

Diversity and Representation in Wind Band Repertoire: Content Analysis of Programming in Winnipeg-Based Band Concerts

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Why does composer representation matter?

While the composer diversity reflected in music performed by wind ensembles influences the careers of composers currently underrepresented in concert bands, it also plays a significant role in the lives of students.

Programming music from diverse composers:

- Allows for more students to see themselves reflected in the field of wind band composition
- Allows for students to create more meaningful connections with the music
- Creates more learning opportunities, as the music may offer differing elements or qualities

A literature review on composer diversity in wind band revealed the current underrepresentation of music by women, LGBTQIA2S+ composers, and composers of colour.

An extension of this study may involve interviews with music educators and composers to investigate proposed solutions to how composer diversity can be encouraged.

Guiding Research Questions:

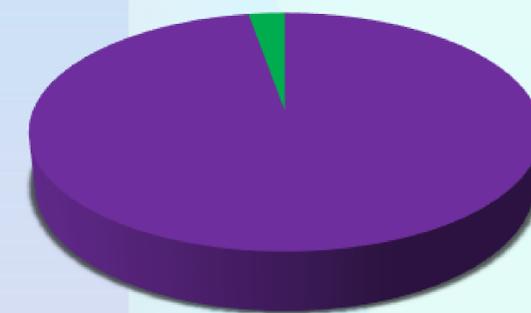
- 1) Are there any significant changes overall in the percentages of well-represented and under-represented composers or arrangers between the 2014-2015 concert programs and the 2018-2019 concert programs? If there are any significant changes, what might these be?
- 2) Are there any comparable similarities in trends with the composer or arranger diversity of concert programs of these Winnipeg-based ensembles and with Music Fest Canada lists? Do we see any comparable differences?

High School/Community Band	2014-2015	2018-2019	
C.1	13/13 works performed were by a white male	11/14 works performed were by a white male	3/14 works performed were by a BIPOC male
C.2	34/34 works performed were by a white male	11/11 works performed by a white male	
S.1	24/24 works performed were by a white male	23/25 works performed were by a white male	2/25 works performed were by a BIPOC male
S.2	8/8 works performed were by a white male	14/14 works performed were by a white male	
S.3	22/22 works performed were by a white male	19/19 works performed were by a white male	

Note: In the above code for each high school/community band, C is a community band, and S is a school band

Table 1

Composer representation of selected concert programs



Note: all percentage values are rounded to the nearest tenth

■ White Male (97.3%) ■ BIPOC Male (2.7%)

Study Parameters:

The goal of this preliminary study is to gain a basic understanding of potential trends of composer and arranger representation in concert programs (from the 2014-2015 and 2018-2019 academic school years) of wind bands in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

For this study:

- Five wind bands were chosen at random from a list of all public high school and community bands in Winnipeg.
- While personal and systemic discrimination can be based on many factors, this analysis was restricted to gender and racialization.
- In terms of racialization, I have only indicated whether the composer or arranger belonged to a racialized group and have not specified further.
- To be considered a work “by” an underrepresented person, either the composer or arranger may belong to an underrepresented group.
- Concert programs (which provide a list of band music performed at concerts) were distributed publicly at concerts and (for some ensembles) posted on the ensemble’s public websites. For this study, concert programs were accessed via websites and digital archives.
- Unlike most festival syllabus lists, there were a total of nine works in these concert programs which were arrangements of traditional pieces and did not have an arranger specified. These works were excluded from the findings.
- To identify each composer or arranger’s gender and whether they belonged to a racialized group, resources such as the Institute for Composer Diversity,¹ official biographies on the composers’ and publishers’ websites, Wind Repertory Project,² and other published writing about these individuals (such as interviews) were consulted.
- The investigation of the composer representation in the corresponding Music Fest Canada syllabi was conducted using the same parameters as the investigation for the repertoire performed by the selected wind bands.

As mentioned in a study by Pratik Gandhi regarding composer representation in the 2018 Music Fest Canada Syllabus, “...each individual’s particular categorization into race and gender, and therefore the overall analysis, remain subject to correction by the composers in question.”³

¹ Rob Deemer, “Institute for Composer Diversity,” accessed July 30, 2021, <https://www.composerdiversity.com/>.

² “Wind Repertory Project (Composer Categories),” Wind Repertory Project, accessed June 4, 2021, https://www.windrep.org/Main_Page.

³ Pratik Gandhi, “Composer Representation in Canadian Wind Band Festival Lists,” Canadian Winds/Vents canadiens 19, no.1 (Fall 2020): 25, Accessed June 4, 2021, https://e14fb933-c2a4-4e29-9f43-22f9069355ba.filesusr.com/ugd/e771fb_6a7e9ed89f9b44b4b8745a64d75e35a2.pdf.

Music Fest Canada Syllabi	Selected Concert Programs												
2015: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>86/90 works by white males</td> <td>95.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3/90 works by BIPOC males</td> <td>3.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1/90 works by white females</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> </table>	86/90 works by white males	95.6%	3/90 works by BIPOC males	3.3%	1/90 works by white females	1.1%	2014-2015 academic school year: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>101/101 works by white males</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </table>	101/101 works by white males	100%				
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2019: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>83/93 works by white males</td> <td>89.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7/93 works by white females</td> <td>7.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2/93 works by BIPOC females</td> <td>2.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1/93 works by BIPOC males</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> </table>	83/93 works by white males	89.2%	7/93 works by white females	7.5%	2/93 works by BIPOC females	2.2%	1/93 works by BIPOC males	1.1%	2018-2019 academic school year: <table border="1"> <tr> <td>77/82 works by white males</td> <td>93.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5/82 works by BIPOC males</td> <td>6.1%</td> </tr> </table>	77/82 works by white males	93.9%	5/82 works by BIPOC males	6.1%
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Table 2



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