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Gifted composer, educator Staniland named 2015 Distinguished Alumnus of the Year

Renowned as a rising star in both the worlds of music and academia, University of Lethbridge alumnus Dr. Andrew Staniland (BMus '00) has been named the University of Lethbridge Alumni Association's 2015 Distinguished Alumnus of the Year.

"We're thrilled to be able to recognize the impact that Andrew has made on the music world and as an educator with the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year award," says Randy Kobbert (BMgt '86), president of the University of Lethbridge Alumni Association. "In just a few short years since graduating from the University, he has carved out a very impressive career and is sought after as one of Canada's truly elite composers. That he found his passion here at the U of L and it served as a launching pad for his professional aspirations speaks to his educational experience and the opportunities it allowed him to pursue."

Staniland, currently a professor of music at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), has been on the fast track of Canada's music scene from the day he graduated from the U of L. During his master's studies at the University of Toronto, his compositions were already attracting attention and requests for commissions began to pile up.

His compositions have received numerous awards and accolades. In 2009, he won the National Grand Prize of the CBC Composers Competition. In 2014, he received the Harry Freedman Recording Award and was elected to the inaugural cohort of the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists Royal Society of Canada.

"I'm in the enviable position of being able to pick and choose projects that interest me," says Staniland, who has been booked solid with commissions since 2002.

Unlike many contemporary Canadian composers whose works are performed once and then languish in obscurity, Staniland has amassed more than 100 national and international performances of his work and been chosen to represent Canada at prestigious festivals in Poland, France and Hong Kong. The fact that his works, whether

electronic, chamber, vocal or orchestral, have received multiple performances and broadcasts is a true testament to the musicality and broad appeal of his compositions.

“In my experience, love and passion for creativity are totally contagious, as is the pursuit of musical mastery,” he says. “I was moved and inspired by my teachers who had these traits, and I now have the privilege of inspiring others the same way, through my music and my teaching.”

A well-respected professor of music at MUN, Staniland’s creative activities earned him the President’s Award for Outstanding Research in 2014.

Staniland is currently working on a song cycle for the Brooklyn Art Song Society, which will premiere in New York next year and tour across Canada in 2016 and 2017.

Andrew Staniland will be recognized for his outstanding professional accomplishments at the Fall 2015 Convocation ceremony, Saturday, October 17, 2015. A concert featuring a selection of Dr. Staniland’s work will be performed by faculty from the U of L’s Department of Music on Friday, October 16 at 7 p.m. Tickets are free and can be reserved through the University Box Office online at ulethbridge.ca/tickets or by phone at 403-329-2616.

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