

Welcome to the 75th anniversary of the Sault Ste. Marie Music Festival. This year's Festival begins on March 24 with the String division and concludes with the Shield Competition on April 29. All of the adjudicated sessions are condensed into 10 exciting days of music with hundreds of student performances. We have excellent professional adjudicators travelling to Sault Ste. Marie from across Ontario. All of the adjudicated sessions are free of charge - so come out and enjoy.

The full program will be posted on our website about two weeks before the start of each session.
http://www.algomaconservatory.com/web-content/pages/festival_index.html

There will again be a variety of junior and senior scholarships awarded and as a grand finale the 2012 Festival concludes with the ***Shield Competition***, featuring the finest senior students from each division. This is sure to be an exhilarating evening of music. All of the junior scholarships will be mailed at the conclusion of the Festival, and the senior scholarships and awards will be presented at the Shield Competition. We ask all senior recipients to attend.

I have been involved with the Festival for over 25 years and have seen it evolve into a truly positive format. Some years ago individual number grading of each performance was removed, due to the wonderfully creative elements in music performance and the resulting subjective nature of their evaluation. This was replaced with a certificate of participation for each student. This includes written comments and evaluation of each performance from the adjudicator. The competitive aspect does still remain, however, with the awarding of scholarships, and the selection of students to compete in both the Shield Competition and the Ontario Provincial Music Festival Competition. The adjudicator's selection of these competitors is partly based on the number grade assigned to each senior performance. These grades are only shared with students selected for the Ontario Provincial Music Festival Competition.

Through our festival's combination of an evaluation certificate and the awarding of scholarships, we hope to offer recognition, encouragement and the motivation to excel, while maintaining a positive and festive atmosphere for all participants. Students wishing a more detailed evaluation, including a number grade, are encouraged to complete examinations through the Royal Conservatory of Music or Conservatory Canada which are held in Sault Ste. Marie several times each year.

I encourage you to become involved in the Festival by participating in the sessions and enjoying the concerts. Preparing for a Festival performance is an excellent goal to work towards each year - and hearing other student performances is important for all students. I hope that the Festival will encourage you to keep working at your music. Every student in the Festival has the potential to reach a level where they can experience the joy of making music at home and in chamber groups, bands, orchestras and choirs.

Since 2005 the Algoma Conservatory of Music has coordinated the Sault Ste. Marie Music Festival and is committed to providing a top quality music festival as it is important for the many talented students, and the dedicated music teachers in our community.

The joy of making music lasts a lifetime.

Guy Trafficante
Principal, Algoma Conservatory of Music
A non-profit organization - located and affiliated with Algoma University