



MUSIC IN THE AFTERNOON

Women's Musical Club of Toronto

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Annual Report 2021 - 2022

124th Season

Artistic Director's Report

The 124th season of *Music in the Afternoon* concerts found us continuing to offer our concerts in virtual format.

Our opening concert treated us to a delightful program of works by Mozart, Janáček, Prokofiev and Kreisler featuring violin virtuoso [Blake Pouliot](#), in collaboration with pianist Hsin-I Huang. Staged in our familiar home of Walter Hall at the University of Toronto, this performance served as a delayed celebration of Blake's 2018 WMCT Career Development Award win. Blake's mature and thoughtful performance, later broadcast by CBC, clearly demonstrated the artistry required to join this select group and rapidly received over 200 online viewings providing a magnificent launch to the new season.

Our second concert pushed the WMCT envelope in several different directions. We must thank amazing percussionist [Beverley Johnston](#) for much of this as it was she who brought stamna, marimbas, pitched flower pots and gongs to the WMCT stage for the first time. Nevertheless, the WMCT can accept a pat on the back for taking the plunge and staging its first ever percussion recital, as well as commissioning a work for percussion quartet from Russell Hartenberger. With guests flutist Susan Hoepfner and violinist Marc Djokic, as well as percussionists Russell Hartenberger, Aiyun Huang and Randall Chaves Camacho, Beverley delivered a stunning performance that was also broadcast by CBC and, for the first time, captured with a two-camera system so that our virtual audience was really brought into the thick of it!

The arrival of 2022 found us released from the bonds of live-audience-free performances. After almost two years

of virtual-only concerts, on March 3, 2022 *MitA* was once again "Live!" The venue: Grace Church on-the-Hill. The featured performer: rising star of the opera world, tenor [Andrew Haji](#). Haji, along with collaborative pianist Stéphane Mayer, showed the full power of his amazing voice, presenting art songs by Britten, Liszt, Brahms and Bridge, as well as by lesser-known Italian composer Francesco Santoliquido, and particularly in selections from Handel's *Tamerlano*, *Samson* and *Jephtha*. We adopted a hybrid format for this concert having not only a substantial in-person audience but simultaneously live-streaming to those unable to attend. The program was recorded for broadcast by CBC and ticket-holders could view an edited video version of the concert for two weeks following the concert. With superb artists, an in-person audience, wonderful acoustics, and beautiful surroundings, this event marked a new triumph for *MitA*.

MitA's fourth concert of the season featured [Cameron Crozman](#), named "Canada's next big cello star" by CBC Music, with pianist Philip Chiu. The duo charmed the audience with a musical tapas party. Each of the short Spanish or Spanish-inspired works by composers from Isaac Albéniz to Maurice Ravel was chosen for its own unique flavour, to give a musical taste of Spain's incredibly diverse and rich culture. The tapas delight was anchored mid-concert by the world-premiere of *Solastagia* by Canadian composer Allan Gordon Bell. Commissioned for Crozman by the WMCT, with funding support from The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation, *Solastagia* provided a near-perfect metaphor for how we have all felt emotionally enduring the unavoidable restrictions of the pandemic, expressing the homesickness we feel while, despite

being still at home, the world changes around us.

For our final concert on April 28th, we were incredibly fortunate that the [Viano String Quartet](#) were available to replace the Finnish Meta4 whose North American tour was cancelled at short notice. A year earlier we had enjoyed a video presentation from the Viano and to now have the quartet on stage with us was a new joy. Their program of familiar and wonderful works by Borodin and Prokofiev centred around *Strum* by Jessie Montgomery – described by the composer as "a narrative that begins with a sense of nostalgia and transforms into ecstatic celebration." The over fifty students in attendance from Rosedale Heights School of the Arts expressed strong reactions to the performance. Their glowing feedback included:

"... amazing and so fun to watch. ... great ensemble skills ... I learned a lot from this concert."

-Alissa-

"Each player's sound swelled and diminished with the others like one big instrument."

-Lauryn-

"I really enjoyed the ensemble's chemistry. ... They listened to each other and played to illuminate each other's playing."

-Pluto-

"I was amazed at how much each piece meant to me, the histories behind each were as meaningful as the music itself."

-Lauryn-

Another challenging year, but a challenge for which the WMCT was well prepared. The light at the end of the tunnel began to shine and we moved towards it with alacrity!

Simon Fryer, Artistic Director

President's Report

After another year under the shifting shadow of the Covid pandemic, we look ahead to a better one, hoping for full engagement with artists and audiences, in person rather than on two-dimensional screens. New vaccines, more attention to air quality in public spaces, and informed choices about masking may secure the reopening of society which we all crave.

In July, the Board welcomed Daisy Leung as a new director, while Bonnie O'Dacre, Jerri Merritt Jones, and Julia Smith completed their terms and retired with our thanks for their immense contributions over many years. Jennifer Ackland had resigned for personal reasons.

For the second year, the September Annual Meeting and most Board and committee meetings were conducted by Zoom. In the spring, a dedicated group of volunteers made welcoming telephone calls to all members. By June, a music specialist web developer had reviewed and improved the WMCT website.

Presenting the unusual hybrid 124th season required payments to professional videographers as well as to professional artists. These expenses were sustainable only because of the steadfast support of members, an important level of donations from individual patrons and donors, and family foundations, support from the Toronto Arts Council, and a CERS benefit. The investment fund stewarded by the WMCT Foundation remained the essential bedrock of our operations.

While group student attendance was possible only for the final Viano Quartet performance, videos of all the concerts were made available to half a dozen high school teachers for classroom use.

The Membership, Concerts, and Marketing (MCM) Committee responded well to the many concert-production emergencies. University of Toronto pandemic rules changed month by month over the summer of 2021, ultimately leading to the closing of Walter Hall to the public. After organizing successful virtual-only presentations there in the fall, the committee negotiated an alternate venue to accommodate audiences at the spring concerts. Daisy Leung's skills and experience in event management became essential, as MCM members dealt with challenges including unaccustomed backstage requirements, equipment deficiencies, and construction detours.

My thanks to all the committee chairs and members who moved the work of the WMCT forward – awarding scholarships, pursuing diversity in membership and management, maintaining our financial and legal integrity, and promoting our activities in print and online. Artistic Director Simon Fryer, backed by the Artists Selection Committee, has produced a 125th concert season program which will embody both the historic accomplishments of the Club, and its future aspirations. I am thoroughly grateful to Arts Administrator Shannon Perreault who coordinated everyone and everything.

Kathleen McMorro, *President*

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For the Year Ended June 30, 2022, with Comparative Figures for 2021

<u>Concert & Career Development Award Funds</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>
Membership Fees	\$ 22,416	\$ 27,684
General Admissions & Other Revenue	6,512	4,273
OAF Endowment Income & Interest	3,168	2,940
WMCT Foundation	45,500	26,300
Other Charitable Foundation Donations	18,441	13,847
Member, Friends & Sponsorship Donations	66,498	78,948
Government Grants	2,500	2,500
Career Development Award from WMCT Foundation	0	21,484
TOTAL REVENUE	\$165,035	\$177,976
Artistic Fees & Expenses	\$ 29,268	\$ 28,472
Commission of New Work	9,500	4,500
Production, Web Site, & Hall Rental	28,996	14,156
Occupancy Costs	23,026	22,817
Administration & Membership Costs	52,615	43,795
Scholarships	25,000	25,000
Career Development Award Expenses	0	21,484
TOTAL EXPENSES	168,405	\$160,224
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	(3,370)	17,752
Fund Balance, beginning of year	89,786	72,034
Fund Balance at end of year	\$ 86,416	\$ 89,786

<u>Where funding comes from</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>
Membership Fees	14%	16%
General Admissions, Other Revenue, & Interest	6%	4%
WMCT Foundation	28%	27%
Other Charitable Foundation Donations	11%	8%
Member & Friends Donations	40%	44%
Government Grants	1%	1%
	100%	100%

SOURCE AND USE OF FUNDS

Revenues		
"Earned" (membership fees, admissions, etc.)	19%	20%
Donations (private, corporate, grants)	81%	68%
Career Development Award	0%	12%
Total revenues	100%	100%

Expenses		
(excl. contribution to WMCT Foundation and Projects)		
Concert production	40%	29%
Career Development Award	0%	13%
Scholarships	15%	16%
Operating costs (general admin, newsletter, etc.)	45%	42%
Total expenses	100%	100%

Secretary-Treasurer Report

The pandemic impacts continued during the 2021-2022 year.

With increased operational support from the WMCT Foundation, recording and distribution of online concerts plus presentation of some in-person concerts were possible. The WMCT used prior year surplus to fund the current year loss.

Janet Murray, CPA, CA, *Secretary-Treasurer*

2021-2022 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Keris Choi, violin
110th Anniversary Scholarship
(*The Glenn Gould School, RCM*)

Gabrielle Turgeon, soprano
Centennial Scholarship
(*Faculty of Music, University of Toronto*)

Juliette Moreno, clarinet
Graduate Fellowship
(*Faculty of Music, University of Toronto*)

Jessy Je Young Kim, violin
Academy Fellowship
(*Toronto Summer Music Academy*)

*All WMCT Scholarships and Fellowships
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Shannon Perreault

WMCT



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