

EPHATHA

NEWSLETTER FOR THE ALBERTA KODÁLY ASSOCIATION



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President's Message - Spring 2011

Greetings AKA Members!!

My name is Jorgianne Talbot and I am your newly elected AKA President for the 2011-12 term. For those of you who don't know me, let me briefly introduce myself. I am an elementary music and choral music teacher. I have a Master of Music in Music Education with a Kodály Emphasis from Capital University (Columbus, OH), three diplomas from the Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music (Kecskemét, Hungary), an After-Degree in Elementary Education and a Bachelor of Music Degree from the University of Alberta. I am very excited to work with the AKA as we promote and provide professional development support and training for music teachers.

As summer approaches, I always wonder what activities to do in order to relax, rejuvenate, and also sharpen my professional toolbox. The following programs are available to music teachers in Alberta this summer.

There will be an accredited **Kodály Level I Course** offered from July 4-15, 2011 at the University of Alberta. For more information, please click [here](#). The AKA is offering scholarship assistance for this program. Please register with the U of A by June 1.

Also, [Singspiration and Inspiration](#) is happening again at Concordia University College of Alberta in Edmonton from August 8 – 13, 2011.

For your information, I will be attending the 26th International Kodály Seminar and Kodály Art Festival offered by the [Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute of Music](#) in Kecskemét, Hungary from July 15-31, 2011. If you are interested in learning more about the Kodály Institute and possible studying there, please go to their website.

The AKA wishes you a musical summer!!

Jorgianne Talbot, President
Alberta Kodály Association

“Real art is one of the most powerful forces in the rise of mankind, and he who renders it accessible to as many people as possible is a benefactor of humanity.”
Zoltán Kodály

“Save the Date” Events

November 3-5, 2011: Music Conference Alberta, Red Deer

The AKA is again sponsoring clinicians at **Music Conference Alberta**. This conference is a collaboration between the Alberta Choral Federation, the Alberta Band Association, the Alberta Music Education Foundation, the Alberta Kodály Association, and the Alberta Guild of English Handbell Ringers.

Saturday, January 21, 2012: Singposium 2012, Edmonton

Featuring **Elaine Quilichini** and **Viva Choir**. Elaine Quilichini will be offering a full-day workshop for Singposium 2012 at the Alberta College Conservatory of Music.

Reflection:

KODÁLY INSTITUTE 2010 - 35th jubilee of its opening; 15th anniversary of the Foundation for the Kodály Institute
By Ardelles Ries

Between October 7 and 9, 2010, two important anniversaries were celebrated in Zoltán Kodály's birthplace, Kecskemét. The 35th anniversary of the opening of the Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute and the 15th anniversary of the Foundation for the Zoltán Kodály Pedagogical Institute were marked by way of an international conference for Kodály-based music education. Hosted by the Kodály Institute of the Liszt Academy and director, Dr. László Nemes, conference participants (including honorary patron, Mme. Sarolta Kodály, members of the Hungarian music education community, 42 undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled at the Kodály Institute, and representatives from the International Kodály Society) were treated to presentations from eighteen guest speakers and workshop clinicians representing Canada, Finland, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Portugal, Switzerland, and the United States. The keynote speeches, academic papers, and workshops were based on the following conference themes: opportunities and challenges in music education; international adaptations of Kodály-based music pedagogy; and the physical, cognitive, psychological, and social implications of singing. The conference proceedings concluded with two important roundtable discussions related to the success and future of Kodály-based music education in Hungary and the rest of the world.

The keynote speaker for the conference was renowned Hungarian musicianship pedagogue and master teacher of music

pedagogy at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, Ildikó Herboly-Kocsár. Herboly-Kocsár's impassioned presentation focused on the role of music education in the midst of modern-day consumer culture. An optimist at heart, Herboly-Kocsár recommended that the current challenges music educators face be viewed as an opportunity. According to Herboly-Kocsár, music educators need to consider their work as a mission or a social responsibility. Within the context of media-, technology-, and consumer-driven society, music education now, more than ever, serves to build community as well as engage, strengthen, and cultivate creative minds. Herboly-Kocsár strongly reinforced one of the basic tenets of Kodályian philosophy that only the finest music educators be entrusted with the music education of children. She reminded us that, in addition to superb musicianship, the music educator must be selfless, open, and flexible, with a love of music and of children.

In memory of Klara Kokas (1929-2010)—teacher of children of all ages and abilities, professor of the Kodály Institute of the Franz Liszt Academy of Music, founder of AGAPE: Joy of Music, Joy of Life Foundation, and avid environmentalist—a touching DVD presentation explored Kokas' uniquely inspired, beautiful, and compassionate philosophy for music education and music therapy. With the finest music literature as a conduit, Kokas was a champion for the development of expressivity, creativity, and deep understanding of music through singing, improvisation, and movement. Further information and audiovisual materials about her outstanding contribution to music education can be found through Professor Zsuzsa Pásztor from the Liszt Academy of Music and the Eötvös Loránd University, or online at: <http://www.kokas.hu/index.html>

Zsolt Körmendy, educational consultant for Budapest's state-of-the-art Béla Bartók National Concert Hall and Festival Theatre¹, summarized innovative strategies for audience education and development. Programs for outreach concerts include not only classical music but jazz, popular, and world musics as well as dance. Superbly designed educational programs draw families to the concert hall via interactive and experiential events—Baby concerts (i.e., concerts designed for young parents and toddlers), children's matinée concerts, young performers concerts, and improvisation workshops are held nearly every day of the week with extremely affordable tickets (free admission up to \$5 CDN).

Anikó Fehér, folk music professor at the Kodály Institute of the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, based her presentation on the enigmatic phrase: "World music or music of the world?" A discerning view of folk music within the curriculum was offered, highlighting suitable approaches to the appropriation of authentic folk music.

Gabriella Thész, esteemed conductor of the Hungarian Radio Children's Choir, demonstrated how the moveable-do system truly opens the world of contemporary music for children. Thész outlined her philosophy of choral music education for children based on *a cappella* singing, the use of moveable-do solfa, and a systematic and sequential pedagogical approach using the finest repertoire drawn from the 15th century to the present day. According to Thész, the use of solfa will ensure a deep musical understanding of past, present, and future musical styles. (See *Figure 1*). Although a fine children's choir can be built as one would any fine instrument, Thész firmly believes

that this can only be done with compassion, kindness, and honesty as children are willing, open, and able partners within the artistic process.



left to right:
Nemes László, Ardelle Ries, Erdei Péter

Practical workshops led by Cyrilla Rowsell and Miranda Zwalf from the British Kodály Academy, Alan Murdoch from Ireland, and Lucinda Geoghegan from the National Youth Choir of Scotland provided clear examples of adaptations for Kodály-based music pedagogy in the United Kingdom. References were made to the use of YouTube and the adaptation of Kodályian philosophy for instrumental teaching as applied to the *Colourstrings* method.

Dr. Ava Numminen and Tuula Tenni from the Sibelius Academy in Finland brought insights to the physiological, cognitive, psychological, and social implications of singing in order to assist music educators as we lead children and adults of all abilities and attitudes to the world of song. Numminen's doctoral dissertation, *Helping adult poor pitch singers to sing in tune: A study of obstacles confronting developing singers and a means to surmount them*, led to the establishment of

¹ *Constructed in 2005, the Béla Bartók Concert Hall is one of the world's finest concert halls, home to many fine orchestras. If ever in Budapest, this hall is a "must see/must hear" on your sightseeing (sighthearing) list!

a novel, holistic singing program in Finland— *Key to Song*. This educational program for developing singers of all ages focuses on Kodály's adage that "music is for everyone." Through creative and enjoyable exercises in vocal exploration and awareness, program participants are gradually led to change identity, from a non-singer to a singer.

Marita Kern, professor of Music Education at the School of Education, in Trinity College, Dublin shared results of a recent research project that investigates whether student music-teacher reflections as learners have the potential to change pedagogical practice. Kern believes that teacher training programs must endeavour to instill in their students the ability and willingness to act as reflective practitioners. The ability to reflect is a learned skill and the adoption of insights into practice can initially be difficult. Kern's paper describes personal reflections of ten trainee music teachers, all neophytes to traditional Irish music, and their experiences as novice tin-whistle students. The manner in which student teachers' practice was affected when the student teachers themselves were learners was determined through the analysis of reflective journals and group reports.

Round table discussions focused on the international success of Kodály-based music pedagogy. Delegates drawn from the international Kodály community to participate in the panel included Cristina Brita da Cruz, professor of ear training and music pedagogy from Portugal's Escola Superior de Música de Lisboa; OAKE president, Dr. Joy Nelson; Lorraine O'Connell from the Dublin Institute of Technology Conservatory of Music and Drama; Dr. Ardelle Ries from the University of Alberta; Michalis Patseas, director of the Kodály Conservatory and Greek Kodály Institute; Lenke Igó, supervisor of student teaching from the Liszt Academy; Alan Murdock from Great Britain's John Fisher School Chapel Choir; and Finnish representative, Dr. Ava Numminen. Each round-table participant described the

application of Kodály-based music education within their respective countries from historical and current perspectives. The presenters shared a certain degree of anxiety about the survival of Kodályian philosophy within contemporary society addicted to immediate results, emphasis on outcome-based educational practices, economic viability, and market value.

The final session of the conference featured a round table discussion devoted to the future of Kodály-based music pedagogy in Hungary. The panel consisted of individuals representing diverse segments within the Hungarian music education community: Gabriella Thész from the Hungarian Radio Children's Choir; Dr. Katalin Kiss, musicianship teacher from the Kodály Institute of the Liszt Academy; Emese Szanka, graduate in music education from the University of Debrecen and teacher from the Kecskemét Kodály School; János Laczkó, graduate in conducting from the Liszt Academy and music teacher at the József Katona Secondary School in Kecskemét; Dr. Mihály Ittzés, musicology professor at the Kodály Institute of the Liszt Academy; and Dr. Peter Erdei, Professor and Director Emeritus from the Kodály Institute. The Hungarian round table delegates were asked to speak to the dilemmas that music educators face today through responses to three important questions:

1. Should music belong to everyone and, if so, can music realistically belong to everyone?
2. What circumstances would make this (#1) possible?
3. What advice can be given to Kodály music educators?

Based on responses from the panel for the first question, it was clear that a number of factors have worked against this vision. Globalization and changes in political structure over the last two decades have spawned instability for Hungarian music education. As a result, inconsistent music

curricula, reduced funds, rising costs for materials, declining standards, decrease in the number of instructional minutes for music, and criticisms of Kodályian philosophy abound. Although 200 music schools exist within Hungary, 4% out of 5000 schools is a statistic far removed from the Kodályian ideal.

Responses to the second question were far more hopeful, citing passionate teachers, quality teacher training, changes to government policy, and advocacy as integral agents to ensure music education for everyone. It was suggested that additional research and collaboration with the scientific and academic communities would provide a compelling and concrete justification for the inclusion and continuation of quality music education in the school system. Gabriela Thész concluded this portion of the round table discussion with a motivational question —“We can live without music, but then *how* will we live?”

Members of the panel gave advice to future teachers:

- Choose to teach only if motivated by fervent passion and untiring devotion, dedication, and commitment to the cause.
- Keep informed and up to date with knowledge of current musical and cultural trends.
- Listen mindfully to music every day, both live and recorded, and encourage parents and children to do the same.
- Remember that pedagogical renewal is a life-long venture. Teachers are partners with children throughout all education and performance experiences, i.e., teachers learn as well as lead.
- Educate with the goal to create both a hunger and a taste for art.
- Observe lessons and learn from master teachers.
- Teach the music that you love the most.

- Be a living example of what you teach.

A fourth, rather sobering question was posed by the panel itself near the end of the final round table discussion, as the waning interest in Kodály music education within Hungary and the slow erosion of international teacher training programs was discussed —“What have we done wrong?” This question was immediately rearticulated by an ardent and unanimous call for action, i.e., “What can we do?” There is an acute awareness that a number of cultural factors are at work, far beyond the control of passionate advocates for quality music education. Conference presenters and participants declared that through conferences such as the one generously hosted by the Kodály Institute, a unified front from the Hungarian and international Kodály communities will build momentum, prompting innovative advocacy and proactive approaches for dissemination.

The conference was brought to an encouraging and inspirational close through the words of a Hungarian proverb:

If you have a vision for one year, cultivate potatoes.

If you have a vision for 10 years, cultivate grapes.

If you have a vision for 100 years, be a pedagogue.

Figure 1

Whole Tone Scale

Octatonic Scale

Twelve Tone

The figure displays three musical scales on a treble clef staff. The Whole Tone Scale is shown with notes D, E, F#, G, A, B, and C. The Octatonic Scale is shown with notes D, E, F, G, A, B, C, and D. The Twelve Tone scale is shown with notes D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and A. Each scale is accompanied by a sequence of letters below the staff, likely representing solfège syllables or fingerings.

Choral Literature:

Review of three choral pieces

By Janos Horvath

1. Mi'kmaq Honour Song, Incorporating Traditional Chant, by Lydia Adams. Originally for mixed voices but can be done by treble voices as well. Publisher: Leslie Music Supply Inc.

This piece is a great combination of working with a traditional chant and combining it with clusters of sounds and imitating several bird sounds.

The chant is a very accessible melody excellent for sensitive vocal production, good for teaching flexible chant-like singing, and enables the singers to be free of metric "limitations". It appears in canon form as well; the second part entering two beats later. Before singing in canon, the main melody needs to be taught securely; also advisable to use canon preparatory exercises, as singing two beats later can be challenging.

Once ready for two-part singing, at the start I would ask individual singers to follow the main melody without using the written music!! This will ensure independent and stable canonic work.

The "accompanying" clusters are excellent for many pedagogical purposes.

The chromatic scale that should be practiced melodically with the students before starting the chordal work.

The relative newness of these sounds will turn natural and become a source of fun, enabling the singers to be independent, confident and free.

The individuals imitating the bird sounds will have to follow cues from the conductor but there are no traditional conducting patterns to follow.

In summery this piece can open new vistas both for the students and the conductor.

**2. Feller From Fortune, arr. By Nancy Telfer
Publisher: Reflections Of Canada, vol.2,
Frederick Harris Music**

This very spirited Irish fiddle tune, reflecting the life in Newfoundland's outports is an excellent example of fast 6/8 music. The melody allows free and spirited, probably a bit "careless", performance. It is about dancing, drinking and courting. It needs to be performed with energy, freedom and need not to be too cautious of blend and "beauty". The most important thing is to have a great time singing and frolicking!!!

It is an excellent example for dealing with fast 6/8 music in a free way, very careful counting is needed at the end where the patterns change and the surprise effect is very smartly composed.

Great variety of dynamics and "displaced" accents make this piece great fun to perform. Also the role of the conductor is essential, great for the choir to be ready to respond to what the conductor is conducting.

I will never forget Elmer Iseler working an arrangement of this piece with my choir. Have lots of fun!!!

To register, or for more information about the Alberta Kodály Association go to

<http://www.albertakodaly.ca/kodaly/membership>

3. The Lake Isle of Innisfree by Eleanor Daley
Publisher: Oxford University Press 2002

This piece came my way through Marni Strom, conductor of the Calgary Children's Choir.

This is a beautiful sensitive piece of music, set W.B. Yeats poetry.

The piano accompaniment is an organic part of the composition and needs to be nurtured.

It starts out with beautiful controlled unison singing - an excellent way to learn about changing meter and getting used to ritardandos, meno mossos and other ways of changing tempi and feelings in a very disciplined way.

The composer obviously knows how to write for the voice and how to bring out the singers' best.

As two and three part harmony appear, the voice balancing is crucial for good intonation and blend.

The melody moves around and the larger moves need to be prepared ahead of time, so the smoothness and fluency of expression does not suffer.

The build up of intensity is very important to be able to keep the forward movement of the musical line, in spite of the changes in tempo or dynamics.

Sustaining the mood and tone while maintaining good vocal support is crucial to feel the beautiful ending. This is what leaves us with the feeling of magic that music, singing and words can create.

Reflection:

Acorn to OAKE: Nurturing Musical Growth Creativity, Quality, Community
Organization of American Kodály Educators
2011 National Conference
By Betty Radford

It was my good fortune to be able to attend OAKE's National conference this past spring in Minneapolis. This was the first time I had an opportunity to attend the OAKE conference which happens in a different American city each year. I had heard about it from my Kodály colleagues in the past and decided that this year I was going to go. It was tremendous!

I travelled to the conference with our president, Jorgianne Talbot. Mostly I tagged along as she has been a regular participant at these conferences in the past. We boarded the "red-eye special" on March 16 and had breakfast in Toronto. We arrived at our hotel where the conference took place and started right into sessions immediately. There were many choices... "Techniques for Nurturing Part Singing", Latin American folk Music in the Kodály Classroom", Fostering Solfege Skill & Creativity with Classroom instruments", Branching out: Aural, Visual & Kinesthetic Strategies for Musical Development". These are a tiny sampling.

The next days were spent attending many sessions and performances. It was great to have so many discussions. I was also really pleased to see so many younger teachers participating and looking forward to careers in the music classroom. Their approach to music teaching parallels the work we do here in Alberta.

Several choirs participated in the conference and there were many superb performances. Three National choirs (the National Children's Choir, the National Youth Choir, the National Concert Choir) met for a week of rehearsal. These choirs each performed several songs in the concert Finale of the conference.

If you have a chance to participate in this conference, please consider it. It is great to rub shoulders with so many who are striving to achieve the same goals we all work towards – excellent music programs for our students.

OAKE 2012 National Conference is in Phoenix, Arizona, March 15 – 17.

Maybe it's your turn to go!

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Calgary Arts Academy Kodály Music Position

♪ This is a Calgary arts school that is looking to hire a full-time Kindergarten– Grade 4 music teacher who is Kodaly-trained and interested in teaching in a school setting

♪ This is a charter school with an independent board, their own superintendent, a benefit package, an affiliation with the ATA so the payment is close to ATA standards and also the same pension fund into which the Calgary Board of Education and Calgary Catholic Board contribute

♪ If you are interested, please contact Mr. John VanBeers at: 403-229-3010 or jvanbeers@calgaryartsacademy.com

♪ If you have any questions that you would like to discuss prior to contacting Mr. VanBeers, please contact Susan Drayson at: sdrayson@mtroyal.ca and she will put you into contact with an instructor from the school who will be happy to chat with you. You may also look at their website: www.calgaryartsacademy.com

Thank you for your interest. It sounds like a wonderful job!