

## **Selections from CANADA 150 Programs – Heather’s Picks for High School**

I looked through the list with a focus on accessible middle/high school repertoire with lots of teaching opportunities. I realized after there are quite a few in the ten below from a “folk idiom” – perhaps it’s my Maritime roots, but my high school kids always love these pieces. But for a celebration of Canadian music and culture, very appropriate! Listed here in alphabetical order:

### **Baker, David, (arr. Larry Nickel) | Royal Hudson | SATB with some divisi (various voicings) | Piano | BC | Cypress**

- An energetic folk song arrangement celebrating a part of the country’s history. Rhythmic, quick text, stomp your feet kind feel - a typical “barn burner”. Need a good pianist - fun jazzy piano part. Have seen many young people’s face light up singing this one!

### **Emery, Matthew | Sing Your Song | SATB | Piano | ON | Pavane Publishing**

- New publication. Great for massed choir events - uplifting message and would sound best with a large group. The trickiest bit is the syncopated rhythms and the odd text stresses at times, which are occasionally also overlapping between parts.

### **Glick, Srul Irving | Adonai, Adonai (Mvt. 4 from Triumph of the Spirit) | SATB | piano or orchestra | ON | Gordon V. Thompson**

- A standard work in Canadian repertoire – Triumph of the Spirit was commissioned for the centenary of the TMC after the composer was shot leaving his synagogue. It’s a moving, reassuring Hebrew text set to lush, gorgeous music. For more advanced high school choirs/regional youth choirs.

### **Hatfield, Stephen | All Too Soon | SATB | piano | BC | Boosey and Hawkes**

- A classic! Two contrasting sections – an opening/ending with a lyrical melody that sets the scene like a prologue of a play. The middle section unfolds to tell the story with dotted rhythms and a very Celtic swing feel. The text tells of grandparents arriving in the Maritimes after the war when they were young, their hardship, the issue of people leaving to seek work elsewhere, and how much the ocean stays in the blood of a Maritimer. Relevant, relatable, and really fun to sing, my singers literally ask to do this piece every year! Great to sing with a little Celtic band, or even just a fiddle. Although the opening is written a capella, I’ve always had a “drone” of some kind be sustained throughout.

### **Martin, Stephanie | Ave Verum Corpus | SATB | A Capella | ON | Cypress Music**

- More suitable for more accomplished high school choirs, I like this piece for the amount of teachable moments. Possibly a good gateway for singers into early music. Sacred text, standard Latin. Accessible vocal ranges and good use of voice pairing. Great for teaching pure text stress, momentum and shaping of phrases. Easy to analyze score for form, sequence, chord function, tuning etc.

**Rose, Sheldon | Hush (A Lullaby) | SSA | Piano | ON | Kelmann Hall Publishing**

- A delicate setting – just really simple and intimate. Most effective (and challenging) part is the middle section - passing the motives from section to section and maintaining balance of sound, dynamic and colour so that it sounded seamless. (especially with the OO vowel on the strong beat and the AH on the weak...) Depending on space, could lend itself to different standing formations to create different effect.

**Sirett, Mark (arr.) Traditional Irish | Carrickfergus | TBB | Piano | ON | Boosey and Hawkes**

- My middle/high school boys loved this. (We sang it on stools, like they were pining for home over a beer in a pub... a little dramatic flair.) Lots of opportunity to work on good supported sound, unison, vowels, expressive diction, text stress and long, sensitive phrasing. Parts all have predictable voice leading. Great teaching piece – very sing-able, but with lots to nit pick, especially for male developing voices.

**Sirett, Mark (arr.), Traditional Gaelic Carol | Taladh Chriosda | SATB | Piano Violin | ON | Boosey and Hawkes**

- A beautiful, simple and lilting lullaby for Christmas, alternating between verses of Gaelic text and choruses of “Alleluia”. Perfect for teaching text emphasis in 6/8 meter, reading syncopated rhythms and mixolydian mode.

**Smallman, Jeff (arr.) & Rita MacNeil (arr.) | Kicking Horse River | SATB | Piano, Flute, Bodhran | ON & NS | Lighthouse Publishing**

- Throwback to NYC 2010! Not much to say except it’s a really fun sing, bright and cheery, with a fun piano accompaniment, with optional piccolo/flute and bodhran.

**Sonstenes, Miriam | Leaving | SSA or SAB | A Capella | BC | Cypress**

- Original tune sung by “The Sweet Lowdown” – a Canadian roots trio based on Vancouver Island. Gorgeous text that teenagers love: “I am leaving, I am leaving, don’t you cry - it won’t be long. I’ll hold on to one sweet memory singing songs until the dawn.” Simple, strophic, memorable folk tune perfect for around a camp fire, or for graduation etc.

## Selections from CANADA 150 Programs – Laura’s Picks

### **Allan, Kathleen | Maid on the Shore | SSAA | A Cappella | NL | CYP**

- One of my favourite traditional folk songs
- Driving rhythm with optional percussion part
- Vocal slides enrich the expression of the folk style
- ‘primal vigour’ as marked adds to the sense of female empowerment within the text

### **Bevan, Allan | Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal | SATB | A Cappella | ON | CYP**

- Dream-like feeling created by fragments of text and fluid harmonic transitions

### **Emery, Matthew | Sleep Now | TTBB | A Cappella | ON | CYP**

- Pleasing balance between movement of outer voices and stability of inner voices
- Mixed meter supports essence of peace and tranquility

### **Enns, Jeff, arr. | Song of the Land | SATB | Accomp. Piano | ON | CYP**

- Relevance to contemporary issues of refuge and immigration in Canada
- Evocative natural imagery

### **Gubiotti, Estanislau | Immigrant Son | SATB (SSAA) | Accomp. Piano | CYP**

- Relevance to contemporary issues of refuge and immigration
- Rhythmic pulse and ascending melodic lines add tension reflective of the text

### **Ingari, Robert | Vient le jour | SATB | Accomp. Cello | QC | CYP**

- Interplay between cello and choir moves the line through the mixed meter

### **Lund, Gail | Gabriel’s Message | SATB | Accomp. Piano | ON | CYP**

- A joyful piece for Christmas
- Mixed meter adds emphasis to the narrative effect
- Piano accompaniment fills the piece with fanfare, further bolstering the joyful mood

### **McKen, Jean | I am Song, Je Suis Chanson | SAB (SSA) | Accomp. Piano | ON | CYP**

- I love the way McKen evokes the spirit of Canada by intertwining the power of music and nature within the text
- The mixture of English and French, combined with simple harmonies, makes this song a great teaching piece for amateur choirs

### **Murphy, Kelly-Marie | Miserere | SATB | A Cappella | ON | CYP**

- Beautifully layered, complex harmonies
- Simple text allows for focused harmonic learning

### **Sgroi, Laura | Alone | SATB | A Cappella | ON | Ren**

- Richness and warmth
- Beautiful harmonies intertwine between voices

## Selections from CANADA 150 Programs – Diana’s Picks for Developing Choirs

### **Daley, Eleanor | The Angels Will Guide You Home | SSA | ON | ALL**

- lovely lovely. Fits the voice so well; opportunity to practice rubato

### **Hatfield, Stephen | Living in a Holy City | SSAA | BC | HL**

- Groove-based layers, so it’s not as hard to learn as it looks on the page. Singers ask to sing this one every year!

### **Hawley, Laura | Earth Voices | SAB or 2 pt/SSA | ON | RTMP**

- dramatic text resonates with young singers; full of juicy moments through which to teach musicianship; feels good in the voice to sing

### **Peterson, Oscar (arr.) | Hymn to Freedom | SSA or SATB or works as unison | ON | HL**

- **UPDATE THE WORDS if you sing this one!** “When WE will live in dignity” and “When EVERYONE...” But a fantastic concert closer or massed piece.

### **Tate, Brian | Klee Wyck | SA | BC | CYP**

- Yay a song of the WEST Coast! :) Young singers and audiences LOVE this piece! So dramatic- you can hear the rugged BC coastline and forests. Connection to Emily Carr, painter.

Also recommended

HL = Apple Tree Wassail SSA – Stephen Hatfield

RTMP = Au Champ d’honneur – Laura Hawley

CYP = C’est l’aviron – Donald Patriquin

ALL = Canticle to the Spirit – 2 pt – Eleanor Daley

ALF = Come, Ye Makers of Song – Ruth Watson Henderson

HL = Espiritu de Dios – Trad. Cuban, arr. Brian Tate

KHMM = Frobisher Bay SSA James-Gordon, Arr. Tamarack

CYP = If I were a Blackbird – Scott Macmillan

HL = Living in a Holy City – Stephen Hatfield

ALF = Psalm 23 – Srul Irving Glick

ALF = Song for the Mira – A. MacGillivry, arr. Stuart Calvert

HL = Song of the Stars – Arr. Imant Raminsh

HL = Together We Are – Brian Tate

HL = When I Sing – SSA – Bill Henderson

CYP = Woodsmoke and Oranges – Ian Tamblyn, arr. Rebecca Campbell

ALF = Inuit Vignette – Michael and Mira Coghlan

## Selections from CANADA 150 Programs – Joel’s Picks

### **Brown, Emerson & Morrison, (arr. Jeff Enns) | Song of the Land | SATB | piano | N/A | Cypress**

- Part of the Canadian Chamber Choir series with Cypress, I’ve had the pleasure of singing, playing, and conducting this choral arrangement from coast to coast. Very similar in tone and mood to “Parlez-moi,” it addresses the important issues of belonging, identity, and reconciliation.

### **Daunais, Lionel | Le pont Mirabeau | SATB adult | a cap | QC | Walton**

- This is a classic, and, I think, one of the most beautifully understated Canadian unaccompanied part songs. The subtle changes between verses requires a great deal of attention to the text and the text setting.

### **Hatfield, Stephen | La lluvia | SSA and SATB | a cap | BC | Hal Leonard**

- I’ve never actually done this piece, but I’ve long admired Hatfield’s use of rhythm, form, and story-telling. It’s fast and playful, as well as extremely technically demanding. Having lived in the States, I know that Hatfield is one of Canada’s biggest choral exports.

### **Levasseur-Ouimet, France, (arr. Allan Bevan) | Parlez-moi | SSA and SATB | piano | AB/ON | Cypress**

- The beautiful melody is wonderfully harmonized and fleshed out with piano accompaniment by Allan Bevan. Each vocal line is lovely to sing, and it tells a touching story of yearning for a deeper connection to one’s heritage. It builds to an emotional climax at the end.

### **Macdonald, Don | Tabula rasa | SSAA and SATB div | a cap | BC | Cypress**

- Musically stunning (with an equally beautiful text by Allison Girvan), this has become a favourite of youth and adult choirs. The extremes of vocal range, especially for sopranos, make this piece quite technically demanding. Pay close attention to dynamic markings and carefully balance the parts when the top voices are divided.

### **Propp, Erin, (arr. Absalon Figueroa) | The Frost | SSA and SATB | piano (others opt.) | MB/BC | Rhythmic Trident**

- I love this tune, and the arrangement is quite different from the original – but it works. There are instrumental parts for a small ensemble; I’ve done it with just piano and fiddle. The syncopation (at quite a brisk tempo) and the large melodic leaps will take some time to work out.

### **Raminsh, Imant | In the Night We Shall Go In | SATB adult | piano, cello | BC | Hal Leonard**

- A gorgeous concert closer, this combines Raminsh's classic harmonic colours with a sensuous text by Pablo Neruda. The piano and cello parts are idiomatic and not terribly difficult. One of my favourite pieces by one of my favourite Canadian composers.

**Rogers, Stan, (arr. Ron Smail ) | Watching the Apples Grow | TBB and SATB | piano | ON/BC | Cypress**

- This is a classic tune and a great arrangement that everyone – singers and audiences - loves. I've done it with piano and banjo (you need someone who can finger-pick well).

**Ryan, Jeffrey | ...sempiternam | SATB/SATB (double choir) | a cap | BC | self-published**

- This is an adaptation of an excerpt from the Agnus Dei movement of Jeff Ryan's *Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation*, surely one of the most important Canadian choral-orchestral works of the last 25 years. The two choirs sing in canon, creating a hauntingly beautiful echo effect.

**Tate, Brian | The Emily Carr Suite | SATB | piano | BC | Cypress**

- This is a set of three songs: "Rise," "So Still," and "Go into the Glory of the Woods." The music has an expansiveness, which allows the poetry (by Emily Carr) to be at the forefront. Brian's music, for me, always has an excellent structure and balance. The third movement is rhythmic with an invigorating energy to it.

## **Selections from CANADA 150 Programs –Jennifer’s Picks**

My approach to selecting a repertoire shortlist was through the lens of a mixed university choir or advanced high school choir. Even in a mixed voice choir I always include SSA and TTB selections so they are featured in this list as well.

### **Hawley, Laura | Sonnet 43: All Days Are Nights| SATB | A Cappella | ON | RTMP**

This song has quickly become one of my favourites as it presents deceptive challenges, especially rhythmically. Soaring above the underlying syncopated rhythms is a gorgeous melody that captures the text expertly. Through compositional elements of driving rhythms and shifting textures, Hawley captures the joyful and whimsical nature of Shakespeare’s text in Sonnet 43.

### **Leslie, Kenneth (arr. Stuart Calvert)| Cape Breton Lullaby| SSA| Piano | NS | ALF**

This song has a beautiful piano accompaniment and the lullaby sentiment of the song creates wonderful opportunities for sensitive singing, word painting, and gentle dynamic control. The melody is shared between voices with a choral accompaniment of “Ah” in the middle section and homophonic textures provide a great challenge to secure the chordal harmonies.

### **MacGillivray, Allister | Away from the Roll of the Sea| SATB | Piano | NS | YP, ALF**

The melody in this song is one that singers will be thrilled to sing and audience members will leave singing. There are solo/soli sections throughout with a beautiful lilting piano accompaniment representing the water’s movement. The impact is even greater when the ensemble enters the a cappella section. This song is definitely a musical treasure for many choirs.

### **Raminsh, Imant | Ave Verum Corpus| SATB | A Cappella | BC | Hal Leonard**

This song has rich harmonies with beautiful lyrical melodies interspersed throughout the voices. Each vocal line has such an interesting contribution to the harmonic picture. There are wonderful harmonic surprises throughout building to a musical climax that is incredibly moving for singers and listeners alike.

### **Sirett, Mark| Ce Beau Printemps| SATB | A Cappella | ON | Hal Leonard**

“The poetry is by Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1595) who was known as the ‘prince of poets’ by his own generation” (Sirett, program notes) and musically invites sustained dynamic control and support. The repetition calls for subtle ways of colouring each articulation of a word or phrase. The nuance and finesse required for this song results in a stunning performance.

**Smallman, Jeff | Lady Icicle | SSA | piano & flute | ON | Lighthouse**

Set to the text by E. Pauline Johnson, London Ontario composer Jeff Smallman, captures the anticipation, magic, and beauty of this winter goddess. The contrasting middle section of the song paints the image of a whimsical awakening of winter making it a delight to sing with piano and flute. Musically this song brings the poetic character to life beautifully.

**Quick, Jonathan (arr.) | Loch Lomond | SATB | A Cappella | BC | Cypress**

This traditional melody is a welcome addition to any choral performance.

Quick's arrangement begins with a beautiful solo followed by a stunning harmonized verse featuring the lower voices, which is then given over to the treble voices. Another solo opportunity arises in the middle with a treble "oo" accompaniment. Finally, the texture builds as voices enter in the percussive "Dai Dai" section, which is undoubtedly the characteristic feature of this wonderful arrangement.

**Quick, Jonathan (arr.) Newfoundland Folk Song | Sarah | TTB/SSA | A Cappella | BC | Cypress**

This traditional Newfoundland Folk Song contains musical elements designed to highlight its folk characteristics: speaking, pitch bends, grace notes, articulated accents, lilting rhythms, and a repeated chorus. *Sarah* features four solo opportunities with a full choral verse that quickly becomes a welcome "earworm."

**Wallace, Russell | The Gift (Gathering Song) | SATB | A Cappella | Lil'wat Nation | CYP**

"This song is about a community coming together to prepare a feast – to celebrate "the gift" of traditions and the transmission of knowledge. The lyrics in this song are not words in any language, but they are based on Aboriginal vocables from the western part of North America. I am a member of the Lil'wat Nation and have sung and composed many songs based on this traditional form," (Wallace, program notes). The song is a wonderful opening to a concert as it reaffirms our relationship to each other and to the space in which we gather. It begins with a baritone solo and introduces vocal lines at staggered intervals producing luscious harmonies in support of a rich melody. This effect mirrors the gathering of people together and the spirit of the song and community.