

Candidates for the 2010 OCFF Board of Directors Election

The candidates for election were asked to supply brief biographies about themselves along with their statements of interest in the position. As you consider your selections, please take these into account.

Ballots for the election can be downloaded from the OCFF website at www.ocff.ca/contact/board.html. Questions? Please call the OCFF office at 613-560-5997 or toll-free at 1-866-292-6233.

Joeann Argue



Joeann is currently the Indigenous Student Councillor at Trent University. She is on the board of Indigenous Performance Initiatives in Peterborough and teaches traditional song creation and singing for the Centre for Indigenous Theatre's summer school. She sings with the Aboriginal women's group "Unity", an a cappella group that performs in a variety of venues. Unity has been performing together for approximately four years. Prior to forming Unity, she sang with the Otonaabe Women's Handdrum for six years. Joeann is also an aspiring blues singer and a stone sculptor.

Why Joeann Would Make a Good Director:

I have been involved with music and theatre most of my life. In the past few years I have had the opportunity to work with a variety of musicians and performers in various venues, which fuelled my interest in the "business" of music. I am very interested in seeing public access to live performance expanded and broadening audience exposure to a variety of music. Aboriginal music is of special interest to me and I would love to see the musicians gain exposure to a wider audience. Music is a universal language and Aboriginal musicians have a lot to offer. If I can be a part of creating that exposure, I would be honoured.

Richard Flohil



Richard Flohil is a long-standing figure in the "folk" music scene in Canada. He is a former festival AD, on-going publicist, writer, editor, promoter and talker with 4,000 names on his Rolodex and 10,000 CDs and records in his living room.

Why Richard Would Make a Good Director:

Few people have his breadth of knowledge, contacts; he is currently serving on the board and would like to continue, especially in view of the changing nature of OCFF and the degree of continuity that must be maintained as the changes become implemented.

Brian Gladstone



Brian Gladstone has been involved in the Canadian roots music scene for thirty five years in a variety of rolls including singer-songwriter, producer, festival director, presenter, and activist – thus brings good experience and expertise from all sides of the stage. Brian Gladstone is the founder and still active festival director of the OCFF member festival, 'Winterfolk' - now going into the ninth year – which has somewhat served as a modern template for emerging off-season festivals. As a semi-retired engineer, Brian now spends his time touring, writing and recording, teaching guitar, and remaining involved in the Canadian roots community.

Why Brian Would Make a Good Director:

Having worked in private industry for over twenty five years as an engineering director and research team leader, Brian Gladstone has gained high proficiency in all aspects of project management, leadership, effective delegation, work load management, instilling motivation, meeting deadlines, and good ability to work as team member. Brian would very much like to become a member of the OCFF board, is committed to the cause, and would work diligently in any capacity assigned to fulfill their mandate to the best of his ability. It is likely Peter MacDonald, as well as numerous of his predecessors has a folder full of Brian's emails over the years with suggestions, complaints, and ideas for innovation.

ShoShona Kish



ShoShona is a multidisciplinary artist who has fused her art school training with her first loves music and songwriting. She is the co-creator and front woman for the 2010 JUNO Award winning group Digging Roots.

In addition to her work with the band she is also a passionate advocate for First Nations arts and arts education. She hosted a First Nations radio show for Rock 95 and is currently the host of nationally broadcast music magazine Rez Tunes for APTN and BRAVO with band mate and partner Raven Kanatakta.

ShoShona is a recipient of the Chalmers Fellowship and was honoured with a nomination for K.M. Hunter Artists Award for emerging artists at the Ontario Arts Council for her latest multi-arts work the 'Song Lines Project'.

The new Digging Roots album, 'We Are' was released to critical acclaim in the fall of 2009. www.diggingrootsmusic.com

Why ShoShona Would Make a Good Director:

ShoShona is an artist with strong arts admin tendencies. When she is not performing or in the studio, she spends much of her time collaborating with communities on arts events, assisting other artists in their creative and business pursuits and dreaming new ways to engage positive change through music and art.

ShoShona brings to the table a strong sense of the importance of diversity and community engagement. She has sat on several non-profit boards, most recently the board for the Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts (AN DPVA) and continues to collaborate on many planning committees and arts advocacy initiatives.

Devin Latimer



Devin Latimer is a faculty member at the University of Winnipeg, a founding performer with Juno Award winning band Nathan (Netzwerk) as well as the artistic director of the Trout Forest Music Festival, booking an average of 30 acts for the annual all-Canadian 3-stage weekend festival near Ear Falls, Ontario (www.troutfest.com)

Why Devin Would Make a Good Director:

As a touring musician and festival artistic director, Devin has attended numerous folk alliance, OCFF and WCMA conferences and believes the OCFF plays a pivotal role for festivals, musicians and, indeed, the entire folk music industry in Canada. He is eager to serve this vital organization.

Kuljit Sodhi



Kuljit Sodhi is the creator and leader of the very successful world music ensemble Galitcha. After ten years of civil engineering Kuljit embraced music full time in 2002. Since then Galitcha has traveled around the world sharing music made in Canada.

Kuljit divides his time between practicing, writing, promoting and performing his music. As manager and, until recently, agent for the group, Kuljit has been booking Galitcha for performances in concert halls, festivals, schools and community events nationally and internationally.

Kuljit has served as past president of a housing co-op; sits on peer assessment committees; is a FACTOR juror; teaches dance; and, serves as consultant and coach to music artists across Canada and United States.

Why Kuljit Would Make a Good Director:

Kuljit Sodhi has attended OCFF since 2001. With Galitcha he has showcased at the conference and won the “Songs From the Heart” competition in the world music category. Kuljit has also served as a panelist in a number of workshops and has volunteered at OCFF conferences over the years. He has organized guerrilla showcases with other artists and has been a jamming musician in the hallways of the conferences. Kuljit has also attended and showcased at other regional and national music conferences. For the past four years Kuljit has brought Galitcha to schools through the OCFF Art Beat Community program. Outside the OCFF family, he has been active with numerous communities and municipal boards. As Director Kuljit will add to the OCFF Board his rich understanding and past experience of the OCFF as well as his experience and knowledge of the music industry.

Hitomi Suzuta



I work on contract with the Department of Defense in the overseas operations as a Lessons Learned Analyst and also as a researcher on a project about mentorship with the Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Canada.

As an immigrant to Canada from Japan, via the United States, Hitomi has had an opportunity to travel throughout the US, Canada and many parts of the world.

Although relatively new to Ottawa, moving here in the fall of 2008, I am no stranger to volunteering, Boards and Folk Festivals. I was a 7 year volunteer with the Regina Folk Festival and also served as a Festival Coordinator and a member of the Board of Directors.

Why Hitomi Would Make a Good Director:

My extensive experience on Boards and volunteering with organizations such as Tennis Venue Volunteer Coordinator for the Canada Summer Games in 2005; Children's Festivals, Winnipeg Folklorama, Fringe Festivals, Grey Cup, Regina Mosaic and numerous other sports, cultural and multicultural events, festivals and organizations would be an asset to the OCFF.

Jerry W. Switzer



Chair of Tottenham Bluegrass Festival (since 1991 to present). Legal counsel for several arts organizations, clubs, charities, foundations and association. Director and Officer of community organizations relating to business and cultural events. Member of bluegrass band called South Simcoe Ramblers. Involved in musical community at all levels. Song writer and performer.

Why Jerry Would Make a Good Director:

Specific interest in the development of music at the grass roots level and to encourage the development of performers within the folk festival milieu. Interested in seeing that Festivals preserve the inherent values associated with the presentation of music which may not always be commercially successful nor meet the accepted standards of the popular culture. To contribute to the OCFF in a manner that builds upon its past successes and gives the membership stability but a voice for change when necessary. Generally a decent Director is there to listen to what challenges exist, determine whether there are soft or hard fixes, and if and when necessary, arrange for the implementation of those hard or soft remedies.

Rebecca Webster



A Ryerson honours graduate from the Radio and Television Arts degree program in Toronto, the once-Vancouverite first spent time honing her skills first booking bands at Canada's largest cultural arts centre – Harbourfront Centre in Toronto - before assuming the role as Publicist for the Media Relations and Marketing Department. It was there that she launched the 25th anniversary of the International Festival of Authors, and three programs of 13 summer festivals, anchored on all styles and genres of music. Her resume includes working concerts for The Neville Brothers, Tinariwen, Femi Kuti, Margaret Atwood, Los Lobos, Los De Abajo and Broken Social Scene. Later, with Montreal's Secret City Records and Distribution Fusion 3 she developed and promoted the careers of Patrick Watson, Plants and Animals, Sunparlour Players and Emilie-Claire Barlow. Her most recent addition to her independent client roster is Arcade Fire. Rebecca is an active member of

CARAS and sits as 2010 Chair for the Instrumental Category as well as the newly developed Electronic Committee. She was an Advisor for the Ontario Arts Council's Domestic and International Touring Grant Committee and has conducted workshops for the Canadian Council for the Arts. www.linkedin.com/in/rebeccacwebster and www.webstermediaconsulting.com

Why Rebecca Would Make a Good Director:

Diligent, passionate and always eager to move things forward, Rebecca Webster is a self-driven individual who has been involved in Canada's arts scene for over 20 years. Her foray in the music scene began a little over 10 years ago and she has helped solidify footholds, grow careers, advise, promote and above all, be aware of the surrounding environment – economic, political and artistic to make big and small projects a sure success. She's up with the trends but also a trendsetter herself and it's all of these qualities that serve to bring forward ideas in committees. Since co-chairing the Instrumental Category at the Juno awards, the submissions grew from a paltry 15 a year to over 75 submissions in 2009. Serving as a board member is a great way to give back to the community that keeps the music thriving.