters: a twelve-year-old prodigy from Nova Scotia played the third movement of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata."²² However, while the place-defying and time-saving advantages of such communication are undeniable, and the benefits of being mentored by inspirational teachers are unmatched, such a method of teaching, more reminiscent of a master class, can be considered as a rather privileged niche; it could be recommended for students whose technical challenges have been overcome, and who are able to resolve any practical on-site difficulties.

Additionally, due to the lower quality of sound resolution that can be otherwise experienced on CDs, MP3s, or HD, etc., online sessions do not allow for genuine assessment of the student's tone quality and colour, and even dynamic variation is not transmitted with its true vibrancy, resulting in a monochromatic, and even unbalanced impression (i.e., the melody is not distinguished from the accompaniment). Moreover, when applied to beginner piano players, video-lessons can appear inherently flawed: such a method deprives the student of acquiring the fundamental skills of establishing the proper technique. Although the report on the online lessons with Durand may have evoked a resoundingly positive reaction to such a great technological advancement, the potential of exposure, and the opportunity of acquiring lessons across the globe, teaching online has significantly more downsides than advantages,²³ and Durand himself concedes that "nothing will fully replace a teacher who sits next to a student. It is a bit like teaching dance, [...] sometimes a teacher needs to touch the student to move his hands or

²² Colin Campbell. 2004. "Remote Piano Lessons, In Real Time." *New York Times*, March 11, 2004, <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/03/11/technology/remote-piano-lessons-in-real-time.html> (accessed May 3, 2019).

²³ Cerebroom by Chad. January 12, 2012, <https://blog.twedt.com/archives/1782> (accessed May 4, 2019).

shoulders.”²⁴ On that note, among East Asian communities, traditional, in-person music education shows no indication of decline, as Grace Lin notes:

Due to the Asian community’s continuous retention of interest in pursuing piano education, our waitlist of potential students seeking lessons has become quite extensive—a promising sign meaning that our school will never experience any shortage of enrolment. (Lin, Euromusic Centre for Music Studies, private communication, June 19, 2018)

Retrospectively, the development of musical instruments such as the pianoforte has also played a role in “technology” in the past, attracting a ready market through improvements in action, volume, tone, compass and other features over several decades in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²⁵ These in turn inspired new compositions and experimentations. Likewise, in the current digital era—with various lifestyle enhancements and sophisticated digital sound production—the possibilities for channelling one’s creativity seem just as thrilling and limitless, only on a different level of advancement and sophistication.

In this environment, creativity seems to have started its migration from the performing arts to technological innovations, where endless opportunities open up infinite possibilities. Will these digital novelties supplement or, on the other hand, replace and leave behind all that is associated with artful, captivating communication mediated by acoustic instruments? Traditionalists’ grieving over the danger of losing old customs is expressed concisely by Prof. Michael Coghlan (York University): “Doesn’t every generation shake their heads when talking about the previous one?” alluding to a centuries-old hypothetical exclamation and a perpetual dispute about the shifts in mentality and morality in successive generations (Coghlan, private communication, September 27, 2018). The moral balance between old and new, and during times

²⁴ Colin Campbell. 2004. “Remote Piano Lessons, In Real Time.” *New York Times*, March 11, <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/03/11/technology/remote-piano-lessons-in-real-time.html> (last accessed May 3, 2019).

²⁵ Dorothy Jean De Val. 1991. “Gradus ad Parnassum: The Pianoforte in London, 1770-1820.” PhD diss., University of London, King’s College, 12, <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/2931107/308701.pdf> (accessed May 4, 2019).

of transition, is provided by a live mentor who delivers a quality education—a crucial factor in making a lasting impact on a student. On this note, Chernigovskaya remarks:

Online courses are great and their existence is a sign of progressive education, however, students need to be mentored face to face by a live teacher figure, who is capable of igniting the spirit of learning by his own example. Computers used for online courses do not ignite—they are just machines. It [effective education] only works in human-to-human personal communication (translation mine).²⁶

The students of today are learning and expressing themselves through new forms and means, and we cannot expect them to reverse time and follow the methodologies of the past: the majority of the methods to which we are accustomed may no longer be applicable to the new generation; however, the role of an influential mentor-figure cannot be underestimated.

The RCM's examiners experience first-hand the symptoms of the digital era, which inevitably consume the market: within the RCM practical examinations, technology has been used to provide the Electronic Marking Form (EMF),²⁷ so far unmatched among examination systems globally. The digital platform enables an instant summary of the marks, allows selection of repertoire and études titles from the menu,²⁸ can approve a report on the spot, and submit it to the Academic Office upon the completion of the exam, or save on the server for the examiner's review. The most appealing feature to candidates is that such system allows for receiving a legible, uniformly formatted report. The long-term goal is to switch to the digital report format throughout the College, and many examiners (just over 50%) are now using the EMF,²⁹ while the rest still prefer the handwritten tradition, despite the introduction of the EMF 15 years ago.³⁰ It is

²⁶ Tatyana Chernigovskaya. 2017. *Zima Magazine*. December 7. YouTube video, 10:48. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18ytHSO7Ez0> (accessed October 27, 2018).

²⁷ EMF is an intellectual property of the College of Examiners, released strictly to the RCM examiners, and apprentices-in-training.

²⁸ Elaine Rusk. Creating a New Edition of the *Celebration Series*, 2015 (Piano). Unpublished document.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ There are various, and not necessarily generational, reasons for this: many examiners prefer to write by hand out of a long-established habit, or preference of a tactile connection to pen and paper. However, one has to appreciate

now mandatory for new recruits and newly hired examiners to use a laptop at exams, which reinforces the advantages of using the digital option and increases efficiency in the report processing.

Regarding technology's inevitable arrival versus its cautious reception by older-generations users, Prensky notes:

Those of us who were not born into the digital world but have, at some later point in our lives, become fascinated by and adopted many or most aspects of the new technology are, and always will be compared to them, Digital Immigrants. [...] As Digital Immigrants learn—like all immigrants, some better than others—to adapt to their environment, they always retain, to some degree, their “accent,” that is, their foot in the past. [...] Today's older folk were “socialized” differently from their kids, and are now in the process of learning a new language. And a language learned later in life, scientists tell us, goes into a different part of the brain. [...] My own favorite example [of a Digital Immigrant] is the phone call, “Did you get my email?”³¹

Based on my observation, while the age of examiners ranges from approximately early-thirties to mid-seventies the majority of the College comprises examiners over the age of 40-50, many of whom are able to use EMF along with some who still produce handwritten reports. However, I would still put them in the “digital immigrants” category.

The minds of today's youth function much differently: “Children now have an enormous capacity for thoughts and information processing, they are capable of finding instantaneously anything on the internet, as their brains work so much faster,” says Chernigovskaya.³² The Digital Immigrant might wonder, how much of the streamlined, or even fragmented, information is qualitatively retained, utilized, synthesized and stored—deposited into the Digital Native's brain data for future use? Does the speed of information processing make humans smarter? Or

the convenience and efficiency of the EMF system (although not without occasional issues and glitches, inherent to any internet-dependent device).

³¹ Marc Prensky. 2001. “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, part 1.” *On the Horizon* 9 (5): 2.

³² Tatyana Chernigovskaya. 2017. *Zima Magazine*. December 7. YouTube video, 10:48. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18ytHSO7Ez0> (accessed October 27, 2018).

just faster? Needless to mention, “smart” equates to the ability to intake information, process, synthesize and apply it intelligently and effectively for the most beneficial result. The intake of more information and at a faster rate without the key ability to synthesize does not contribute to being smart or a problem solver: it contributes to being a mere recipient and data keeper/retainer. Thus, there is some questioning of the theory of morphological structural changes in the brain: the evolutionary alterations need a much more extensive timespan to adapt to the environment.

To technology we owe the freedom and ease of communication and travel across the globe, accessibility to resources and the speed of processing and networking; these technological privileges, however, are not without downsides: the students of today are growing up in an environment in which things previously taken for granted are gradually dissipating—such as taking time to internalize and connect to their profound selves, to synthesize concepts and come to conclusions on their own, to develop social skills through meaningful eye contact and body language. “So what should happen?” asks Prensky:

Should the Digital Native students learn the old ways, or should their Digital Immigrant educators learn the new? Unfortunately, no matter how much the Immigrants may wish it, it is highly unlikely the Digital Natives will go backwards.³³

For the time being, this poses a conundrum for “Immigrant” educators, who are in the position of teaching “Immigrant” subject areas to “Natives,” using the “tools” of the Native: the “old school” generation is faced with communicating knowledge in the “old fashion” through “new fashion” means to a generation that is far ahead of them, possessing a much more sophisticated technological skill-set.

Can we expect our students to convey musical meaning and intent as vividly and persuasively as older generations did? With technology taking over and replacing the need for

³³ Marc Prensky. 2001. “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, part 1.” *On the Horizon* 9 (5): 3.

musical excellence previously gained through empathetic maturing, contemplation and personal growth, is there still a need to have this kind of transcending experience in our lives? According to Chernigovskaya:

In anticipation of the arrival and the possibility of Artificial Intelligence soon reigning over our existence, our only hope as humans is to preserve and cultivate the emotions, arts and music—all of which machines cannot do: the machines can only copy but cannot create. That is why our hopes as professionals and educators are directed at the humanities fields and the arts.³⁴

As music educators, examiners and adjudicators, at the very least we are left with the responsibility to introduce conventional methodology in pursuit of “anchoring” students’ minds to the traditional practices, link them to the history as far back as we are equipped to, share the knowledge, wisdom and beauty of the past the best we can, and demonstrate with our own examples what we have accomplished without digital “privileges”—through hardship at times, tireless effort, perseverance and a lifetime passion.

Alluding to Anagnoson’s remark about the measure of a great performance manifested through the examiner’s impulse to “put the pen down and listen,” the capacity to transport an audience into a state of awe with an artful performance represents the unity of physical command, mastery of an instrument, and an ability to communicate through musical sounds. Indeed, it might be said that music is a kind of universal “wireless transmission” device capable of channelling much more than words and images, superseding any existing technology by communicating wisdom, beauty, spirit and emotions to the point of others experiencing the same or even more powerful sensations. Music possesses a transformative force and rejuvenating energy, and humanity would be much impoverished without it and the transcendence it can bring. It is for this reason that we need to keep evaluating the way we teach music in institutions

³⁴ Tatyana Chernigovskaya. 2017. *Zima Magazine*. December 7. YouTube video, 10:48. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18ytHSO7Ez0> (accessed October 27, 2018), translation mine.

such as the RCM, always negotiating ways and means within a context of constant change in the way we live and work.

CHAPTER 7

THE EXAMINATIONS TODAY: TO BE CONTINUED?

SECTION A

THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF THE EXAMINATIONS' CURRICULUM
WITHIN THE MUSICAL LANDSCAPE OF CANADA

Given its long history and spread over most parts of Canada, the Examinations system of the Royal Conservatory of Music has maintained its reputation through those experiencing its activity either first-hand or through family or friends. It is also gaining steady popularity in the US, where its influence on music education is gradually being recognized.

As we have seen, the Examinations as a multifaceted institution has retained its primacy on the music education landscape by preserving its traditionally established curriculum, by regularly updating the requirements, expanding and infusing the repertoire with more modern options, by integrating technology into the learning process, and by employing interactive and educational resources for students and teachers. The Examinations, while establishing its own identity as distinct from the English model, has nonetheless undergone many changes and reforms over a century, and its objectives impart a commitment to maintaining the standards of students' music education along with an insistence on and monitoring of scrupulous and unbiased evaluation of their achievements.

While the RCM Examinations' approach to the marking scheme, the expectations, and the feedback is generally conventional, the constantly evolving curriculum, particularly in the past decade, demonstrates the ability of this large organization to be flexible and responsive. This translates to its ability to identify areas due for updates or adjustments; to reflect the progress of the digital age in new applications and programs designed to improve the learning experience;

and to recognize the latest currents in teaching by maintaining communication with teachers—i.e., implementing changes in the curriculum based on teachers' feedback.

As well rounded and extensive as can be afforded, and with an emphasis on inclusivity of all genres, styles, and cultural representations, the repertoire is reviewed every seven years, as the curriculum and the book series are revised and renewed to offer variety as well as to include methodological modifications in pursuit of continuous improvement of the system. Balancing equally the works of Canadian and American composers in the past decade shows the effort to appeal to and please both markets, although Canadian contributions could have been (and probably should be) represented more generously. Aside from potential copyright issues, the Conservatory could make more effort to market or commission Canadian composers and by doing so build bridges of cultural exchange between Canada and the US, and thus become a trendsetter in contemporary musical art by supporting and promoting its national heritage with pride.

Moving away from its “traditional” image, the Conservatory has tapped into arrangements of pop, jazz, and film music to attract younger players, musicians with versatile tastes, or adventurous types, tempting them to explore beyond the classical repertoire—an exam option to replace one of the required études. The trend to incorporate popular repertoire is not that new to the RCM curriculum: as mentioned in Chapter 3, the 1911 syllabus contained some token works by Chaminade and Metzler—early prototypes of the modern-day Popular Selection List.

While for some teachers and students these options create an opportunity to temporarily veer from the traditional selections towards something more contemporary, anecdotally others perceive them as diluting the repertoire, with the substitutions being less challenging choices that may not fulfill the technical aspects that must be mastered by a certain level and demonstrated

through playing a traditional *étude*, although they most definitely fulfill other objectives, e.g., syncopated or intricate rhythmic patterns, jazz riffs, and different harmonies. This more modern experience as part of the curriculum is meant to target and appeal to a much wider audience, to which, however, different populations respond differently: some teachers report that these more popular idioms help retain their studio's enrolment and "help to maintain [their] students' interest in piano lessons," (Yasmin Moosa, private communication, July 12, 2018) while others consider such repertoire more of a sideline that can be explored by students on their own without impeding the main focus—"classical." Again, options are designed to accommodate students of a vast variety of aims and predispositions. Hence the Examinations that routinely strives to expand the scope of genres and new trends in music, introducing the latest trends while preserving traditions.

The Certificate Program, of which the Examinations is a central part, endeavours to fuse tradition with the current cultural environment by adjusting the requirements to help advance the skill level of the candidates; the Program attempts to tune into the new generation's lifestyle, school demands, and music preferences while striving to provide a quality core curriculum that will outlast fleeting trends and retain its educational value for the next 100 or more years. Regardless of what the future brings—what music will be considered "classical" in the next 50 years, or what innovations will be shaping the examinations in the upcoming decades—the Conservatory, along with the Examinations, is bound to a dual responsibility: being both innovative and conservative in its approach to music education for as long as it is effective and functional in society. And with societal, cultural, and educational shifts, the Examinations will have to adapt to possible economic changes, reshaped mentalities and perceptions, and newer technologies in order to survive and maintain its prosperity in an ever-changing environment.

SECTION B

HONOURING THE IDENTITY

Over its history, the RCM Examinations kept the examination's essential constituents and format untouched, preserving a commitment to the European tradition (i.e., playing a set repertoire, studies, demonstrating technical skills, acuteness of ear, and sight reading ability), though we have seen that the repertoire itself was constantly undergoing review. Despite some forays into more exotic repertoire, the curriculum was confined to Western European repertoire though in the last decade music by North American composers has more of a profile. It can be said that Canada's most renowned aspect—ethnic diversity—conceptually was woven into the Examinations' canvas through its repertoire lists, despite accessibility and copyright challenges. Moreover, the number of francophone composers in the latest syllabus (2015) is notable, with the inclusion of Francois Morel, Rhené Jaque,¹ Clermont Pépin, Jacques Héту, Jean Papineau Couture, et al., who also appeared in the preceding syllabuses.

We have seen how the College of Examiners has become more diverse since its inception, and that Canada has become more pluralistic. Would it not be a reasonable consideration to allow a candidate the option of representing their cultural background at an exam through the performance of one selection (under certain conditions) from their native culture, which could fit into the existing Own Choice category, without that particular piece/composer being listed in the curriculum? The repertoire compilation is a meticulous, lengthy process that involves extensive research and, based on my observations of the documentation in the RCM archives, the Academic Office has made the best effort to exhaust all obtainable resources, striving for variety, balance and being current. However, there must be plentiful resources of world music from the

¹ A pseudonym of Marguerite Marie Alice Cartier.

nations with rich traditions of which the repertoire compilers may be unaware, or that are simply inaccessible due to copyright.

For example, countries from the former Soviet bloc have a rich musical tradition and composers' unions with a very distinct sense of national pride, and so has China, Hong Kong, South America, Australia, Israel, Scandinavia etc. Performing music from your native country gives listeners a little taste of the performer's identity: I personally performed Belarusian pieces while giving recitals in Europe and such musical "vignettes,"—accents in the program—were always welcomed and appreciated by audiences. Although such an option might open up a series of complications if not applied appropriately, on the whole it could demonstrate an emerging effort to welcome and support the idea of fusing formal music education with the elements of multiculturalism.

Additionally, this option would not necessarily be taken by all candidates (conceivably, many may be hesitant to take advantage of it), and the performance of a music selection unknown to an examiner would not happen often owing to the publishing, arrangement, and transcription issues. However, it might be worth implementing as a pilot trial to observe how this option could be unveiled and received by families and teachers.

SECTION C

DO THE BENEFITS OF EXAMS OUTWEIGH THEIR LIMITATIONS?

Attributed to socioeconomic shifts predominantly in the past decade, participation in the exams has uncovered many unhealthy trends, unwittingly yet inevitably resulting in deficiencies in some areas of musicianship and musicality. Nevertheless, the exams continue to be an integral part of music education. Outlined below is a summary of the pros and cons as discussed in this

dissertation of participating in the exams, which may help to define their impact through underlining both their effectiveness and disadvantages.

1. Humans strive to achieve quantifiable success—a natural instinct for evolutionary advancement, it bears a survival value as natural selection, where “the strongest prevails.” An aimless pursuit without feedback resembles work done “in a vacuum,” with the effort, performance, and skillset having no parameters to measure against. All fields of human activity require some form of statistical calculation, data collection, scoring, etc., to measure success, ensure productivity, and determine strategic goals for improvement. However, competitiveness can sometimes lead to an unhealthy loss of self-esteem, can force one to work at a pace that doesn’t suit, and deprive one of a sense of liberty in planning one’s own music education.
2. Although the executive function is still developing in the brains of young students who take music exams, they are taught and encouraged to be aware of timelines and deadlines, as the exam components need to be thoroughly prepared and polished by the exam date. Being guided and supervised by their teacher and parents, students learn to organize their practice, focus, and plan and execute the tasks in a timely manner. The exam’s efficient pace encourages the stimulation of problem-solving skills and the ability to think quickly on one’s feet in case of unexpected setbacks, stumbles, memory lapses, etc. Arguably, the time constraints imposed by exam preparation can inhibit the enjoyment of music exploration and meaningful discovery that encourages a life-long appreciation of music, sometimes causing students who take exams under pressure to quit playing piano entirely after completing the Level 8 practical and theory exams required for high school accreditation.

3. The exams promote a disciplined approach to practice through enforced goal setting: they provide motivation by outlining the requirements clearly, moulding the student's practice routine, fostering self-discipline and independent practice according to the set rubrics. However, the lesson routine, stifled by exam preparation, suffers from a lack of time for such things as exploring repertoire that is outside the exam requirements, learning improvisation or composition, mastering harmonization, or playing duets/trios—pursuits that are cultivated by self-motivated students whose passion for practising and exploring independently breaks through the barriers of the exam-confining template. Such curiosity and initiative for learning and researching derive from a disciplined mind and are early signs of an effectively developing cognitive function, possibly attributed to having previously taken exams.
4. The exams introduce the exam concept to students from a young age, far before any exams are introduced in school. This, however, also introduces young students to unnecessary stress or even anxiety, as the exam is seen as a vehicle of assessment, not one of learning or of experience. Exams can intimidate some students with a more pronounced sensitivity to pressure, depriving them of the ability to mobilize their performing capacity in one “snapshot.” Conversely, the stress factor can be perceived as a positive constituent of the student's experience, as it builds stamina and teaches them to control their behaviour and how to deal with stressful situations—indispensable skills in adulthood. By conquering nervousness, the student develops character and the ability to survive outside their comfort zone. Taking music exams at the early levels allows students to gain an understanding of the concept and see it in action, acquiring familiarity with this important vehicle of education that will inevitably be imposed on them for the next 20 years (or possibly more) of continuous studies.

5. The exams foster a student's skills to concentrate on a task. The student learns to focus on several components during a short time, and to remain focused on each component as they switch from one task to another (e.g., playing scales followed by études and the repertoire, then moving on to ear tests and sight reading), as well as on delivering the best performance at the given time (or any given time and in any circumstances), regardless of their comfort level or the number of listeners. For some students, despite good preparation, an inability to concentrate equally on different activities will result in a weaker performance of some components.
6. The exams require repetition of the repertoire to take the performance to its most polished state; fixation on the same pieces, however, causes the learning process to cease, and cultivates mechanical rehearsal.
7. The exams make the cognitive task of memorization necessary—regardless of the type of memorization being used—liberating the candidate from the constraints of reading the score to allow for a more artful rendition. In some students, imposed memorization causes unnecessary anxiety and, potentially, memory lapses during the exam.
8. The exams teach a student to accept critique from a third party. Progress is driven by critical assessment, especially in the early stages of skill acquisition. However, both the examiner and the exam's setting may be intimidating and at times discouraging, and critique does not always affect a child's self-esteem constructively.
9. The exams' balanced repertoire requirements mandate a variety of musical eras, and a wealth of repertoire is available to explore through the syllabus, aside from the designated book series published by the RCM. Many students lack an in-depth understanding of styles, either

because of insufficient time allotted for practice, general disinterest, a lack of motivation, or a lack of knowledge on the teacher's part.

10. Technique (i.e., scales, chords, arpeggios, etc.) is the matrix of a pianist's arsenal and is a compulsory requirement of the exams; however, studying scales independently on a daily basis and taking part of a lesson to review them with the teacher are seen by some as unnecessary, and thus their requirement can discourage students from taking exams.
11. Practice in performing is (or should be) cultivated prior to exams: by increasing the number of performances and exposing the student to different types of audiences and settings (i.e., creating desirable difficulties), the exam will appear less frightening. However, there are a number of students who work to conquer stage fright but still find the exam's atmosphere an uncomfortable venue for music sharing. Furthermore, exams in general tend to stifle a sense of spontaneity as the performance is preconceived and set, almost "drilled" to a particular standard of playing.
12. Education implies grading, and piano lessons are subject to evaluation, which is an academic approach to music education: this holds both the student and teacher accountable. On the contrary, the teacher is often held accountable for a poor exam outcome, even if it is the result of the student's neglected practice. Sometimes, an exam result will reveal insufficient teaching or, in some cases, will initiate a family's decision to leave a studio because of irreconcilable views on the child's progress or objectives between the family and the teacher.
13. Motivational support from the parents and the funding of lessons with the goal of pursuing exams can provide a student with an encouraging home environment. However, the parents' role in music education and, at times, their control can cause anxiety in the student and a sense of being torn between parents and teacher. Some parents consider exams as a

motivational goal and encourage study towards them, while practice outside the exam context is seen as a waste of time. In some cases, parental influence and unrealistic ambitions for an accelerated method of study may result in divided views between parents and teacher and may lead to an extreme measure of the student being withdrawn from a teacher's tutelage, or the teacher initiating termination of lessons to avoid potential conflict for the benefit of the student, and to allow the family seek a suitable to their demands teacher. To be noted, this is not typical parental behaviour and a situation in which families find themselves often, yet such instances take place on occasion.

14. The exams provide tangible validation of progress: being ranked by a national institution is important to many, as it endorses and validates both the student's and the teacher's efforts. However, some families do not see the value in pursuing certification, either intrinsically or as a result of decreased interest in undergoing routine exams, and instead are interested in their children taking piano lessons as a recreational activity.
15. The exams introduce a different angle of social interaction to the student: an external professional, and the necessary respect for a person of authority (i.e., examiner) and his work, along with compliance with policy, rules, exam etiquette, and the orderly procedure, following instructions, maintaining structured behaviour, and respect for other candidates.
16. The exams are an opportunity for self-discovery: students learn to conduct themselves appropriately in an unfamiliar situation, and also learn about physiological and psychological aspects of performing in an unpredictable environment.
17. The exams reward students' motivation for conquering challenges and overcoming obstacles, to achieve their highest level of performance with a minimal number of errors.

18. The exams require students to display a range of skills at a certain level and in an established framework, which are evaluated in a confidential and discreet format, providing a cyclical checkpoint of their progress and a compass for their development.
19. The exams encourage a disciplined approach to music studies: i.e., planning and strategizing, an organized practice, adherence to deadlines, setting goals, task completion, etc. As

MacMillan notes:

It (music playing) becomes art only when it is controlled, and I have never yet heard of a musician, amateur or professional, who achieved any great freedom of self-expression without disciplining himself to some extent through a mastery of these same mechanics (i.e., technique).²

20. For both novice students and teachers, an exam is a solid starting point: for the former, a foundation for developing basic music skills, and for the latter, a template for teaching the fundamentals.
21. The curriculum is designed to be inclusive of the diverse teaching methods and progress expectations among Canadian and American populations.
22. In terms of affordability, in comparison to other children's activities (i.e., a variety of grass-, court-, and ice-based sports, martial arts, competitive ice or ballroom dance, recreational ballet, fine arts, etc.), the exams are accessible to most of the population as music education is available at any price point. While charitable piano lessons are still quite rare, there are some teachers who cover examination expenses and festival fees, and practice with underprivileged students free of charge, recognizing and advancing their potential and talent without profit.

² Ernest MacMillan. 1933. "Those Music Exams! A Stumbling Block or a Stepping Stone?" *Chatelaine*, November, 48. Toronto.

23. Both directly and indirectly, the existence and operation of the examinations provide jobs for teachers and create networks for professionals; they continue to promote the role of music education throughout all levels of society, bolstering piano sales, books, educational materials, and branded publications, maintaining the music teacher and examiner workforce and promoting the profession throughout the nation.
24. The exam's psychological downsides (i.e., overrated and unnecessary anxiety), certain teachers' misinterpretations of the curriculum's objectives, confinements to learning bare minimum repertoire—deficits—bring into relief how music (through the piano) should and can be taught. It may be a faulty model but a useful one for identifying insufficient teaching, as well as discovering talent through exceptional teaching throughout various regions of the country.

SECTION D

ARE EXAMS FOR ALL TEACHERS?

Music pedagogy is the study of the methods and principles of music instruction, applied to the art of teaching. Just as not every good teacher can become an examiner it is also true that not every good pianist can become a teacher: "Teaching takes analytical thinking," says Regaudie-McIsaac (Regaudie-McIsaac, private communication, July 17, 2018). A synergy of two or more specializations (pianist, teacher, examiner, adjudicator, etc.) is quite common among musicians, as they have to adapt to demands through synthesizing their skills, although they do not necessarily have equal proficiency in both areas. Good teaching implies the ability to analyze and break down a concept to a molecular level and teach it to a student step by step until he

understands it, and is then capable of reproducing it or, in rare cases, eventually (and quite desirably) outperforming his mentor.

At the dawn of the twentieth century the TCM's concern about the poor standard of teaching outside its premises gave it its *raison d'être*:

A Conservatory of Music, worthy of its title, presents no such uncertainty to the mind of the pupil. It is morally certain that the teachers of a Conservatory are selected mainly on account of their ability, as it would not be in the best interest of any institution to sacrifice its reputation by employing other than good teachers. Again, a stimulating atmosphere of a large music school is another distinct advantage over private instruction. Narrowness and one-sidedness of culture are always to be guarded against by the music student of high aims, and no better safeguard from these faults can be found than in the broadening and inspiring influences of a comprehensive and progressive Conservatory of Music.³

It is understandable that a screening process for hiring teachers would ensure that its teachers would meet its standard and philosophy. Today such practices are taken for granted, including even more rigorous procedures such as police checks, thus assuring clients of a measure of quality and safety. In the field of private practice, however, families have to trust references or take a risk by employing a teacher they know nothing about. The reference for the Conservatory, or for any one of the many schools throughout the country, is the organization's brand itself, and the assurance of quality is implied, hence the higher fees for enrolment in community schools. Among private instructors, the cost of building maintenance and staff salaries are not factored in: teachers' fees vary based on credentials, teaching status, accomplishments, experience, exam results history, the location of the private studio, and, most importantly, referrals, people's feedback, the teacher's reputation, etc.

Aside from some distinct and fine examples of an early manifestation of a talent for teaching among some teenagers, in general, a population of younger teachers, more eager and daring, more assertive in their capabilities to teach, yet lacking such qualifications, poses an

³ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Thirteenth Annual Calendar, 1899-1900, 23.

ongoing issue—much as it did 130 years ago, when the Conservatory’s concern with a mediocre teaching level outside the main body of existing expert teachers resulted in the promotion of education on its premises. In an authoritative manner, expressing quite distrust in private instruction, which in its view was flawed, the Conservatory argued on the pages of the early Calendar:

It is an undeniable fact that the great want of the present day in connection with Musical Education is that of competent, thoroughly trained teachers. Teachers of music exist by the hundreds and thousands, but how many of them have studied the art and science of *teaching*? This is said in no disparagement to the considerable number of excellent professional music teachers in our community, but have they not gained their excellence mainly by dint of long, laborious experience?⁴

Undoubtedly, teachers have to start somewhere and somehow; those who are eager to do so need to begin accumulating experience by teaching through trial-and-error at some point, preferably with the aspiration and the prospect of continuous self-improvement in mind. For aspiring yet barely competent students, the Conservatory launched the Teacher’s Diploma (now ARCT Teachers) back in the 1890s:

Whereas in the [Artists course] the student continues to direct his attention mainly towards acquiring more technic, expressions and finished style in his art as an executant, the student in the Teachers course will take up such studies as have a direct bearing on the best methods of *imparting* musical knowledge. [...] It is believed that this attempt on the part of the Toronto Conservatory of Music to supply a crying need in the musical world is unique in its character, and cannot fail to be productive of much good to musical progress.⁵

Many teachers strive to acquire appropriate qualification through various opportunities, i.e., ARCT Pedagogy exams, workshops, conferences, summits, and courses, including those offered through the RCM. Despite a high achievement in ARCT Performance, some teenagers may still be apprehensive to pass on their knowledge to younger children, believing their understanding of pedagogical principles to be insufficient, or others might feel they are capable

⁴ UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, TCM Calendar, 1890-1, 21.

⁵ Ibid., 22.

of starting their teaching practice by virtue of their accomplishments and relative maturity level. The circumstances in which beginner teachers launch their practice vary widely, and at times and in some areas it is challenging to find a qualified teacher, especially if parents do not have a musical background and thus are unaware of the search criteria.

A qualified teacher from the professional field—with good experience, adequate academic background and credentials, extensive insight on students’ potential and genuine care for them—will provide a solid start for a student, and instil good technique and work habits, let alone a life-long profound appreciation for music. The role of such expert teachers is often overlooked or simply underestimated and under-appreciated in today’s mentality, in which a teacher is becoming more of a hobby facilitator or service provider, more like a technician or clerk than somebody who has undergone years of education and training or is a performing career professional.

It bears mentioning that the diversity and inconsistency in the quality of teaching methods is still a concern. The country’s vastness and the multicultural pool of teachers, either born here or having arrived from around the globe, diminishes (if not eliminates) even the slightest chance of a uniform community that can agree to a single teaching model. And perhaps, this can be seen as both an ongoing challenge and an attractive feature: the examination system continues to receive varied responses, as every teacher perceives and learns from the examinations in a different way, while the curriculum aims to unify them. Although the curriculum is designed to reflect the most universal method to teach the material, and the exams are intended to help teachers advance and keep their teaching techniques current and organized—or, for novices, to revisit and refresh their memory about their own upbringing—not every teacher chooses to teach according to the examination curriculum, or they may do so infrequently or selectively. Whether

followed or not, the examination system, with its inherent curriculum, is created to offer practical tools for piano education, equally beneficial to both students and teachers.

SECTION E

WHAT CONSTITUTES A MUSICIAN?

As we have seen, scientific research has proven that during the physical playing of an instrument, or even thinking about playing an instrument, all the regions of the brain related to music processing (i.e., auditory and motor cortices, verbal, cerebrum, cerebellum, limbic system, etc.) are activated simultaneously, facilitating stimulus to a wide spectrum of human activities and abilities. In other words, during music processing almost the entire brain lights up. On this subject, Zatorre, Chen, and Penhune remark:

Music performance is both a natural human activity, present in all societies, and one of the most complex and demanding cognitive challenges that the human mind can undertake. Unlike most other sensory-motor activities, music performance requires precise timing of several hierarchically organized actions, as well as precise control over pitch interval production, implemented through diverse effectors according to the instrument involved.⁶

Isn't this the reason that from early childhood, musicians develop and then possess for life many skills that are transformable and interchangeable with other cognitive and performance abilities that evolve over time and can adapt to almost any practice? Isn't this a key phenomenon that allows performing musicians and teachers to work within their profession far beyond normal retirement age, and even as their day-to-day capabilities decline, to play with agility, preserving a sharp, clear mind and good memory well into old age? Not many professional fields can benefit from such intellectual wealth, as the majority of professionals, once retired, do not continue to practice in the same field, whereas musicians do. On this note, adding to the existing

⁶ Robert J. Zatorre, Joyce L. Chen, and Virginia B. Penhune. 2007. "When the Brain Plays Music: Auditory-Motor Interactions in Music Perception and Production." *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 8 (7): 547.

evidence of the plasticity of musicians' brains, Altenmüller notes, "Listening to music, learning to play an instrument, formal instruction, and professional training result in multiple, in many instances multi-sensory, representations of music, which seem to be partly interchangeable and rapidly adaptive."⁷

Within the music profession there are countless related opportunities, and sometimes musicians themselves are unaware of where their life journey might take them, how their skills might be effectively used, how their brains might be effortlessly adapted, or their artistry unexpectedly reinvented. For example, an organist by education can become a touring artist or a staff organist in a symphony orchestra; a teacher of pupils ranging from infants to adults in their eighties or beyond; an examiner for keyboard disciplines; a developer of exam syllabuses for organ; a theory specialist; a church organist and music director of a choir; a conductor of a vocal group or even an instrumental ensemble; a composer or an arranger of choral or organ works; an adjudicator at festivals, competitions, and auditions; an instructor in an academia; a writer/columnist about music education; a clinician presenting workshops or lectures; an accompanist to singers and instrumentalists; a member of an academic administrative office that requires a team member with a professional musical background; a manager/coordinator of an orchestra or ensemble; or even a principal of a music-related organization.

Likewise, a pianist has the opportunity to "wear many hats" through applying his/her skills wherever they are needed: a piano player can become all of the above listed for the organist, in addition to performing with trios or quintets; being an accompanist to dancers (including ballet); or a vocal coach, working for an opera company; a host of master classes for all levels of study; a department head (an administrative job entailing numerous tasks unrelated to music—managing

⁷ Eckart O. Altenmüller. 2001. "How Many Music Centers are in the Brain?" *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 930 (1): 273.

and organizing, calculations, statistics, scheduling, etc.); leader of a project related to music education or creator of an online course; a publisher or an editor of music scores for a publishing company; a composer of a wide spectrum of material, from oratorios and symphonies to piano miniatures for young beginners—and the list goes on. Seemingly, no other profession can offer such a wealth and abundance of applications, paths of divergence, and derivatives from what is simply called and referred to at times with confusion, mixed feelings, but always with mystical adoration—a musician.

Essentially, a musician is a messenger of the most archaic tool of communication that preceded words—music. In their contemplations, Trimble and Hesdorffer remark:

Somewhere along the evolutionary way, our ancestors, with very limited language but with considerable emotional expression, began to articulate and gesticulate feelings: denotation before connotation. But, as the philosopher Susanne Langer noted, “The most highly developed type of such purely connotational semantic is music.” In other words, meaning in music came to us before meaning given by words.⁸

Upon comparing the reactions to music between humans and other mammals, McDermott and Hauser conclude that “there appear to be motivational ties to music that are uniquely human,”⁹ to which a decade later Trimble and Hesdorffer add, “Two features of our world which are universal and arguably have been a feature of an earlier evolutionary development are our ability to create and respond to music, and to dance to the beat of time.”¹⁰

⁸ Michael Trimble and Dale Hesdorffer. 2017. “Music and the Brain: The Neuroscience of Music and Musical Appreciation.” *The British Journal of Psychiatry International* 14 (2): 29, https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/095C9B25E4C50A3702BDA3DB2A529A31/S2056474000001720a.pdf/music_and_the_brain_the_neuroscience_of_music_and_musical_appreciation.pdf (accessed June 20, 2019), quoted Susanne K. Langer. 1951. *Philosophy in a New Key*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 93.

⁹ Josh McDermott, and Marc D. Hauser. 2007. “Nonhuman Primates Prefer Slow Tempos But Dislike Music Overall.” *Cognition* 104 (3): 654.

¹⁰ Michael Trimble, and Dale Hesdorffer. 2017. “Music and the Brain: The Neuroscience of Music and Musical Appreciation.” *The British Journal of Psychiatry International* 14 (2): 28-29, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5618809/> (accessed June 20, 2019).

Music separates humans from the rest of the living world: composing, improvising, and performing with countless interpretations, as well as being able to choreograph body movements precisely to the beat of a song or dance are characteristic of exclusively humans. Responding to music emotionally is also a feature unique to humans: “Our preferences for certain kinds of music may reflect a unique evolutionary history of selection on perceptual mechanisms linked up with our emotional and motivational systems,” note McDermott and Hauser.¹¹ Each moment of learning music can be seen as a catalyst for engaging the brain in its entirety—a spark that ignites and activates the potential in every person of any age who comes in contact with music.

Admittedly, every endeavour has its limitations or downside, and the examinations being in a state of constant evolution are not an exception. However, it would be near-sighted to limit its influence by calling its primary function to be providing guidelines for musical studies and issuing records of achievement. More valuably, the examinations *stimulate* the development of skills that are potentially transferable within the profession or into other fields, increasing the probability of a student’s multifaceted approach to the future opportunities and possibilities that can begin with just one humble exam.

The role of the executive function in humans is crucial in our ability to focus, make decisions, complete tasks, and thus avoid being vulnerable by being absent-minded or wandering off course: a structured set of rules keep us on an orderly path. Since children’s development of the executive function is not complete until the end of their teens, they need more guidance and supervised, or even imposed, elements of education: e.g., a daily routine of playing scales, consistent hours of practice with a constant level of concentration, adherence to deadlines, etc. An exam is a commitment that provides that discipline.

¹¹ Josh McDermott, and Marc D. Hauser. 2007. “Nonhuman Primates Prefer Slow Tempos But Dislike Music Overall.” *Cognition* 104 (3), 667.

Arguably, who else but the musician can fully appreciate and assess the degree of orderly processing, the coordination of movements across the 88 keys with precision, the mental tracking of the myriad notes and passages, and monitor an overall structure, charged with emotions and control all at the same time? A mind that is both creative and disciplined can.

Of the Examinations' many roles outlined previously, its most important is to be a cultural link between amateurs and professionals in the musical arts: the link that cultivates aesthetics, instils a sense of timeless beauty in the mind of each student, and attempts to elevate the craft and the privilege of being a musician.

SECTION F

SUMMARY: A WAY FORWARD

The journey to perfection is infinite, but it is worth every step.
—author's expression

The following list incorporates and develops ideas expressed in the dissertation—both through the historical survey and through present-day informants—regarding aspects of the exams that could be revisited and possibly improved.

1. As we have seen (Chapter 2) the link between RCM examinations and school credits has been a continuing though weakening feature of the system. Among all the Canadian provinces, Ontario offers the fewest credits: only two are granted for practical Levels 7-8, with the completed co-requisite theoretical subjects. Level 8 is the most desirable threshold of piano studies and a magnet for goal setters and credit or certificate collectors. Studying at Level 9 and beyond remains mostly an extra, as it attracts no official credit.

Additionally, there is no credit for the comprehensive set of co-requisites for Level 9 (Harmony or Keyboard Harmony; History) and for Level 10 (Harmony and Counterpoint;

History) and ARCT (Harmony and Counterpoint; History; Analysis), which are often completed by rapidly advancing and aspiring students before they graduate from high school.

As it stands, students who are thinking of pursuing Level 9 and beyond are increasingly unwilling to do all of this extracurricular work on top of their regular school workload just for the mere certification, without formal high school credit. A stronger and more persistent effort to negotiate with the Ministry of Education is required to obtain more extensive accreditation for higher levels of study: such accreditation would inevitably, and almost instantaneously, significantly increase the number of candidates registering for the full spectrum of disciplines at Levels 9-10-ARCT. Nor is there any credit given at the university level for completion of RCM exams, though negotiating this would no doubt be challenging. What we are noting here is the disconnect between RCM training and music education in high schools and universities.

2. Some teachers may avoid exams altogether, after being discouraged by lower than expected marks, or disappointed by the examiner's evaluation or the marks' final breakdown and rationale. Complaint letters are dealt with respectfully and thoroughly on an individual basis through candidate services, but to avoid any ambiguities in terms of the marking scheme's detailed breakdown and the performance expectations, the Examinations could consider educating teachers through workshops that explain the standings, the reasoning behind the marks, the examiners' expectations, etc.: this might eliminate some reservations about RCM exams that have arisen from incidental discouraging experiences. There is no data available to illustrate the frequency of discouraging occurrences at exams, although on occasion, these cases can be revealed through letters of complaints, forwarded to the Candidate Services or through concerns shared by colleague-teachers.

3. Creating a Teacher Reward (or Incentive) Program to recognize those teachers who actively participate in exams might greatly encourage more teachers to send students to exams annually. Such a system of points or practical incentives could be accumulated based on the number of students submitted for exams, and used as redeemable credits in addition to a partial payment towards online teacher courses, pedagogy exams, The Certified Teacher membership fees, or registration fee for a two-day annual Summer Summit organized by the RCM. Motivating teachers is of primary importance: parents unconditionally trust the teacher's opinion, and the teacher is the most influential figure in promoting the examinations to the families completely voluntarily, and choosing/selecting to teach the RCM curriculum over a number of other available systems.

4. Reprinting the book *For All Piano Teachers* by Cora D. Ahrens and G.D. Atkinson (endorsed by Ettore Mazzoleni and published in 1955, in reprint until 1976) as a valuable resource for piano pedagogues, particularly novices.

5. In the document titled "*Celebration Series*[®], 2015 Edition – Contemporary Sounds for Today's Students" which Elaine Rusk shared with me, she conveyed an intriguing idea:

Students are usually thrilled when they discover that the composer of the piece they are learning is still alive and still composing! The 2015 edition of the *Celebration Series*[®] contains dozens of pieces by "living" composers. Look for opportunities to learn directly from these composers, many of whom are actively teaching, presenting workshops, or even blogging.¹²

The Examinations can take this idea further and wherever possible or applicable, when working on the recordings for each level (mostly repertoire) to engage either Canadian composers to perform their own compositions (if they are able to), or employ Canadian celebrity pianists to perform Canadian compositions listed in the syllabus or published book: not only these

¹² Elaine Rusk. Celebrating Today's Composers. "*Celebration Series*[®], 2015 Edition – Contemporary Sounds for Today's Students." Unpublished document.

recordings will be thrilling for the students to learn from, but they will expand their *auditory data* (term mine) of the existing, performing and thriving Canadian pianists (many of the younger generation student fail to even know who Glenn Gould was and what he meant for the Canadian musical history).

6. The Academic Office might want to consider running a pilot trial of allowing/encouraging the candidates to include one piece from their native country in the Own Choice category.

7. The Academic Office might consider a new option titled “Bridge of Generations” by including a duet (with teacher, or parent, or sibling) in the exam. This would apply only at junior levels with a view to reducing anxiety. Likewise in a vocal exam, only the examinee’s performance is assessed, not the accompanist’s/partner’s.

8. The Academic Office might want to consider running a pilot trial of allowing the candidates to perform an original composition at the exam in the Own Choice category to foster creativity and strengthen theoretical background through composing.

9. The Conservatory’s archives need to be conserved, maintained and catalogued so that researchers can access these materials in future.

SECTION G

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

With an increased connection between scientific research and music, mentioned in this dissertation, there could be more awareness made and detailed guidance provided among the pedagogy community regarding the processes involved in sight reading and memorization.

Along some useful information related to neuroscientific findings on the brain function during music-related activities offered at the RCM’s Summer Summits and through many promotional

pamphlets and advertising campaigns, a number of additional scientific material can be explored, processed and communicated to the teachers and examiners in accessible language, providing practical advice. Many such studies examine the mechanisms of sight reading and eye movement¹³ and memorization,¹⁴ the principles of which could be applied to musicians (except for the studies which already involve musicians). The teachers' and examiners' awareness of the brain processes for these specific tasks can further shed light on the understanding of how to improve their teaching practice in private studios or build a more sympathetic awareness of the candidates' efforts in the examination rooms; optimize, and increase the efficiency of preparation for sight reading tests and help students to attain more efficient and sustainable memorization skills.

In light of the digital era it might be revealing to investigate whether recent and robust initiatives launched by the RCM appeal to the digital natives, and what is the response rate over the past few years, as well as if there is any substantial improvement noted in the quality of preparation for exams (mainly musicianship skills and theory). Admittedly, more teachers, especially of the younger generation, are taking advantage of the apps and online coaching, or online progress-tracking systems, etc. while the students are also responding with an enthusiasm for the products of technology, taking theory courses and completing exams online. It is worth studying whether the technological advancement indeed is linked to the continuous interest for music learning, or such interest is still held on the traditional pillar of connecting one-on-one with the live teacher.

¹³ Sight reading: Wolf 1976; Henderson and Ferreira 1990; Goolsby 1994; Truitt et al., 1997; Furneaux and Land 1999; Lehmann and McArthur 2002; Gilman and Underwood 2003; Stewart 2004; Madell and Hébert 2008; Lehmann and Kopiez 2009; Gudmundsdottir 2010; Mishra 2013; 2014, et al. Eye movement in language reading: Stroop 1935; Hochberg 1976; Rayner 1986; Sloboda 1986; Goolsby 1994, et al.

¹⁴ Memory/memorization: Bartlett 1932; Bradley 1992; Hamann 2001; Chaffin and Logan 2006; Zatorre and Halpern 2006; Chaffin 2007; Chaffin, Logan and Begosh 2009; Janata 2009; Chaffin 2011, et al.

The consequences of the integration of digital resources into the traditional Conservatory training are yet to be seen and evaluated, however, the transition has already begun and eventually needs to be assessed to determine the next course of action. Based on my personal observation and the interviews conducted, classical music, or piano culture, or examination culture are still relevant to the digital natives, with no sign of declining. Every innovation tends to be two-fold, and while the beneficial and amusing aspects of digital learning are undoubted, it can also be noted that many aspects of a live, person-to-person communication, in which a student can experience the mentor's direct impact in real time, remain irreplaceable.

CONCLUSION

If along the way [the students] can pick up some awards or scholarships, that's great, but it [music education] is really about the formation of the person, and the character. Whether or not they play piano in forty years—I hope so—will they at least be part of some music society, maybe the church choir, or community orchestra, maybe they are just patrons of the ballet, who knows? But they will have to live with themselves, and *what* they are and *who* they are, for me, is taught by piano. (Olivia, private communication, July 24, 2018)

The year 2018 represented a significant milestone worth marking—the 120th anniversary of RCM examinations being held outside of Toronto in 1898, followed by gradual expansion throughout the provinces and now steadily planting roots in the US. As a multifaceted organization that advocates for sustaining and preserving the arts in a modern society with shifting values, the Examinations represents the historically established yet constantly evolving structure that anchors Canadian culture, still relatively young, to the past; it connects the country with tradition while striving to maintain its relevance in the ever-changing socioeconomic dynamics of today. This dissertation has attempted to show, through past and living voices, that the institution, and in particular its examination system, is not a living anachronism, but through continuing engagement with its public and its teachers continues to evolve and adapt to rapidly

changing circumstances. It has also shown that some challenges remain in the system, especially as we move into the uncertainties and fast pace of the digital era.

The organization's long existence and its overall robustness, particularly in the past two decades, are profound proof of its effectiveness in providing a guiding framework for music learners. Among a handful of Canadian iconic establishments still in existence, e.g., Hudson's Bay Company (1670), Montreal Gazette (1778), Quebec Chronicle (1764), Molson Brewery (1786), Bank of Montreal (1817), Scotiabank/Bank of Nova Scotia (1832), The Canadian Pacific Railway/CP Railway (1881), Canadian National Railway/Canadian National (1919), and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (1920)—the Royal Conservatory's Examinations remain one of the oldest brands in the country that has retained its original name, status, essence, and purpose, as well as its reputation and prosperity, which, although not without challenges and setbacks, have grown over the course of the century. The vexed question of funding will always mean that the Conservatory will rely on its examinations as a revenue stream, but as in the past one hopes that financial need will be balanced by the opportunities for musical development that the institution, its people and its examinations have provided over the years, and hopefully will provide for future generations.

While the examination curriculum was always intended to foster and inspire sound teaching methods, particularly in the burgeoning private studio practice of its early and middle periods, the examination assessments and the standardized marking system served—and continue to serve—as indicators of the level and quality of teaching, students' interests, engagement and competence in their musical pursuits, and their striving for accreditation and achievement in a rapidly changing world.

Works cited

- ABRSM. "About us." ABRSM website, <https://us.abrsm.org/en/about-us/> (accessed May 31, 2019).
- "Adamson, Bertha Drechsler." 2007. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/bertha-drechsler-adamson-emc> (accessed July 23, 2019).
- Ahrens, Cora Belle, and George Douglas Atkinson. 1955. *For all piano teachers*. London, UK and Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Music Co. Limited.
- Altenmüller, Eckart O. 2001. "How Many Music Centers are in the Brain?" *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 930 (1): 273-80.
- Anonymous. Edward Johnson Music Library, University of Toronto collection. "Miss Ellen Ballon." *Musical Canada*, 1910 (June, Vol. 5, no. 2): 50, <https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/music/musicalcanada05.pdf> (accessed May 21, 2019).
- Babin, Margaret Ann. 2005. "Music conservatories in Canada and the piano examination system for the preparatory student: A historical survey and comparative analysis." MA thesis, University of Ottawa.
- Beethoven, Ludwig Van, Alfred Christlieb Kalischer, and J. S. Shedlock. 1972. *Beethoven's Letters: A Critical Edition with Explanatory Notes*. New York: Dover.
- Belarusian State Academy of Music, Study for Foreign Citizens, BGAM website, <http://www.bgam.edu.by/learning/foreign-citizens/> (accessed June 16, 2019).
- _____, International Partners, BGAM website, <http://www.bgam.edu.by/partnery/mezhdunarodnye-partnery/> (accessed June 16, 2019).
- Bellezza, Francis S. 1996. "Mnemonic Methods to Enhance Storage and Retrieval." In *Memory*, edited by Elizabeth L. Bjork and Robert A. Bjork, 345-80. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Berdes, Jane. 1993. *Women Musicians of Venice: Musical Foundations, 1525-1855*, New York: OUP.
- Bernstein, Seymour. 2015. *Seymour: An Introduction*. Documentary directed by Ethan Hawke. DP/30: YouTube video, 41:18. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePZF7cTugP4> (accessed October 27, 2018).

- Bilson, Malcolm. 1980. "The Viennese fortepiano of the late 18th century." *Early Music* 8, no. 2: 158-62.
- Bilson, Malcolm. 2019. "Performing the Score." Cornell SCE, March 14. YouTube video, 2:44:37, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qTN7JdiRJQ> (accessed June 16, 2019).
- Bjork, Elizabeth L., and Robert A. Bjork. 1996. *Memory*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- _____. 2011. "Making Things Hard on Yourself, But in a Good Way: Creating Desirable Difficulties to Enhance Learning." In *Psychology and the Real World: Essays Illustrating Fundamental Contributions to Society*. Ed. Morton A. Gernsbacher, Richard W. Pew, Leaetta M. Hough, and James R. Pomerantz, 56-64. New York: Worth Publishers.
- Bukofzer, Manfred. 1939. "Allegory in Baroque Music." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 3, no. 1/2: 1-21.
- Campbell, Colin. 2004. "Remote Piano Lessons, In Real Time." *New York Times*, March 11, 2004, <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/03/11/technology/remote-piano-lessons-in-real-time.html> (accessed May 3, 2019).
- Canadian National Conservatory of Music Examination Application fees, CNCM website, file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/examination_application_fees_2018-2019.pdf (accessed February 3, 2019).
- Carley, Lionel. 2006. *Edvard Grieg in England*. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press.
- Cerebroom website. [no surname provided] Chad. January 12, 2012, <https://blog.twedt.com/archives/1782> (accessed May 4, 2019).
- Chabris, Christopher F. 1999. "Prelude or Requiem for the Mozart Effect?" *Nature* 400 (6747): 826-27.
- Chandler, Margaret Ross. 1980. *A Century of Challenge*. Belleville, Ont.: Mika Publications.
- Chernigovskaya, Tatyana. 2017. Zima Magazine. December 7. YouTube video, 10:48. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18ytHSO7Ez0> (accessed October 25, 2018).
- College of Examiners, Fall Professional Development session. Toronto 2017. Personal communication.
- Comeau, Gilles. 2009. *Piano pedagogy: A research and information guide*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Conservatory Canada, "All about eExams," CC website, <https://conservatorycanada.ca/all-about-eexams/> (accessed December 11, 2019).

- Conservatory Canada, "Exam session dates and deadlines, In-person Flex Practical Exams," CC website, <https://conservatorycanada.ca/examination-information/> (accessed December 11, 2019).
- Conservatory Canada, "Examination fees," CC website, <https://conservatorycanada.ca/examination-information/examination-fees/> (accessed February 3, 2019).
- Conservatoire de musique et d'art dramatique du Québec website: Conservatoire brochure, 13, http://www.conservatoire.gouv.qc.ca/IMG/pdf/cmadvq_brochurefinale_ang72.pdf (accessed September 16, 2019).
- CPR website, CP interactive timeline, <https://www.cpr.ca/en/about-cp/our-history> (accessed October 2, 2019).
- Dalcroze Canada website, <https://www.dalcrozecanada.com/index.php/en/> (accessed June 16, 2019).
- De Val, Dorothy Jean. 1991. "Gradus ad Parnassum: The Pianoforte in London, 1770-1820." PhD diss., University of London, King's College, <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/2931107/308701.pdf> (accessed May 4, 2019).
- Edmunds, D.T.N., and Hon-Lun Yang. "The Shanghai conservatory, Chinese musical life, and the Russian diaspora, 1927–1949." *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012): 73-95.
- Edward Johnson Music library, University of Toronto. "Miss Jessie Binns." *Musical Canada*, May 1910 to April 1911 (Vol 5): 256, <https://www.electriccanadian.com/lifestyle/music/musicalcanada05.pdf> (accessed June 2, 2019).
- Ekman, Paul, and Wallace V. Friesen. 1969. "The repertoire of nonverbal behavior: Categories, origins, usage, and coding." *Semiotica* 1, no. 1: 49-98.
- Fisher, Edward. "Talks with Teachers: Examinations." *Conservatory Bi-Monthly* 1, no. 2 (March 1902): 42/616, <https://archive.org/details/conservatorybimo01torouoft/page/n41> (accessed March 24, 2019).
- George, Elyse M., and Donna Coch. 2011. "Music training and working memory: an ERP study." *Neuropsychologia* 49, no. 5: 1083-94.
- Gibbon, John Murray. 1938. *The Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

- Green, J. Paul, Patricia Wardrop, and Jennifer Higgs. 2012. "The Royal Conservatory of Music. Postwar Expansion." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/royal-conservatory-of-musicconservatoire-royal-de-musique-emc> (accessed April 20, 2019).
- Helmer, Paul. 2009. *Growing with Canada: The Émigré Tradition in Canadian Music*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Hodges, Howard. 1999. "Does Music Really Make You Smarter?" *Southwestern Musician* 67 (9): 28-33.
- Institute for Educational Leadership, IEL website, http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what_is_a_community_school.aspx (accessed June 2, 2019).
- Irvine, Daryl and R.G. Condie. 1984. *How to prepare for and take a practical music examination*. Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- Kallmann, Helmut, and Patricia Wardrop. 2006. "Canadian Academy of Music," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-academy-of-music-emc> (accessed September 21, 2019).
- Kallmann, Helmut, Carl Morey, and Patricia Wardrop. 2006. "Music in Toronto." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/toronto-ont-emc> (accessed June 16, 2019).
- Keillor, Elaine. 2007. "George Alfred Grant-Schaefer." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/george-alfred-grant-schaefer-emc> (accessed June 21, 2019).
- Kunits, Luigi von. "Aftermath of the Examinations." *Conservatory Quarterly Review* 7, no. 4 (August 1925): 134. In: UTARMS, A1975-0014/43. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1922-7. *Quarterly Review*. TCM, Vol. V-IX.
- Lang Lang International Music Foundation (LLIMF), "Keys of Inspiration" program website, <http://langlangfoundation.org/music-education/why-music/> and <http://langlangfoundation.org/our-programs/keys-of-inspiration/curriculum/> (accessed October 5, 2019).
- Library and Archives Canada. The Glenn Gould Archive. Toronto Conservatory of Music examination results, Grade 3 piano, February 20, 1940. The examiner: Ernest J. Farmer, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/glenn Gould/028010-1010.01-e.html> (accessed July 18, 2019).
- Lin, Chi. 2002. "Piano teaching philosophies and influences on pianism at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China." DMA diss., Louisiana State University.

- MacMillan, Ernest. 1933. "Those Music Exams! A Stumbling Block or a Stepping Stone?" *Chatelaine* (November): 15, 48, 62. Toronto.
- Matsumoto, David, Seung Hee Yoo, and Johnny Fontaine. 2008. "Mapping Expressive Differences around the World: The Relationship between Emotional Display Rules and Individualism Versus Collectivism." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 39 (1): 55-74.
- McDermott, Josh, and Marc D. Hauser. 2007. "Nonhuman Primates Prefer Slow Tempos But Dislike Music Overall." *Cognition* 104 (3): 654-68.
- Moogk, Edward B. 2007. "William (Willie) Eckstein." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/willie-eckstein-emc> (accessed August 7, 2019).
- Moreno, Sylvain, Carlos Marques, Andreia Santos, Manuela Santos, São Luís Castro, and Mireille Besson. 2009. "Musical training influences linguistic abilities in 8-year-old children: more evidence for brain plasticity." *Cerebral Cortex* 19, no. 3: 712-23.
- Mowat, Bruce Farley, and Marlene Wehrle. 2006. "The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/frederick-harris-music-co-limited-emc> (accessed August 3, 2019).
- "Music at Conservatories and Academies," 2011. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/music-at-conservatories-and-academies-emc> (accessed December 4, 2017).
- Peaker, Charles. "Editorial Notes." *Toronto Conservatory of Music Bulletin*, no. 97 (February-March 1946): 1.
- Pogosyan, Marianna. 2016. "Emotion Perception across Cultures." *Psychology Today*, October 9, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/between-cultures/201610/emotion-perception-across-cultures> (accessed February 17, 2019).
- Pogosyan, Marianna. 2018. "How Culture Shapes Emotions." *Psychology Today*, March 30, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/between-cultures/201803/how-culture-shapes-emotions> (accessed November 8, 2018).
- Porter, John. 1965, reprint 2015. *The Vertical mosaic: An analysis of social class and power in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Prensky, Marc. 2001. "Digital natives, digital immigrants part 1." *On the Horizon* 9, no. 5: 1-6.
- Rauscher, Frances H., Gordon L. Shaw, and Katherine N. Ky. 1993. "Music and spatial task performance." *Nature* 365, no. 6447: 611-611.

Ray, Janet. 1981. *Towards Women's Rights*. Internet Archive, Open Library. Toronto, Grolier Ltd., 15, access through membership (accessed May 20, 2019).

RCM, "About Digital Learning." RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/digital-learning> (accessed September 29, 2018).

RCM, "Academic Resources and Policies." RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/academic-resources-and-policies> (accessed December 22, 2018).

RCM Bookstore, "Celebration Series Advanced Set," <https://shop.rcmusic.com/products/celebration-series-advanced-set> (accessed December 11, 2019).

RCM Bookstore, "Celebration Series Level 5 Set," <https://shop.rcmusic.com/products/celebration-series-level-5-set> (accessed December 11, 2019).

RCM Canada, Guide to Examinations, RCM website, https://files.rcmusic.com//sites/default/files/RCM_CANADA_Guide-to-Examinations_Online.pdf (accessed December 11, 2019).

RCM, "College of Examiners," RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/college-of-examiners> (accessed December 11, 2019).

RCM, "Examination and Other Service Fees—Canada," RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/examfeesca#PracticalExaminationFees-6> (accessed November 30, 2019).

RCM. "Forms and Services. Royal Conservatory Theory Examination Equivalent," RCM website, https://files.rcmusic.com//sites/default/files/examinations/documents/forms/Theory%20Equivalents_Prerequisites%20and%20Corequisites_Oct2017.pdf (accessed December 11, 2019).

RCM, "High School Credits – Canada, Ontario." RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/high-school-credits-canada#Ontario-5> (accessed May 14, 2019).

RCM, "Learning/Royal Conservatory School." RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/royal-conservatory-school> (accessed October 3, 2019).

RCM, Marking criteria in the "Guide to Interpreting Examination Results." RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/plan-your-exam-examination-resources-students> (accessed November 3, 2018).

- RCM, “Music lessons for Children and Teens.” RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/royal-conservatory-school/music-lessons-for-children-and-teens> (accessed October 3, 2019).
- RCM Piano Syllabus. 1994. Introductory Level through ARCT. Mississauga: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus. 2001. Celebration Series: The Piano Odyssey, Introductory Level through ARCT. 2001. Mississauga: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2008. Introductory Level through ARCT. Mississauga: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2015. An Addendum: Popular Selection List. Updated October 2016. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus. 2015. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2015, Examination Procedures, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/examinations/syllabi/s41_pianosyllabus_2016_online_f.pdf (accessed August 3, 2019).
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2015, Split Level 10 Practical Examination, 98. RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/examinations/syllabi/s41_pianosyllabus_2016_online_f.pdf (accessed June 21, 2019).
- RCM, Price, Scott. “Introducing Repertoire, Recitals, and Performances to Students with Special Needs.” Teacher Portal webinar, access for certified teachers (accessed August 16, 2017).
- RCM, “RCM Teacher of Distinction Award,” RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/convocation/teachers-of-distinction-awards> (accessed November 30, 2019).
- RCM, “Recognition-Accomplishment.” RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/recognition-accomplishment/high-school-credits-canada> (accessed December 16, 2018).
- RCM, “RCM Teacher Certification, Transform Your Teaching,” RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/teaching/files/teacher-chart2019_1.pdf (accessed November 30, 2019).
- RCM, “Small Hands.” RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/examinations/academic-resources-and-policies#CandidateswithSmallHands-5> (accessed May 10, 2019).

- RCM, "Teacher Certification. How to Qualify to RCM Teacher Certification," RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/teaching/rcm-teacher-certification/how-to-qualify-for-rcm-teacher-certification> (accessed November 30, 2019).
- RCM, "Teacher Online Courses, Teaching Advanced Piano Course," RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/teaching/documents/adv_details2020.pdf (accessed November 30, 2019).
- RCM, "Teacher Online Courses, Teaching Elementary Piano Course," RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/teaching/documents/ele_details2020.pdf (accessed November 30, 2019).
- RCM, "Teacher Online Courses, Teaching Intermediate Piano Course," RCM website, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/teaching/documents/int_details2020.pdf (accessed November 30, 2019).
- RCM USA, RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/about-us/rcm-usa> (accessed February 7, 2019).
- RCM, "What Are the Advantages of The Royal Conservatory Certificate Program for Students?" RCM website, <https://www.rcmusic.com/learning/about-our-program/certificate-program-faqs> (accessed November 3, 2018).
- Reich, Nancy B. 2001. *Clara Schumann, The Artist and the Woman*. Rev. ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Rusk, Elaine. Celebrating Today's Composers. "*Celebration Series*[®], 2015 Edition – Contemporary Sounds for Today's Students." Unpublished document.
- _____. Creating a New Edition of the *Celebration Series*, 2015 (Piano). Unpublished document.
- _____. Creating an RCM Piano Series (2015). Unpublished document.
- _____. Celebration Series, 2015 Edition. Scope of the Revision. Unpublished document.
- Schabas, Ezra. 2005. *There's Music in These Walls: A History of the Royal Conservatory of Music*. Toronto: Dundurn.
- Schabas, William. 2007. "Margaret Miller Brown." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/margaret-miller-brown-emc> (accessed June 2, 2019).

- Schellenberg, E. Glenn. 2004. "Music lessons enhance IQ." *Psychological Science* 15, no. 8: 511-4.
- Schellenberg, E. Glenn. 2005. "Music and cognitive abilities." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 14, no. 6: 317-20.
- Schlaug, Gottfried. 2001. "The brain of musicians. A Model for Functional and structural Adaptation." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 930, no. 1: 281-99.
- Steele, Kenneth M., Joshua D. Brown, and Jaimily A. Stoecker. 1999. "Failure to Confirm the Rauscher and Shaw Description of Recovery of the Mozart Effect." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 88 (3, pt. 1): 843-48.
- Terauds, John. 2013. "Carnegie Hall withdraws from The Royal Conservatory of Music's United States venture." *Ludwig Van Toronto*, January 14, <https://www.ludwig-van.com/toronto/2013/01/14/carnegie-hall-withdraws-from-royal-conservatory-of-musics-united-states-venture/> (accessed October 5, 2019).
- The Cross-Eyed Pianist. 2019. "Memorisation and the 'proper' pianist." April 12, <https://crosseyedpianist.com/tag/concert-pianists-playing-from-the-score/> (accessed April 29, 2019).
- Thompson, Gordon V. 1958. "Meet Canadian Composers at the Piano." Toronto: Gordon V. Thompson Limited. See CMC website, <https://www.musiccentre.ca/node/2170> (accessed October 3, 2019).
- Thomson, Hugh. 1964. "All-Girl Band Among All Those Gamblers." *The Globe and Mail*, February 25. Toronto, Ontario, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/docview/1282858561/957A9646718F4A72PQ/121?accountid=15182> (accessed August 8, 2019).
- Tomes, Susan. 2007. "All in the Mind," *Guardian*, April 19, <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2007/apr/20/classicalmusicandopera1> (accessed April 29, 2019).
- Tommasini, Anthony. 2012. "Playing by Heart, With or Without a Score." *The New York Times*, December 31, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/01/arts/music/memorizations-loosening-hold-on-concert-tradition.html> (accessed April 29, 2019).
- Toronto Public Library. Call number: 910.7135 T59 – 406707. The Toronto City Directory, 1906, <https://archive.org/details/torontodirec190600midiuoft/page/n15> (accessed June 2, 2019).

- Trimble, Michael, and Dale Hesdorffer. 2017. "Music and the Brain: The Neuroscience of Music and Musical Appreciation." *The British Journal of Psychiatry International* 14 (2): 28-31, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5618809/> (accessed February 17, 2019).
- Turbide, Nadia, Chantal Gauthier, Annick Poussart, and Richard Haskell. 2011. "Music at McGill University," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/music-at-mcgill-university-emc> (accessed September 16, 2019).
- Turnbull, Robert. 2006. "The Rise of Chinese Pianists." *The Spectator*, November 15, 2006, <https://www.spectator.co.uk/2006/11/the-rise-of-chinese-pianists/> (accessed May 26, 2019).
- University Settlement, Music and Arts School, <http://universitysettlement.ca/music-arts-school/> (accessed June 19, 2019).
- Versailles, Claire, Helmut Kallman, Florence Hayes, and Patricia Wardrop. 2011. "Music Diplomas." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/music-diplomas-emc> (accessed December 4, 2019).
- Warne, Vanessa. 2018. *Blindness Clears the Way: E.B.F. Robinson's The True Sphere of the Blind (1896)*. In: *Untold Stories: A Canadian Disability History Reader*. Ed. Nancy Hansen, Roy Hanes, and Diane Driedger. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Warren, Jeff. 2011. "Is the Royal Conservatory Helpful Or Harmful to Musical Culture and Student Development?" jeffwarren.wordpress.com, <https://jeffwarren.wordpress.com/2011/11/02/is-the-royal-conservatory-helpful-or-harmful-to-musical-culture-and-student-development/> (accessed April 6, 2019).
- Western Ontario Gazetteer and Directory, 1898-9. Toronto Public Library. Ontario Publishing & Advertising Co., Ingersoll, Ontario, <https://static.torontopubliclibrary.ca/da/pdfs/37131055372791d.pdf> (accessed June 1, 2019).
- Wright, David C. H. 2013. *The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music: A Social and Cultural History*. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell.
- Zatorre, Robert J., Joyce L. Chen, and Virginia B. Penhune. 2007. "When the Brain Plays Music: Auditory-Motor Interactions in Music Perception and Production." *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 8 (7): 547-58.

Archives (UTARMS and RCM)

Syllabuses and other miscellaneous sources:

- RCM Archives. Australian Music Examination Board. Popular Piano Syllabus: Piano for Leisure, 2005. Series 2: Recording and Handbook, Grade 7. Melbourne, Australia: Allans Publishing.
- RCM Archives. Brown, Thomas A. 1938. Forty Lessons in Sight Singing in Three Volumes. London UK and Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Co.
- RCM Archives, CL Box 12, CL 2, Series P. Creating the books series "Celebration Series, 2004. Piano Syllabus 2008 Edition and Technical Requirements Revision." April 5, 2004.
- RCM Archives, CL Box 12, CL 2, Series P. Creating the books series "Celebration Series, 2004. Piano Syllabus 2008 Edition and Technical Requirements Revision." Month unknown, 2004. The focus group comprising RCM examiners.
- RCM Archives. Popular Selection. 2002. An Addendum to 2001 Syllabus.
- RCM Archives, TCM Grade II Pianoforte Examination, (year unknown, presumably 1915). Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Co.
- RCM Archives, TCM Junior Pianoforte Examination, Selected Compositions (compiled and edited by A.S. Vogt, Mus. Doc.). Toronto: The Nordheimer Piano and Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Archives. The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Piano Syllabus 1990. _____ . 1997.
- RCM Archives. The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Smith, Ronald. 1994. Aural Training in Practice.
- RCM Archives. The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Selected Piano Examination Pieces, 1999-2000, Grades 1-8.
- RCM Archives. The Frederick Harris Music Company fonds. A photocopy from Clavier journal in correspondence between Janice Holden (FHMC) and Trish Sauerbrei (FHMC Managing Editor). New Music Reviews. May/June 1990 Centennial Celebration Series, 37-8.
- _____. The Frederick Harris Music Company 1925-46 financial records.

- RCM Archives. The Western Board of Music, Piano, Singing, Theory Syllabus. 1983. Edmonton: The University of Alberta.
- RCM Archives. The Western Board of Music, Piano Connections, Repertoire. 1993. Edmonton: The University of Alberta.
- RCM Archives. Western Ontario Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte, Organ, Singing and Theory Syllabus, 1981-6. London, Canada.
- RCM Examinations library, Royal Conservatory of Music Pianoforte Syllabus 1983.
- RCM Rupert Edwards library archival fonds A: 2: 1. TCM Year book, 1938-9.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/004, Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses and Calendars 1887-1910.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1911-2.
- UTARMS, P78-0130 (01), Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1914-5.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/033, Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1915-6.
- UTARMS, P78-0130 (03), Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1916-7.
- UTARMS, P78-0130 (01), Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1917-9; 1920-5.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/033. Toronto Conservatory of Music Pianoforte Syllabuses 1911-25.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/034, Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1925-32.
- UTARMS, P78-0129-130, Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1932-43.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/36, Toronto Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1942-7.
- UTARMS, P78-0131-0138, Royal Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1947-51.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/37, Royal Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1951-60.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/38, Royal Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1960-8.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/39, Royal Conservatory of Music, Pianoforte Syllabuses 1966-81.

UTARMS, P81-256/264, Royal Conservatory of Music Pianoforte Syllabus 1981.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/42. Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto, "Examine 40,892 Music Candidates." Monthly Bulletin, September-October 1960 (original copy).

UTARMS, A1975-0014/043. "Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Conservatory." Quarterly Review Vol. 5, No. 1 (November 1922), 5.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/23, Letter from Miss Hebden to Dr. Mazzoleni, November 28, 1950.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/53, Mazzoleni, Ettore. 1960. "Examine 40,892 Music Candidates." RCM Bulletin. Reprint from the Globe and Mail, June 8.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/099. A speech made in 1947 and dedicated to the RCM's 60th Anniversary, author unknown, typewritten document, presumably Ettore Mazzoleni (Principal).

UTARMS, B96-0013. Office of the Principal: Schabas's files. Wolff, Roger, Alexandra Johnston, R.W. Missen, G.P. Payzant, Walter Pitman, and D.W. Lang. "Committee on the future of music studies: A final report." Draft B, May 22, 1984. Also reproduced in the University of Toronto Bulletin.

UTARMS, B96-0013/16(4). Office of the Principal: Schabas's files. Schabas's notes on "Examinations," February 1984, 4-5.

UTARMS, B96-0013. Office of the Principal: Schabas's files. Creech, Robert, E. 1990-1 to 1995-6. RCM McMaster Hall Academic Programs and program Space Requirements.

UTARMS, B96-0013. Office of the Principal: Schabas's files. July 30, 1991. The announcement of the "Report of the Royal Conservatory of Music Commission on the National Examination System," issued in May 1991. Signed by Ezra Schabas and Robert Creech, typewritten document.

UTARMS, B96-0013/11. Office of the Principal: Schabas's files. April 29, 1990, typewritten document addressed to Robert Creech.

UTARMS, B96-0013. Office of the Principal: Schabas's files. Burgess, Norman E, Warren Mould, and G. Campbell Trowsdale. 1991. "Report of the Royal Conservatory of Music Commission on the National Examination System." Unpublished document: Toronto.

UTARMS, P78-0826-0830. RCM Year Book 1958-9.

Newsletters/Bulletins sources:

- UTARMS, A1975-0014/016-01. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1902. *The Conservatory Bi-Monthly: A magazine for the Music Lover, Student and Teacher*. TCM, Vol. I, Nos. 1-6.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/016-02. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1903. *The Conservatory Bi-Monthly: A magazine for the Music Lover, Student and Teacher*. TCM, Vol. II, Nos. 1-6.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/016-03. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1911. *The Conservatory Bi-Monthly: A magazine for the Music Lover, Student and Teacher*. TCM, Vol. X, Nos. 3.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/016-04. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1912. *The Conservatory Monthly: A magazine for the Music Lover, Student and Teacher*. TCM, Vol. XI, Nos. 1, 5-6, 9.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/016-05. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1913. *The Conservatory Monthly: A magazine for the Music Lover, Student and Teacher*. TCM, Vol. XII, Nos. 1, 4-5.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/043. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1918-22. *The Conservatory Quarterly Review*. TCM, Vol. I-IV.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/043. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1922-7. *Quarterly Review*. TCM, Vol. V-IX.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/044. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1927-32. *Quarterly Review*. TCM, Vol. X-XIV.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/045. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1933-5. *Review*. TCM, March-August.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/041. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1935-40. *Monthly Bulletin*. TCM, Nos. 1-53, Oct. 1935 – Dec. 1940.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/041. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1935-40. *Monthly Bulletin*. TCM, Nos. 1-53, Oct. 1935 – Dec. 1940.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/042. Toronto Conservatory of Music *Monthly Bulletin* 1941-63. TCM issues in 1941: 55, 57, 58, 59, 59a, 60. From No. 62 the *Monthly Bulletin* became the *Bulletin*. There was no *Bulletin* published in Jan. 1943, the archive is missing No. 85, March 1944. The subsequent issue is No. 102 in 1947. In 1948 the journal changed its size, format.
- UTARMS, A1975-0014/041. Toronto Conservatory of Music. 1964-71. *Bulletin*. TCM, Nos. 1-53, Oct. 1935 – Dec. 1940.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/042. Charles Peaker. 1946. "Editorial Notes." TCM, Bulletin, no. 97 (February-March 1946): 1.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/043. Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto, *Monthly Bulletin*, Mid-Winter, 1969.

Press clippings sources:

UTARMS, A1975-0014/088. TCM Press clippings 1903-8.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/086. TCM Press clippings 1908-15.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/015. Toronto Conservatory of Music. Press clippings 1931-6. Saturday Night (April 16, 1932): 88.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/002. Royal Conservatory of Music. press clippings, 1948-72.

UTARMS, A1975-0014/098. Royal Conservatory of Music, Press clippings 1972-5.

Works consulted

- Adam, Louis. 1804. *Méthode de piano du Conservatoire: adoptée pour servir à l'enseignement dans cet établissement*. Impr. du Conservatoire de Musique, see IMSLP, http://ks.imslp.net/files/imglnks/usimg/7/74/IMSLP437183-PMLP711287-BnF_VM8_S-1041_-_M%C3%A9thode_de_piano_du_Conservatoire_-...-Adam_Jean-Louis.pdf (accessed September 21, 2019).
- Albergo, Cathy, and Reid Alexander. 2000. *Intermediate Piano Repertoire: A Guide for Teaching*. 4th ed. Mississauga: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- Albergo, Cathy, Reid Alexander, and Marvin Blickenstaff. 2001. Celebration Series®, The Piano Odyssey®: Handbook for Teachers. Mississauga: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- Baker-Jordan, Martha. 2003. *Practical Piano Pedagogy: The Definitive Text for Piano Teachers and Pedagogy Students*. Miami, FL: Warner Bros.
- Barrett, Margaret S. 2014. *Collaborative Creative Thought and Practice in Music*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate.
- Bartlett, Frederic C. 1932. *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology*. paperback reprint, 1972. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bastien, James W., and E. Gregory Nagode. 1988. *How to Teach Piano Successfully*. 3rd ed. San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company.
- Beauchamp, Laura Denise. 1994. "Boris Berlin's career and contributions to piano pedagogy." DMA diss., University of Oklahoma.
- Becker, John. 1983. "The early years of the Toronto Conservatory of Music." MFA thesis, York University.
- Beckwith, John. 2006. *In Search of Alberto Guerrero*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- _____. 2012. *Unheard Of: Memoirs of a Canadian Composer*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Beethoven, Ludwig Van, Alfred Christlieb Kalischer, and J. S. Shedlock. 1972. *Beethoven's Letters: A Critical Edition with Explanatory Notes*. New York: Dover.
- Berlin, Boris, and Andrew Markow. Four Star Sight Reading® and Ear Tests, 2015 Edition. Rev. Laura Beauchamp-Williamson. 12 vols. (Preparatory A–Level 10) with online ear-training activities. 2015. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.

- Bernstein, Seymour. 1981. *With Your Own Two Hands: Self-Discovery through Music*. London: Collier Macmillan.
- _____. 1991. *Twenty Lessons in Keyboard Choreography: The Basics of Physical Movements at the Piano*. New York: Seymour Bernstein Music.
- Beynon, Carol A, and Kari K. Veblen, eds. 2012. *Critical Perspectives in Canadian Music Education*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Bjork, Robert A. 1994. "Memory and Metamemory Considerations in the Training of Human Beings." Ed. Metcalfe, Janet, and Arthur P. Shumamura. *Metacognition: Knowing about knowing*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 185-207.
- Bloom, Benjamin S. 1985. Ed. *Developing Talent in Young People*. New York: Ballantine.
- Blume, Helmut. 1978. *A National School of Music for Canada: An Inquiry*. Ottawa: Canada Council.
- Braaten, Brenda, and Crystal Wiksyk. 2005–2006. *Sound Advice: Theory and Ear Training*. 8 vols. (Levels 1–8). Online audio tracks at www.soundadvisedirect.com. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- Bradley, Margaret. M.; Greenwald, Mark K.; Petry, Margaret C., and Lang, Peter J. 1992. "Remembering pictures: Pleasure and arousal in memory." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, & Cognition* 18 (2): 379–90.
- Brown, Thomas A. 1938. *Forty Lessons in Sight Singing in Three Volumes*. London, UK and Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Co.
- Bruser, Madeline. 1997. *The Art of Practicing: A Guide to Making Music from the Heart*. New York: Bell Tower.
- Camp, Max W. 1992. *Teaching Piano: The Synthesis of Mind, Ear and Body*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.
- Chaffin, Roger and Topher Logan. 2006. "Practicing perfection: how concert soloists prepare for Performance." *Advances in Cognitive Psychology* 2 (2-3): 113–30.
- Chaffin, Roger. 2007. "Learning Clair de Lune: Retrieval practice and expert memorization." *Music Perception*, 24: 377-93.
- Chaffin, Roger, Topher R. Logan, and Kristen T. Begosh. 2009. "Performing from memory." In S. Hallam, I. Cross, and M. Thaut (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology*: 352-63. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Chaffin, Roger. 2011. "Thinking about performance: Memory, attention, and practice." In: *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Performance Science 2011*: 689-99. Utrecht, The Netherlands: European Association of Conservatoires (AEC).
- Chapman, Norman B. 1973. "Piano music by Canadian composers after 1940," PhD diss., Case Western Reserve University.
- Christianson, Sven-Åke. 1992. "Emotional stress and eyewitness memory: A critical review." *Psychological Bulletin* 112 (2): 284–309.
- Chronister, Richard. 2005. *A Piano Teacher's Legacy: Selected Writings by Richard Chronister*. Ed. Edward Darling. Kingston, NJ: The Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy.
- Cisler, Valerie, and Maurice Hinson. 2004. *Technique for the Advancing Pianist*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.
- Coats, Sylvia. 2006. *Thinking as You Play: Teaching Piano in Individual and Group Lessons*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Creech, Andrea, and Susan Hallam. 2009. "Interaction in instrumental learning: The influence of interpersonal dynamics on parents." *International Journal of Music Education* 27, no. 2: 94-106.
- Creech, Robert. E. 1989. "Partners in Music." Paper presented at a meeting of the Canadian Music Council for the National Conference on the Role of Conservatory Training in Canada. Toronto, June.
- Creech, Robert, E. 1990-1 to 1995-6. RCM McMaster Hall Academic Programs and program Space Requirements. In: UTARMS, B96-0013. Office of the Principal: Schabas's files.
- Czerny, Carl. 1846. "On the Proper Performance of All of Beethoven's Works for Piano." Edited with a commentary by Paul Badura-Skoda. Vienna: Universal Edition (1970).
- Davidson, Jane, and Sarah Scutt. 1999. "Instrumental learning with exams in mind: a case study investigating teacher, student and parent interactions before, during and after a music examination." *British Journal of Music Education* 16, no. 1: 79-95.
- Donington, Robert. 1989. *The Interpretation of Early Music*. New rev. ed. London and Boston: Faber and Faber.
- Duke, Robert. 2005. *Intelligent Music Teaching: Essays on the Core Principles of Effective Instruction*. Austin, TX: Learning and Behavior Resources.
- Dumlavwalla, Diana Teresa. 2011. "Approaching the Examiner's Chair: Chronicling the Experiences of Piano Examiner Apprentices for the Royal Conservatory of Music." PhD diss., University of Toronto.

- Elster, Angela. 2001. "Learning Through the Arts: Program Goals, Features, and Pilot Results." *International Journal of Education and the Arts* 2 (7), <http://www.ijea.org/v2n7/> (accessed October 15, 2017).
- Ferguson, Howard. 1975. *Keyboard Interpretation from the 14th to the 19th century: An Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fink, Seymour. 1992. *Mastering Piano Technique: A Guide for Students, Teachers and Performers*. Portland, OR: Amadeus.
- Furneaux, S., and M. F. Land. 1999. "The effects of skill on the eye-hand span during sight-reading." *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 266, 2435-40.
- Gerig, Reginald R. 1974. *Famous Pianists and Their Technique*. Washington DC: R. B. Luce.
- Gillespie, John. 1972. *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music: An Historical Survey of Music for Harpsichord and Piano*. New York: Dover.
- Gilman, Elizabeth, and Geoffrey Underwood. 2003. "Restricting the field of view to investigate the perceptual spans of pianists." *Visual Cognition*, 10 (2): 201-32.
- Goolsby, Thomas W. 1994. "Profiles of Processing: Eye Movements During Sightreading." *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 12 (1), 97-123.
- Gordon, Stewart. 1996. *A History of Keyboard Literature: Music for the Piano and its Forerunners*. New York: Schirmer.
- Government of Canada. Backgrounder—Facts in Canada's Immigration History, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/archives/backgrounders-2011/facts-canada-immigration-history.html> (accessed May 19, 2019).
- Government of Canada. Justice Laws Website. Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. 1982. Section 27 Multicultural heritage, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-15.html> (accessed May 19, 2019).
- Government of Canada. Library and Archives Canada. Canadian Music Periodical Index, Musical Journal, http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/films-videos-sound-recordings/music-periodical-index/Pages/list.aspx?k=musical+journal&&p_ID=30 (accessed June 2, 2019).
- Gowan, John Curtis. 1972. *Development of the Creative Individual*. San Diego, CA: R.R. Knapp.
- Gramit, David. 2008. *Beyond the Art of Finger Dexterity: Reassessing Carl Czerny*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

- Green, J. Paul, and Nancy Vogan. 1991. *Music Education in Canada: A Historical Account*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Gudmundsdottir, Helga Rut. 2010. "Advances in music-reading research." *Music Education Research*, 12 (4), 331-8.
- Hafner, Katie. 2008. *A Romance on Three Legs: Glenn Gould's Obsessive Quest for the Perfect Piano*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.
- Hahn, Christopher Charles. 2005. "Canadian pedagogical piano repertoire since 1970: A survey of contemporary compositional styles and techniques." PhD diss., The University of Oklahoma, Graduate College.
- Hale, Marjorie. "Berlin, Boris," *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, 1992. 2nd ed., <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/boris-berlin-emc> (accessed December 4, 2017).
- Hallett, Archibald. 1977. "Report of the Committee to Review the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Faculty of Music" ("Hallett Report"), June 1.
- Hamann, Stephan B. 2001. "Cognitive and neural mechanisms of emotional memory." *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 5 (9): 394–400.
- Hamilton, John. 1973. "Report of the Committee to Study Relationships Between the Faculty of Music and the Royal Conservatory of Music" ("Hamilton Report"), August 29.
- Hanley, Betty. 2005. *Franklin E. Churchley: Gentleman, Scholar, Teacher*. Publisher unknown. Available online, <http://cmea.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/churchley.pdf> (accessed October 1, 2019).
- Hansen, Nancy, Roy Hanes, and Diane Driedger, eds. 2018. *Untold Stories: A Canadian Disability History Reader*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars.
- Harris, Paul. 1994. *Improve your Sight-reading! A Workbook for Examinations*. London: Faber.
- Hassell, Lorna. "Hambourg Conservatory of Music," *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, 1992. 2nd ed., <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/hambourg-conservatory-of-music-emc> (accessed December 4, 2017).
- Henderson, J. M., and F. Ferreira. 1990. "Effects of fovea processing difficulty on the perceptual span in reading: implications for attention and eye movement control." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory and Cognition*, 16: 417-29.
- Hinson, Maurice. 2004. *The Pianist's Dictionary*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Hinson, Maurice, and Wesley Roberts. 2013. *Guide to the Pianist's Repertoire*. 4th ed. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

- Horwood, Frederick James. 1936. *Toronto Conservatory of Music: A Retrospect (1886-1936)*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Hout, Cécile. 1992. "Canadian Music Competitions Inc.," *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, 2nd ed., <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-music-competitions-inconcours-de-musique-du-canada-inc-emc> (accessed December 4, 2017).
- Jacobson, Jeanine Mae, and E. L. Lancaster. 2006. *Professional piano teaching, Book 1: A comprehensive piano pedagogy textbook for teaching elementary-level students*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Music.
- Jacobson, Jeanine M., E. L. Lancaster, and Albert Mendoza. 2015. *Professional Piano Teaching, Volume 2: A Comprehensive Piano Pedagogy Textbook*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Music.
- Janata, Petr. 2009. "The neural architecture of music-evoked autobiographical memories." *Cerebral Cortex* 19 (11): 2579–94.
- Jianzhong, Wang. 2006. 30 Famous Chinese Piano Pieces, ed. Wei Tingge. People's Music Publishing House.
- Johnson, Christopher M., and Jenny E. Memmott. 2006. "Examination of relationships between participation in school music programs of differing quality and standardized test results." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 54, no. 4: 293-307.
- Jones, Gaynor G. 1989. *The Fisher Years: the Toronto Conservatory of Music 1886-1913*. Canadian Music Documents 4, 59-144.
- Jones, Gaynor G. 1991. "Exam Wars" and the Toronto Territorial Connection. *Canadian University Music Review* 11, no. 2: 51-67.
- Jones, Tudor Powell. 1972. *Creative Learning in Perspective*. London: University of London Press.
- Kallmann, Helmut. 1987. "The Conservatory remembered." *Performing Arts and Entertainment in Canada* 24, no. 1: 9-11.
- Kallmann, Helmut, Gilles Potvin, and Kenneth Winters, eds. 1992. *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*. 2nd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Kallmann, Helmut. 2006. "Music History." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/music-history> (accessed December 4, 2017).
- Kallmann, Helmut. 2013. *Mapping Canada's Music: Selected Writings of Helmut Kallmann*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

- Keillor, Elaine. 2008. *Music in Canada: Capturing Landscape and Diversity*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Kelly, Wayne. 1992. *Downright Upright: A History of the Canadian Piano Industry*. Toronto, Dundurn.
- Kennedy, Gregor E., Terry S. Judd, Anna Churchward, Kathleen Gray, and Kerri-Lee Krause. 2008. "First Year Students' Experiences with Technology: Are They Really Digital Natives?" *Australasian journal of educational technology* 24, no. 1: 108-22.
- Le Huray, Peter, and James Day. 1981. *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-nineteenth Centuries*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lehmann, Andreas, and Victoria McArthur. 2002. "Sight-reading" in *The Science & Psychology of Music Performance: Creative Strategies for Teaching and Learning*. Richard Parncutt and Gary E. McPherson (eds). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lehmann, Andreas C, and Reinhard Kopiez. 2009. *Sight-reading: Perception of music notation and sight-reading*. In: Susan Halam, Ian Cross and Michael Thaut (eds.). Chapter 32, 344-51. *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lopinski, Janet, et al. 2007. "Pedagogy Friday: Exploring Evaluation and Assessment." Compiled for pre-conference professional development sessions for music educators. *American Music Teacher* 57 (2): 18-36.
- Lopinski, Janet, and Jennifer Snow. 2007. "Nurturing a New Generation of Teachers." *American Music Teacher* 57, (2): 34-34.
- Lyke, James, Geoffrey Haydon, and Catherine Rollin. 2011. *Creative Piano Teaching*. 4th ed. Champaign, IL: Stipes.
- MacMillan, Ernest, ed. 1955. *Music in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Madell, Jaime, and Sylvie Hébert. 2008. "Eye Movements and Music Reading: Where Do We Look Next?" *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. 26 (2): 157-70.
- Magrath, Dorothy Jane. 1995. *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.
- Malitowski, Cynthia Marie. 2001. "The journey from instrumentalist to musician: reflections on the implementation of the conservatory method in musical performance." PhD diss., Lethbridge, AB: University of Lethbridge, Faculty of Education.
- Mark, Thomas. 2003. *What Every Pianist Needs to Know about the Body*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications.

- Mingxin, Du. 2006. 30 Famous Chinese Piano Pieces, ed. Wei Tingge. People's Music Publishing House.
- Mishra, Jennifer. 2013. "Improving sightreading accuracy: A meta-analysis." *Psychology of Music*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1177/0305735612463770
- Mishra, Jennifer. 2014. "Factors Related to Sight-Reading Accuracy: A Meta-Analysis." *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 61 (4), 452-65.
- Mitchell, Nancy E.C. 2012. "Beginning and Intermediate Piano Students' Experiences Participating in Evaluative Performances." PhD diss., University of Toronto.
- Morey, Carl. 2013. *Music in Canada: A Research and Information Guide*. New York: Routledge.
- Morrison, Madelaine E. 2014. "Domestic Harmonies: Musical Activity in Southwestern Ontario, 1880-1920." PhD diss., Carleton University.
- Mulgan, Felicity. 1987. "High tech and independence: Robert Dodson eyes the upcoming century at the Conservatory." *Performing Arts in Canada*, 24, June: 5-6.
- RCM Piano Études 2015. Celebration Series, Levels 1 through 10. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Repertoire 2015. Celebration Series, Levels Preparatory A and B through 10. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2015. An Addendum: Associate Diploma in Piano Pedagogy. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2015. An Addendum: Licentiate Diploma in Piano Performance. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/examinations/syllabi/rcm-piano-licentiate-2016_online_f.pdf (accessed October 11, 2019).
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2002. An Addendum: Popular Selection List. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2009. An Addendum: Popular Selection List. 2009. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- RCM Piano Syllabus 2019. An Addendum: Popular Selection List. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/examinations/syllabi/s49_popsellist_2019_online_f.pdf (accessed October 11, 2019).

- RCM Piano Syllabus 2015. An Addendum: Resources. Toronto: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, <https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/documents/examinations/syllabi/rcm-piano-resources-2015.pdf> (accessed October 11, 2019).
- Rosenblum, Sandra P. 1988. *Performance Practices in Classic Piano Music: Their Principles and Applications*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Rusk, Elaine. 2018. "A Primer on Royal Conservatory Exams." *Canadian Musician* 39 (4): 26.
- Sadie, Stanley, and John Tyrrell, Eds. 2001. Conservatories. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 6, 311-324. London: Macmillan.
- Schabas, Ezra. 1994. *Sir Ernest MacMillan: The Importance of Being Canadian*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Scruton, Roger. 1997. *The Aesthetics of Music*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Shockley, Rebecca Payne. 1997. *Mapping Music for Faster Learning and Secure Memory: A Guide for Piano Teachers and Students*. Madison, WI: A-R Editions.
- Statistics Canada. 150 Years of Immigration in Canada. Updated: May 17, 2018, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2016006-eng.htm> (accessed May 19, 2019).
- Stewart Lauren, Vincent Walsh, and Uta Frith. 2004. "Reading music modifies spatial mapping in pianists." *Perception & Psychophysics*, 66 (2): 183-95. London, England: University College London.
- Tame, David. 1984. *The Secret Power of Music*. New York: Destiny Books.
- Taylor, Clara. 2005. *These music exams*. Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.
- Tien, Adrian. 2015. *The Semantics of Chinese Music: Analysing Selected Chinese Musical Concepts*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Thompson, Gordon V. 1946. "Growth of Music Education in Canada." *Music Journal* 4 (2), January 1: 50.
- Thompson-Schill, Sharon L., Michael Ramscar, and Evangelia G. Chrysikou. 2009. "Cognition Without Control: When a Little Frontal Lobe Goes a Long Way." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 18 (5): 259-63.

- Trowsdale, G. Campbell. 1988. Independent and Affiliated Non-Profit Conservatory-Type Music Schools in Canada: A Speculative Survey. Prepared for Dr. Lorne Watson, Chairman, Conservatory Project Committee. A companion guide to: Creech, Robert E. 1989. *Partners in Music*. Toronto: Canadian Music Council.
- Truitt, F.E., C. Clifton, A. Pollatsek, and K. Rayner. 1997. "The perceptual span and the eye-hand span in sight-reading music." *Visual Cognition*, 4: 143-61.
- Waterman, Fanny. 1983. *On Piano Teaching and Performing*. London, UK: Faber.
- Western Board of Music. Music Examinations, (n.d.), Grades I, II, III, IV, and VI Piano. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Western Ontario Conservatory of Music. Graded Examination Piano Repertoire, 1958. Grade 5. Oakville, ON: The Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited.
- Westney, William. 2003. *The Perfect Wrong Note: Learning to Trust Your Musical Self*. Pompton Plains, NJ: Amadeus Press.
- Wolf, Thomas. 1976. "A cognitive model of musical sight reading." *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 5: 143-71.
- Wolters, Benita. 1999. "The early years of the Canadian League of Composers." PhD diss., University of British Columbia.
- Women's Morning Musical Club, WMCT website, <https://www.wmct.on.ca/about-wmct/history/> (accessed June 2, 2019).

APPENDIX

SECTION A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Informed Consent Form**

Date: _____

Study Name: **A History of the Royal (Toronto) Conservatory of Music Piano Examinations, 1887-2015: Their Impact and Influence.**

Researcher name:

- Tatiana Voitovitch-Camilleri, Principal Investigator, Doctoral student, Department of Music, York University.
- Research Ethics Board Approval Certificate no. 2018-033, valid through 04/05/18-04/05/19.

Purpose of the Research:

- The research will outline the history of the RCM piano examinations and its syllabuses. It will also explore the impact of the successive editions on the teaching methods at times of new releases, and reveal a notable symbiosis between the exam curriculum and piano pedagogy practice at the times around Syllabus's releases.
- This research will involve interviews with the main contributors who worked on the latest edition of the Piano Syllabus (2015); the composers, whose works have been included in the preceding and the latest syllabuses; the academic educators and professionals whose viewpoint on the RCM Examinations and Pedagogy may be valuable for the research. The interviews will be conducted either in person or via VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) and this portion of the investigation will be a constituent of the above mentioned PhD dissertation.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

To respond to the questions in an interview setting. **Contributors to Syllabuses, examiners, administrative staff:** will cover the objectives, and the process of compiling the Piano Syllabus during the 7-year term between publications, and examine how the work on the Syllabus corresponds to and affects the development of the Piano Curriculum, and vice versa; what changes occur in each edition of the syllabus and the underlying reasons for them. Depending on the extent of your involvement in the Syllabus production the questions may cover a 20-year span of the most recent editions of the syllabus (i.e., 1994, 2001, 2008, and 2015). **RCM teachers (still teaching or retired), pupils of notable teachers:** will explore the impact of the successive editions of the syllabus on the teaching methods at times of new releases, and whether there was a noticeable connection between the exam curriculum and piano

pedagogy practice at these times. **Composers:** has a canon of Canadian compositions been created? Was a balance sought or achieved between Anglo- and Franco-Canadian works? What are/were the criteria for being selected for a publication in the syllabus etc?

- Only one data collection method will be used.
- Each interview is expected to take 1-1.5 hours to complete.
- There are no inducements offered to participate in this research.

Risks and Discomforts:

- We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

- At the conclusion of the research, the participants may follow up with the researcher to learn the outcome of this historical exploration. This information should become helpful for all piano teachers, examiners, clinicians, piano students, and music-specializing historians.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff, or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

Confidentiality:

- The documentation of the interviews will be done through a transcript and analysis of the audio files to be used within the dissertation's content.
- The data will be safely stored on the laptop with an encrypted password that gives access to only a researcher (i.e., myself) and Dissertation Supervisor.
- The data will be stored for future research.
- The data will not be destroyed due to its potential valuable content.
- The data will be archived, since it will hold the historical value and will present an important temporal record that may be useful for future research by the investigator.
- Unless you choose otherwise, all information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research.
- The data will be collected through notes typed on a laptop, and the interview will be recorded on a digital recording device. Pictures or videos might be taken for a historical record. Your data will be safely stored on the laptop with an encrypted password, digital device, both of which will be held in a locked facility and only the researcher and Dissertation Supervisor will have access to this information.
- The data will be archived in the Royal Conservatory's archives, and possibly in the Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections at York University, if such study is deemed valuable and permission is granted.
- Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

- The data collected in this research project may be used – in an anonymized form – by members of the research team in subsequent research investigations exploring similar lines of inquiry. Such projects will still undergo ethics review by the HPRC, our institutional REB. Any secondary use of anonymized data by the research team will be treated with the same degree of confidentiality and anonymity as in the original research project.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact me, Tatiana Voitovitch-Camilleri, Doctoral student, Department of Music, York University; or my supervisor, Dr. Dorothy de Val, Associate Professor, Department of Music, York University; and/or **committee members:** Prof. Michael Coghlan, Associate Professor, Department of Music, York University, and/or Prof. Christina Petrowska Quilico, Professor, Department of Music, York University.

You may also contact the Graduate Program in Music, Graduate Program Assistant Tere Tilban-Rios.

This research has received ethics review and approval by the Delegated Ethics Review Committee, which is delegated authority to review research ethics protocols by the Human Participants Review SubCommittee, York University’s Ethics Review Board, and conforms to the standards of the Canadian TriCouncil Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in **“A History of the Royal (Toronto) Conservatory of Music Piano Examinations, 1887-2015: Their Impact and Influence.”** conducted by Tatiana Voitovitch-Camilleri. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____
Participant

Date _____

Signature _____
Principal Investigator

Date _____

Additional consent (where applicable):**1. Audio recording**

I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

2. Video recording or use of photographs

I _____ consent to the use of images of me (including photographs, video and other moving images), my environment and property in the following ways (please check all that apply):

In academic articles	[] Yes	[] No
In print, digital and slide form	[] Yes	[] No
In academic presentations	[] Yes	[] No
In media	[] Yes	[] No
In thesis materials	[] Yes	[] No

Signature:

Date:

 Participant: (name)
3. Consent to waive anonymity

I, _____, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature:

Date:

 Participant: (name)

SECTION B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PIANO TEACHERS

1. Why do you encourage your students to enrol in the RCM examinations? Do you initiate the enrolment or the students' parents do? Do the students themselves ever express the desire to pursue the exams?
2. Do you recommend completing the exams annually, or do you often skip the levels, or compress the levels (i.e., learning two levels in one year) or, on a contrary, span the levels over the longer time periods? Does the latter depend on the learning style of your students (i.e., do you adapt to your student's learning style and adjust the goal setting), OR is it a result of a decreased difficulty of the repertoire in the lower levels of study?
3. What does the RCM's national standard of learning and teaching mean to you as a teacher?
4. Do you find that your teaching routine has to be adjusted according to the requirements introduced in the new syllabus/series? How long does it take you to implement all the changes required by the new curriculum?
5. How many series launches did you witness (i.e., they occur every 7 years)? Which new series (if any) appeared to be drastically different from the preceding ones, significantly affecting your teaching? Do you think the requirements are becoming easier with every consecutive series?
6. Was there (and is still) a notable symbiosis between the exam curriculum and piano pedagogy practice at times surrounding the Syllabus's release: did the former affect the latter or vice versa (i.e., did the renewed in its due time curriculum dictate pedagogical approaches, or did the pedagogical methods, practised at the time, shape the curriculum? How did the new Syllabus and curriculum affect you as a teacher?
7. Do you think that the exams build self-confidence or, on a contrary, add unwanted/unnecessary stress to the process, amplifying the fear of performing in front of another individual(s)? How do your students overcome the latter and foster the former?
8. Do your students perceive the exams as an inevitable reality, which they are obliged to pursue to satisfy their parents' aspiration? Are you ever under any pressure from the parents who express their desire to "gallop" through the levels in order to reach ARCT by the end of high school, or even reach L10 by the age of 10?
9. Do you navigate freely through the syllabus, and do you feel that selecting the works from the Celebration Series books is "risk-free" vs. assembling the repertoire from your existing music library? Is it easier for you to simply follow what is in the book and introduce, learn and prepare the same pieces every year, or do you tend to customize the repertoire for each student?
10. Do you opt for any repertoire or études substitutions? If so, how often?
11. Do you use Popular selections as substitutions often? If so, how do you prime/prepare your students for the non-classical idioms?
12. Do the marks/comments your students receive in the examiner's report coincide with your personal assessment you communicate to your own students prior to exam? Has the examiner's evaluation ever appeared as a surprise to you in either extreme?
13. Would you prefer to receive valuable comments that inspire you to grow as a professional, be more prone to changes in your own teaching routine, and also give you insightful ideas? Have you ever felt inspired by the examiner's report?

14. Are the students excited about moving up a level, or do they dread it? How do you deal with the students who are overly fixated on preparing the exam repertoire and do bare minimum for the examination?
15. Are exams seemed as a challenge? A difficult task to overcome every year? Do the students get fixated on their anxiety throughout the year, expressing their fears of failure in almost every lesson? Or do they work proactively in partnership with you, studying diligently and independently enough to make visible progress each week? Statistically, how many of the latter type do you have in your studio compared to the former type?
16. If your students have a sense of pride after going through an exam, is it evident upon their exam completion on the day of exam or their higher than expected exam mark received later? Which instance gives them more relief and a sense of accomplishment? On the examiner's reports, what do your students read first: the mark or the comments?
17. What if (to your surprise) the mark is inflated and does not correspond with what the student actually deserves in your view? How do you communicate the necessity of continuous work despite the inflated mark?
18. Do you find that within the examination body there are too many levels of study offered to the candidates (Prep AB, Ls 1-10, and Diplomas), or is there a reasonable/appropriate constellation of levels that corresponds with their school levels? Do the school and music levels usually align?
19. Do you think that the students who participate in the RCM examinations tend to become more dedicated to their instrument and practice more often? Or, on a contrary, do they need to be pushed, as the exam preparation seems as an obligation?
20. How the students' achievement in the examination is indicative of their creativity, while there are no tests on the exam that require to demonstrate creativity (i.e., no improvisation, no composition etc.)? Do the exams provide an environment to foster creative and artistic qualities in pianists, especially in those individuals who choose piano performance as a professional path?
21. How much time do you devote to developing sight reading skills in lesson? How important is it to your students to excel in this cognitive task? And what methods do you use to help them in the acquisition? Given the emerging transparency between science and arts, do you think that scientific findings on sight reading might be beneficial for your teaching?
22. The Candidates' Demographics: has there been an apparent shift associated with the Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, etc.) community's expansion? Was there a "wave" of arrival of Asian candidates? Did the wave facilitate significant bolster of Asian candidates into the examination scene? Can it be said that the piano teachers' financial profitability relies at large on the Asian communities in certain Provinces? The same can be said for the Indian community in Brampton (Ontario) etc.? Why do you think the enrolment of the African American candidates is on a significantly lower side compared to Caucasians and Asians?
23. How motivated are your students by preparing for and completing four extensive exams in order to obtain only two high school credits? Do you think the commitment rate would rise if credits were offered for Ls 9-10?, as well as earlier Levels (i.e., 5-6)? How many of your students pass the threshold of L8 and continue to pursue Ls 9-10 with the same motivational strength?
24. Is enrolling in the exam the only path to learning music? Does enrolling in the exam provide the ultimate motivation for learning, or could there be other stimuli for learning?

25. Q continued: Would you agree/disagree that the process of preparation for an exam affects the student's perception of the music learning process, and furthermore, positions it at a certain angle of understanding of what music learning truly is all about? I.e., the "exam-oriented" mentality is fostered over the "creative music exploration" mentality. Due to their inherent pressure and constraints on repertoire do the examinations limit the exploration of a vaster repertoire?
26. What happens after a student quit the exam-road and decides to take lessons "for mere enjoyment": how does the absence of a goal affect an overall motivation level? How many students do actually continue taking lessons for enjoyment?
27. What are the learning objectives when deciding to take exams: what are the benefits of taking the exams, and the advantages of measuring everyone's level up to a single standard, and why is it important to many?
28. Can music learning be equally facilitated without preparing for exams? What is the non-exam-oriented music lessons and music exploration missing or, on the other hand, gaining?
29. The purpose of the examination system: why do we need exams in general, and are exams for everyone?
30. Can talent be measured by numbers?

SECTION C

CREDITS

Both University of Toronto and RCM archives professionals and staff provided an indispensable wealth of information, support and committed attention to my work throughout the past four years.

University of Toronto Archives and Records Management Services (UTARMS):

Tys Klumpenhower; Harold Averill (retired archivist); Karen Suurtamm (resigned archivist); Daniella Ansovini; Marnee Gamble; Emily Sommers; Barbara Edwards; Andrea McCutcheon; Loryl MacDonald.

Human participants/informants:

1. Aline Banno
2. Alison Bell
3. Nina Bielawsky-Schipani
4. Paul Dykstra
5. Dr. Thomas Green (RCM, Chief Examiner)
6. Helen Hardy
7. Melvin Hurst
8. Diana Kazumyan
9. Mary Kenedi
10. Jennifer Knelman
11. Grace Lin
12. Yasmin Moosa
13. Anne Marie Page (RCM, Manager, Academic Communications)

14. Francine Regaudie-McIsaac
15. Frances R. Saxby
16. Dorothy Stavrinou
17. Olga Tcherniak
18. Tanya Tkachenko
19. Daniel Webb
20. Dale Wheeler
21. Peteris Zarins

Anonymous participants/informants:

1. Antonina (private teacher, examiner and adjudicator)
2. Charles (private teacher and examiner)
3. Daphne (private teacher and examiner)
4. Elena (teacher, examiner, adjudicator, author, composer)
5. Galina (private teacher)
6. Joy (private teacher)
7. Lilian (private teacher and examiner)
8. Margaret (private teacher and examiner)
9. Michelle (concert pianist, private teacher and adjudicator)
10. Olivia (private teacher)
11. Paul (pianist, examiner)
12. Stephanie (private teacher)

Written correspondence:

1. Dr. Christopher Foley (Adjudicator Certification Program Specialist)
2. Larysa Kuzmenko (composer)

RCM administration (communication support/private conversations/correspondence):

1. Elaine Rusk (Vice President, The Certificate Program)
2. Dr. Janet Lopinski (Senior Director, Academic Programs)
3. Jane Campbell (Business Manager)
4. Nicole Hulme (formerly, Publishing Department; at present, Registrar, The Glenn Gould School)
5. Adelaide McDonnell (Library Services Manager, Rupert Edwards Library)
6. Meredith Heyland (Manager, Academic Office)

I wish to express the most profound gratitude to all my colleagues, friends, fellow teachers, examiners from across Canada, US, and Hong Kong, as well as the members of the RCM Academic Office, who devoted the time sharing their experience and expertise with generosity and continuous encouragement, helping to advance my knowledge. My research journey was enriched immeasurably because of your invaluable contribution, passion, and devotion to your professions, the musical arts, and pedagogy.