

Citations for the 2020 Honorary Awards Recipients

CASAVANT FRÈRES LTÉE.

Established 1879 in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, Casavant Frères Ltée. continues to build and install pipe organs of the finest quality. Exemplifying 140 years of craftsmanship, their catalogue of opus numbers approaches Number 3940 and includes new and rebuilt instruments of all sizes serving a wide range of users. The huge legacy of distinguished instruments may be seen on the firm's website at: www.casavant.ca.

From the firm's beginning when Joseph-Claver and Samuel-Marie Casavant "grew up observing their father's love of organ building,"* the two brothers travelled throughout Europe in order to hone their craft before setting up in the location where the company is based today.

In 1930, as the firm entered its sixth decade, Casavant Frères was awarded the Grand Prix at the international exhibition in Antwerp. The company has consistently strived to keep abreast of international developments in organ construction and tonal design. Of particular note has been its support of the tonal ideals of the organ reform movement, which followed the aspirations of Albert Schweitzer, instigator of this movement in the earlier part of the 20th century.

The firm's approach to tonal design has been the product of a succession of experts who have come from some of the best organ building traditions in the world. Artistic and tonal directors have included Stephen Stoot (English), Lawrence Phelps (American), Gerhard Brunzema (German), Jean-Louis Coignet (French) and most recently Jacquelin Rochette (Canadian).

To survive, any artistic endeavour needs the foundation of a sound business model. Casavant Frères Ltée. began as a company-owned enterprise and became a joint stock company in 1919. Subsequently it has been owned by Bertin Nadeau and very recently was acquired by Simon Tétreault. These men have assured its solvency and future.

Last but not least, the firm has been the root from which a number of newer Canadian-based organ- building firms flourished: Gerhard Brunzema, Helmut Wolff, Karl Wilhelm, and Orgues Létourneau. It is worth noting that these last two have already received the Award of Excellence by the RCCO.

• *Quote from Casavant et Frères webpage*

JACQUELIN ROCHETTE

Jacquelin Rochette is one of the most prominent figures on the Canadian organ scene, both as the Artistic Director of Casavant Frères, the world-renowned pipe organ builder celebrating 140 years of activity, and as a sought-after concert organist.

Jacquelin Rochette joined Casavant Frères in 1984, first working with Jean-Louis Coignet and later serving as Associate Tonal Director before taking on the mantle of Artistic Director. Over the years, Jacquelin Rochette has been responsible for the design of numerous successful new Casavant organs, along with projects to restore or rebuild pipe organs of musical and historical significance. Of particular note is the exceptional Grand Orgue Pierre-Bélque installed in 2014 in the Maison symphonique de Montréal. M. Jean-Willy Kunz, Organist in Residence with the Montreal Symphony, writes of M. Rochette's artistic supervision of the building of the instrument as ensuring the prestige of Montreal as a capital of the organ in North America. M. Rochette's "experience of more than 35 years at the head of Casavant Frères, his exemplary professionalism and his constant research after excellence are a great source of inspiration for Canadian organists and for the milieu of the organ internationally."

As a concert organist, Jacquelin Rochette has performed numerous times on the CBC and recorded Vierne's Sixth Symphony, Dupré's Stations of the Cross, and the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies of Widor. He frequently appears as a lecturer and recitalist in Canada and the United States.

To acknowledge Jacquelin Rochette's immense contribution to the promotion and value of the organ and its music in Canada and around the world, we respectfully nominate him for the Award of Excellence of the Royal College of Organists.

DENIS BÉDARD

In a musical career spanning five decades and counting, Denis Bédard has been—and continues to be—an inspiration to innumerable organists and the wider public as a performer, teacher, and composer of a large body of published organ, choir and ensemble music. This achievement has earned him an international reputation as one of the few Canadian composers and organists recognised outside of Canada.

His many years of contribution to church music in both French and English Canada, and the frequent performance of his works in the USA, UK, and Europe have brought an internationally respected presence to Canadian organ playing and composition.

Following his early study of music at the Conservatoire de musique de Québec, graduating with first class honours in organ, harpsichord, chamber music, counterpoint and fugue, he continued his studies in Paris and Montreal, as well as in Amsterdam with Gustav Leonhardt, and was laureate of the “Prix d’Europe” in 1975 and of the CBC Radio Talent Competition in 1978. A professor at the Conservatoire de musique de Québec from 1981 until 1989 and organ professor at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver from 2001 until 2004, Denis Bédard was organist at St-Coeur-de-Marie church in Quebec City for 19 years and then became organist at St-Roch church, also in Quebec City, in September 1997. Since September 2001 Denis Bédard has been organist and music director at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver. As a concert artist he has given recitals across Canada, in the United States, in France and in Brazil.

His compositions include more than twenty chamber music works, as well as orchestral and vocal music, and many works for solo organ. He has received commissions from Radio-Canada, the CBC, the Québec Symphony Orchestra and various professional musicians in Canada, England, France, Switzerland and the U.S. Many of his works have been widely performed both in Canada and internationally (U.S.A., France, Monaco, England, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Poland, Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Greece, South Africa, Namibia, New Zealand, China, Japan, Singapore, Vietnam, Brazil, Ecuador, Israel, Russia), particularly at international organ and saxophone conventions, and several have been recorded on CD. His music is characterized by a clear and expressive style that is loved both by audiences for its evocative melodies and harmonies, and by performers for its virtuosity and accessibility. His recent CD *Works for Organ and Other Instruments* was described as “a wonderful tribute to the breadth and variety of the compositions of one of Canada’s best loved composers” (Organ Canada, Spring 2019)

Together with his wife, Rachel Alflatt, they revived and rejuvenated the Vancouver RCCO Centre, which, together with the Holy Rosary Cathedral, co-sponsored numerous recitals and workshops. The superbly organised organ concert series at Holy Rosary became a focal point for regular organ recitals in Vancouver and garnered the admiration and respect of Vancouver’s leading organists.

Having taught in Quebec and Vancouver, Bédard is a beloved organ teacher, described by his students as humble, approachable, generous, and having the ability to bring out the best in them. He is also supportive, not only of his own students but also of other organists. Denis is very much sought-after as a clinician and recently lead a masterclass at the RCCO's 2019 Organ Festival in Halifax.

It is with great pleasure that the RCCO awards Denis Bédard the Diploma of Fellowship (honoris causa).

HANS-OLA ERICSSON

Hans-Ola Ericsson's accomplishments on the Canadian and international scene – as organist, pedagogue, clinician, composer and organ consultant - are most impressive. As an organ virtuoso he has maintained an exceptional international career and attained international eminence. He is on the cutting edge of world-class organ interpretation, delivering impassioned performances of works from across the spectrum of standard organ literature, while constantly pushing the boundaries of advanced performance techniques as a champion of contemporary composers and electroacoustic endeavours. From 2002 until 2006 he was Principal Guest Organist of the Lahti Organ Festival in Finland. Some of his upcoming concerts and Master classes include appearances in Germany, Russia, Scotland (Glasgow) and Hungary (Budapest, Liszt academy). During the years 2009-2013 Hans-Ola was working on an extensive recording project focusing on chamber- and organ solo works by Johann Sebastian Bach for the Norwegian record label, Euridice. These recordings were released during 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Serving as Chair of the Organ Department at McGill in the last decade the department continued to flourish with many of his students continuing with exceptional careers. His deep knowledge of the literature and avant-garde proficiencies have enabled the breadth and depth of scholarly research in Montréal to reach new heights. He has been actively engaged in extensive work together with, among others, John Cage, György Ligeti, Bengt Hambraeus and Olivier Messiaen on the interpretation of their works for organ. In the spring of 2000 he was named a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music and he received the Swedish Society of Composers' interpretation prize in 1999. As pedagogue he has led and inspired students from undergraduate through to doctoral studies, and many of his former students have gone on to excel as performers, maintaining active international careers and winning major international competitions, including two current CIOC prizewinners. Currently boasting 24 students, including international ones, it is one of the healthiest and most vibrant organ programs in North America. He has been most supportive of the Montreal RCCO Centre, encouraging his students to become involved with the centre executive and activities, and always being open to collaborations between the RCCO and the organ studio.

His work as an international organ clinician is exemplary, including serving as judge for the inaugural Canadian International Organ Competition (2008) and as main professor for the biannual Organ Academy at the Orgelpark, Amsterdam. From 2005 until 2011 he

was artistic consultant for the Bodø International Organ Festival in Norway. In 2009 he was awarded wine knighthood in the German town of Oppenheim. He will also be chairing two large international organ competitions, the "Wadden" International Organ competition in Esbjerg, Denmark in January 2021 and the International Organ competition in Dudelange in Luxembourg in September 2021. Some of his upcoming concerts and Master classes include appearances in Germany, Russia, Scotland (Glasgow) and Hungary (Budapest, Liszt academy). He has recently been appointed Honorary Professor at the Danish National Academy of Music.

During the last decade, a number of compositions by Ericsson have been premiered, and during his recent sabbatical year several compositional projects were completed. His compositional language is complex and transfixing.

Beside his artistic and pedagogical activities, Ericsson is also deeply involved in different projects aiming at either restoration of historical organs or innovative organ building projects. His recent work in this regard includes the Orgelpark, Amsterdam, St. Petri church in Malmö, Sweden and the concert hall in Gothenburg, Sweden. He served as the project leader of the "Övertorneå-project", an exhaustive documentation, two reconstructions and a restoration of the most important instrument of the Swedish Baroque, the organ of the German Church in Stockholm, a project that took place between 1992 and 1999. At the School of Music in Piteå, Sweden, he worked as the project leader with an innovative organ project which resulted in an organ for the 21st Century, that was inaugurated in October 2012.

This impressive work around the globe in so many fields has helped to bring recognition to Canada's reputation in the field of organ performance and teaching and the accomplishments of its young organists, and highlighted Montréal as a destination for serious organ scholars from around the globe.

It gives us great pleasure to award Hans-Ola Ericsson the Diploma of Fellowship (honoris causa).

FLORENCE BARWELL

Florence Barwell established the Barwell Scholarship in 1988, a year after her husband's death. Edward Barwell loved the sound of the organ and had a collection of the Albert Schweitzer recordings of J.S. Bach. A cousin, Robert Evenden and his wife Eleanor, organists in Hamilton, suggested to Florence that her desire to remember Edward could be done through an annual scholarship. This scholarship would assist advanced pianists, who had a sincere interest in learning to play the organ, in receiving lessons.

For the past thirty-two years from \$3,000 to \$5,000 has been awarded to promising candidates, a sum of well over one hundred thousand dollars. The awards are made based on merit by a jury following an audition on the piano. Successful candidates who

receive this financial assistance are able to study with some of Toronto's finest organ teachers.

The Barwell Scholarship has had far-reaching effects which are now part of the Toronto Centre's identity. While candidates like Aaron Tan have gone on to professional careers, others have taken the RCCO examinations and continued their studies. Another example of success is Michelle Chung who has participated in the Toronto Centre's Bach Walk and played a noon-hour recital at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Numerous others have followed a similar path because of their start with the Barwell Scholarship. The majority of the candidates have made a substantial difference in the level of musicianship within their local parishes. The breadth of this award will resonate for years.

Mel Hurst, who administers the Barwell Scholarship notes: "In the twenty-three years I have been involved with this scholarship, I never cease to be impressed with the humility of Florence Barwell. This humble vision has had a significant impact on making the organ accessible to pianists. She is happy to be helping young people and does not see her contribution as being that significant. She is 93. I believe this approach is a model for all Centres in our country".

Provisions have been made for the Barwell Scholarship to continue into perpetuity following Florence Barwell's passing.

PETER BISHOP

J.S. Bach once remarked that 'music is an agreeable harmony for the honour of God and the permissible delights of the soul'. For more than fifty years Peter Bishop has dedicated his career to realizing both aims. His many choirs, first at the Toronto Oratory, Church of the Holy Family (where he oversaw the completion of the installation of the renovated Gabriel Kney organ), and then at St. Vincent de Paul Church have benefitted from his supreme skill and direction.

During his many years as a member of the Toronto Centre, Peter has displayed his passion for the work of the RCCO not only in Toronto but far afield as well. His contribution as an executive member, including volunteering on several committees, conventions/festivals, panel discussions and as Secretary and then President, have been of great value. For many years Peter, with a good deal of reliability, took on the responsibility of organizing the Center College examinations. More often than not, he appeared on site of the various venues to ensure smooth setting up, calming candidate's nerves, and to keep vigil.

During his terms as Toronto Centre President, he encouraged colleagues to offer support through collegial and pastoral calls to those affected by loss of job. He offered sound advice on this complex topic including dialogue between organists and clergy. Peter's monthly column in the Toronto Centre "Bulletin" was always a study in poetic English language - a good storyteller! When it came to professional issues, he found a

way to illuminate a situation. In one article, he discussed organist's feelings of fear and security while practicing in an empty church – probably not covered by any of the standard textbooks on the organ. Through his articles and sage advice during meetings, Peter would invite lively panel discussions. Peter was instrumental (working with other executive members) in helping to provide a strong link between the Toronto Centre with such institutions as the Ontario Choral Federation (Choirs Ontario) and the Toronto branch of the Royal School of Church Music. As an educator of the music and liturgy of the Catholic Church, Peter was an eager advocate in strengthening ties between the Church and the Toronto Centre. Peter is responsible in part, for the Toronto Centre now enjoying a more positive collaboration/joint sponsorships with places like St. Basil's Church and St. Michael's Cathedral.

Even when he moved on to become National Secretary and then President of the RCCO, Peter has continued to be active and influential in the Toronto Centre. His penchant for reminding us of the rules and regulations around competitions and examinations (always with a marvelous poetic bent) is of enormous help.

Friends and Colleagues of the Toronto Centre admire Peter for his wisdom and quirky humour. Peter continues to devote himself to preserving and promoting organ and sacred music.

DAVID CAMERON

David Cameron joined the RCCO in Toronto in 1958, was a founding member of the Kingston Centre in 1966 and continues as a vital and contributing member to the present. His service has left a significant mark on the Centre's history which for its vision and breadth, provides a model worth imitating to Centres nationwide.

David's positions with the Kingston Centre include: Chair 1969-74, 1980-81, 1985-86; Newsletter Editor (2012-present); Contributor to newsletter (countless articles); Professional Concerns officer (2000 – present); being instrumental in developing a Foundations of Church Music course in conjunction with Queen's extension courses (1997 – 2000), in which he taught organ and choral techniques; organizer and leader of choirs for the College Services (2000 – 2018). He has had an active role in developing, maintaining, and teaching in the Centre's Scholarship Program.

As an RCCO accredited teacher of organ, David taught approximately sixty students in the Kingston Region and at the Queen's University School of Music between 1969 and 2011. Many of these former students are in leadership positions locally, and from Ontario to the West Coast, including two Cathedral organists and current and past RCCO Centre Presidents. In the words of former student and current Kingston Centre president Brad Mills, "I can say without a doubt that the organ and choral training that I received from him has significantly shaped my life as a professional musician."

The Kingston Centre hosted national conventions in 1986 and 2016. David was a member of the Organizing Committee for both, and Program co-editor for the 2016 event.

In addition to his contributions at the Centre level he has contributed at the national level, having served as Chair, Competitions Committee (1972-74); President 2006-2008; and Chair of the Examinations Committee (2008-2019).

HUGH CREIGHTON

Hugh Creighton gave a lifetime of dedication, service, and support to the organ. He became interested in the instrument and its music in his teens and soon began to play for church services while pursuing a career in finance, his first service being at St Andrew's United Church, his home church, in Halifax. He continued to play for churches in the Halifax area throughout his life, with his last position being at St Alban's Anglican Church in Dartmouth, a position he held until his death on September 21, 2019.

He was very generous both financially and with his time and talent to the Halifax Centre for many years, as well as to other RCCO and organ-related events, serving as Centre Treasurer and later as Auditor. At Centre events, he volunteered to greet people and to hand out programs and, as a result, became a familiar, friendly face to many.

Hugh worked tirelessly as Treasurer for the 2019 Halifax Organ Festival and did a lot of work behind the scenes during the Festival week in addition to those duties. He was often seen either taking tickets or giving out programs while sharing his sense of humour and friendliness with everyone.

In addition to all this, Hugh gave of his time to the CIOC events in Montreal over the years and was planning to do the same in October 2019. He was also a volunteer during the 2017 Montreal Organ Festival.

Music was Hugh's passion and he worked endlessly to promote the organ and its music. He served as an advisor to members at St John's Anglican Church, Lunenburg in the replacing of the organ that was destroyed by the fire of 2001. He was also active in the Halifax music community more generally, serving as Board member and Treasurer for a number of organizations including Musique Royale and the Halifax Camerata Singers, and as volunteer Manager of the Symphony Nova Scotia Boutique. Hugh lived his life to the fullest. His creativity, humour, and generosity were noticed by all who met him.

RON DOSSENBACH

Ron Dossenbach has been an active member of Windsor Essex Centre for nearly 10 years, serving on the Centre Executive in the position of Organ Advisor. Since his retirement, he has pursued education in organ building and maintenance with singular purpose. In 2015, he assisted the Jan Van der Stadt Company in no small way in the

rebuilding of the organ in Paulin Memorial Presbyterian Church in Windsor. In 2016 and 2017, he restored the 1924 Aeolian Player Organ in the Morris Sutton Funeral Home in Windsor, to the point that it was featured in a community concert in 2018, celebrating its history and adaptability. His work was a labour of love, largely unpaid beyond reimbursement for parts for the organ. In 2019, he took the Colleague exam offered by the American Institute of Organ Builders. Since then several churches in southwest Ontario have contracted him for maintenance services on an occasional basis and he readily offers his skills to a growing number of churches towards maintenance of their organs, assisting them in the absence of resident organ technicians.

After the 2017 RCCO Organ Festival in Montreal, at which the concept of OrgelKids was introduced, Ron's enthusiasm and fascination with this model organ and its potential led him to build his own version at the same time as the RCCO program, OrgelKids Can, was incubating. Once again, he paid personally for the materials, and constructed the entire instrument from finished lumber and parts purchased from organ supply houses. Since then, his OrgelKids Opus 1 has been at the centre of numerous presentations he has led, from Pedals, Pipes and Pizza, to courses under the University of Windsor's Elder College program, to classes at many schools in the area. He has received a total of 15 invitations to present in southern Ontario and 8 in western Michigan. The Windsor Star has featured his work a number of times, and he frequently contributes a column in the Windsor Essex Centre's Newsletter.

His passion for the organ, learning about its operation and construction, has led significantly to raising the profile of the organ in the Windsor area. He cares deeply about the welfare of the region's pipe organs, and actively pursues avenues for their preservation.

SUSAN OHANNESIAN

Susan Ohannesian is a Vancouver bred musician who has been involved in the local organ community for 50 years, during all of which time she has also been a member of the Vancouver Centre. Encouraged to join the RCCO in 1969 and sign up for the upcoming RCCO Diamond Jubilee Convention in Vancouver, Susan was both excited and inspired by this introduction to the RCCO, and to competition winner Patrick Wedd, who later became both her teacher and mentor.

In the 1970s Susan participated in, or contributed to, or was involved with many of the Centre's student organ competitions, student recitals, organ workshops, choral workshops, parties and potlucks, annual clergy/organist dinners, organ crawls, recitals by local, national and international organists, Sunday afternoon concerts at her church, Sunday evening concerts at Holy Rosary, Wednesday or Friday noon hour concerts at Christ Church, a newsletter every other month, an annual college service for the feast of St. Cecilia, and an annual December choir festival.

By the later 1980s the Centre was struggling with reduced membership and declining attendance at events, but Susan soldiered on, remaining involved with trying to maintain

the traditional Centre activities. In 1991 Susan joined the Centre executive and became treasurer in 1992. By 1997, even though the Centre was totally inactive, Susan continued to hold the reins as treasurer and sent out an occasional newsletter.

In 2002, Susan organized a meeting of organists which became the impetus for a resurgence of Centre activity. By 2006, with an executive in place, Susan relinquished her treasurer role but continued to work on members' recitals, produce posters and programs for Halloween concerts and help with invigilating and marshalling RCCO exams. Susan rejoined the executive in 2014, and in 2018 became membership coordinator.

Susan's exemplary and lengthy service to the Centre, a high watermark in its history, is worthy of special recognition, as well as being an inspiration for members across Canada. She is still playing the organ in church and in recitals, attending concerts, workshops and organ crawls and serving on the executive. Thanks to her steadfastness and resilience, the Centre is now again a vibrant organization.