



MUSIC IN THE AFTERNOON

Women's Musical Club of Toronto

Women's Musical Club of Toronto Annual Report 2022 - 2023

125th Season

President's Report

What a wonderful 125th season of celebration we had!

It is truly amazing that a volunteer-based arts organization like ours has survived let alone thrived for such a long time - through wars, pandemics, depressions, and recessions.

To be back in Walter Hall for the entire concert series, post pandemic, in-person, made the 125th season performances so exhilarating. Our Artistic Director, Simon Fryer, along with the Artists Selection Committee members, put together a spectacular lineup of varied and diverse talent and musical choices for this special year.

The pre-concert talks by music historian, Robin Elliott, were fascinating, linking the world, Canadian, Toronto, and WMCT history to each concert timeframe. The content of the notes is still available on the WMCT [website](#) and if you haven't encountered them, they make good and informative reading. Also available on the website is [Counterpoint Three](#), Robin's second update to the history of the WMCT.

As part of the Club's community outreach, we were thrilled to welcome back to our concerts high school students from a variety of schools in the GTA. Their attendance always provides marvelous added energy to the afternoons.

In February, Club and Foundation members and donors were invited to a [reception at Queens Park](#), hosted by Her Honour Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, who is a patron of the WMCT. In addressing the guests at the reception, Ms. Dowdeswell remarked on the long history of the

connections between the office of the Lieutenant Governor and the WMCT, and she spoke movingly of the power of music, particularly live music, to build bridges, comfort, and inspire. It is a message which resonates with all of us who love music.

During this season, Kathleen McMorrow stepped down as President. During her tenure in that role, Kathleen led the WMCT through the challenges of the COVID pandemic and, supported by a hard-working team, made it possible for the Club to provide music performances virtually, which was a format not previously used by the WMCT. Kathleen deserves many thanks for all that she has done and continues to do for our organization.

All board members continue to work on expanding diversification - among our members, our board, our committees, our performers, and our repertoires. Vice-president Annette Sanger has headed up this initiative with great dedication.

All our many volunteers deserve thanks as well for the countless hours contributed to all areas of our operations. They, with Shannon Perreault as our only paid employee, keep the WMCT functioning.

The Club continued its tradition of supporting music education through [scholarships and awards](#). Members who attend the WMCT's annual meeting will have the privilege to hear some of our recent award recipients perform at the Arts and Letters Club. We do hope to see many members there!

This past summer saw relocation of our office, twice! As part of the moves a significant downsizing was

required with primary responsibility landing on Shannon Perreault, Jerri Merritt Jones, and Diane Martello, who did an admirable job meeting tight timelines and managing move logistics. Our newest address is 2 Bloor St West, 7th floor.

Robin Sundstrom began to serve as Secretary-Treasurer in September and Adair Hope took over the reins of the Awards Committee from Susan Johnston. I thank them both for all their hard work.

Tamar Adaskin Nelson, who has so capably handled co-ordination of Student Outreach, is stepping away from those duties and we are looking for someone to take over for her.

In recognition of the many changes over the past six years in the role of the Arts Administrator, Shannon Perreault's position description and title have been adjusted to reflect the assumption of increased responsibilities. Shannon does a fabulous job as General Manager for the WMCT.

While the 125th season was a success on many levels, the Club is still feeling the negative impact of the pandemic on membership and volunteer numbers. Pre-pandemic our members numbered close to 400, while in 2023 the number was less than half of that. Most new members come through being introduced to the WMCT by current or former members and we need to rebuild our numbers to ensure that the WMCT can continue its significant contributions to the cultural landscape in the GTA, Canadian musicians and music students. So please tell your friends all about us and our magnificent Thursday afternoon concerts!

Janet Murray, *President*

Artistic Director's Report

This special 125th Anniversary Season celebrated the WMCT's continuous connection to our city, to Canadian and international artists, and to the global canon of musical creation. Our diverse, featured artists were asked to present programs involving their mentors and/or those they have in turn mentored, and each concert featured a representative work from one of the 5 blocks of 25 years comprising our 125 years of concert activity. The context of this work in local and international events was featured in the program and elaborated online, demonstrating the WMCT's firmly established contribution to international culture.

On October 6th, [Michael Bridge](#), virtuoso accordionist and winner of the 2021 WMCT Career Development Award, performed solo, with his mentor Joseph Macerollo, OC, and with the Ladom Ensemble. The program combined western classical with Ladom's traditional Bosnian and East Coast music, added Persian poetry, and ended with a standing ovation after Piazzolla's *Libertango*.

November 17th brought more than a fine string quartet. The audience experienced the power of mentorship firsthand as Maxine Despax told of the musical growth of the Despax siblings. [Quatuor Despax](#) began their program with Haydn and Ravel, but the real treat arrived when the quartet was joined by mentors Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt and Brian Manker. The sextet presented a masterful, indeed transfiguring, performance of Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*.

Our February concert was a first for the WMCT: dedicated to a single composer, the concert was curated by Icelandic Canadian [Fjóla Evans](#). The Aizuri Quartet, VC2, pianist Talisa Blackman and singer Krista Kais-Prial realised a fascinating afternoon, with Evans explaining the influence of each work on her creative journey. The climactic moment came with the world première of Ms. Evans' *Moss* for string quintet, inspired by Iceland's swathes of moss-covered lava fields.

The April 6th concert was intensely moving, featuring favourite opera excerpts alongside works exploring the Indigenous/Settler relationship on Turtle Island. Singers [Marion Newman](#), Melody Courage, and Evan Korbut, together with pianist Gordon Gerrard, presented a musical path through truth to reconciliation. Scenes from *Indians on Vacation; Breakfast for Barbarians* by Métis composer Ian Cusson; and Bramwell Tovey's *Ancestral Voices*, led to a powerful finale as the trio's Mozart brought the audience to its feet.

Violinist [Mark Fewer](#) returned to the *MitA* stage on May 4th, bringing with him the Thalea String Quartet, and former WMCT CDA winner, pianist Jeanie Chung, for an epic performance. The TSQ opened the concert with Erwin Schulhoff's string quartet, but then the instrumental combinations became unusual. *Schattenwerk*, by Canadian John Rea, had Fewer and TSQ violinist, Chris Whitley, present more a duel than duet, and finally there were two pieces for the unusual combination of solo violin, piano and string quartet: *You Know It's Coming, You Just Don't Know When* by Carmen Braden (from Yellowknife, NWT), and the Concerto by Chausson. A rousing conclusion to a triumphant 125th Season for the WMCT.

Simon Fryer, *Artistic Director*

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For the Year Ended June 30, 2023, with Comparative Figures for 2022

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>
Membership Fees	\$ 30,888	\$ 22,416
General Admissions & Other Revenue	9,912	6,512
OAF Endowment Income & Interest	2,983	3,168
WMCT Foundation	53,218	45,500
Other Charitable Foundation Donations	28,968	18,441
Member, Friends & Sponsorship Donations	74,351	66,498
Government Grants	2,375	2,500
Career Development Award from WMCT Fdn	<u>6,045</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$208,740</u>	<u>\$165,035</u>
Artistic Fees & Expenses	\$ 61,493	\$ 29,268
Commission of New Work	5,000	9,500
Production, Web Site, & Hall Rental	34,851	28,996
Occupancy Costs	23,281	23,026
Administration & Membership Costs	67,555	52,615
Scholarships	25,000	25,000
Career Development Award Expenses	850	0
Contribution to WMCT Foundation	<u>14,000</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$232,030</u>	<u>\$168,405</u>
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	(23,290)	(3,370)
Fund Balance, beginning of year	<u>86,416</u>	<u>89,786</u>
Fund Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 63,126</u>	<u>\$ 86,416</u>

Where funding comes from	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>
Membership Fees	15%	14%
General Admissions, Other Revenue, & Interest	6%	6%
WMCT Foundation	28%	28%
Other Charitable Foundation Donations	14%	11%
Member & Friends Donations	36%	40%
Government Grants	1%	1%
	100%	100%

SOURCE AND USE OF FUNDS

Revenues		
"Earned" (membership fees, admissions, etc.)	21%	19%
Donations (private, corporate, grants)	76%	81%
Career Development Award Support	3%	0%
Total revenues	100%	100%

Expenses		
(excl. contribution to WMCT Foundation and Projects)		
Concert production	47%	40%
Career Development Award	0%	0%
Scholarships	11%	15%
Operating costs (general admin, newsletter, etc.)	42%	45%
Total expenses	100%	100%

Secretary-Treasurer Report

The WMCT was happily able to return to in-person concerts for our 125th anniversary year. Nonetheless, we continued to see fall-out from the pandemic, as our audiences were roughly half the size we've hosted in the past. As a result, we did operate at a loss this year, but the deficit has been covered from past surpluses, and help from the WMCT Foundation and our generous donors has meant we still maintain sufficient funds to deal with any likely eventuality. Our goal for the coming year is to continue to improve the Club's financial outlook.

Robin Sundstrom, *Secretary-Treasurer*

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Centennial Scholarship
(Faculty of Music, University of Toronto)

Isabella Czynnyj, clarinet
Graduate Fellowship
(Faculty of Music, University of Toronto)

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All WMCT Scholarships and Fellowships
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GENERAL MANAGER

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as at June 30, 2023

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