

## On the MaHRC

The Newsletter of the Music and Health Research Collaboratory  
February, 2012

### **MaHRC Proposal Passed Provost Advisory Group**

The proposal to establish the Music and Health Research Collaboratory (MaHRC) was discussed and approved in principle by the Provost's Advisory Group on January 16. Some minor revisions were suggested and these will be implemented into the next draft. Following this level of approval from the Provost, the proposal was distributed for information at the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Music on January 31. In the next months it will be reviewed by the Research Committee of the Faculty of Music and then will be presented to the Faculty Council at the end of March for ratification.

### **Musician's Health Group Meets**

A group of faculty interested in research on musician's health and particularly related to body alignment met to begin planning potential collaborative research on January 26. Prof Midori Koga described her funded project to enhance balance for performers. This project, employing a newly developed Wii board application for monitoring balance, has real potential to raise awareness of body position and alignment in performers. Meeting with the group to explore research ideas was Dr. Gabriela Ilie, specialist in psychology of music and neuroscience. Faculty interested in the activities of this group can contact Prof. Lee Bartel for more information.

### **PAMA Symposium**

On February 4 and 5 the Performing Arts Medical Association presents workshops on the theme, Healthier Practice and Performance from Studio to Stage. The workshops take place at the Royal Conservatory of Music. Please see the following site for more information: <http://www.artsmed.org/2012TorontoFullFlyer.pdf>

### **Professor Piltzer Researches Music and Health in "Korea's Hiroshima"**

Assistant Professor Josh Pilzer took leave from the Faculty of Music last term as a Chancellor Jackman Research Fellow of the Jackman Humanities Institute to begin a research project on music in the lives of first and second generation Korean victims of the atomic bombing of Japan. During the Asia-Pacific War (1930-45) many Koreans were recruited to work in Hiroshima and Nagasaki's military factories. In the Allied nuclear bombings 40,000 Koreans perished; most of the 30,000 survivors returned to their hometowns throughout the Korean peninsula. The largest percentage of Koreans in

Hiroshima were from the rural Southeastern Korean district of Hapcheon, which has come, over the past two decades, to be known as “Korea’s Hiroshima.”

Professor Pilzer spent four months in Hapcheon in 2011 working with survivors and their families, and encountered a number of ways that they have made use of music as a resource for survival, post-traumatic recovery, sense-making, and community-building. First generation survivors sing Japanese children’s songs to engage with complex memories of childhood in Japan, forge connections with Japanese victims, and sustain connections to the land in which many of them were born. First generation survivors mix Japanese and Korean language in song and talk in complex negotiations of transnational identity. First and second generation victims select and modify popular and folk songs preoccupied with, illness, disability, and the passage of time. Victims play Korean traditional percussion instruments as means of improving physical health, expressing physio-social competence, and socializing. Lastly, victims often turn to faith and prayer to try to explain their experiences, and to attempt to positively impact the fates of the dead, themselves, and the Russian Roulette of inter-generational transference of radiation-related illnesses.

The project is phase two of Pilzer's long-range ethnographic inquiry into the musical lives of different survivors in South Korea, the first of which has resulted in a book, *Hearts of Pine: Songs in the Lives of Three Korean Survivors of the Japanese "Comfort Women"* (Oxford University Press, 2012). Pilzer will return to Hapcheon each summer for the next five years as he prepares a monograph on the music of "Korea's Hiroshima."

### **New Study on Vibroacoustic Therapy and Fibromyalgia**

Dr Lili Naghdi a medical doctor in clinical practice has established The Sound Therapy Centre of Vaughan and is beginning a study employing vibroacoustic therapy. This study is designed to evaluate and follow the effects of VAT (Vibroacoustic Therapy) in the treatment of patients with Fibromyalgia. The role of Vibroacoustic therapy for pain management has been investigated since the 1960’s by Olav Skille in Norway. A study done by Skille showed that using sinusoidal sound massage with low frequency improved the symptoms in patients suffering from fibromyalgia. The patients had 50% reduction in their symptoms. (Skille 1994). Dr. Heidi Ahonen, Wilfrid Laurier University and Associate of MaHRC, and Dr. Lee Bartel are co-researchers on this project.

### **Announcement:**

The Second International Health Humanities Conference - Music, Health, and Humanity takes place at Montclair State University on August 9 – 11, 2012.

For more information please see:

<http://www.montclair.edu/health-humanities-conference/index.php>

<http://www.montclair.edu/health-humanities-conference/call-for-papers.php>