

# Red Leaf News

www.redleafpianoworks.com Newsletter no.6 - September 2011



Red Leaf Pianoworks  
a composers' collective

Martha Hill Duncan  
Susan Griesdale  
Beverly Porter  
Rebekah Maxner  
Janet Gieck  
Christine Donkin  
Joanne Bender  
Teresa Richert

## Composers as Clinicians

*A busy summer for Red Leaf!*

Canadian Music Teacher's Convention,  
Regina July 2011

### Turning Over A New Leaf

Participants experienced the creation of a new collaborative music venture while learning about the challenges, trends and music of living composers. Hosted by Martha Hill Duncan, Janet Gieck and Susan Griesdale with performances by Teresa Richert, Joanne Bender and Beverly Porter, audience members were encouraged to follow their own musical dreams as a consequence of learning about the collaborative success of Red Leaf Pianoworks.

**Teaching Adult Students** Host Susan Griesdale described the challenges facing adult students with helpful tips and handouts on how to help the older student progress. Performances of "adult-friendly" Red Leaf repertoire were given by Joanne Bender, Teresa Richert, Janet Gieck, Martha Hill Duncan, Beverly Porter and Rebekah Maxner.

*(continued on page 2)*

## An Interview with **Christine Donkin**

### Tell us about your background.

I grew up on an acreage near Grande Prairie, in northwest Alberta. There was always a lot of music – my father taught bands and orchestras, my mother taught classroom music and directed choirs, and my sister and I took lessons in various instruments and played in school music groups. But even more than music, the most important thing in my life has always been creativity. Composition has been a creative outlet since I was about five years old, but throughout my childhood I also drew pictures, wrote stories, assembled monthly magazines documenting the family's activities, and programmed simple adventure games on our computer. I

haven't changed all that much - I'm always happiest when I'm making something.

### What keeps you busy now?

I've been fortunate enough to make a living using some of the same creative outlets I explored as a child. I compose music for musicians of all kinds – five-year-old students all the way up to symphonic ensembles. I love to create hands-on activities for my piano students, and I also design online music games for a website called Tonic Tutor which I co-created along with my husband, William Ratke. When I'm not busy with those things, I'm usually walking around downtown Ottawa, or at home benefitting from the affection and wisdom of my lovely cats.

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## CFMTA Competition Winner!

**Susan Griesdale's** piece *Arctic Voices* was this year's CFMTA Winner for the Call For Compositions grade 3-4 Piano Solo Category. This piece is being made available to teachers across Canada for Canada Music Week. You can hear *Arctic Voices* and download the score at [www.cfmta.org](http://www.cfmta.org) - click on the "Winners 2011" link.



*Christine's cats performing a duet on the piano.*

## New Releases

### Martha Hill Duncan

*Flying Horses, Talking Fish and If Dogs Could Talk* - These "pianosongs" are designed to develop rhythm, reading and pitch matching skills in the aspiring young musician. They can be performed with or without singing and work equally well for early pianists and singers alike.

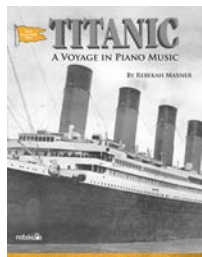
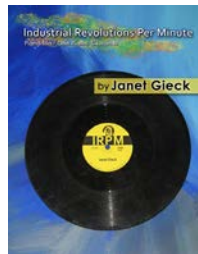


**Beverly Porter**  
*Land of the Silver Birch* is a collection of contemporary folk song arrangements of the North-East. *Rags to Riches* has various styles from

jazz to rags and impressionistic. Elementary to intermediate.

### Janet Gieck

*Industrial Revolutions Per Minute* (1 piano, six hands) has a great groove and uses lots of extra-piano sounds: slaps, knocks, and voice effects. Great for guys, teens, and all creative types! Intermediate.



### Rebekah Maxner

*Titanic 1912 - 2012*  
Early Intermediate piano solos arranged from music that was played on the Titanic. Historic photos and notes included.

### Susan Griesdale

Susan's solo *Piano Poems* are now gathered together in a collection. Music that is intentionally written to fall easily into the hands and geared for the intermediate player. Ideal for teens and adults.



**Teresa Richert**  
*Northern Menagerie, Seascape, and Seasons* (not shown). Pieces about nature, outdoor activities and wild creatures.

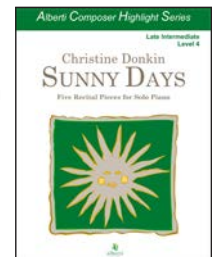
(continued from Christine Donkin interview, page 1)

### You've written some piano quartets. How did you become interested in this instrumentation?

In my home town there is an amazing and energetic teacher who commissions piano quartets from me on a fairly regular basis. At first I found them quite difficult - it seemed that there were too many hands available and not enough variety of tone colour with everyone playing the piano. Over the years, however, I have started to develop a technique for composing these pieces. My most recent effort, called *Just 4 Fun*, was premiered this summer at a piano camp here in Ottawa by the camp staff (of which I was a member). And I'm excited about an advanced quartet called *How Beautiful is the Rain*, which is almost finished: it's a very lively piece that features some interesting effects with pedaling and glissandos. I'll post both of these pieces on the Red Leaf site when they're ready!

### What can you tell us about the complimentary piece?

*A Nap on the Porch* was originally from my self-published intermediate book, *In the Neighbourhood*. It's now part of a slightly different collection of pieces entitled *Sunny Days*, which is available for download from a new site called **www.printitplayit.com**. It's a very lazy piece about drifting in and out of sleep. The cadenza-like sections are reminiscent of fleeting dreams and should be played very freely. ♦



You can find more of Christine Donkin's music at **www.redleafpianoworks.com**.

(continued from Composers as Clinicians, p. 1)

**The Composers' Perspective:** CFMTA Call for Compositions Winners Joanne Bender, Teresa Richert and Martha Hill Duncan presented a workshop on their works for Saskatchewan Provincial Composition Winners.

Summer Sizzle, Mt Forest, ON  
**From Ordinary to Extraordinary** - Nurturing and developing "the artist" in each and every student. A masterclass of Summer Sizzle participants performing Red Leaf repertoire hosted by Martha Hill Duncan with helpful input from Rebekah Maxner and Susan Griesdale.

## Festivals/Adjudications/ Presentations

### Joanne Bender

- ◆ Elmira, ON Kiwanis Festival, 2011
- ◆ Composition adjudicator, Grey County Kiwanis Festival, 2011
- ◆ Composition mentor/Group composition: CNCM Summer Sizzle, 2011

### Christine Donkin

- ◆ BCRMTA-CFMTA Student Composer Competition 2011

### Martha Hill Duncan

- ◆ Regina, SK Music Festival, April, 2011
- ◆ Saskatchewan SRMTA Student Music Writing Competition, 2011
- ◆ Burlington, ON Rotary Music Festival, Oct. 31-Nov. 5, 2011

### Janet Gieck

- ◆ Red Deer, AB, Sept. 17, 2011, Student/Teacher Workshop

### Susan Griesdale

- ◆ ORMTA Auditions, 2011– Newmarket, ON
- ◆ Ontario ORMTA Student Music Writing Competition, 2011

### Rebekah Maxner

- ◆ Featured Composer, Maritime Conservatory, Halifax, NS – Nov. 26, 2011, Presenting A Composer's Voice
- ◆ Move Over Mozart student composition publication, CNCM Summer Sizzle, 2011

## Recent and Upcoming Composition Performances

### Susan Griesdale

- ◆ *engarde* is written for Toy Pianos, Table Top drum, wooden mallets, music box, acoustic grand and an actual toy – Charlie Chimp the cymbal monkey! This piece will be performed by the amazing junctQin keyboard collective (<http://junctqin.com/>) in September in Toronto and Barrie.

### Janet Gieck

- ◆ The Gala Trio in Saskatoon (French horn, soprano, piano) performed *Independence* 3 times in the past few months.

### Joanne Bender

- ◆ Joanne will conduct her newly commissioned Cantata in Waterloo, ON, in November

### Teresa Richert

- ◆ Selections from piano collections *Petals* and *Bugs* performed by Rachel Kiyo Iwaasa at Vancouver Pro Musica's Sonic Boom Festival at the Western Front, Vancouver (March, 2011), at Britannia Mine Museum, BC (part of a New Music in New Places presentation by Astrolabe Musik Theatre, May, 2011) and at the CFMTA convention in Regina.

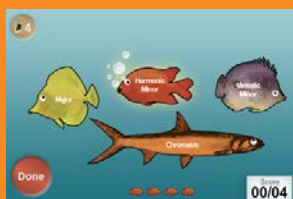
### Christine Donkin

- ◆ *Magnificat* for women's choir was performed this summer at Festival 500 in St. John's, NL, and in September in Exeter Cathedral (Devon, England).
- ◆ *So far, so good!* for double bass and piano will be premiered at Wells Cathedral School in Somerset, England, in October.
- ◆ In November, *Three Autumn Scenes* will be premiered in BC by the Prince George Symphony Orchestra.
- ◆ Also in November, *Four Animals* for SATB choir and piano will be premiered in Alberta by the Grande Prairie College Choir.

## UPCOMING RED LEAF EVENTS

- ◆ New York State Teacher's Association Convention, Ithaca NY - Oct. 21-23, 2011
- ◆ MTNA Convention, New York, NY, March, 2012
- ◆ Long and McQuade British Columbia Tour, April, 2012

## Tonic Tutor - Ten New Games!



**Aquarium**



**Player Piano**

Everyone with a free account can access all of our games and features for the full month of September. Come and play!

[www.tonictutor.com](http://www.tonictutor.com)

# A Nap on the Porch

Christine Donkin

Dreamy; lazy (♩=44)

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The piece is in 6/8 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked 'Dreamy; lazy' with a quarter note equal to 44 beats. The first system consists of five measures. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and fingerings (1, 2, 2). The left hand has a bass line with chords and slurs. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *sim.* (sostenuto). Pedal markings are present below the first and second measures.

1 1  
3 4  
Ped.  $\wedge$   $\wedge$  *sim.*

Freely (like a cadenza)

Musical notation for measures 6-10. The right hand features a more active melodic line with slurs and fingerings (1, 3, 1, 4, 1). The left hand continues with chords and slurs. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano). Pedal markings are present below the first and second measures.

1 3 1 4 1  
4 2 3 5 3  
Ped. \_\_\_\_\_

Tempo primo

Musical notation for measures 11-14. The right hand has a rapid sixteenth-note passage in measures 11-13, followed by a triplet in measure 14. The left hand has a steady bass line. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *molto rit.* (molto ritardando), and *p* (piano). Pedal markings are present below the first and second measures.

pedal as before

Musical notation for measures 15-19. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and fingerings (2, 1, 1, 2, 4, 5, 1, 1). The left hand has a bass line with chords and slurs. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano). Pedal markings are present below the first and second measures.

20

1 3

25

Freely (like a cadenza)

5 p mf

Ped. 3

28

8va 8va molto rit. 3 3

31

Meno mosso

1 3 p rit. pp

pedal as before