



## **Banff 2010**

*Victoria Simonsen ('cellist)*

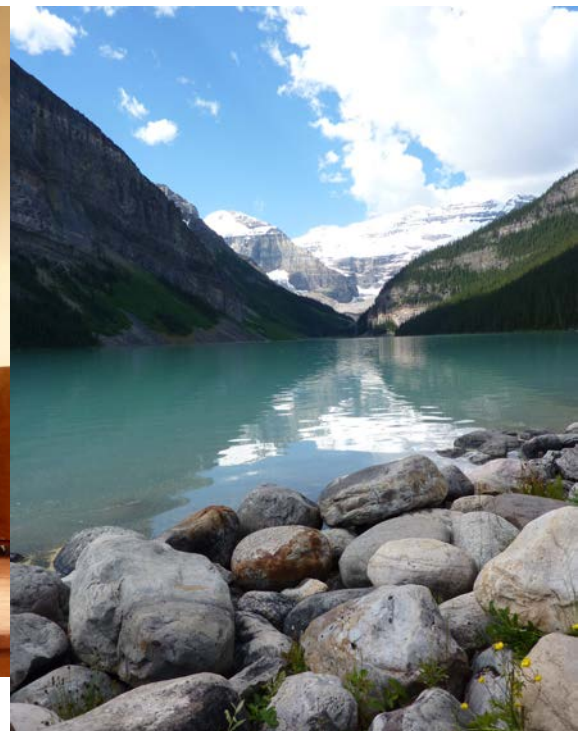
**M**y three weeks at the Arts Centre in Banff, Canada, have left me refreshed and filled with energy, optimism and a desire to work harder and aim even higher.

It goes without saying that it is one of the most beautiful and inspiring places for a summer school – I must admit, even though I had been told about it by previous attendees, on my arrival I was still absolutely stunned by the landscape and the environment in which the Arts Centre lies.

The campus itself is large, with wonderful music facilities and an incredible array of buildings housing Dance, Art, Music, Audio Recording and Science departments, plus a brand new music library – the sheer number of programs on offer and students involved is dazzling.

This year's Master Classes for Strings and Winds course had a cello class comprising of 27 students, predominantly from North America. During the three weeks, I received three private lessons and two public master classes with the cello faculty of Andrés Díaz, Raphael Wallfisch, Colin Carr and Desmond Hoebig. In turn, I was able to watch and learn from the classes of fellow cellists, in addition to regular concert performances by the faculty members. Two performances in particular that remain in my memory are a Brahms Sonata performed by Colin Carr and a Brahms Piano Quartet performance by Hagai Shaham, Barry Shiffman, Raphael Wallfisch and Lydia Wong. I also had the honour of playing in one of the first public concerts of the course, having been chosen to perform Brahms' Clarinet Trio with faculty members, 'Canada's pre-eminent' clarinetist James Campbell and Japanese pianist Futaba Niekawa.

Without the ESU, I would never have considered attending the Summer Master Classes in Banff, due to the financial costs involved. A huge and heartfelt thank you to the English-Speaking Union Music Scholarship trustees, audition committee and administrators for honouring me with this scholarship and helping me to have the experience of a lifetime.



*Above: Victoria in class with Desmond Hoebig (and collaborative pianist Hiroaki Takenouchi)*

*Right: Lake Louise*

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