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The French horns to be heard around the world

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By Laura Lennie
News Staff

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Last weekend, with the help of theatre lights, Omni Media Productions from St. Catharines and a cherry picker, Orchard Park Secondary School students Brent Wirth, William Callaghan, Christina Petlura and Hayley Proudfoot recorded original music and video to be broadcast to hundreds of thousands of people during the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Italy.

The four French horn players are part of "The One Project" by Grammy-nominated composer Christopher Hedge, who's collecting performance clips from around the world to be played in a musical collage at Turin's Piazza Solferino before medal ceremonies.

Weeks ago, Mr. Hedge invited a submission from David Young, friend, composer and part-time music teacher at Orchard Park, who wrote a 30-second clip featuring a stirring introduction evoking O Canada, a soprano sax interlude by his wife, and music department head, Wendy Young and a slight conclusion meant to blend into a different clip.

"Originally, Mr. Hedge was going to include clips of Mrs. Young and myself in addition to a short feature of our new classical album 'Silver Lining,' but then it seemed really appropriate to do a clip with our students also," said Mr. Young. "So I thought we needed a small group and a strong group and out of our band, the French horns are a very, very, strong group of players - very dedicated, very reliable and consistent - so that's who we went with," he said.

Fifteen-year-old Hayley was pleasantly surprised.



PHOTO BY LAURA LENNIE

Last weekend, Brent Wirth, William Callaghan, Christina Petlura and Hayley Proudfoot of Orchard Park Secondary School recorded a segment of original music and video to be broadcast to hundreds of thousands of people during the Olympic Games. Pictured here, David Young and his musicians simulate their pose seen at the end of their video, as they point their five French horn bells at the camera to create a gleaming silvery version of the five Olympic rings.


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"I think it's a very, very good opportunity for us to get exposure," she said.

"We're going to be playing with all of these other musicians and we've never even heard them play before. I think that's kind of cool," said 16-year-old William.

Christina, 15, agreed.

"I think it's something none of us will ever forget," she said.

Shows run nightly until Feb. 26, but Mr. Young said he doesn't know when Orchard Park's clip will play in Mr. Hedge's longer composition.

"It's going to be webcast. We don't know what kind of coverage there will be from networks; it will be who happens to be there covering it at the time, he said.

Mr. Hedge will then take the performance and project it as an 80-foot image onto screens and buildings.

An estimated quarter million people will witness Orchard Park's message.

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