

MUSIC IN THE
AFTERNOON

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NEWS & NOTES

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**2009 WMCT CAREER
DEVELOPMENT AWARD
WINNER: DARRETT ZUSKO**
By Annette Sanger

Many of you will know the WMCT best for its outstanding annual *Music in the Afternoon* chamber music series. However, there are many other facets to the work of this time-honoured and highly respected organization, not least of which is its support for up-and-coming classical musicians. The WMCT helps performers of the future in many different ways – through scholarships at the University of Toronto and The Royal Conservatory of Music, by occasionally presenting “undiscovered” talent alongside more seasoned musicians in its concerts, and through its Career Development Award, presented every three years to an outstanding young musician embarking on his or her professional performance career. I am delighted to announce the winner of the 2009 competition, an exceptional young pianist, Darrett Zusko.

Darrett Zusko's musical studies have taken him from Windsor, Ontario, where he grew up, to New York, where he studied at The Juilliard School with Julian Martin. On the performing circuit, Darrett has appeared all over Canada and the United States as well as in the United Kingdom and Spain, where La Nueva Espana hailed him as “one of the most promising performers of the 21st century”. His repertoire ranges from concertos (which he has performed with the Cincinnati, Montreal, and Toronto symphony orchestras) and chamber music, to numerous works for solo piano by a wide range of composers including, Bach, Schubert, Scriabin, Albeniz, Takemitsu, Haydn, and Hétu. Especially notable is Darrett's keen interest in Canadian music – his debut album, released in April this year, features the solo piano works of the late Oskar Morawetz and he recently premiered and recorded Harry Somers' final work for piano after working with the composer before his passing.



The WMCT would not be able to confer its Career Development Award without the help of many other individuals and organizations. The award is presented in partnership with CBC Radio Two and Espace musique de Radio-Canada. Candidates were nominated by CBC music producers from across Canada, and the selection was based on such criteria as musical excellence, strong communication skills, general performance history, and, not least, the timeliness of the award in the context of each young musician's career. Previous winners include James Ehnes, Karina Gauvin, and Shannon Mercer, all of whom are now eminent and highly accomplished performers.

The winner is selected by a distinguished panel of jurors to whom the WMCT offers warmest thanks for generously donating time and expertise. It is certainly not easy choosing a winner, given the extremely high

standard of all candidates and the fact that they perform on a range of different instruments. The members of this year's jury were Roman Borys, Philippe Djokic, Alison Howard, Heidi Krutzen, Peter Longworth, Lydia Wong, and the chair, Pascale Labrie.

The Career Development Award, worth \$15,000, has two parts: a cash award and a concert in the WMCT's *Music in the Afternoon* series. The WMCT is grateful to the WMCT's Centennial Foundation for its generous support in funding the prize, and we all look forward to a wonderful performance by Darrett Zusko in the WMCT's 2010-2011 concert programme.

Annette Sanger is chair of the WMCT's CDA Committee.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A It gives me great pleasure to welcome 485 subscribers to the WMCT's third consecutive sold-out season. This year, this unique and historic organization celebrates 112 years of *Music in the Afternoon*.

The WMCT's Front of House volunteer ushers are sporting new musically-themed vests, donated by a member. It is hoped that these vests will make ushers more visible as they assist members who are searching for seats in the sold-out hall. Please remember that the cloakroom on the main floor of the Edward Johnson Building will be open for your convenience for the WMCT December, March, and April concerts in Walter Hall. As well, Members are encouraged to submit concert tickets they cannot use 48 hours before the concert for a charitable tax receipt.

The WMCT's February 25, 2010, concert will be held in the newly-opened, acoustically splendid Koerner Hall in the TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning at The Royal Conservatory of Music. Thanks go to the WMCT members who have purchased 190 extra tickets for this concert. Including the 100 seats set aside for Student Outreach, this celebrity concert is almost 90% sold out. Tickets may be purchased at the RCM box office, 416-408-0208 or online at <https://tickets.rcmusic.ca/public/>. A great deal of time and energy has been expended by board members and especially the indispensable Susan Corrigan, the WMCT's arts administrator, to make this special event happen. There is no doubt that this concert would have remained an impossible dream were it not for liaison efforts by WMCT Centennial Foundation's vice president, Ina van Berkel, who also sits on the board of the RCM, and Simon Fryer, the WMCT's artistic director since 2006.

Simon Fryer is the WMCT's secret weapon when

it comes to negotiating with his fellow artists and their agents. Simon is immediate past director of the Chamber Music Program at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, and until recently was cellist with the Penderecki String Quartet, quartet-in-residence at WLU and one of Canada's most successful ensembles. A former member of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Simon held teaching positions at Wilfred Laurier University, the University of Toronto, and The Glenn Gould School, and has been continuously active as a chamber musician, orchestral player, and soloist in more than thirty countries on six continents. With dedication and commitment, he chairs the Artists Selection Committee, which continues the WMCT tradition of selecting high-calibre Canadian and international artists for appearance in the *Music in the Afternoon* series. He maintains a busy schedule at home and abroad. As part of his discography he appears on the Juno-winning CD *Azulao* with Isabel Bayrakdarian.

The ever-popular pre-concert *Tuning Your Mind* lectures continue this season, arranged and introduced by Robin Elliott, Graduate Coordinator, Jean A. Chalmers Chair in Canadian Music, Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, another stalwart supporter of the WMCT. Whenever possible, advance notice of the speakers will be sent out to those members who have e-mail. I invite members also to investigate the WMCT's revamped web site at www.wmct.on.ca, which will be launched soon.

The WMCT Annual General Meeting was held this year on September 30, 2009. Renée Simmons, vice president, Marilyn Genovese Brown, director, Patricia Hausner, Front of House chair, Bonnie O'Dacre, Marketing and Membership chair, and I, WMCT president, were elected by the membership for two-year terms. Susan Johnston was appointed to the board of directors for a one-year term. Susan is a librarian and has kindly agreed to succeed Grace Heggie, who recently retired as the WMCT archivist.

Members who attended the AGM enjoyed a fine recital organized by Danuta Buczynski, with performances by one of last year's and three of this year's WMCT and WMCT Centennial Foundation scholarship winners and were greeted and thanked by the graduate fellowship recipient, Mark Vuorinen, who is in choral conducting. At the first concert of this season Annette Sanger, chair of the CDA Committee, presented the WMCT's eighth Career Development Award worth \$15,000, awarded every three years in partnership with CBC Radio, to pianist Darrett Zusko. The WMCT is proud to be a part of the life stories of all these talented and deserving young people and also to offer, when available, free tickets for WMCT concerts to senior and high school music classes, and to university music students.

Careful management and diligent fund-raising carried out by both the WMCT and the WMCT Centennial Foundation, led by Esther McNeil since its inception nine years ago, has parleyed a \$772.37 profit from a series of three concerts in the 1930s into today's extensive scholarship and award funding and Student Outreach Programme. Because both these organizations are entirely volunteer-run with the exception of a very able part-time arts administrator, donors can be assured that every dollar they give is spent on producing fine concerts and increasing scholarships for this country's emerging musicians.

I am proud and honoured to be WMCT president this year and I look forward to enjoying the 112th season with you.

Julia Smith
President

THE SOUNDTRACK of NATIONALISM

By Graham Freeman

Some of the finest music in the art music repertoire is that which synthesizes those elements we often consider "classical" with melodies derived from folk song. From the pastoral symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams, or the simple rustic melodies of *Der Freischütz* by Carl Maria von Weber, to the use of the mazurka and the polonaise in the music of Chopin, folk song has long been the final vital ingredient necessary for art music to strike the right popular note and achieve the success of immortality through endless concert programmes and recitals.

This was not, however, an entirely innocent venture by composers, nor can we attribute the success of such folk-inspired music simply to grubbing for popular acclaim from a nostalgic public. These composers were, in fact, swept up in the nationalistic tide surging throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as people bound by common languages and cultures began to assert their claims for recognition on the national and political stage. One of the most powerful and inspiring ways of doing this was to hold up the music of the folk as the most authentic musical culture a nation could produce, and to use this as a cultural signifier in which the sounds of the folk became the soundtrack of the nation.

The idea of folk song finds its origins in the work of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), a German theologian, philosopher, and poet. Inspired by the Ossian poems – a series of poems that had been attributed to

ancient Scottish bards but were actually an elaborate hoax perpetrated by the poet James Macpherson – Herder came to believe that the music of the folk was the music that had been least subject to the passage of time and the whims of artistic tastes.

Following Rousseau, Herder saw the folk as the guardians of a pure and authentic knowledge to which the nation needed to return in order to grant contemporary culture the authenticity it required to be able to stand on the international stage. The term folksong is derived from Herder's term *volkslied*, which he had coined in his 1773 publication *Von deutscher Art und Kunst: einige fliegende Blätter*. Herder's subsequent ideas concerning the use to which such music ought to be put would become his most influential: that in order for art music to inspire the nation and provide a common cultural currency in which everyone could take pride, it would have to be infused with the melodies of the folk. This new nationalist music would be a synthesis of art and folk that would extract the best of both in order to be something that neither one could be on its own: the music of the nation.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Herder's ideas of the synthesis of art and folk song became extremely important for everyone from Chopin to Wagner, and to them we owe credit for the inspiration behind much of the greatest music of the Western world. It was, however, the idea itself that was far more important than the actual songs of the folk, for more often than not the art music that had been inspired by folk song contained very little musical material that could in any way be attributed to the folk.

Many of the composers who were most adamant in their admiration for the folk were the least interested in getting their hands dirty by associating with members of the folk community. Chopin's music, for example, though often held up by Polish nationalists as the very heart and soul of the Polish people, contains almost nothing derived from the repertoire of Polish folk song. Instead, Chopin used fragments and ideas that were commonly held to be typical of Polish folk song, such as dance rhythms and the use of the exotic scales. The music of nationalism was, therefore, infused not with the music of the folk, but with the idea of the music of the folk.



Dancing to the type of Polish folk songs which would have inspired Chopin.

If you are starting to think that this sounds more like propaganda than art, you would be right, and it should come as no surprise that we frequently find such ideas in the political ideologies of totalitarian régimes such as Soviet Russia. Nevertheless, many of the pieces that are central to the Western art music canon owe their existence to them. Can we separate the artistic product from the ideology? Probably not, but perhaps an awareness of the extent to which they are intertwined can give us a better appreciation of both.

Graham Freeman is a recent Ph.D. graduate in Musicology at the University of Toronto.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: Grace Heggie by Betty Gray & Elizabeth Newton

Grace Heggie and her two sisters grew up in the east end of Toronto in a home that enjoyed all kinds of music. Her early memories are of music coming into the house over the "airwaves". Her parents were of the "twenties" and enjoyed the new music – jazz – and all the popular music of the day, as well as Scottish music for her Scottish born father and Italian arias and light classical for her mother of Italian extraction. Grace and her sisters absorbed it all

During their high school and university years Grace developed a serious interest in classical music, especially chamber, baroque, and Renaissance music. Another fond memory for Grace was attending story-telling hour at the Main Street branch of the Toronto Public Library. Love of books and the library began early in her life. She earned a Master of Arts degree in modern history and a Bachelor of Library Science from the University of Toronto, and started to work there in 1962. Later she moved to York University where she remained until retiring in 1993.

Newspaper concert reviews brought Grace to the Women's Musical Club of Toronto and when she retired in 1993 she immediately became a member. Grace was encouraged by Elizabeth Newton and the late Muriel Roberts to engage in WMCT volunteer activities, and served on the second Career Development Award Committee.

In 1997 Esther McNeil asked Grace to become honorary archivist with the WMCT and she accepted with great pleasure. Her challenge was to move the significant WMCT archives to the Special Collections department of the Toronto Reference Library, a natural place for the resource, as the TRL has an outstanding Toronto

historical collection and the WMCT material adds greatly to the musical and cultural history of the city. For Grace this was satisfying work because of the cause and the dedicated people involved. She continued as a member of the Honorary Board Members Committee until her resignation this spring.

Travelling to far off places has also captured Grace's interest. The ultimate adventure for her was the maiden voyage of the round-the-world tour of the Queen Mary II ocean liner in January to April of 2007.

The radio still plays on in Grace's life. In spite of the commercials she enjoys the jazz on 91.4 FM and classical music on 96.3 FM.

The WMCT is grateful for all the work Grace has done to preserve the history of the organization. Her participation in the activities of the organization will be missed. Thank you Grace from past, current, and future members of the WMCT.

The WMCT archives can be visited by appointment at the Special Collection department of the Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, 416-393-7131.

FEELING GOOD ABOUT MAKING A LEGACY GIFT

I am often amazed at what I learn from my friends. A friend and I had lunch recently and chatted about the Women's Musical Club of Toronto. She commented that she had wanted to leave something in her estate to the WMCT Centennial Foundation, but kept putting it off at the thought of having to create a codicil with her lawyer. She confided, "I delayed coming to grips with my good intention and, truthfully, I might never have gotten around to it if I hadn't found a straightforward solution."

She simply called up the institution which holds her RRIF and asked for the form used to name her beneficiary. She completed the form, naming The Women's Musical Club of Toronto Centennial Foundation as the beneficiary of her RRIF, sent it back to the institution, and notified her executors. (RRSPs can work the same way.)

It was as simple as that.

She also added some details that made this approach even more attractive:

- Donations in excess of \$200 save estate tax at the top rate, currently 46.4%, regardless of the income level of the person making the donation.

Women's Musical Club of Toronto/WMCT Centennial Foundation 2009-2010 Record of Scholarships, Fellowship, & Award

The Royal Conservatory of Music

1. The Women's Musical Club of Toronto
Ottillie M. Gunning Scholarship (established 1992) - \$5,000

Awarded annually to a piano student who displays musical excellence and is entered in a performance degree programme at The Royal Conservatory. The student must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant and may receive this scholarship only once.

2009-2010 Recipient: Grace Kim, piano

2. The Women's Musical Club of Toronto and the Women's Musical Club of Toronto Centennial Foundation 110th Anniversary Scholarship - The Glenn Gould School (established 2008) - \$5,000

The recipient must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.

2009-2010 Recipient: Leigh-Anne Martin, mezzo-soprano



Scholarship winners Christopher Arnold, violin, Grace Kim, piano, 2008-2009 WMCT-Ottillie M. Gunning winner Katsiaryna Khatsko, piano, Honorary Board Members Committee chair Danuta Buczynski, Leigh-Anne Martin, mezzo-soprano, and Mark Vuorinen, choral conducting, at the WMCT Annual General Meeting on September 30, 2009.

University of Toronto, Faculty of Music

1. Women's Musical Club of Toronto Entrance Scholarship (established 1993) - \$2,000, plus \$2,000 top-up for the year 2008 only
Awarded annually to a student entering the Performance Program, the scholarship is granted based on the entrance audition and academic achievements. The student must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant. (This scholarship replaced the WMCT Joan B. Wilch Scholarship in Voice, and the Mary Osler Boyd Women's Musical Club Scholarship, 1930-1973)

2009-2010 Recipient: Christopher Arnold, violin

2. The Women's Musical Club of Toronto Centennial Award - \$5,000

Established in 1997-1998 as part of the WMCT Centennial Celebrations, it is awarded annually to a graduating student from the Performance Program. The student must attain an annual grade point average of 3.5 or above, and have the intention to pursue a career as a concert musician. The student must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.

2009 Recipient: Mark Dimitroff, clarinet, and Ilana Zarankin, soprano

3. Women's Musical Club of Toronto and the Women's Musical Club of Toronto Centennial Foundation Fellowship (established 2001) - \$3,000 top-up to the endowed fellowship

Established with a gift of \$25,000 from the donors, and matched by the University of Toronto, to create an endowment that will sustain an annual award in perpetuity for an outstanding graduate student in Performance in the Faculty of Music. The recipient must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.

2009-2010 Recipient: Mark Vuorinen, choral conducting

The Banff Centre for Continuing Education

The Women's Musical Club of Toronto and the Women's Musical Club of Toronto Centennial Foundation Scholarship - \$2,000.

Granted to a student in the Master Classes for Strings & Winds and who is a resident of Toronto and a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.

2009 Recipient: Rachel Desoer (Cello Master Class)

Women's Musical Club of Toronto Career Development Award

Established 1989, the award, granted every three years, is administered and granted by the Women's Musical Club of Toronto and funded by the Women's Musical Club of Toronto Centennial Foundation.

The \$15,000 award is aimed at assisting exceptional young Canadian musicians who have already embarked on a professional performance career, and furthering that career through a recital in the Women's Musical Club of Toronto Music in the Afternoon concert series. The CDA is a project of the Women's Musical Club of Toronto, in partnership with CBC Radio Two and Espace musique de Radio-Canada.

2009 CDA Winner: Darrett Zusko, piano