

Season's Greetings from the Executive of the Canadian Music Festival Adjudicators' Association

On behalf of your Executive, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you who have been in touch with us over the past year with suggestions and encouragements. We are grateful for your ongoing support. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with us directly if you have questions, suggestions, or criticisms, remembering of course that the Executive is a volunteer group and doing the best we can☺

This year we had so many things change in the arts and specifically music festival adjudication, and I am not alone in hoping we all will have a return to some normalcy in 2021.

Dues for 2021

As we prepare for 2021, it will soon be time to pay our dues for the upcoming year 2021. Perhaps you are not aware, but the CMFAA budget is extremely small, and based on the dues paid by our membership. As everyone knows, this year has been devastating to many of the arts groups and those in the community who are practicing musicians. The Executive is concerned about those in our membership who will be struggling this year and would like to offer those who are interested in remaining with the organization but simply cannot afford the \$50 fee the option of not paying dues for the coming year. Please be in touch with our Treasurer Ireneus Zuk zuki@queensu.ca directly if you are needing relief. On the other hand, if you can give a donation to our organization on top of your dues for 2021, please feel free to do that as well. (Please note we are unable to give tax receipts for donations). The pandemic has hit everyone very differently, and we would love to be able support our membership where we can.

New member of the Executive

Finally, on a happier note, 2020 was also the year that we welcomed Donna Garner to our Executive. I am personally thrilled by her contributions over the past year, and on behalf of the Executive would like to thank her for her energy and enthusiasm.

Stay tuned- coming in January 2021

Professional Development Resources for Members

If there is one thing that is clear, there are a lot of changes that are probably going to be with us into the future. The use of technology in education, festivals and masterclasses is one of those areas. The Executive has heard a lot of feedback, and will be releasing the following Professional Development resources in January for members:

** Please note, these resources are for CMFAA members only.

- 1) "Online Adjudicating: Impactful Written and Video-Recorded Feedback" – Article and Video by Amy Boyes**
- 2) "Online Adjudicating" – An Interactive Zoom Session with Donna Garner**
Embrace your online game! While nothing will replace the in-person music festival adjudication experience, moving music education online opens up a great opportunity to reach budding musicians in all areas of this vast country. Practice your online adjudication skills in real time, and with real students, receiving practical tips

on technical set-up, how to effectively engage your online audience and adjust your adjudication skills to the screen.

- 3) “Creating an Outstanding CMFAA Member Profile” – Article by Amy Boyes**

Fair Pay: Reevaluating Adjudicating Rates for Online Music Festivals

Since the pandemic began, I have received a number of inquiries from music festivals across the country wondering whether the adjudicator fee should be re-considered as a result of moving festivals online.

Currently the CMFAA recommends a fee of \$400 per day for three 3.5-hour sessions a day (or five sessions over two days for a total of \$800), not including travel and expenses. Please note that these figures have always been recommendations, and remember that all **music festivals are more than welcome to work out contracts with CMFAA adjudicators which may have different parameters than our guidelines**. This has not changed. In addition, Festivals **are required to pay GST/HST on adjudicator wage only, and are encouraged to seek reimbursement of this expense when filing their taxes. This and all current info about the contracting of adjudicators is available on our website by clicking [Info for Contracting Adjudicators](#)**

However, with music festivals moving to online formats, some festival administrators have suggested that perhaps we should reconsider these guidelines.

After consideration, the Executive is recommending that adjudication fees should remain unchanged for the following reasons:

1. The amount of technical knowledge that everyone has had to acquire to make music work online during the past eight months has been tremendous. Many of our examiners and educators have had to do a lot of study in order to work in the new formats which festivals have been moving towards. Many have had to update equipment, internet, and have had significant costs to continue working online. These equipment costs are now part of the “adjudicator’s kit” - which in the past mostly involved bringing a pen and pencil to the festival.
2. The amount of time it takes to listen to a recording on YouTube is not less than listening to a live performance at a music festival, and comments are often needing to be more specific because having the opportunity to speak directly to the student is usually not possible. It is in fact often more work as listening to hours of recordings on YouTube is quite tiring (to which everyone can attest). The recording quality of the students is also highly variable, which presents a whole new challenge in trying to evaluate performances.
3. I think it is important to note that many of our outstanding adjudicators are now are working entirely online through teaching etc. and because of the collapse in performing, are having to take on more students to cover costs. A teacher working in the major cities who is working as an adjudicator is often charging at least \$60-\$90 an hour to teach lessons. At this rate, while \$400 for festivals is often a huge challenge for local festivals,

it does not cover the income of many adjudicators. Having said that, many adjudicators feel that working for music festivals is more of an opportunity to give back to the communities that have supported them as students over the years, and not so much as an opportunity to make money. Many adjudicators have told me directly that before the pandemic they would adjudicate one or two festivals a year simply because that was all they could afford to give time for. Since the pandemic, as many musicians are teaching more it means that it's even more of a sacrifice financially to adjudicate even at \$400 a day.

I myself grew up in a small town, and often have adjudicated in smaller festivals administered by passionate volunteers. I'm now living and working in Vancouver with many freelancing musicians, so I can see the issue from both sides. I'm also very aware of the challenges of our young musicians who are incredibly well-educated as a result of our wonderful music education system in Canada. Giving our young people an opportunity to express their craft and work with community music festivals and at the same time give them a wage that as much as possible supports the work they are doing I think should be a goal of all the festivals.

It is a wonderful opportunity for us to continue well past this pandemic to be supportive of each other, kind to each other, and hold up the arts for their critical value in our communities.

Dr. Greg Caisley, President, CMFAA