

The Leading Note Foundation

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SPRING 2008

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A word from the president

What a year! It has been an extraordinary adventure hearing over 40 of our OrKidstra students play *Twinkle, Twinkle* only 15 months after watching *Tocar y Luchar*, the DVD about the life-changing Venezuelan youth music program that inspired us into action. After seeing the enthusiasm and

joy in the children each week, our belief in music education for each and every child is stronger than ever. This belief has been further strengthened by the overwhelmingly enthusiastic response and generosity from Ottawa's community. Life is all about choices and if children aren't given the right

opportunities, we can't expect them to make the right choices. Our choices as adults and professionals can create opportunities that will resonate for generations. It is very exciting! Deep thanks to everyone who has been involved in making this program a reality.

Go OrKidstra Go!

Improving lives through music

The Leading Note Foundation was inspired by a phenomenal youth music program created in Venezuela. Called *El Sistema*, the program has changed - and in many cases literally saved - the lives of countless children and is spreading across the world with similar programs now starting up in the U.S. and the UK.

Its main premise is this: offer children the instruments and the education to enrich their lives spiritually, and they will find the means to sustain themselves and, most importantly, become active contributors to society.

The Leading Note Foundation is made up of professional musicians in the Ottawa area who felt inspired to bring music to all Ottawa children, regardless of socio-economic background.

In January 2007, Tina Fedeski, co-owner of The Leading Note music store in Ottawa, and Margaret Munro Tobolowska, cellist with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, were inspired to import *El Sistema* to Ottawa.

Tina, an Ottawa flute teacher and now President of The Leading Note Foundation,



OrKidstra's first lesson day

traveled to Venezuela in March to see the program at work. She and Margaret began to develop a business plan in anticipation of a fall 2007 launch.

The Leading Note print music store soon became the hub of what is now known as The OrKidstra Program and began to fill with instruments acquired either by purchase or donation. To date, more than \$10,000 in instrument donations have been collected.

Guy Harrison, a local luthier, offered his expertise in appraising all donated instruments.

Local musicians were equally eager to offer their teaching skills; four members of the NAC Orchestra signed on, as did two Suzuki trained instructors, a teacher from the Ottawa Youth Orchestra

Academy and two student teachers from the University of Ottawa. All are assisted by 10 mentors from the Youth Orchestra Academy.

The Foundation soon found a new home, joining many other non-profit organizations at Ottawa's Bronson Centre, which houses both the Foundation's office and Monday evening OrKidstra classes. The Bronson Centre is also within walking distance for many of the students.

The OrKidstra Program was an almost instant success; after presentations were made to schools in the Centretown area, nearly 100 applications were received for just 48 available spaces.

The wider Ottawa community was also quick to embrace the program. The Foundation's first concert fundraiser was held October 22, 2007 at McLeod Stewarton United Church in Centretown and featured a dozen NAC Orchestra members. They, along with Ottawa's Trio Scherzando, donated their talents and helped raise \$5,000.

Read on to see what all the hard work has achieved.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- April 28, 2008, 5pm, Mac Hall, Bronson Centre (211 Bronson Avenue): OrKidstra Concert. Free-will donation.
- May 4, 2008, 3pm, First Unitarian Congregation (30 Cleary Avenue): "Dances, Ditties and Devious Instruments" Leading Note staff concert fundraiser featuring music by PDQ Bach and Butterworth. Free-will donation.

'Play every note with love'

"[OrKidstra] is a good extra activity. It improves [my daughter] as a person and her knowledge."

- An OrKidstra dad

"My daughter is really enjoying the program. She is a very shy girl so this program has been helping with her confidence"

- An OrKidstra mom



Violins and cellos playing together for the first time.

One, two, three, four; the students tap the rhythm out by hand. Two beats on their legs, one clap of their hands and a snap of their fingers.

This is more than an exercise in basic rhythm, however. OrKidstra violin teacher Susan Rupp also leads the group in chants such as "Together we build respect," and "Play every note with love."

This is where the rubber hits the road; the seed of The OrKidstra program, planted just over a year ago, has taken root.

"It's a good extra activity," says the parent of one violin student. "It improves her as a person and her knowledge." "Music is a good thing," he adds after a short pause. "It's great therapy for everyone."

"It's a very good opportunity for the children," says an OrKidstra mother, who adds her two sons feel deeply proud to be learning the cello from teacher and program co-founder Margaret Munro Tobolowska. "It helps their grades."

Currently, there are 18 students in the Junior OrKidstra program, 17 in the Senior group and another six in the guitar program and attendance at the weekly sessions has consistently been over 90%.

Such enthusiasm is hardly surprising given the caliber of instruction being provided. Along with Margaret Munro Tobolowska and Susan Rupp of the National Arts Centre Orchestra, The OrKidstra kids are also learning from the NACO's principal trumpet, Karen Donnelly.

Tina Fedeski of The Leading Note, also an in-demand freelance flautist and a teacher with the Ottawa Youth Orchestra Academy, is another integral part of The OrKidstra teachers' lineup.

Also on The OrKidstra teaching team is Jean Barsalou, former artistic director of SuzukiMusic Ottawa, a Suzuki violin teacher since 1997 and 2007 music educational co-ordinator for the National Arts Centre.

Heading up the OrKidstra guitar program is Jonathan Sandler, who is also working toward his Masters degree at the University of Ottawa.

Ottawa cellist and accredited Suzuki teacher Anne-Marie Guedon is also lending her time to the program along with violinist Paul Casey, an Ottawa Youth Orchestra Academy alumnus currently in his fourth year of undergraduate studies at the University of Ottawa.

This impressive group is ably assisted by a team of mentors — Ottawa Youth Orchestra

players from area high schools including Lisgar Collegiate, Canterbury and Colonel By, as well as home schooled students — fulfilling their mandatory volunteer hours while enriching their own musical education.

The OrKidstra students will be putting all they have learned to work late in April. On April 28, they will perform for family and friends at the Bronson Centre's Mac Hall, beginning at 5 p.m.

The OrKidstra Concert Tour takes place over the first week of May, when the students will be performing for their peers at elementary schools in the program's Centretown catchment area.

The tour will not only be an opportunity for students and teachers alike to celebrate all that has been accomplished in the program's first year, but also a chance to introduce the program to more prospective students while providing them with an educational music event.

Organizers are also hatching a summer program for keen students. Participants will play in full string OrKidstra, twice weekly from June 2 to July 11. The summer course will also see the launch of a choir, The KidSingers program, and, on July 11, an exciting final concert will include everyone performing together — what a sound that will be!

The summer course will be a fun, relaxed time and include pizza and film nights and other social events.

Behind the scenes, The Leading Note Foundation is officially incorporated as a not-for-profit body. An application for charitable status was made in late January 2008 and is expected to be received by the fall. All donations from the end of January will be retroactively acknowledged by the Canada Revenue Agency for tax receipts.

Thank you to our Donors!

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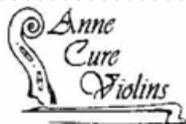
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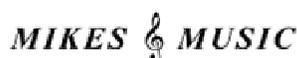
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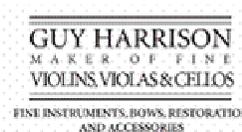
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Time and Service Donations

- Teachers who have volunteered their time, knowledge and passion for music:
 - Susan Rupp, Jean Barsalou and Paul Casey – violin, Margaret Tobolowska, Anne-Marie Guedon – cello, Karen Donnelly – trumpet, Jonathan Sandler – guitar and Tina Fedeski – flute
 - Student mentors from the Ottawa Youth Orchestra and the University of Ottawa
- The musicians who donated their time and talents for our first Fundraising Concert October 14, 2007:
 - Leah Roseman, Mark Friedman, Edvard Skerjanc, Sally Benson, Jane Logan, David Thies-Thompson, Leah Wyber, Margaret Munro Tobolowska; Rideau Lakes Brass Quintet: Karen Donnelly, John Ellis, Jill Kirwan, Don Renshaw, Nick Atkinson; Trio Scherzando: Bryan Cheng, Jeremy Gibbens, Brandon Zhao
 - And all the volunteers who helped with the concert
- Thirteen Strings for featuring and supporting the OrKidstra Program.
 - Renée-Paule Gauthier [violin] and Frédéric Lacroix [piano] for playing a private recital fundraiser organized by Sylvia Gazsi-Gill on January 13th, 2008.
 - Jill Laforty & Steven Mazey for invaluable media coverage.
 - McLeod-Stewarton United Church and First Unitarian Church for providing great concert spaces.
 - Ian Warren, barrister and solicitor, for providing pro bono legal services.
 - Reportex Copy & Print - Katari Imaging for printing services for posters and fliers.
 - Colin Traquair and Troy Kay for graphic design.
 - Guy Harrison, instrument maker & luthier, for providing free written instrument evaluation (for tax receipt purposes).
 - Margaret Tobolowska for donating proceeds from the sale of 100 copies of 'A Cello for Chelsea' and 'Zara the Maggini'.
 - Paula Koundakjian for her invaluable help writing and editing grants.
 - Anne Cure for setting up and improving many violins.
 - Lesley Hendry for designing & evaluating the OrKidstra parents' survey
 - Steven Fouchard for preparing and writing the first newsletter.
 - Sheilah Craven for her invaluable administrative skills.
 - Gary McMillen for setting up the incorporation, organizing the finances and creating the website.
 - The Leading Note print music store for donating:
 - all the print music and books to be used in the program
 - profits from sale of the DVD *Tocar y Luchar*
 - 10% of the buskers' proceeds from the *Busking at The Leading Note* program
 - Greg Idasz for making the mini-documentary on the program.
 - Jennie Riddick for bookkeeping help.
 - Christine Johnson for inspiring support.
 - The Venezuelan Embassy for their ongoing friendship and support.

Everyone is invited to attend The OrKidstra's year end recital on April 28th at 5pm in Mac Hall at the Bronson Centre.

The Leading Note print music store is thrilled to announce that it is the exclusive Canadian distributor of the life-changing *Tocar y Luchar* DVD. All profits from the sale of the DVD are going towards The Leading Note Foundation.



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Mandate

The mandate of The Leading Note Foundation is to give children from low-income communities the opportunity to learn and make music together and the chance to benefit from the individual skills and community values that are inherent in music-making.

Mission Statement

The Leading Note Foundation will:

- provide children in low-income communities with free group and individual music lessons and the opportunity to perform in an OrKidstra;
- instill and reinforce mutual respect, discipline, teamwork, creativity, and self-confidence — all values and skills that are inherent in music-making;
- foster community participation by encouraging young musicians to become mentors to children in the program;
- broaden the community’s understanding of the value of music and the arts by involving volunteers with diverse backgrounds and skills to establish a vibrant network of music educators, players, and community members to strengthen music programs.

‘Devious instruments’ featured in fundraiser



The Leading Note’s talented staff take the stage

The Leading Note Foundation’s OrKidstra program is not only inspiring participating students and their parents, but also the staff of the downtown Ottawa print music shop for which the Foundation is named.

Four of The Leading Note’s staff will be lending their considerable talents to a concert fundraiser, “Dances, Ditties and Devious Instruments”, on Sunday May 4, beginning at 3 p.m. in

Ottawa’s First Unitarian Church (30 Cleary Ave.). Admission is by free-will donation.

The group — pianists Wendy Berkelaar and Laura Hawley, soprano Shannon Cole and baritone Nick Piper — plan a varied program, including songs by Butterworth, Three Argentinean Dances by Ginestra and a piano duet composed by Nick.



Laura promises a light-hearted second half featuring P.D.Q. Bach’s ‘Four Folk Song Upsettings.’

This work, she says, will include voices, piano and “devious instruments.”

“But I won’t give away what those devious instruments are,” Laura adds. The four began planning the concert in fall 2007 and announced it to The Leading Note co-owners

Tina Fedeski and Gary McMillen the following December during the company Christmas party.

“We could all see how hard Tina was working to get the foundation and The OrKidstra program off the ground,” says Laura. “She has given so much of herself to get this going and what better way for us to offer support than to band together and put on this concert.”



“I think I can speak for all four of us when I say that we can truly see how important this program is and we really believe in its creators and are

inspired by their tireless commitment to music education. Music has affected all four of us profoundly and we are thrilled to support a program that gives everyone the chance to have music in their lives.”