



MUSIC IN THE AFTERNOON

Women's Musical Club of Toronto

Women's Musical Club of Toronto

Annual Report 2017 - 2018

120th Season

President's Report

A Little Background

In 2015-16, in preparation for the future, and in order to reflect and modernize, the WMCT hired C.S. Arts Consultants to do a Strategic Review of the Club. Their report was received in late summer, 2016. Building on the findings of the Strategic Review, The Connected Brand was hired in the Fall of 2016 to produce a Marketing Plan. The plan was adopted by the Board of the WMCT in early 2017 and includes a new "look" with a modern logo, font and colour palette; more emphasis on the trademarked "Music in the Afternoon"; and mindfulness of three things:

- the WMCT Brand Structure (*essence, purpose, vision, values, target, and promise*)
- our Brand Personality (*friendly, accessible, consistent, communal*)
- our three Differentiating Pillars (*legacy, musical afternoons and dedication to chamber music*)

Working the Marketing Plan in the 2017/18 Season

(Italicized sections in the following quoted from the 2016-2017 Marketing Plan by The Connected Brand)

OUR NEW LOOK

Launched in March 2017, the new logo, font and colour palette have been very well received. Our 2017/18 brochure was larger, brighter and easier to read. Our colours have been used on everything from banners to balloons and the names WMCT and *Music in the Afternoon* are becoming interchangeable.

OUR ESSENCE AND PURPOSE: *The beauty and excitement of chamber music in the afternoon; Presenting an exceptional chamber music experience to Toronto Arts Patrons.*

In 2017/18, the WMCT presented five outstanding chamber music concerts at Walter Hall with an average attendance of 397.

OUR VALUES: *Quality, Community, Integrity; Importance of music in Canadian culture; Sponsorship and outreach.*

Our chamber music series received favourable and rave media reviews. The

concerts included three with Canadian performers, a WMCT-commissioned new composition and the Toronto debut of an international artist. Our final concert, *CelloDrama!* was chosen for broadcast coast to coast by CBC Radio.

Through our free Student Outreach programme, 170 high school and university students attended our concerts and a dozen advanced violin students attended the master class given by Canadian violin virtuoso Lara St. John. Our partnership with the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, which began in early 2018, brought in 52 first-year Canadian citizens who were given complimentary tickets to our spring concerts.

As part of our outreach and support to emerging artists, the WMCT partnered with the WMCT Foundation to present a special, exclusive concert in March, with performances by four of our scholarship winners. The venue was the prestigious Verity, a private downtown Club for women.

Additionally, in March violinist Blake Pouliot was announced as winner of the \$20,000 Career Development Award. Members of the CDA committee held a lunch for Blake and his parents the day after his TSO performance. Blake will perform at *Music in the Afternoon* in 2020.

BRAND PROMISE: *Thursday afternoon delight.*

As well as outstanding performances by some of the world's best chamber musicians, *Music in the Afternoon* performances include a pre-concert lecture, complimentary refreshments, and a chance to meet and greet the artists following the performances. In May, after our final concert, the entire audience was invited to a coffee reception for a triple celebration: Simon Fryer's 10th year as Artistic Director, the WMCT's 120th Season and Blake Pouliot's CDA win.

BRAND PERSONALITY: *friendly, accessible, cultured, communal, lovely.*

This year, after great discussion, the Board decided to continue with the Club

policy of general seating at our concerts. Audience members with mobility issues are encouraged to call ahead for special accommodations. As well as our core of loyal volunteer ushers, during the April and May concerts we experimented with hiring student-ushers to help people who use assistive devices. Thanks to a generous donation from a long-time member, we will continue to provide this specialized service in 2018/19.

DIFFERENTIATING PILLARS:

WMCT Legacy and Musical Afternoons.

The WMCT has been thriving and evolving for 120 years with a tradition of music in the afternoon. Many of our subscribers/club members are volunteers in concert production. I would like to thank all of these volunteers for keeping the legacy alive. In particular, I would like to thank my fellow board members, Holde Gerlach, Patricia Hausner, Eva Innes, Susan Johnston, Kathleen McMorro, Jerri Merritt Jones, Janet Murray, Tamar Nelson, Bonnie O'Dacre, Annette Sanger, Julia Smith and Debra Voorheis, who are all extraordinarily devoted to the WMCT. It has been a tremendous pleasure for me to work with each of you to create what is described in our Marketing Plan as "*Urban Charm*".

Although primarily a volunteer-run organization, we would fall apart without the efficient work of Shannon Perreault, our Administrator. Thank you, Shannon, for your skills and kindness.

The WMCT is dedicated to Chamber Music. A special thank you to Artistic Director Simon Fryer, who over ten years has guided us to present outstanding chamber music concerts performed by artists of the highest calibre. This season, Simon also performed with us, presenting the astounding *CelloDrama!* concert, with cellists from across Canada.

With Simon continuing as Artistic Director, and with the dedication and determination of my fellow volunteers to "work the marketing plan", I am very optimistic for the future of the WMCT as we begin our 121st season.

Diane Martello, *President*

Artistic Director's Report

This being the 120th season of *Music in the Afternoon*, it represented a significant anniversary for the WMCT. It was of course, also the 150th anniversary for Canada and my own 10th anniversary as Artistic Director of the WMCT. Canadian and foreign artists enthralled us with extraordinary and dynamic performances with repertoire covering a broad range from the classic to the present day.

It was violinist Lara St. John who opened the season with pianist Matt Herskowitz and a spectacular program based around their recent recording *Shiksa*. Launched by the much-loved Sonata by César Franck, the duo veered from Gershwin to creative re-imaginings of traditional tunes from the Jewish Diaspora, Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Caucasus and Middle East to variations on *O Canada*, probably setting a record for eclecticism on a WMCT recital!

The second program welcomed the WMCT debut of the Zodiac Trio. This slightly unusual trio of instruments (violin, clarinet and piano) brought a brilliant program that essentially provided a survey of music written over the 120-year history of the WMCT *Music in the Afternoon* concerts. With music from Canada, America, Russia, Argentina and Hungary, geography was represented as well as history, and the dazzling performance style of the group brought the variety of music to life with great success.

2018 opened with something of a contrast to the foregoing events. The UK-based Elias Quartet delivered a mainstream string quartet program of great power and depth. Extraordinary understanding of complex works from Schubert, Janáček and Beethoven was a revelation brought into particular relief by exceptional dynamic range. After a standing ovation, first and second violinists switched places, as Scotsman Donald Grant hit a bulls-eye to the emotional core of the audience by turning out and playing by heart, two drone-accompanied folk tunes from the Scottish Highlands.

Maintaining the European focus, our April concert featured soprano Sylvia Schwartz making her Toronto debut with Montreal native, collaborative pianist Olivier Godin. Ms. Schwartz's gorgeous voice, with amazing dynamic diversity and skilled dramatic interpretation, was complemented admirably by her sensitive and supportive collaborator. The program began superbly with songs by Berg and Wolf but the highlight was Ms. Schwartz interpretation of *Castellán Folksongs* by Guridi. Ms. Schwartz charmed the audience, explaining the difference in the language of the songs compared to Spanish. All was well received by the very full house, which included 50 high school students, and 22 brand new Canadian citizens. Following the concert, Ms. Schwartz gave generously of her time, answering the students' many questions.

Our final concert of the season was my own *CelloDrama!* featuring eight of Canada's most eminent cellists. This program was a special joy for me to put together and along with a WMCT commission from Kelly-Marie Murphy, an appearance at the piano by conductor Gordon Gerrard, and an elegant Villa-Lobos from WMCT favourite soprano Shannon Mercer, the cellists realized works covering a broad swath of history and genre. Recorded for later broadcast by CBC, I am proud that this program caused quite a stir and that the capacity audience responded wonderfully and enthusiastically.

The 120th anniversary concert series was a great success, with the artists deeply appreciative of the attentive, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic response from the WMCT audience. John Mayo again provided engaging program notes and thanks go to the members of the WMCT Artists Selection Committee, who demonstrated their insightful understanding of, and commitment to, the goals of the *Music in the Afternoon* series.

Simon Fryer, Artistic Director

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For the Year Ended June 30, 2018
with Comparative Figures for 2017

<u>Concert & Career Development Award Funds</u>	<u>2017-2018</u>	<u>2016-2017</u>
Membership Fees	\$ 65,675	\$ 62,295
General Admissions & Other Revenue	11,171	9,027
OAF Endowment Income & Interest	2,590	2,776
Corporate Donations	0	500
WMCT Foundation	15,500	20,000
Other Charitable Foundation Donations	14,751	13,207
Member, Friends & Sponsorship Donations	27,505	27,959
Bequests	0	41,037
Government Grants	2,500	2,500
Career Development Award from WMCT Foundation	24,000	0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$163,692	\$179,301
Artistic Fees & Expenses	54,053	42,795
Commission of New Work	5,000	4,650
Production, Web Site, & Hall Rental	29,718	32,945
Occupancy Costs	16,745	20,818
Administration & Membership Costs	38,822	44,905
Career Development Award	17,028	0
Strategic study (Marketing, Rebranding, CDA Reception)	11,243	29,102
Contribution to WMCT Foundation	0	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$172,609	\$175,215
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	(8,917)	4,086
Fund Balance, beginning of year	79,086	75,000
Fund Balance at end of year	\$ 70,169	\$ 79,086
Where funding comes from (excluding bequests)	<u>2017-2018</u>	<u>2016-2017</u>
Membership Fees	40%	45%
General Admissions, Other Revenue, & Interest	8%	9%
Corporation Donations	0%	0%
WMCT Foundation	24%	14%
Other Charitable Foundation Donations	9%	10%
Member & Friends Donations	17%	20%
Government Grants	2%	2%

SOURCE AND USE OF FUNDS

Revenues (excluding CDA fundraising)		
"Earned" (membership fees, admissions, etc.)	48%	41%
Donations (individual, corporate, grants, bequests)	37%	59%
Career Development Award	15%	0%
Total revenues	100%	100%
Expenses		
(excl. contribution to WMCT Foundation and Strategic Study)		
Concert production	55%	55%
Career Development Award	11%	0%
Operating costs (general admin., newsletter, etc.)	34%	45%
Total expenses	100%	100%

In 2017-18 some extraordinary one time expenses were incurred primarily in relation to the 120th season artist fees. Earned revenue covered 100% of operating costs and 27% of concert production costs. The remaining 73% of the production costs were covered by donations.

In 2017-18 The WMCT Foundation provided the Club with \$15,000 for concert sponsorship, \$24,000 for the Career Development Award (including marketing and administration) and \$500 to support Club promotion.

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The WMCT gratefully acknowledges the support of the following members and friends:

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Women's Musical Club of Toronto



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