



Women's Musical Club of Toronto

Annual Report 2024 - 2025

127th Season

President's Report

The 2024-2025 year was full of outstanding musical performances as Simon Fryer recounts in his report.

The *Tuning Your Mind* lectures prior to the concerts were engaging and informative, thanks to organization by UofT Professor of Musicology Robin Elliott. Program notes by John Mayo added greatly to audience understanding of the music to be performed and he deserves recognition for all he contributes.

A major development in the year was the selection of Amy Hillis, violinist and Associate Professor in the music faculty at York University, as the next Artistic Director of the Women's Musical Club of Toronto (WMCT). Simon Fryer nominated Amy's candidacy and, after considering a number of highly qualified musicians, we felt that Amy was the best fit and were delighted that she accepted our offer of the position.

We contracted with marketing specialist, Jennifer Petrilli, to boost awareness of the WMCT as we continue to be one of the best kept musical secrets in the GTA.

In December 2024 the WMCT received notification from the Ontario government that all requirements for compliance with new Ontario not-for-profit legislation were met. The necessary changes to the Club operations and governance are in place and

have been communicated to the Charities Directorate at the Canada Revenue Agency.

The important student outreach initiatives of the WMCT saw 115 high school music students and their teachers attend concerts, adding their significant energy to our audience. Midori Marsh, 2024 Career Development Award (CDA) recipient, held a workshop for RH King Academy high school vocal students who were thrilled with the session. WMCT member Dianne Henderson's ongoing financial support of our student outreach program is very much appreciated.

To our donors: members, foundations, and especially the WMCT Foundation, you are key to the long-term viability of the WMCT and our ability to provide performance opportunities, scholarships and the CDA. Thank you.

My final message is that what most people are not aware of is how much work our amazing member volunteers do throughout the year. Each volunteer gives time, ideas, and passion for our mission to support music performance and education in Canada. The combination of our volunteer team and Shannon Perreault, our invaluable General Manager, accomplish minor miracles to make everything happen.

Janet Murray,
President & Board Chair

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

The Women's Musical Club of Toronto reported a loss of just over \$31,000 in fiscal 2024-25. Past strong performance meant that we could cover this loss from our retained surplus, and we are fortunate in that, as well as in having consistent support from the Women's Musical Club of Toronto Foundation to help sustain us.

With profound thanks to our many donors and supporters, I am pleased to say that the WMCT is well situated to continue its musical activities for years to come. In this we are better positioned than many other arts organizations in the city, some of which have been forced to amalgamate or combine initiatives.

That said, audience numbers are not yet where we would like to see them. We are intensifying our marketing efforts with the aim of building our audiences and our profile. We see this as money well spent.

We will continue to operate prudently and responsibly, and look forward to seeing you all at our concerts.

Robin Sundstrom,
Secretary-Treasurer

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For the Year Ended June 30, 2025, with Comparative Figures for 2024

	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>
Membership Fees	\$ 33,400	\$ 33,620
General Admissions & Other Revenue	13,950	13,911
OAF Endowment Income	3,344	3,087
WMCT Foundation	86,382	25,400
Other Charitable Foundation Donations	20,062	25,041
Member, Friends & Sponsorship Donations	39,158	109,297
Government Grants	2,140	2,140
Career Development Award from WMCT Fdtn	<u>5,443</u>	<u>21,000</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	\$203,879	\$233,496
Artistic Fees & Expenses (inc. CDA performance)	\$ 50,236	\$ 47,882
Commission of New Work	4,676	5,000
Production, Web Site, & Hall Rental	30,805	27,346
Occupancy Costs	19,133	17,151
Admin, Membership & Other Activities	82,592	72,013
Scholarships	25,000	25,000
Career Development Award Expenses	0	22,000
Special Projects	22,798	9,456
Contribution to WMCT Fdtn & Others	0	1,500
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$235,240	\$227,348
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	(31,361)	6,148
Net Assets, beginning of year	69,274	63,126
Net Assets at end of year	\$ 37,913	\$ 69,274
Where funding comes from	2024-2025	2023-2024
Membership Fees	16%	14%
General Admissions, Other Revenue, & Interest	9%	7%
WMCT Foundation	45%	20%
Other Charitable Foundation Donations	10%	11%
Member & Friends Donations	19%	47%
Government Grants	1%	1%
	100%	100%

Artistic Director's Report

The 127th *Music in the Afternoon (MitA)* Concert Season opened with three of Canada's best-loved artists, clarinetist James Campbell, soprano Leslie Fagan and pianist Angela Park, here together to perform a program ranging from folksongs to opera. *Images at Nightfall: Georgian Bay* by Canadian composer, Srul Glick - performed in front of Allan Stein's projected paintings - was a showstopper right up to the concluding, solo clarinet loon call. The concert ended on a lighter note, with *Concert Fantasia on Motives from Rigoletto* for clarinet and piano. This duo was "interrupted" and became a trio when the soprano tip-toed onto the stage and joined-in - the audience loved it!

When friends from student days re-connect, there is laughter and delight. When those friends happen to be accomplished performing musicians, the camaraderie is unmistakable. Such was the case when Lithuanian-born violinist Julian Rachlin, along with Canadians, violist Sarah McElravy, cellist Karen

Ouzounian, and pianist Sheng Cai, performed. The program opened with music from J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, followed by a violin/viola duet by Krzysztof Penderecki, and *Tell Me Again*, for solo cello, composed for Karen Ouzounian by American, Lembit Beecher. Following intermission, the entire ensemble performed Brahms' A major Piano Quartet. The warmth and affection of the performers, for the music and for each other, was returned with a standing ovation.

Two weeks before their scheduled *MitA* concert, the Marmen Quartet cancelled their North American tour. Efforts to save our concert shifted into high gear and after just a little frenzy, the fabulous Balourdet Quartet agreed to make their Toronto debut with *MitA*. The Quartet's flight touched down on the morning of the concert, they found their way to Walter Hall and burst onto our stage! Notwithstanding such drama, the quartet performed as if they had been here all along and brought extraordinary life to works by Mozart, Paul Novak and Beethoven. Their enthusiasm, technical skills, and emotional depth were thrilling and resulted in cheers and a standing ovation from a grateful audience.

By the end of the April concert, many in the audience were weeping. Why? Soprano Midori Marsh, - WMCT's 2024 CDA winner, mezzo-soprano Alex Hetherington, pianist Frances Armstrong, and flautist Rachel Szabo certainly performed superbly, but it was more than that. The program titled *Sister, Sister*, traveled through music by the 17th-century nun, Chiara Margarita Cozzolani, the 19th-century Viardot sisters, and the 20th-century Boulanger sisters, and rose to a heart-felt conclusion, connecting the all-female artists with their audience and the audience, in turn, with the women in their own lives. The final set expressed the richness of sisterhood with works by Libby Larsen and Stephen J. Lawrence, and the tears were real.

Belonging: the May, concert, brought an exceptional emotional journey. Through brilliant programming and outstanding artistry, Sri Lankan singer, Asitha Tennekoon, engaged us all in his struggle. What is it like to be an outsider in a country; to be a visible minority; How do you navigate racism? How do you belong? Works addressing such questions included those of Métis Canadian Ian Cusson, and WMCT-commissioned Canadian, Danika Lorèn. In the finale, Tennekoon and pianist Steven Philcox were joined by a string quartet for Samuel Barber's *Knoxville, Summer of 1915*, a work expressing the yearning for belonging from a child's point of view. The profound effect of this performance touched us all and concluded the season in deeply thoughtful yet uplifting fashion.

Simon Fryer, Artistic Director (2006 - 2025)

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Our 127th Music in the Afternoon season was brought to you by:

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110th Anniversary Scholarship
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Ian Gillis, baritone
Centennial Scholarship
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Anna Boyes, soprano
Graduate Fellowship
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Yoanna Haeun Jang, violin
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 *All WMCT Scholarships and Fellowships are supported by the WMCT Foundation*

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Simon Fryer

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