



2017 Senior Honour Concert Band

*submitted by Cheryl Ferguson,
Honour Band Administrator*

In early November, 2017, seventy-two student musicians from twenty-three schools across the province came together for the 40th Annual Manitoba Senior Honour Band. Under the direction of guest conductor Shelley Axelson, the students participated in three days of full band rehearsals. Their hard work and dedication culminated in a dynamic, exciting and very musical concert at Jubilee Place on Saturday, November 4, 2017.

Guest conductor Shelley Axelson is the Assistant Professor of Music Education at Montclair State University in New Jersey. Dr. Axelson has appeared as a guest conductor, clinician and adjudicator throughout much of the United States and Canada. This is not her first time working with band students in Manitoba; she has been an adjudicator at the Optimist Band Festival on several occasions.

The students had a fantastic experience with Dr. Axelson, learning to push themselves towards a higher level of excellence with each rehearsal, and fully immersed themselves in the collective goal of producing a satisfying, joyful performance of the selected music.



The Honour Band program included:

- Symphony No. 1 “The Lord of the Rings” (1988) by Johan de Meij
- Epitaph (for Hillsborough) (2009) by Peter Meechan
- First Suite in E-Flat (1909) by Gustav Holst
- Mambo from “West Side Story” (2013) by Bernstein, arr. Sweeney

The Honour Band was joined on this concert by the University of Manitoba Wind Ensemble under the direction of Jacquie Dawson. The Wind Ensemble’s performance was a beautiful, moving way to start the event off for the evening and provided great inspiration for the students in the Honour Band.

The University of Manitoba Wind Ensemble opened the concert with the following program:

- Magnolia Star (2012) – by Steve Danyew
- One Life Beautiful (2010) – by Julie Giroux
- Vientos y Tangos (2004) – by Michael Gandolfi

Many of this year's sixty-two Honour Band members had been involved in the Manitoba Honour Band program at some level, however 29 students were participating in the Senior band for the first time. Several grade 12 students were recognized for their long-term participation with the Honour Band program, including:

6 Honour Bands: Natalie Warner (French Horn, MBCI)
 Micah Kroeker (Trombone, Vincent Massey)
 Islay McIlraith (Tuba, Springfield (Oakbank))

A tremendous thank you to the Senior Honour Band Chairperson Jacquie Dawson, who oversees so many details. Thank you also to:

Fort Richmond Collegiate for hosting the listening sessions
The Desautels Faculty of Music for hosting the sectionals/first rehearsal
Erin Dodds for arranging listening sessions in Brandon
Andrew Klassen, Elwood Wiebe and Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute
The over 50 Manitoba Band Association volunteers who give so freely of their time.
Without their dedicated service, this program would not be possible.