

Friends of the academy,

Before I begin I would like to thank you so so much for your generous contribution to my trip to Canada. It was an amazing experience that I won't soon forget. The 6 WAAPA students that were fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to have such an experience took away very different things.

It's fair to say I had the most to learn from the orchestra. Professional repertoire has up until this year been very foreign to me. For three years prior to attending WAAPA (this being my first year) I did not study my instrument, have a teacher or play in an orchestra. So firstly I'd just like to say how grateful I feel to be a part of WAAPA. It's been quite an experience to be plunged back into the world of music and with such vigor.

However the Orchestre de la Francophonie (OF) was something else. 6 weeks of near daily rehearsals, we performed 30 pieces of repertoire and 9 concerts. Just for reference last semester over the 12 weeks or so we learnt and performed a total of five pieces orchestrally. Montreal was a monolithic undertaking for me, I'm honestly impressed with myself that I was able to learn that much in such a short time. Let alone the fact that I played it all on viola, an instrument I started learning this year for WAAPA's string camerata.

It was invaluable the time I was able to spend with the instrument, mind you I still have a long way to go but what a perfect way to start an instrument, with a 6 week intensive crash course on it.

Though it wasn't just playing notes that I benefited from it was, as my teacher Alex da Costa said before I left, "the light at the end of the tunnel".

In the OF we had a variety of players and backgrounds. Culturally there were Brazillians, Italians, French and of course many locals, stylistically most notably was the difference between European and American oboe, hours on buses meant plenty of musical discourse especially about different facets of different instruments. Which to me was an amazing wealth of collective knowledge that I was given the chance to tap in to. Now I know the best way to learn more about music: talk to those who

are passionate about it.

It wasn't just because they were passionate it was because of how skilled the ensemble was. The youngest member was just turned 18 and was about to start his studies at Julliard while other members of the orchestra were already playing part or full time with professional orchestras around the world. It was an inspirational standard to aim for and an insight as to what having an orchestral job would feel like.

Furthermore it allowed me to observe how the post graduate students of WAAPA shaped up against players from an international stage, which I'm proud to say was incredibly well. The three post graduate students took the seats of principal violist, first violinist and concert master (one of three in a rotation) which has given me a new found respect for both my peers and little old Perth, we have some great talent!

Thank you again for your assistance
Daniel