

Tempo: Manitoba Music Educators' Association Conference 2025
October 24, 2025
Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute
173 Talbot Avenue

Program:

8:40-9:50 am

Session One

9:50 - 10:20 am Industry Display and Coffee Break

10:20-11:30 am

Manitoba Music Educators' Association Gathering and Keynote Address

11:30-1:00 pm

General Luncheon and MBA Luncheon and Awards

1:00-2:10 pm

Session Two

2:10 - 2:30 pm Industry Display and Coffee Break

2:30 - 3:40 pm

Session Three

Jodi Contin

Jodi Contin is from Wasauksing First Nation. Her Anishinabek roots and cultural ethical principles shine through in everything she does. Drumming and singing are activities close to her heart as well as being a renewed drum maker.

Currently, Jodi is Director of Programs and Culture at the Parry Sound Friendship Centre.

As a mother to three sons, and Nookomis to Little Joe and Baby Bodie, family and community are incredibly important to her.

Jodi is a musician, song writer, and co-narrator in the productions "Sounding Thunder the Song of Francis Pegahmagabow" and "The Spirit Horse Returns." Both productions are about Truth and Reconciliation.

Ken MacDonald

Ken is currently the Associate Principal horn with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, a position he has held since 2001. He is a long-standing collaborator with the Festival of the Sound and a member of the

national touring ensemble Octagon. MacDonald's solo work has been featured with the WSO, the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, and on national CBC broadcasts. Ken is a co-creator of the acclaimed production "The Spirit Horse Returns," a collaborative work that explores the history and cultural significance of the Ojibwe horses, which has been produced across Canada. Beyond the stage, he is a passionate educator, teaching at the University of Manitoba and serving as a National Arts Centre teaching artist. A certified trainer in holistic teaching approaches, Ken MacDonald brings a wealth of experience, artistry, and dedication to every performance and masterclass.

Patrick Sheridan

Patrick is one of history's most celebrated tuba soloists. He has performed over 3,500 concerts in 50+ countries, from the White House to the Hollywood Bowl. A former member of "The President's Own" U.S. Marine Band, he has been featured on NBC's Today Show and NPR's All Things Considered.

Beyond performing, Patrick is deeply committed to education. His students hold principal positions in major orchestras and military bands across 30+ countries and serve on over 200 university faculties. He has taught at Arizona State, NAU, UCLA, the Rotterdam Conservatory, the Royal Northern College of Music, and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Co-author of The Breathing Gym®, the best-selling method for instrumental improvement, he has presented clinics to over a million students worldwide. The method won a 2009 Regional Emmy® for Instructional Video Production. He serves as Chief Design Consultant for Jupiter Band Instruments, Hercules Stands, and Laskey Mouthpieces.

Jennifer Barnes

Ms. Barnes is a highly sought-after vocalist, educator, clinician and arranger and Professor of Music at the University of North Texas. As Director of Vocal Jazz Studies, Ms. Barnes oversees all vocal activities within the Division of Jazz Studies at UNT, including four vocal jazz ensembles and directing the award-winning Jazz Singers. She has previously taught at seven other universities, served as a guest conductor for District and All-State Music Festivals in sixteen states, taught jazz vocal improvisation at the Jamey Aebersold Jazz Camps from 1998 through 2015, and was the invited conductor of the inaugural ACDA Honor Jazz Choir in 2025. Her vocal arrangements are published by Sheet Music Plus, Anchor Music Publications, UNC Jazz Press, KerryMarsh.com, and self-published on her website, JenniferBarnesMusic.com. She was awarded the 2016 Jazz Education Achievement Award by DownBeat Magazine, as only the second vocal educator to receive that honor.

Ms. Barnes earned the Master of Music degree from the University of Miami (FL) and the Bachelor of Music degree from Western Michigan University.

Susan Brumfield

Dr. Brumfield is Professor of Music Education at Texas Tech University. She is an internationally recognized author, composer and Kodaly specialist. Recent publications include the First, We Sing! Series of Kodály-inspired teaching materials, Hot Peas and Barley-O: Children's Songs and Games from Scotland, Over the Garden Wall: Children's Songs and Games from England and most recently, Jean Ritchie's Kentucky Mother Goose, published by Hal Leonard. She also has an extensive catalogue of choral publications. Her areas of expertise include methodology, folk music research and performance, and choral music for treble voices. She is a native of South Louisiana.

8:40-9:50 am

Session One

I Think I'm Terrible, What Now?

Patrick Sheridan

Sponsor: Jupiter

Location: Band Room

Freaking about Fillmore? Grim about Grainger? Horrified with Holst? Questioning what, how, and why you are teaching? Need to fall in love with music and teaching again? Want to hear your scores in greater detail? Come to this inspirational clinic about intention and focus. Discover pathways to improved musicianship, inspiration, and meaning in your music education career.

Guitar Chords

Andrew Erickson

Sponsor: MMEA

Location: Theatre

Teaching chords from junior high to high school (including your jazz band guitar players!) Andrew will go through a variety of common chord shapes, modifiers, jazz voicings and approaches to chord theory. Guitars provided (first 30 people)

L'apprentissage musical à travers le folklore francophone

Rachelle Landry and Jody Stark

Sponsor: MMEA

Location: Library

Dans cette session, Rachelle et Jody vont partager des modèles et principes pour approfondir les connaissances et les habiletés musicales des élèves de M à 6e années à travers le répertoire traditionnel francophone.

Rachelle and Jody will share activities for use in the K-6 French music context using traditional folk materials to develop students' musical understanding and skills.

Flute FUNdamentals: Confident Teaching from the First Note

Stéphanie Superle

Sponsor: MMEA
Location: 5100

Teaching flute can feel tricky—but it doesn't have to! This hands-on session gives you the tools to tackle embouchure, first notes, tone development, and common classroom challenges. Build your confidence and leave with practical tips to make teaching flute fun and effective! Don't forget to bring a flute!

Music as a Guide – Aural Training for the Rhythm Section

Fabio Ragnelli

Sponsor: Manitoba Chamber Orchestra

Location: 5102

What are the challenges in describing a rhythm, feel, and/or stylistic approach when working with a rhythm section? Does musical terminology or notation work? Using specific musical examples as a primary resource helps streamline the process.

The session will cover specific styles and recordings, notated examples, rhythm section 'dictionary', and authentic sound (the beat).

Warm-ups to guarantee healthy tone production

Catherine Robbins

Sponsor: Manitoba Chamber Orchestra

Location: Choir Room

This session explains and coordinates essential principles of alignment, respiration, phonation, and resonance that contribute to vibrant vocal development. Methods to build an effective warm-up sequence will be explored and demonstrated. Teachers may record and employ this sequence in future rehearsals along with the accompanying PowerPoint presentation.

Vocal Jazz 101 - Part 1

Jennifer Barnes

Sponsor: St. John's Music

Location: Multi Purpose Room

In this session, we'll cover a broad spectrum of the basics of getting started with a vocal jazz ensemble, with topics to include repertoire, sound reinforcement, rhythm section, vocal jazz ensemble sound and style, and rehearsal techniques.

Note: Whether or not you've attended "Vocal Jazz 101 - Part 1", you're welcome to attend "Vocal Jazz 101- Continued" at 1:00 p.m

Enriching Students with Military Music - An Opportunity

Joel Lessard

Sponsor: Fehr Way Tours

Location: 3200

Explore the benefits of exposing your students (and yourself!) to a military wind band, military music, and the military environment. Learn about the many ways students can musically and personally gain independence, confidence, fulfillment, accountability, adaptability, and much more through involvement in a military Brass & Reed Band.

Making Music More Accessible - Bringing more students more opportunities

Tricia Howe & Sheila Scott

Sponsor: Long & McQuade

Location: 3201

This session will talk about some of the equipment currently available to make musical instruments more available to learners with physical barriers, including instruments from a more universal design perspective, and allow attendees some time with the equipment.

Mix it Up! Songs and Games for Brain Breaks, Social Interaction and Fun!

Susan Brumfield

Sponsor: St. John's Music

Location: Blue Gym

Whether it's singing, playing instruments, reading and writing notation, creating or listening intently, many skill-based activities in music classes require intense concentration and focus. Incorporating intermittent "brain breaks" throughout your lessons can provide students with much-needed opportunities to rest, recharge and refocus their minds and bodies, enhancing their overall experience and enjoyment.

These informal activities help to foster social interaction, reduce stress, provide opportunities for sharing musical ideas, build rapport and camaraderie, and create an atmosphere of belonging and community within the classroom. In this session, we will actively explore repertoire with a focus on its musical and extra musical benefits. We'll learn name games, "mixers" and other songs and games along with fun activities designed to get students moving, singing and playing while cultivating a joyful, playful, and relaxed environment for learning.

10:20-11:30 am

Keynote Address: The Spirit Horse Returns: Truth Behind the Harmony

A Case Study in Cross-Cultural Educational Partnership

Jodi Contin & Ken MacDonald

Sponsor: Long & McQuade

Location: Jubilee Place

When a settler musician (Ken MacDonald) and an Anishinaabe storyteller (Jodi Contin) set out to share the story of the Ojibwe Horse with young audiences, the result was "The Spirit Horse Returns", an acclaimed orchestral production that has served as a powerful curriculum tool for K-12 Truth and Reconciliation education across

Canada.

In this keynote featuring songs from the production, Ken and Jodi demonstrate how the arts can bridge cultures.

But for music educators across Manitoba seeking to build their own authentic partnerships, the real lessons are found as we move beyond the success of the show to discuss the process of collaboration. Ken and Jodi reveal the necessary friction, difficult conversations, and direct criticisms they faced from within their communities and the arts world.

This is not just a story of success; it is a vital conversation about humility, vulnerability, and the personal responsibility required to create shared, meaningful educational resources.

With this keynote, you'll walk away with concrete, actionable takeaways on how to approach these partnerships with integrity. If you're not Indigenous, you'll be empowered to confidently integrate Indigenous teachings and music into your curriculum, creating musical experiences for your learners that are both safe and profoundly impactful.

11:30 am-1:00 pm

General Luncheon and MBA Luncheon and Awards

12:10-12:50 pm

Indigenous Artist Sharing Circle

Rhonda Head, Ray (Coco) Stevenson, Sylvia Wastesicoot with Dr. Jody Stark, Amanda Ciavarelli, Andrew Legeny

Sponsor: Desautels Faculty of Music (UM) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

Location: Choir Room

In this session participants will have the chance to get to know three local Indigenous musician-educators and their music. While Rhonda, Coco, and Sylvia all work in different contexts and genres, this session explores how their music could potentially provide a way of learning about Indigenous perspectives for students in Manitoba music programs.

1:00-2:10 pm - Session Two

Jazz Band Rehearsal Techniques - An Open Rehearsal

Alexis Silver

Sponsor: International Music Camp

Location: Jubilee Place

We music educators often face the challenge of balancing numerous tasks with limited time. Productive rehearsals require thoughtful planning and goal setting, but covering all the essentials can be tough. In this session, we'll explore ways to listen to influential artists, try a wee bit of basic jazz theory, and encourage style development through student-focused rehearsal techniques. Join us as we dive into warm-ups, listening exercises, rehearsal strategies, and project-based learning, all demonstrated with a great, young, live ensemble!

Rehearsal Techniques of the Masters

Patrick Sheridan

Sponsor: Long & McQuade and Jupiter

Location: Band Room

Methodologies for better ensemble intonation, dynamics, articulations, time, and expression drawn from Patrick Sheridan's 35-year career as an international soloist, applied lesson teacher, and 20 years as a community ensemble conductor. Active intonation studies for better ears, dynamic and articulation visual aids, groove games for better time, and free play for improved expression will be demonstrated.

Indigenous/Non-Indigenous Collaborations Through Music

Dr. Jody Stark, Rhonda Head, Coco (Ray) Stevenson, Sylvia Wastesicoot, Andrew Legeny, Amanda Ciavarelli

Sponsor: International Music Campo

Location: Choir Room

Indigenous musicians and educators Rhonda Head, Coco (Ray) Stevenson, and Sylvia Wastesicoot, along with music teacher collaborators Andrew Legeny, Jody Stark, and Amanda Ciavarelli, share about their experience working together to bring Indigenous perspectives into their teaching contexts in a good way along with ethical principles for settler/Indigenous collaborations.

Supporting Guitarists in the Middle and High-School Jazz Band

Rylan Knaggs

Sponsor: St. John's Music

Location: Theatre

Familiarize yourself with the essential 7th chord voicings and extensions common to jazz guitar players through an adaptable visual format. Learn to make necessary adaptations and simplifications to existing guitar parts using notation software. Facilitate student independence through a self-directed method for categorizing and memorizing the most common chord qualities as they appear on the guitar fretboard.

What Works for Me: A Conversation Exploring the Joys and Challenges of Teaching in a Higher Needs School

Mark Sawatzky

Sponsor: Fehr Way Tours

Location: 5100

The music room in any school can be a sanctuary for joy and community for students; a place where they build relationships, feel safe and can strive for excellence. It is vital in schools where students may have fewer resources or opportunities.

The State of Your Fire: Tending to the Soul of the Music Educator

Anna Harrison

Sponsor: Fehr Way Tours

Location: 5102

With so many tasks, responsibilities and a tendency to care deeply about our work, music educators often find themselves in a state of burnout wondering...what happened? In this workshop, we will discuss factors that contribute to burnout and different ways that they manifest in the body, mind and spirit as well as explore a range of boundary setting techniques through creative movement.

Introduction to Audio Technology for Music Educators

Joel Green

Sponsor: International Music Camp

Location: Library

This presentation will cover the fundamentals of using an audio console. Basic conceptual foundations and terminology of live sound reinforcement will be discussed, and attendees will learn the theoretical basis for how to properly set up a simple mixer with multiple channels of live microphones.

Vocal Jazz 101...continued

Jennifer Barnes

Sponsor: St. John's Music

Location: Multi Purpose Room

In this session, we'll cover a broad spectrum of the basics of getting started with a vocal jazz ensemble, with topics to include repertoire, sound reinforcement, rhythm section, vocal jazz ensemble sound and style, and rehearsal techniques.

Note: Whether or not you've attended "Vocal Jazz 101 - Part 1", you're welcome to attend "Vocal Jazz 101...continued".

Peer Teaching Wins with the Fiddle

Johanna Hildebrand, Dana Crawford and Tanya Quintana

Sponsor: MMEA

Location: 3200

Join fiddle teacher Johanna Hildebrand, and classroom teachers Dana Crawford and Tanya Quintana in this session exploring how the fiddle room and classroom come together in the peer teaching model used at Constable Edward Finney School in the Seven Oaks School Division. Discover how older students mentor younger ones, enhancing classroom dynamics, fostering leadership, and integrating competencies within the Circle of Courage framework.

Des chansons francophones pour une jeunesse engagée!**Marie-Claude McDonald, Lynne Brémault-Parent****Sponsor: MMEA****Location: 3201**

Les chansons francophones contemporaines sont un véhicule important pour contribuer au cheminement langagier, identitaire et culturel des élèves. Venez découvrir un répertoire de chansons « coup de cœur », porteuses de messages riches et engageants pour les élèves de la 4^e à la 8^e année.

Practical Pedagogy: Skill Building and Practice Activities**Susan Brumfield****Sponsor: St. John's Music****Location: Blue Gym**

You've carefully prepared and "presented" each new element, but what's next? Practice, and lots of it! Fast-paced and fun, these 5-7 minute "practice cards" are designed to reinforce new concepts and support literacy skills through sequential, easy to assess activities. Student-tested and approved, these activities fit easily into your rehearsal and lesson plans, with minimum planning and maximum results. Participants will explore creative ways to reinforce musical skill development in singing, playing, reading, writing, composition, improvisation and part-work in both general music and choral settings. We will explore 5-7 minute practice activities designed to save planning time and to provide efficient and fun ways to deliver instruction and assess.

2:30 - 3:40 pm**Session Three****Unlock Your Brain: Keys to Stress-Free Learning****Patrick Sheridan****Sponsor: Jupiter****Location: Jubilee Place**

Optimize your classroom! Motivation to learn grows through autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Skills develop with mindful repetition and a clear "why." To refine skills, our brain must be in the right state, or bad habits form. Explore the neuroscience of skill acquisition and why musicians must prepare their brains for practice and performance. Discover how breathwork gets your brain excited to learn!

Teaching Improvisation at the High School Level**Greg Gatien****Sponsor: Brandon University****Location: Band Room**

An exploration of techniques and strategies to foster a safe and welcoming space for students of all levels in which they can develop improvisational language that can be expressive, structured, rooted in tradition, and expandable.

Instant Ideas for Engaging Guitar Lessons**Brendan McLean****Sponsor: Desautels Faculty of Music (UM)**

Location: Theatre

This session is for guitar teachers and music instructors new to guitar, focusing on small ideas from pop tunes to refresh your lessons. You arrive in class, your computer isn't working, there's no sub plan, and the projector's on sabbatical leave—having some quick lesson ideas at your fingertips can really save the day.

Chanter et jouer de la maternelle à la 6e année**Amanda Ciavarelli****Sponsor: MMEA****Location: Library**

Venez explorer des chansons et des jeux français qui encouragent les élèves à participer activement à la création musicale et à l'apprentissage. Cette session comprendra des activités pour les élèves de la maternelle à la 6e année.

For School and Community: Teaching Beyond the Perimeter in Manitoba**Wendy Zander, Andrew Coombs, Aurora Whitehead, Kelsey Zimmerman****Sponsor: Brandon University****Location: 5100**

Music educators live, teach, and thrive in every corner of Manitoba. Teachers, each positioned at the centre of arts education, will share viewpoints on the role and value of teaching and investing in the students, families, and residents in their communities. This roundtable discussion will explore the perceived benefits, challenges, and strategies of teaching in a rural position.

Vocal Health for Singers and Educators: Toward Tension-free Phonation**Catherine Robbins****Sponsor: Desautels Faculty of Music (UM)****Location: 5102**

This session provides an overview of the causes of muscle tension in both speech and singing with a focus on principles of tension-free respiration, tone production, and resonance. The session will introduce accessible exercises to develop vocal health in singers and speakers of all ages.

L&M New Music Reading Session for Middle Years and Senior Years Choirs**Vic Pankratz with accompanist Everett Hopfner****Sponsor: Long & McQuade****Location: Choir Room**

Come join us in singing through some highlights of choral music for 2025 for choirs of all ages. The first half of the session (35 mins) will focus on repertoire for early and middle years, featuring unison and 2-part works. The second half (35 mins) will focus on repertoire suited for senior years (grade 9-12) ensembles in 3-part, 4-part, and beyond! Come ready to sing through some great pieces from the 2025 L&M New Music Favourites Choral collection. We have room for lots of voices and the first 30 to arrive for each session half will leave with a complimentary package of octavos!

Next level Vocal Jazz: Moving past the basics**Jennifer Barnes****Sponsor: MMEA****Location: Multi Purpose Room**

An exploration of pedagogical tools for the vocal jazz ensemble director to take their group to the next level! We'll discuss improvisation, programming/repertoire, and advanced stylistic tools including "Micro-dynamics"!

How and Why - Thoughts on Fiddling in Schools.**Daniel Koulack****Sponsor: Manitoba Chamber Orchestra****Location: 3200**

Thoughts and what we are doing and why we are doing it. A few good teaching tricks developed over the years. A discussion of technique. Three elements that determine "success" for more serious students - desire, aptitude, support.

Bring your instruments (there may be a few on hand) - we will play some tunes! Sheet music available for those that are unfamiliar with fiddle repertoire.

Music Belongs to All Learners**Sheila Scott and Holly Walker****Sponsor: Brandon University****Location: 3201**

Bringing together diverse experiences in neurodiversity, Holly Walker (Brandon School Division) and Sheila Scott (Brandon University) explore ways to welcome all learners into inclusive spaces for music education. The applications and perceptions shared are suitable for multiple facets of music learning such as general elementary, guitar, choral, and instrumental.

It's All in Your Head: From Musical Literacy to Improvisation**Susan Brumfield****Sponsor: St. John's Music****Location: Blue Gym**

From the moment children can utter sounds, they begin to create their own musical worlds through babbling, moving, speaking and ultimately singing in their own ways. These natural creative instincts can and should be nurtured in a relaxed and playful way, in a fun and safe classroom environment. There is a frequent misconception that the highly structured nature of this approach can inhibit, rather than encourage creativity. In a true Kodály-inspired practice, however, improvisation is an integral part of the process, embedded in each stage of concept development. Some teachers struggle with the idea of teaching improvisation because of their own experience (or lack of experience) with that skill. Even those who feel completely confident about other aspects of planning and teaching may experience fear or musical insecurity at the thought of finding ways for their students to show what they know through improvisation activities. In this session, we will explore improvisation as a skill (not a magic trick!) that can be developed over time, through small, incremental steps, and view spontaneous creation as a fun, enjoyable process for students and their teachers, too.

