June 9, 2015

**Music grad heads to California for internship with film composer Hans Zimmer**

Edmonton—Oliver Westall, a member of the first graduating class of the Bachelor of Music in Jazz and Contemporary Popular Music always knew music would be his life’s work. He began playing piano when he was three, but it was in 1997 when the film *Titanic* was released that Westall realized his true musical calling. While everyone else focused on what was happening on screen, Westall couldn’t get the soundtrack out of his head and he spent the next two years memorizing the entire soundtrack.

“It started to trigger something,” says Westall. Partway through the fall 2104 semester, Westall began to see how that dream could actually come true. “One of my classmates came into class and said he had an interview with Remote Control Productions in Santa Monica. I hadn’t heard the name before, but when he said it was Hans Zimmer’s studio, he immediately had my attention.”

Westall set out to see if he too could work with the legendary composer behind the soundtracks for movies including *Titanic*, *Gladiator* and *Interstellar*. Eventually it led to an interview where he learned about the internship, including opportunities to sit in on writing sessions. “A stressful few weeks passed after the interview and when I finally found out they wanted me, I ran around the house screaming,” added Westall.

Westall leaves for Santa Monica the day after Convocation for what he says is the five-week opportunity of a lifetime. “To learn what I did in the film-scoring course was incredible, but to have it lead to this is just amazing,” said Westall. “It’s a five-week opportunity to make an impression, one I plan to seize with both hands.”

Westall knows the road to having ‘film composer’ on his business card is a long one. “You have to be willing to work hard, and I’m willing to do that. In 10 years, if I play my cards right, I’d love to be writing music for film, and hopefully be able to make people feel the same magic I did as a little boy growing up listening to *Titanic*,” says Westall.