

Blind piano prodigy shares story

By Mary Barber

Friday night saw the opening gala for Belleville's annual DocFest at the historic Empire Theatre.

The international film festival brings together sight and sound to tell stories covering a wide range of topics, often of people overcoming obstacles.

The headlining show *Keep On Keepin' On*, followed the story of jazz legend Clark Terry's mentoring of a 23-year-old, blind piano prodigy, Justin Kauflin.

The event then climaxed with Kauflin's Canadian debut performance in which its captivated audience found that one can see music without using their eyes.

As the film's credits rolled, Candy, Kauflin's eight-year-old seeing-eye dog, guided him towards the piano at centre stage for his performance. Kauflin opened with an eponymous tune 'For Clark'.

"People say, 'Oh you must be able to hear music so much more clearly now that you are blind,'" says Kauflin anecdotally. "It's not so much that I think my hearing improved, I think that if someone were to close their eyes for about an hour, you would start to become aware of things that you maybe did not realize before through your other senses."

The grande finale of Terry's legacy is captured over the course of five years, alongside Kauflin, who suffers from performance anxiety as a contest finalist for the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition. As Terry's health weakens and his eyesight fades, mentor and student reawaken in the spirit of jazz and the two challenge one another to confront their greatest fears.

"I love Duke Ellington's quote, because that's how it should be -- 'Sometimes when I get on stage, I enjoy a little stage fright.' That's the essence of it. I would be scared if I didn't have that," said Kauflin,

"In the movie, Clark says, 'Use your mind for positive thinking, be positive about it.' This is a gift I have to be able to be on stage and share my experiences. Focus on the positive and realize how grateful I am."

A musical pioneer and trumpeter, Terry collaborated with much of jazz history's great musicians, ranging from Count Basie to Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, Oscar Peterson, as well as Quincy Jones (Terry's first student) and mentor to Miles Davis.

Earlier in his career, he broke the colour barrier as NBC's first African-American staff musician – on *The Tonight*



Photo by Paul Terry

Justin Kauflin, an American Jazz pianist and one of the subjects of the documentary, "Keep on Keepin' On", performs at the opening gala of the Belleville DocFest on Friday night.

Show. In his final years, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2010 Grammys.

"From spending time, connecting with Clark Terry, someone whose lived through jazz history and knew all these beautiful people through his life...Myself, like many of his other students, have a responsibility to make sure that the things that I got from Clark -- the love, the encouragement -- that type of relationship

will be passed on," said Kauflin.

Terry's career spanned seven generations and more than 900 recordings. His contemporary style of jazz trumpet and unique vocal language 'Mumbles', exposed him as one of the most recorded jazz artists in history. As a music educator, he devoted much of his career to establishing technical proficiency in his students and received recognition in 16 honorary doctorates.

"You know, everything is rhythmic with Clark, everything grooves, and we would try to relate to that. He'd say something as Mumbles, I'd put it on the piano as best as I could, and that's how we would learn," said Kauflin.

Dug Stevenson, emcee and public relations co-ordinator for DocFest 2015, estimated that this was the highest attended opening gala the festival has seen yet, with more than 700 people in the audi-

ence. The gala garnered a \$45,000 budget.

"I've had so many people come up to me and tell me that this was a world class event, to have a film like this and have Kauflin who is on his way to becoming one of the greatest jazz pianist in the world," said Stevenson.

"Tonight we had *one guy*, on the stage, captivating the whole crowd. Four years in a row and I believe we've really knocked it out of the park."

Graduates...

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"We are very pleased to receive this Career Focus funding, which will provide opportunities for recent post-secondary graduates to apply their skills and training to careers in our community and region," Piercy said.

"In addition to helping graduates, this program will provide important incentives to local private sector employers to train and fully integrate

these new hires into their businesses. "Our team at Loyalist College Community Employment Services will serve as community coordinator to the program, providing outreach, intake and placement monitoring."

Lisa Benoit, an employment consultant at the Loyalist College Community Employment Services (CES) at 54 Dundas St. E., Belleville outlined the process.

"The CES will be recruiting and selecting the youth participants," she said. "Graduates will have ongoing support and guidance by an employment consultant to identify goals and

research the local labour market as it relates to their post-secondary focus.

"Job developers will also work in the community to promote graduates to local employers and connect them to a paid placement opportunity.

"Due to a lack of work experience, finding employment after completing post-secondary can be both challenging and frustrating for youth, especially those living in a smaller community. This project not only allows participants to apply their newly learned skills but it also allows them to get established within their chosen field by gaining much needed work

experience, networking and more importantly building mentorships with local professionals."

The Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy, which includes the Career Focus program, has helped more than 611,000 youth since 2006. Through its Economic Action Plan 2014, the Government has invested \$40 million towards supporting up to 3,000 internships in high-demand fields and \$15 million annually towards supporting up to 1,000 internships in small and medium-sized enterprises under the Youth Employment Strategy.

Ball hockey...

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"It's \$5 per team and that includes all four members and their lunch today, just a small cost to reserve their spot," said LeGresley.

The entrant fees were used to offset the events operational costs and all further proceeds are slated to fund future programming at the Youth Centre.

"We've got four teams from the air cadets, local Trenton air cadets, which are kicking butt," said LeGresley.

Captain Garret Watts, deputy commanding officer for the 704 Air Cadets squadron saw the tournament advertised on base and brought out teams Challenger, Dakota, Alpha Jet and the tournaments winning team, Buffalo.

"These are cadets who have actually been doing some training otherwise for some other sporting events and we saw this as a great opportunity to get involved in the community a little bit as well as have some fun practicing our skills," said Captain Garret Watts, Deputy CO for the 704 Air Cadets Squadron.

"They've enjoyed themselves and you know we are all working up a good sweat so we are very proud of them," added Watts.

Spirits were high among the other four teams as well, one family had brought team shirts from home and could be heard singing their team song.

At the end of the day, the three top placed teams received prizes and Funky Skunk was awarded the best team name.

"It was great, well organized and a lot of fun," said Andrew Patterson of the Funky Skunk.

"My wife, she's Spanish so she doesn't usually play hockey ... it's nice playing hockey with my wife and kids," he added.

In between games, players stayed warm in the newly renovated and equipped Youth Centre where a variety of activities had been set up and pizza was served.

"A sub goal is to get some more exposure for our youth centre. We just recently went through a major renovation and are really starting fresh so we're always looking for new opportunities to get new people into the youth centre and see what we're all about," said LeGresley.

The Youth Centre is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday nights with special activities catering to a specific age group each night. The 3-on-3 ball hockey tournament is the latest instalment to the centre's special Saturday events which occur once and month and have included a Saturday Brunch and Winter Wonderland activities.

"We've had a lot of response from the public who wanted to put in teams but unfortunately it just was the wrong day of the week or they had other commitments so I think people will be watching out for us," said LeGresley.

"I think most definitely we will be doing it again...everyone's having a great time."

Milford crafter has a barrel of fun

By David Fransky

When he was about five or six, Pete Bradford was at his grandfather's butcher shop and saw two barrels and knew he wanted to make them.

"That is when I decided that I wanted to make barrels."

The resident of Milford, south of Belleville, was at the Ameliasburgh Community Hall Saturday to explain his craft of coopering, or barrel making.

Bradford studied the art of coopering for about 20 years before he did an apprenticeship for seven years in Kansas City. He has now been on his own for three years.

He builds with white oak from all over Canada and does it the traditional way. Bradford said he is the only traditional cooper in Canada.

"For a small barrel, three hours and that is cutting, sanding, burning and hooping," Bradford said. "For a 200-litre, it takes six to eight hours."

There are four levels of charring (burning the inside). Charred barrels are used mostly for whisky.

There are also eight levels of toasting (like charring but not as much heat); a toasted barrel is used mostly for wine.

Bradford uses a lot of different tools to build a barrel.

They are called the crozier (marking tool), wooden mallet, chisel, adze (curved tool for both hammering and carving), a four-pound hammer, the burning pot (made of metal which is used to toast or char) and the bung hole cauterizing iron (used to burn a hole into the wood so the bung or plug can fit tightly into the barrel to stop leaks). He also machines to make to work easier. He designed them himself.

There are many steps of coopering.

The first step is to get the wood and age it for three to five years, because some – but not all – tannic acid in the wood needs to come out by being exposed to rain and snow.

The next step is to mark and cut the wood into staves, ensuring they will fit together in a circular shape.

Then he puts the staves into a jig (a round metal hoop) and puts on the cables. Then he tightens the staves slowly until he can put a large metal band around its middle. Next Bradford hammers down the band.

Then he loosens the cables, takes it out and puts the barrel onto a press to push the band into place. Then he repeats to process on the other end. Then

he does

this twice more at the ends.

Bradford then takes the barrel outside and puts the barrel on the pot that has burning coals in it. If he wants to char it he lets it go for 18 seconds and he listens to the wood. Once it reaches char he does a quick pour

of water which vaporizes to slow down the fire.

If he wants to toast it he uses less heat and toasts it for 30 to 40 minutes. Bradford toasts the barrel, sometimes to open the pores in the wood to get a better flavour. Regardless of what he does, he listens to the wood and has to have patience. Otherwise it will burn.

With other wood that he has cut, Bradford makes the lids for both the top and bottom of the barrel. With the crozier, or router, he cuts groove for the lids to fit into before hammering the lids into place.

Then he drills a hole so that a bung can go in.

As a result of his work Bradford was given the Premier of Ontario Award. He sells his barrels internationally.



Photo by David Fransky

Pete Bradford is showing the barrels that he made in the past in Ameliasburgh Community Hall last Saturday. He has been doing this for 10 years now and is the only one in Canada that does this the traditional way.