

As both an exhibitor and a teacher, I am often envious of the attendees who are able to attend conference sessions (or meet at lunch!) while I am working in the exhibit hall. However I was able to attend a couple of the wonderful evening concerts, and also some Tuesday sessions after the exhibit hall closed.

A Tuesday presentation by Dr. Gilles Comeau, Director of the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory at Ottawa University was particularly inspiring to me, and would probably have been of interest to everyone on this list. Previously unknown to me, this laboratory was opened in Oct 2005 for research and training. It came about due to a \$1.2 million grant from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Ontario Innovation Trust, and the private sector.

I suspect that in the future we will be hearing a great deal from this project, particularly in the areas of research which Dr. Comeau described: 1) Piano Pedagogy as a New Field of Research, 2) Motivation (How do young children develop high motivation at an early age? What will cross-cultural analysis tell us?), 3) Music Reading (Drop-outs increase when music reading begins-why? How many signs are needed to become fully literate? What about eye tracking, dyslexia, text size, coordination?), 4) Injury Prevention (40% of keyboard players will suffer from injury at some point), 5) Physical Aspects of Piano Playing (Analysis of posture and body movement), 6) Video-Mediated Learning.

They have a website and one can subscribe to an e-mail newsletter for additional information and updates. www.piano.uottawa.ca

Dr. Comeau, a warm, smiling, brilliant man, pointed out that they are trying to find out what actually works and why-not what should work, or what tradition or advertising or popular opinion or “experts” say works. They have latest medical and educational technology, a full library of all published method books “all editions”, and collaborating experts from many scientific disciplines. This is exciting stuff, long overdue in my opinion!

Best,

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