



Arts & Entertainment



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Intensive program for young musicians

Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute makes Appleby College its home for third year

By Kathy Yanchus

SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

There's a new kid on the block and her name is Roslyn Fortier.

Fortier will share office space with members of the Downtown Oakville BIA, but her focus will be the administration of the Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute.

SOCMI, which has operated a two-week program for select young classical musicians from around the world at Appleby College for the past three years, has done so thanks to the efforts of an intensely dedicated board of directors.

Now, however, having been given a Trillium Grant, SOCMI has opened up an office and hired Fortier not only to raise awareness of the group and its goals, but to raise money for an endowment fund for operating expenses and scholarships.

"This is an evolution in the growth in the life of a not-for-profit organization," says Fortier. "It has been a total volunteer operation run out of people's homes. In hiring someone, they have taken it out of the basement and made it more visible."

The move also "raises the bar" in terms of how the organization, which has been training young classical musicians in chamber music since 1989, can broaden its mandate.

Aside from daily master classes and coached rehearsals, the institute will now offer guidance in career development and in audition preparation, two new elements to the program this summer.

"Handling their careers is a business," explains Fortier.

"We can now look at their future, particularly when they get out into the big, bad world," she says. "We can focus on adaptability and flexibility. Look at Yo Yo Ma for example, he can play with any orchestra because of his expertise."

Enrolment for the two-week event at Appleby next month is limited to 36 students, who come from across Canada, the United States and overseas. Based on audition tapes, students are matched with others of similar skills, but throughout the course of the program, they may

be interspersed to produce new sounds.

"Young people are working solo with their teachers for so long; it's nice when they can work in an ensemble."

This year's institute, scheduled for Aug. 11 to 25, will feature the Alcan String Quartet as the quartet-in-residence for the first week, and the Penderecki String Quartet as quartet-in-residence for week two.

The Alcan Quartet, formed in 1990, tours, teaches and records, and is based in Quebec, while the Penderecki Quartet, formed in 1986 at the request of Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki, performs on the great concert stages of the world and is quartet-in-residence at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Violinist Norman Nelson, violist Terence Helmer and violoncellist Marcel Saint-Cyr are also among the faculty-in-residence, as is Jacques Israelievitch, concertmaster of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, who will guide students in their preparations for auditions and performances.

Justin Kolb, American pianist, recording artist and authority on the career development of young musicians, will give a master class on *Know the Score: Life After Music School*; and Omar Daniel, assistant professor of composition at the University of Western Ontario, will be composer-in-residence.

SOCMI attracts musicians in their late teens to early 20s, and feedback has proven the two-week study greatly enhances the musical experience of the young musicians, says Fortier.

Fortier is looking forward to working with the Downtown BIA, and in compiling a sponsorship package to attract much-needed sponsors from the Oakville community – one which amazes her with its commitment to the arts.

As part of the annual musical event in Oakville, there will be three public concerts: the first on Aug. 16 at Appleby College with the Alcan String Quartet, the second on Aug. 22 at Calvary Baptist Church featuring the Penderecki String Quartet, and the final student showcase concert on Aug. 25 at Calvary Baptist Church.

All concerts begin at 8 p.m.

For more information, contact Fortier at 905-842-5865.



Photo by Barrie Erskine

Bill Chambers, above, a board member for the Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute, watches as Roslyn Fortier puts up posters advertising the two-week musical event at Appleby College. The Penderecki String Quartet, below, will be the quartet-in-residence during the second week and will give a concert on Aug. 22 at Calvary Baptist Church.



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