

Happy New Year! I thought I would start 2007 with an update about the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory at the University of Ottawa.

The Laboratory has been steadily garnering an international reputation as a centre for excellence in pioneering interdisciplinary research. We are pleased and honoured to announce that Mrs. Aline Chrétien and internationally acclaimed concert pianist Mr. Jon Kimura Parker will serve as honorary co-chairs of the *Friends of the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory*.

The University of Ottawa is committed to raising a \$2 million endowment in support of the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory. This important new initiative will help us raise a sustainable pool of financial support to address the Laboratory's emerging needs and priorities.

We have already received interest from generous benefactors who are helping to enhance the Laboratory and its activities. Canadian composer Ms. Ann Southam generously provided our first major gift, establishing the Ann Southam Music Reading Research Fund in support of research examining how piano students learn to read and express musical notation through well-controlled gestures at the keyboard.

In addition, Mr. Donald Himes, a former teacher at the Royal Conservatory of Music, established a workshop series based on the work of Moshe Feldenkrais exploring the subject of healthier approaches to playing the piano or other musical instruments. Mr. Himes presented the inaugural lecture called *The Path to Pain-Free Performance* which examined how transforming our musical concepts successfully into sound requires our muscular, skeletal and nervous systems to function in total harmony. This lecture gave attendees a comprehensive look at how the brain handles and responds to vast amounts of information during musical performances.

The Piano Lab is also delighted to announce that Routledge will be publishing "Piano Pedagogy: A Research and Information Guide." Routledge is well known for its Research and Information Guide series, which survey the resources available in various disciplines. This volume will be the first major annotated bibliography in the field of piano pedagogy. This is a particularly impressive achievement as several graduate students from the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory contributed to this guide.

As interest in piano pedagogy continues to grow, so does visibility of the Laboratory and its research. Recent media coverage has included a feature in the summer 2006 issue of *Lab Business* magazine, as well as a segment on TV Ontario's *Panorama Show* – which aired on January 9, 2007.

Dr. Comeau was also the keynote speaker, opening the 7<sup>e</sup> *Journées francophones de recherche en éducation musicale*. This international conference was held at the

Université Laval in Québec. His lecture drew such interest that four researchers who attended the conference from Switzerland and France came to Ottawa to visit the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory.

The University of Ottawa is committed to establishing a leading Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory that will develop, promote and expand knowledge in the field of piano pedagogy. Off to a stellar start, we will continue to gain momentum as a program of national and international significance.

Enclosed is a copy of the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory's 2005-2006 Annual Report. It provides a comprehensive overview of the Lab's goals and achievements this past year. Should you have any questions, you can contact Gilles Comeau directly at 613-562-5800, ext.3483.

With all best wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

George Lang  
Dean, Faculty of Arts

c.c. Gilles Comeau, Director, Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory

Enclosure