

## **Day 1 - VIA Rail, Buckets, & the Dining Hall**

Yoshuna: "I am so happy that we are staying in the Margaret Addison Hall in Victoria College. I feel like a university student living in residence. From my room, I can see the CN Tower and the ROM museum. Burwash Hall, the place where we eat breakfast looks like Hogwarts' Great Hall!"

Sheenie: "I liked when we did the drumming with the kids from Italy and England because it was really fun and everyone was playing together! I also liked the train ride because we got to hang out with our friends!"

Nhan: "Yesterday we had a long train ride from Ottawa but we got to hang out with each other. We went into meet the kids from Europe and we started singing Sing Sing with them. It was a long day but was lots of fun!"

Toan: "Yesterday I enjoyed the drumming and we got to go outside to build a pyramid of buckets! We went walking after dinner and bought some snacks to eat while we played cards in Yoshuna's room"

Nancy: "Yesterday was really fun because the train ride was really interesting. It was really fun to be able to talk to everybody! The place we staying is cool but I really I wish I had a roommate!"

Emily: "I enjoyed playing with the Sistema Toronto kids and the kids from Italy & England. The dining hall is really big and relatable to Hogwarts! I am really excited for the concert today!"

Jennifer: "The train ride was really long but fun. The drumming confused me a little. It was hard to follow so I got lost a lot but it was fun! Then we went for dinner and I ate a lot of food - it was delicious!"

Kafele: "so we did this drumming thing as part of the rehearsal when we got there and there was probably about 500000 little children all in the with buckets and sticks and I thought to myself "oh god, this is going to be heck tick..." But then a glimmer of hope, the conductor raised his arms and each child immediately stopped what there were doing and looked up. \*phew\*"

Ms. Tegan: "6:30am was an early morning but watching the kids interact and play games on the train was worth it! It was pouring rain when we arrived in Toronto but we were quickly rescued by Mr. David and taken to the rehearsal room where we joined in singing Sing Sing. The kids then had the opportunity to take part in some drumming (with buckets!) and then we made our way to the residence where we are staying. The kids are enjoying the feeling of being "university students". We stayed up playing some Dutch Blitz - the competition is strong! Lots of laughs were had today. I can't wait for the concert tonight - 150 kids from around the world playing together. "

## **Day 2 blog from Toronto!**

Nancy - The day was really exciting. My stand partner, Michael, was from England. It was really fun performing with everybody but I had trouble with the triplets. There weren't many people playing the triplets.

Jennifer - In the morning we went to a really big museum (the ROM). I liked that in the bat cave there was a voice over that guided you and the animal exhibit was really realistic. I liked it.

Sheenie - I really liked the concert because it was exciting and I liked how everyone got together to play music. My favourite pieces were Brazil and the Brahms.

Emily - I found the concert really exciting and enjoyable because we got to play with kids from lots of different places. The museum was really big and interesting.

Toan - we had a VERY long dress rehearsal for the concert, which was in a beautiful church downtown. We were just a few wind players in a sea of string players! It was fun. Today was the first time I saw and heard an organ being played live. It was a very impressive sound.

Ngan - today was the first time I played beside Ms. Tina for a full rehearsal and concert. There was a lot more sound! it was fun. It was an extraordinary experience to get to visit Toronto and get to play as a musical family.

Kafele - Okay okay so I had my doubts, I mean who would expect 50000 children to be able to sit through 4 and a half hour rehearsal and then a 3 hour concert without any trouble, but once again they proved me wrong. The concert turned out to be incredible, the sound of an actual professional orchestra, except something a little different. For the past couple of days and especially at this concert I noticed something that really separates children from most professionals, the children actually enjoy themselves and I don't mean smiling while playing, but actually having fun, like making music isn't a job or hobby but an adventure. To be honest I think they inspired me more than any professional orchestra would be able to. I have to say again that the concert was, truly incredible.

Yoshuna - Going to the ROM was a really fun experience because it was interesting to see how everyone else reacted to the large dinosaur fossils and the artifacts from different cultures and times. The rehearsal for the concert and the concert itself was unbelievably long, and I congratulate all the performers for sticking through the long day so well! The concert was great. I loved how all the Sistemas came together and created a united sound. My favourite piece to listen to was Great Gates of Kiev! The performance was full of varying dynamics, energy, and cheerfulness. It was especially cool to hear it with a live organ! These past two days have gone by too quickly, but I am looking forward to breakfast tomorrow.

Ms. Erin - What a great weekend! A huge thank you to David & everyone at Sistema Toronto for all your hard work and to Richard and the SMEEC for making this possible. It was such a good opportunity for the kids. They have been saturated with music making and a unique bond was created through this. As everyone head's back to their programs, I know that this experience will have a ripple effect that will carry these children forward into the next part of their music education. There is nothing like an adventure and "we made it" to bring people together as a team.

All the best from Ottawa.