

Honorary Award Recipient Citations 2023

Rachel Laurin – Honorary Fellowship (FRCCO honoris causa)

Born in Saint-Benoit, Québec, Rachel Laurin received her musical training at the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal, where she studied piano with Raoul Sosa and organ with Lucienne L'Heureux-Arel and Gaston Arel. From 1980 to 1985, she studied organ, composition and improvisation privately with Raymond Daveluy FRCCO. After having assisted him for many years at the St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal, Mme Laurin moved to Ottawa in 2002 to become the titular organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral.

Since leaving the Cathedral in 2006, and still residing in Ottawa, Rachel Laurin has led a dual international career as a concert organist, composer and pedagogue. She has also given many master-classes in Canadian and American universities. Rachel Laurin also taught improvisation at the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal in 1988, and gave masterclasses on improvisation in Épinal, France; she also has been a faculty member for the Mount Royal Summer Academy (Calgary) and The Summer Institute of Church Music (Whitby, Ontario). In 2009 and 2010, she was 'Distinguished Guest Artist' at Yale University.

Rachel Laurin has performed in Europe, Canada and the United States and has frequently been invited as a performer, commissioned composer and clinician to major AGO and RCCO national conventions. She was soloist for the premiere of Jacques Hétu's Organ concerto by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra under Mario Bernardi at the Winspear Centre for the Arts in 2002; a musical documentary named *Opus d'Amour* (Helen Folkman, 2003) captures Rachel's collaboration with Jacques Hétu on the composing of this major work. Throughout her life she has been a great promoter of Raymond Daveluy's music and features it in her recitals; she performed his Organ Concerto at the RCCO National Convention in Hamilton in 1999. She has recorded 12 CDs of her music on various labels including Motette, Musicus/Fidelio, Analekta, SRC (Radio-Canada), Richelieu, BND, and Raven.

In addition to her work as a composer for the organ, Rachel Laurin has composed many works for various other solo instruments, voice, instrumental ensembles, choir, and orchestra. Most of her compositions are published and recognized internationally, having been performed and recorded on all five continents. She is also an associate-composer of the Canadian Music Centre, and her catalogue of works comprises over 100 opus numbers. Her music has been published by Leupold Editions (where she has served as "house composer" since 2006), Europart-Music, RCCO Music Publications, Les Éditions du Nouveau Monde, The Canadian Music Centre, Morning Star Publications, and Delatour. Among her many commissions received over the years from around the world, she was invited in 2019 to write a new piece for British organist Thomas Trotter to mark his 800th recital at the Birmingham Concert Hall. A feature-length programme on Rachel Laurin was presented in 2012 by Michael Barone, on *Pipedreams* of the American Public Media network.

In 2008 Rachel Laurin received the Holtkamp-AGO Composition Award, and the following year she was awarded first place in the Marilyn Mason New Organ Music Competition. In 2020 the American Guild of Organists granted her the AGO "Distinguished Composer Award" in recognition of her important contribution to the organ repertoire. More recently Rachel Laurin

won the 2022 Pogorzelski-Yankee Composition Competition. She has been a member of the "Comité d'Honneur de la Fédération Francophone des Amis de l'Orgue" (FFAO) since 2016.

Rachel Laurin is considered one of the most important Canadian composers of organ music and an outstanding ambassador for the instrument the RCCO has been promoting since 1909.

In recognition for her contribution over many years to the goals of the Royal Canadian College of Organists, for her enduring promotion of Canadian music, for her work in the field of music education, and for her contribution to music in Canada and around the world, the Royal Canadian College of Organists is pleased to confer upon Rachel Laurin the diploma of Fellow of the Royal Canadian College of Organists (honoris causa).

Earl Clark – Distinguished Service Award of the RCCO

Earl Clark's career as organist, choir director and music educator embraces his lifelong commitment to the Royal Canadian College of Organists and its goals, extending from his home in the Stratford area and beyond. As an organist, choir trainer, teacher, festival adjudicator, and more, he has been an inspiration to innumerable singers, congregants, clergy, and members of the communities which he has served. In 2019 he was named as an honorary life member of the Royal Canadian College of Organists.

Earl recently retired after serving for 63 years as Director of Music at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Stratford, where he has been an inspiring musical worship leader and an active contributor to the life of the congregation. In the community he has served as Conductor of the Stratford Men's Chorus and was a founding member and accompanist of the Stratford Boy Choir. In his long career as a teacher of Music and French in the Perth County Board of Education, he was Music Consultant for 25 years. His teaching achievements reached into the post-secondary area, where he taught courses in music education for Wilfrid Laurier University. There he supported students by contributions to scholarships, whose recipients have included the composer Jeff Enns and organ virtuoso Jonathan Oldengarm among others.

He also taught and mentored many young organ students in the Stratford area, inspiring them to go on to study at the university level.

Earl has led numerous choral reading workshops in Stratford and at RCCO organ festivals. In commissioning new works for organ from composers such as Rachel Laurin and John Vandertuin, he recognized important RCCO colleagues by dedicating the pieces, either in memoriam (Brian Emory, Gordon Scott and William Wickett) or in tribute (Jack Hillier, long-time National Secretary of the RCCO).

Throughout a life dedicated to music, Earl Clark has worked tirelessly to foster interest in the organ and its music within his church, his hometown of Stratford and beyond. The College is honoured to recognize his lifetime commitment to his congregation, to organists and organ students and to the work of the RCCO across Canada.