
Part 3 – Performance in Canada

Inhabitants of the few settlements scattered across what made up Canada before the 1800s seldom saw a professional musician. Amateur musicians sometimes played to small groups. The nineteenth century heralded the beginning of tours by soloists and companies from Europe and the United States. Amateur musical societies sprang up. Almost every town or city claimed to have at least one, often organized and conducted by professional musicians.

Orchestras

Today, over 80 orchestra ensembles of varying size and character are based in Canada. They range from the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, a group of some 100 musicians with a \$3-million budget to the Timmins Symphony Orchestra, almost entirely made up of amateur musicians.



Andrew Davis, music director of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. (Photo: Frank Harmantas)