



# NEWS & NOTES

MUSIC IN THE AFTERNOON

Women's Musical Club of Toronto

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## MEETING FACE-TO-FACE

By Kathleen McMorrow

On the morning of September 29, 2022, over 40 WMCT members arrived at [The Arts & Letters Club of Toronto](#) on Elm Street for the first in-person Annual Meeting since 2019.

As president I welcomed all, and earnestly encouraged a quick march through the legally-required business – minutes of last year's virtual gathering, documentation



The Arts & Letters Club of Toronto (Photo: James Kippen)

of the Club's financial situation, the formal appointment of the auditor, election of new directors, the report by the WMCT Foundation chair on their care for the investment fund. My own report noted that the WMCT had held an event in the Hall once before – the first evening concert open to non-members took place there on May 23, 1899!

The presentation of silver treble clef pins to retired Board members Julia Smith, Bonnie O'Dacre, and Jerri Merritt Jones opened the more pleasurable part of the gathering, complete with hugs and grateful applause. Officially retiring after this Annual Meeting, Susan Johnston will be presented her pin at a separate celebration.

Keris Choi, our 2021 Glenn Gould School scholarship award winner, then offered a polished performance of the first movement of Beethoven's first violin sonata, with Victoria Kogan, pianist. Jessy Je Young Kim, our Toronto Summer Music "Fellow," presented the passionate first movement of Gabriel Fauré's violin sonata in A major, with pianist Jean-Luc Therrien. Warm applause greeted this return to live music at the Annual Meeting.



Julia Smith, Bonnie O'Dacre and Jerri Merritt Jones (Photo: James Kippen)

The Arts & Letters Club has been based in the 1891 National Historic building since 1920, and stages hundreds of literary, artistic, dramatic, and musical events per year, often involving a meal. The neo-Gothic "Great Hall" features a Steinway grand, oak refectory tables, changing art exhibitions, and whimsical banners of the family "crests" of some of the founders. The talents of the catering staff were on display in the breakfast treats before the proceedings and the light lunch afterwards, and obviously enjoyed. Thrilled by face-to-face communication in a relaxed atmosphere, several members lingered long after the official adjournment.



Jean-Luc Therrien and Jessy Je Young Kim perform (Photo: James Kippen)

*Kathleen McMorrow is the WMCT's Past-President, Website Administrator, and Acting Chair of the Fundraising and Nominating & Governance Committees*

## JANET MURRAY BECOMES PRESIDENT

*By Shannon Perreault*

At the WMCT Board of Directors meeting following the 2022 Annual Meeting, Kathleen McMorow stepped down from her position as President of the WMCT. As this took place part way through her second term, the position was subsequently filled through appointment rather than via election. The WMCT is delighted to announce that the Board has appointed Janet Murray as President for 2022-23. Janet has been a vitally important WMCT member for many years, and I spoke with her to find out what motivates her dedication to the Club.

### How did you first become involved with the Club?

More than 20 years ago I was working full time as Vice-President Finance & Admin for a publishing company. I had given up singing with the [Orpheus Choir](#) as I found the time commitment there increasing and wanted to spend more time with my young daughter. When I mentioned to a friend that I was missing involvement with music, she suggested that I contact the WMCT as they were looking for a Treasurer. I have been a Club member ever since.

### What interested you about the WMCT?

Despite not being able to attend concerts until after my retirement in late 2016, many things attracted me and have made it worthwhile volunteering and supporting the Club. Primarily it was, and still is, what is accomplished by the many dedicated volunteers. Staging innovative musical concerts; supporting Canadian composers through commissioning of new works; the Career Development Award; scholarships; student outreach; fellowship of attending concerts in a smaller, more intimate venue and much more.

### What do you see as the challenges facing the Club?

The challenges are not new, but the pandemic has accentuated many of them. Membership and attendance growth and renewal are key. The two-year absence from in person concerts hindered efforts. Fundraising requires more time and effort. Many people and organizations are reducing or changing support for the arts.

### What makes you hopeful about the WMCT's future?

The core group of members and donors who continue to support the WMCT, especially over the past couple of years. We all believe in the positive power of music



Janet Murray (Photo: James Kippen)

as essential to human connection and are willing to dedicate our resources, both human and monetary, to ensure the ongoing success of the WMCT. The Club has responded to changes in Toronto for 125 years and will continue to do so!

*Shannon Perreault is the WMCT's Arts Administrator*

## SO MUCH TO CELEBRATE

*By Annette Sanger*

On October 6, the WMCT hosted a small reception for performers, board members, sponsors, and major donors following a [spectacular performance](#) by 2021 CDA winner accordionist [Michael Bridge](#), his teacher [Joseph Macerollo](#), and the [Ladom Ensemble](#) in our long-awaited return to Walter Hall. Michael was the 2021 winner of the WMCT's prestigious Career Development Award (CDA), which includes a prize of \$25,000 and a recital in the *Music in the Afternoon* series. Michael is the first accordionist to win the award, and his performance left no doubt about his extraordinary talent, not to mention his warm and friendly on-stage personality. As the twelfth CDA winner, Michael takes his place in our Hall of Fame alongside previous illustrious awardees such as violinist James Ehnes (1992) and pianist Charles Richard-Hamelin (2015).



Michael Bridge and Joseph Macerollo perform a *Music in the Afternoon* recital October 6, 2022 (Photo: James Kippen)

While showcasing the Career Development Award, Michael's concert also celebrated the opening of the



125th season of *Music in the Afternoon*, an incredible milestone for any musical organization! And, for the first time since Covid, Professor Robin Elliott gave a live *Tuning Your Mind* lecture – the first of five he will present during this season. In attendance too was our wonderful Artistic Director, Simon Fryer, now in his 14th season with *Music in the Afternoon*.

There are four more marvellous concerts to enjoy in our 125th season, and we hope to cap it off with a larger post-concert reception on May 4th for all members. We will keep you posted!

*Annette Sanger is the WMCT's Vice-President and Chair of the CDA and DEI Committees*

## 2022-23 WMCT AWARD WINNERS

*By Adair Hope*

This year's recipient from the [Glenn Gould School](#) (GGS) is violinist Daphné Bourbonnais. Daphné entered the Artist Diploma Program at the GGS in September 2021 and studies under the tutelage of Erika Raum.

Daphné was born in Rimouski, Québec, and started playing violin at the age of 4. She completed a bachelor's degree (2018) and Master's degree with distinction (2020) at the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal, studying with pedagogue Anne Robert. She obtained a chamber music diploma at the Conservatoire in 2019. In recent years, Daphné has been a member of several different festival orchestras, including the National Youth Orchestra of Canada (2017 and 2019) and the Orchestre de la Francophonie (2016 and 2018). In February of 2019, she won a position with the Orchestre Symphonique de l'Estuaire.



Daphné Bourbonnais

Passionate about movement, Daphné regularly gives herself to the practice of yoga and she teaches yoga classes for musicians. She strongly believes that yoga is not only an excellent form of injury prevention, but a discipline perfectly complementary to music.

From the [Faculty of Music, University of Toronto](#), the recipient of this year's undergraduate Centennial

Scholarship is pianist Lynna Bao. Lynna is in her fourth year as a piano performance major, studying under Lydia Wong.

In addition to solo performance, Lynna has garnered broad experience in piano-vocal, piano-instrumental and piano-quartet settings. She has won numerous awards in her young career, including a Gold Award in the 2018 Canadian Music Competition. Upon graduation, Lynna is planning to pursue graduate studies in performance as well as venture into composition and music technology.



Lynna Bao

Lynna is the founder and president of the U of T Tolkien Club, which promotes appreciation and a deeper understanding of author J.R.R. Tolkien's life and works. She has plans to do a research project on Tolkien's constructed languages.

Our graduate award winner from the University of Toronto is classical clarinetist, Isabella Czynnyj. Isabella is currently studying with Miles Jaques and is completing her Doctor of Musical Arts degree. She has previously studied with Charlene Zimmerman and John Bruce Yeh at the Chicago College of Performing Arts, and with Shauna Barker and Kimball Sykes at the University of Toronto.

A native of Ottawa, Isabella has performed with ensembles throughout Canada and the United States, including the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. She can be heard on the world-première recording of Stacy Garrop's *Mythology Symphony* as a member of the CCPA Symphony Orchestra.

In addition to being a performer, Isabella is a strong proponent of music education. As well as teaching privately, she has participated in wind quintet performances in Chicago area schools and performed with the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra Winds for their School Education Concerts.

We wish all of our award winners an excellent year!

*Adair Hope is the WMCT's Awards Committee Chair*

## REMEMBERING MARLENE

By Annette Sanger

One of the WMCT's most loyal supporters, Marlene Preiss, sadly passed away on October 15, 2022, at her sister's home in Woodstock. Marlene will be remembered as a generous, funny, feisty, and caring woman whose life experiences ranged from farming in rural Ontario to banking and then teaching. Music was a great love throughout her life and particularly during retirement when she joined the WMCT, initially as a member and later as a volunteer, board member, concert sponsor and, most notably, as Chair of the Telephone Subcommittee. She loved calling up members about their subscriptions or feedback after concerts. Her phone calls were always appreciated, particularly as less personal communication through email began to replace the art of spoken conversation. Despite failing health during the last few



Marlene Preiss in 2017

years of her life, Marlene was always positive and lively, and she continued enjoying music and spending time with her family and friends. She always had an amusing tale to tell, testament to a life lived to the full. Marlene will be sorely missed by so many and will always be remembered as a very special individual.

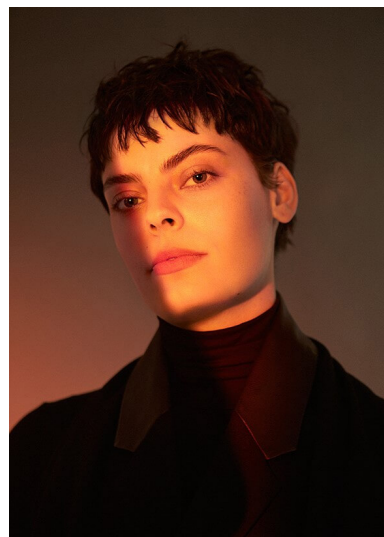
## THE AMAZING SUCCESS OF EMILY D'ANGELO

By Susan Johnston

Toronto-born mezzo-soprano [Emily D'Angelo](#) was awarded the WMCT's Centennial Scholarship at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music for the 2015/2016 academic year, so we like to think that the Club has had a part, however small, in her subsequent amazing success. Some Club members may remember her performance in the Canadian Opera Company's Ensemble Competition, when she appeared on stage elegantly dressed – except for the clunky boot cast she was wearing as the result of

breaking her foot while running. But her performance was anything but clunky, as she won both the competition and the audience prize. From there, she went on to win many other competitions, including the Metropolitan Opera Competition, the George London Competition and the Operalia Competition, where her historic win included First Prize, the Zarzuela Prize, the Birgit Nilsson Prize and the Audience Prize.

Emily has maintained an active international recital schedule, with performances in Prague, Salzburg and



Emily D'Angelo (Photo: Mark Pillai)

Stockholm among many others. She has also toured with the English Concert Orchestra in North America and Europe, with stops including New York's Carnegie Hall, London and Madrid.

Her operatic career has been equally impressive, with highlights as Sesto in *La clemenza de Tito* with the Royal Opera House in London and

Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* with both the Bavarian State Opera and the Berlin State Opera. Recently, she appeared as Prince Charming to Isabel Leonard's Cinderella at the Met in New York.

Emily is a Deutsche Grammophon exclusive recording artist, and her recently released solo album [enargeia](#), including songs from Hildegard von Bingen to contemporary American composer Missy Mazzoli, won a Juno for best classical recording this year.

And soon Toronto audiences will have the opportunity to see this sought-after rising star themselves, as Emily will be giving a [solo recital at Koerner Hall](#) this coming February 22. Still time to get your tickets!

*Susan Johnston is the WMCT's Archivist*



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