



victoria symphony society
2014/2015 **annual report**

VS
tania miller | music director





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VS
14/15
annual report

president's report



PAVEL KOLESNIKOV



CITY OF STARS GALA



OPENING NIGHT



Of all the wonderful performances of our Symphony in 2014/2015, two in particular stand out for me. Our opening concert

in September was three days away when we learned that our distinguished soloist, scheduled to play the fiendishly difficult Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 3, had injured her arm and could not come.

Now, there are not that many concert pianists in the world who can play that piece without a lot of practice and rehearsal, but Mitchell Krieger and Molly Patton, burning up the telephone wires and the internet, found one: a brilliant young man named Pavel Kolesnikov, a Siberian studying in Moscow and just on his way to London to launch his professional career in earnest. He had won the Honens Prize in Calgary just months before, playing – guess what? – Rach 3. And so Pavel came to Victoria, a city he had always wanted to visit, and stunned us all with an amazing performance. I hope we see him again.

In October, a darker event. “Lest We Forget” filled the Armoury with the largest audience for new music we have ever seen. Maestra Miller, with a lot of help from Stephen Smith, created an unforgettable evening of music commemorating the Great War, and especially the role of the Canadian Scottish, our home regiment. Specially commissioned music by Tobin Stokes, as well as 20th-century classics from Britten, Vaughn Williams and more, filled that haunting space. Its architecture was used to the fullest, with musicians playing from the balconies as well as the main floor. I’ll not soon forget Terry Tam disappearing into the wings playing

“The Lark Ascending.” Stunning. There were a lot of stern military faces with motes in their eyes that night.

Trudi Brown and I, having come to (or exceeded) our term limits, are stepping down from the Board, as is Barry Mungham. Partly in anticipation, Dallas Chapple, Joanie Hesketh and Valerie Raymond have been elected to the board and have agreed to stand for re-election at this General Meeting. At our sister organization, the Foundation for the Victoria Symphony, the changing of the guard continues, with Steve McKerrrell elected President of the board and John Heraghty Treasurer. To all our new colleagues, a warm welcome. To Trudi and Barry, many thanks for the contributions you’ve made, and I’ll see you at the symphony.

A special thank you to Brian Butler, who is assuming the President’s chair as of this Annual General Meeting. Brian’s long association with and support of the Victoria Symphony – including a previous stint as President – make him the perfect choice for the coming years.

The Victoria Symphony remains in the black, although our draw on reserves is still higher than it ought to be. But even with the extra expenditures associated with our splendid upcoming 75th season, this draw is on a diminuendo and is planned to disappear before long.

This concludes my seven years on your Board – an extraordinary time filled not just with great music but with force-fed learning about the music business and with a myriad of friendships we will cherish forever. To all of you whose time and treasure make the VS possible, heartfelt thanks!

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Swain | President, Board of Directors



board of directors

- Harry Swain, President
- Grant Ackerman
- April-Dawn Best
- Trudi Brown
- Brian Butler, 1st Vice President
- Ethne Cullen
- Joan Hesketh
- Jim Hesser, 2nd Vice President
- Alan Hollingworth
- Patricia Lortie
- Barry Mungham, Treasurer
- Margot Northey
- Michael Oswald
- Christine Prince
- Valerie Raymond
- Terry Scandrett
- Michael Warren

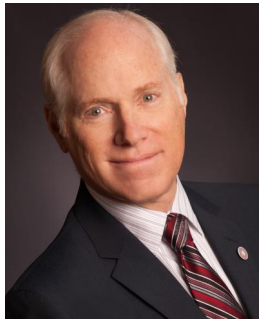
business advisory council

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Grant Ackerman | Stewart Johnston |
| Rick Arora | David Knight |
| April-Dawn Best | James McKenzie |
| Fritz Boehm | Tyrone Pile |
| Bruce Carter | Terry Scandrett |
| Jackie Chu | Jill Sing |
| April Dorey | Wayne Strandlund |
| Art Finlayson | Harry Swain |

honorary life members

- Dr. Eric Charman, CM, OBC, Grand Patron
- Neville and Jill Gibson
- C. Stephen Smith
- In memoriam: Hugh Davidson

executive director's report



In 2014/2015 the Victoria Symphony's many brilliant performances were supported by individuals, businesses,

foundations and three levels of government. As we look back at the year, we are deeply thankful that so many people and institutions think highly enough of the Symphony's work not only to purchase tickets, but to supplement those purchases with donations and grants. This broad-based support led to the sixth consecutive annual surplus for the Victoria Symphony Society, of \$13,581. Ticket sales, sold services and other earned revenue accounted for 33% of our income; government grants totaled 24%; and community support equaled 43%. Individual donations grew by \$142,216 from the previous year, to a whopping total of \$732,133, an amazing increase of over 23%. Thank you to all those generous people, and a special thank you to Jane Currie, our recently retired Director of Development, whose brilliant work was a key factor in that success.

The Foundation for the Victoria

Symphony remains the largest single supporter of the Victoria Symphony Society. The Foundation, while under new leadership, remains forever in debt to the one and only Eric Charman, whose leadership for so many years led to the Foundation's current healthy status. The Foundation's new President is Steve McKerrell, whose knowledge of the community and strong example of philanthropic leadership will, we are sure, build on Eric's legacy.

We joined once again during 2014/2015 with many other organizations in a community-wide project. Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the onset of World War I, the Symphony partnered with Forces Canada, the Royal BC Museum, the Maritime Museum of BC, the Greater Victoria Public Library, and others in presenting "Lest We Forget," a memorable salute to those who served, especially those who did not return. The project is described more fully in our Music Director's Report.

As we have for many years, we provided the pit orchestra for Pacific Opera Victoria, whose wonderful season included productions of *Das Rheingold*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *Madama Butterfly*.

The Wagner opera in particular was a great challenge for our amazing brass section, who rose spectacularly to the occasion. We collaborated as well with Dance Victoria and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Ballet Victoria, the Canadian College of Performing Arts, the Victoria Choral Society, Vox Humana, the Emily Carr String Quartet,

and UVic's Sonic Lab.

In 2013/14 we experimented in collaboration with POV in presenting *South Pacific* in a semi-staged version. The objective was to find a new audience for a high-quality presentation, and the response of the audience was promising; however, the sales were not what we had hoped. We agreed to try one more year in the hope that sales would build, and thus we presented *Camelot* in fall 2014. Once again, the audiences who attended enjoyed the presentation, and once again the sales were less than hoped. After further discussion, we decided the experiment did not achieve its goals, and we are not planning another such production in the near future.

Our Community Relations Coordinator Sandy Grayson led the charge in bringing music into the schools, and schoolchildren to the symphony. Our suite of programs and news from this year are described in the Education and Community Report; but I want to thank Sandy for her excellent work, and also Beverly Unger, whose generosity in underwriting our Musicians in Schools program is exemplary and deeply appreciated.

Sandy joined other members of our amazing and dedicated staff to make 2014/15 successful, led by Orchestra Manager Peter Burris, Marketing Director Jill Smillie, and Finance Director Elizabeth Skillings. A special word of thanks goes to Development Director and Associate ED Jane Currie, who recently retired, and whose accomplishments in her two stints with the VS meant so much to all of us. Lorraine Tanner, who served as Development Manager during 2014/2015 (and accomplished a great deal herself) has been named the new Director of Development.



Two other staff members moved on to new posts: Development Coordinator Dana Loughlin, now at UVic, and Executive Coordinator Rachel Carroll-Howe, who joined the staff at the United Way. We will miss them both. Continuing on our team are Marketing/Splash Coordinator Sarah Head, Marketing Coordinator Molly Patton, Librarian Ron Comber, Stage Manager Eric Gallipo, and Box Office Representative Cheryl Berg. Rachael Blaseckie joined the team in spring 2015 as Executive Coordinator, and Tess Hann will be our new Development Coordinator. They are all skilled and devoted to the success of the Victoria Symphony.

Late in the fiscal year, with the guidance of Alan Brown of WolfBrown and the support of the BC Arts Council, our Board with several staff members and some musicians began a Public Value Audit: a series of carefully planned interviews with community leaders, media representatives, educational leaders and more. The results were extremely interesting and valuable, and will be of great importance to the Symphony's strategic planning process. Board member Terry Scandrett, chair of the Planning and Vision Committee, was instrumental in making the process happen.

Our President Harry Swain has described the changes on our Board. Our incoming President is Brian Butler, whose long-term involvement with and support of the Victoria Symphony is something extremely special. The fact that a past President is willing to serve in that post once again is truly a demonstration of unusual commitment. I know that the Symphony under Brian's leadership will continue to prosper.

It's difficult adequately to thank Harry Swain for his service as Board member, Treasurer and for the last three years, President. Harry's wisdom, deep thinking, and forward

-looking perspective has helped guide the Board, the organization, and me through many challenges. Harry will continue his involvement as Past President and as a member of the Board of the Foundation for the Victoria Symphony. I know we will all continue to receive and appreciate his counsel and support.

Of course, another major change looms for the Symphony, as Music Director Tania Miller prepares to depart after the 2016/2017 season, which will be her fourteenth. Tania's leadership has transformed the Victoria Symphony from an energetic but scrappy regional orchestra to one of Canada's finest ensembles, continually praised by audiences, critics and guest artists as "punching above our weight." Not only does the orchestra play on an extremely high level; Tania has imbued them with a sense of pride and positive energy that is palpable at every performance. Tania has also been an amazing partner to me, and I am proud to have been able to support her in her quest for excellence.

Finally, as many of you know, this will be my last Annual Report. I have committed, for family and other reasons, to depart from my post no later than the end of June 2016. My years with the Victoria Symphony will always be one of the treasured parts of my life, as I worked with so many wonderful people, heard so many great performances, and enjoyed the beauty of our glorious community. I want to thank everyone in the VS family for all you've done and all we've shared. Thank you all!

Respectfully submitted,



Mitchell Krieger |
Executive Director

VS staff

administrative

Mitchell Krieger
Executive Director

Cheryl Berg
Box Office Representative

Rachael Blaseckie
Executive Coordinator (as of May 2015)

Rachel Carroll
Executive Coordinator (until April 2015)

Jane K. Currie
Associate Executive Director and
Director of Development

Sandy Grayson
Community Relations Coordinator

Sarah Head
Marketing and Splash Coordinator

Dana Loughlin
Development Coordinator

Molly Patton
Marketing Coordinator

Elizabeth Skillings
Director of Finance

Jill Smillie
Director of Marketing

Lorraine Tanner
Development Officer

artistic

Peter Burriss
Orchestra Manager

Ronald Comber
Music Librarian

Eric Gallipo
Stage Manager

Russell Bajer
Assistant Librarian

treasurer's report



Going into the upcoming 75th Anniversary Season for the VS, I am pleased to report on

behalf of the Board that the 2014/2015 fiscal year ended with an excess of revenue over expenses of \$13,581, slightly ahead of that budgeted. Total revenues at \$5,112,918 increased by \$229,463, or 4.69% from the previous year. As a part of earned revenues (33.16% of overall revenues), ticket sales have decreased by \$49,542, or 4.00% from the preceding year. Overall earned revenues declined by only \$19,224, or 1.12%. Management is critically analyzing this ticket sales reduction, and working hard to develop creative approaches to reverse this trend. We are pleased to report that initial subscription ticket sales for the upcoming 75th season have been strong, already exceeded the budget set; and the special event this coming December, featuring Yo-Yo Ma, is already sold out.

Additional revenues from services for Pacific Opera Victoria for their three productions, for Ballet Victoria, and performances in Nanaimo and Duncan have helped offset some of the ticket sales decline.

Donations and Fundraising Revenues (42.82% of overall revenues) have increased by \$218,166, or 11.08% for the year, due in large part to the hard work of our Development department. \$142,216 of this increase is attributed to the generous support of individual contributors, for which we give our thanks. Your continued support is critical to our on-going success. We would also thank the Foundation for the Victoria Symphony for their increased support for the year. We have in turn been able to make a contribution back to the Foundation of \$109,959 for a matching contribution from Heritage Canada. Revenues from Government Grants (24.02% of overall revenues) have increased by \$30,521, or 2.54% for the year, primarily as a result of additional funding received from the BC Arts Council to support our Lest We Forget events. We thank the

various levels of the federal, provincial, and local governments for their on-going financial support.

Total expenses increased \$226,048, or 4.64%, from the previous year. Artistic Costs and related direct Production Costs (63.11% of overall expenses) increased by \$208,294, which make up most of the increase in expenses. As was the case in the previous year, a significant portion of the increase in such costs were specifically funded by additional generous unplanned donor contributions, for an enhanced string section for opening night and other concerts (thank you to Wayne Strandlund and Fiskgard Capital), and from additional government contributions for special events related to Lest We Forget. Management has worked hard to control marketing, development and administrative expenses.

We commend management and the staff for their hard work this past year. Management, staff, and the Board, in addition to current operations, have spent considerable time in planning for the upcoming 75th Anniversary Season for the Victoria Symphony Society in 2015/2016. We also continue with our strategic thinking and planning, to enhance development revenues, working with a special development report produced with the leadership of KCI Consulting, and more recently in conducting a Public Value Audit, led by Alan Brown of WolfBrown.

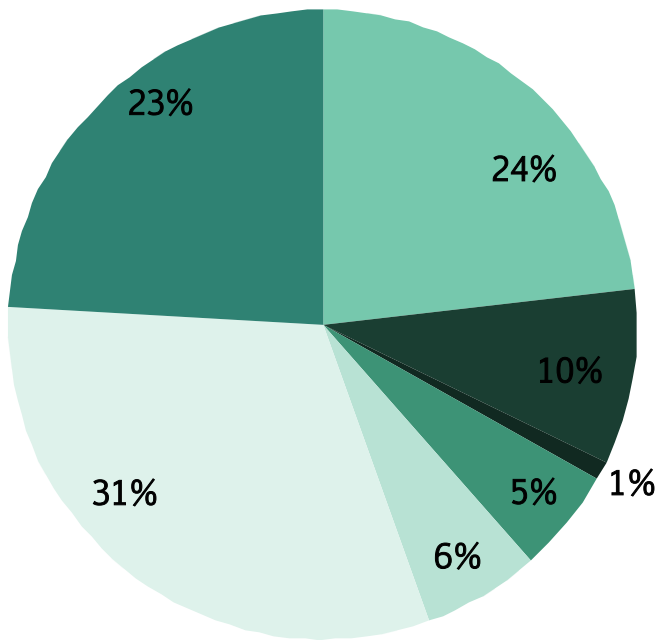
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barry Mungham".

Barry Mungham |
Treasurer, Board of Directors

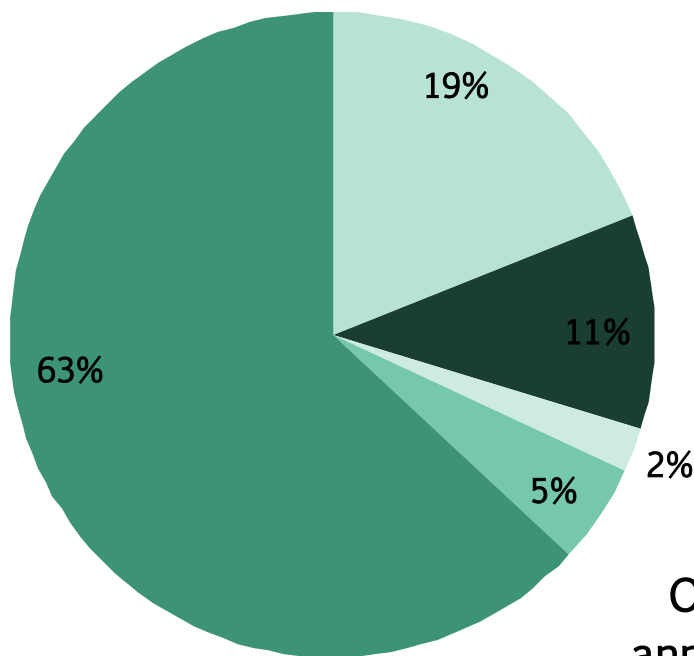


revenues vs expenses



revenue

Ticket Sales	1,187,940
Government Support	1,230,127
Sold Services	457,874
Other Revenue	49,847
Sponsorship	275,640
Event Revenue	306,999
Donations and Grants	1,604,491



expenses

Artistic & Production	3,218,575
Administration	968,019
Marketing & Development	546,920
Foundation	109,959
Event Costs	255,864

Over 60% of annual spending goes directly towards creating innovative performances.

excerpts from financials

Page 1

**Victoria Symphony Society
Statement of Financial Position
As at May 31, 2015**

	2015 \$	2014 \$
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash and cash equivalents	954,826	427,565
Accounts receivable	46,091	94,537
Prepaid expenses	26,464	50,701
Goods and services tax recoverable	-	1,117
	<u>1,027,381</u>	<u>573,920</u>
Capital assets (Note 5)	<u>186,130</u>	<u>193,632</u>
	<u>1,213,511</u>	<u>767,552</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	128,485	95,818
Wages and benefits payable	46,930	35,059
Goods and services tax payable	12,988	-
Deferred revenue (Note 6)	1,172,102	770,000
Deferred capital contributions (Note 6)	2,250	2,250
	<u>1,362,755</u>	<u>903,127</u>
Long term		
Deferred revenue (Note 6)	-	25,000
Deferred capital contributions (Note 6)	9,750	12,000
	<u>9,750</u>	<u>37,000</u>
	<u>1,372,505</u>	<u>940,127</u>
NET ASSETS (DEFICIENCY)		
Unrestricted - page 2	(333,124)	(351,959)
Invested in capital assets - page 2	<u>174,130</u>	<u>179,384</u>
	<u>(158,994)</u>	<u>(172,575)</u>
	<u>1,213,511</u>	<u>767,552</u>

The accompanying notes are a

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Page 2

**Victoria Symphony Society
Statement of Changes in Net Assets(Deficiency)
Year Ended May 31, 2015**

	Invested In Capital Assets \$	Unrestricted \$	Total 2015 \$	Total 2014 \$
Balance, beginning of year	<u>179,384</u>	<u>(351,959)</u>	<u>(172,575)</u>	<u>(182,741)</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses - page 3	-	13,581	13,581	10,166
Amortization of capital assets	(21,888)	21,888	-	-
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	2,250	(2,250)	-	-
Capital asset purchases	<u>14,384</u>	<u>(14,384)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>(5,254)</u>	<u>18,835</u>	<u>13,581</u>	<u>10,166</u>
Balance, end of year - page 1	<u>174,130</u>	<u>(333,124)</u>	<u>(158,994)</u>	<u>(172,575)</u>

excerpts from financials

Page 3

**Victoria Symphony Society
Statement of Operations
Year Ended May 31, 2015**

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Revenue		
Earned	1,695,661	1,714,885
Donations and fundraising (Notes 8 & 12)	2,187,130	1,968,964
Government grants	<u>1,230,127</u>	<u>1,199,606</u>
	5,112,918	4,883,455
Expenses		
Artistic (Note 10)	2,634,050	2,454,863
Production	584,525	555,418
Marketing	368,086	370,575
Box office	132,320	122,583
Development and fundraising	302,378	334,666
Administration (Note 11)	968,019	960,184
Victoria Symphony Foundation (Note 9)	<u>109,959</u>	<u>75,000</u>
	5,099,337	4,873,289
Excess of revenue over expenses - page 2	<u>13,581</u>	<u>10,166</u>

*These are only excerpts from the
2014/15 audited financial
statements.*

*For a complete 2014/15 Audited
Financial Statement including notes,
please contact Rachael Blaseckie at
rachael@victoriasymphony.ca*

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**Victoria Symphony Society
Statement of Cash Flows
As at May 31, 2015**

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Operating Activities		
Excess of revenue over expenses	13,581	10,166
Amortization of capital assets	<u>21,888</u>	<u>19,371</u>
	35,469	29,537
Changes in non-cash working capital items		
Accounts receivable	48,446	(80,145)
Prepaid expenses	24,237	(20,981)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	32,667	17,773
Wages and benefits payable	11,871	(627)
Goods and services tax payable	14,105	7,656
Deferred revenue	377,102	(113,803)
Deferred capital contributions	<u>(2,250)</u>	<u>(2,250)</u>
	541,647	(162,840)
Investing Activities		
Acquisition of capital assets	<u>(14,386)</u>	<u>(18,593)</u>
Increase (decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	527,261	(181,433)
Cash & cash equivalents - beginning of year	<u>427,565</u>	<u>608,998</u>
Cash & cash equivalents - end of year	<u>954,826</u>	<u>427,565</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

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music director's report



The Victoria Symphony's 2014/2015 season was an exciting one, especially in the presentation of monumental and important orchestral repertoire. The Victoria Symphony performed Britten's *War Requiem*, Debussy's *La Mer*, Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*, John Adams's *The Wound Dresser* and Sibelius's *Symphony No. 4* for the first time as well as rare performances for the orchestra of Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra* and Sibelius *Seventh Symphony*. We welcomed wonderful soloists and an array of new guest conductors this season. Most importantly, our musicians continued to perform at the very highest level, better, I believe, than ever before. The wonderful support of the community for the Victoria Symphony, which enables us to accomplish so much artistically, continues to amaze me.

Our season opened with a replacement for the injured Anna Fedorova with young pianist Pavel Kolesnikov flying in from Russia last-minute and giving a spectacular performance of Rachmaninoff's "Mount Everest" of concertos, his *Piano Concerto No. 3*. Bartok's thrilling and challenging *Concerto for Orchestra* – not played by the VS in eighteen years – was the other major work on the program, the first of three concerts with extra strings provided by the generosity of Wayne Strandlund and Fisgard Capital. What an incredible sound they made!

Later in the fall, the Victoria Symphony joined with a number of other partners to present "Lest We Forget," a commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the onset of World War I. Two VS concerts focused completely on this special commemoration. The first took place in the Bay Street Armoury and was centered around a world premiere by Tobin Stokes. His work, *The Piper*, told the moving story of BC's Piper James C. Richardson, who inspired the troops of the Canadian Scottish Regiment to attack but was lost in battle himself and posthumously received the Victoria Cross. The concert combined music and visuals from the period, and used



VS CONCERTMASTER TERENCE TAM

The concert combined music and visuals from the period, and used the entire acoustic space of the Armoury to create an unforgettable and moving experience for the audience.

the entire acoustic space of the Armoury to create an unforgettable and moving experience for the audience, many of whom were military and retired military. This concert was repeated in Nanaimo.

Our second concert was the overwhelming War Requiem of Benjamin Britten, an extraordinary musical depiction of the tragedy of war, never before performed in Victoria. This concert was dedicated to the late Hugh Davidson, who lovingly provided financial support for the complex and massive forces of large orchestra, chorus and children's chorus. We also included works from the war period throughout the season, such as Vaughan Williams's "London" Symphony, Ravel's *Le*

Tombeau de Couperin, and Stravinsky's Symphony in Three Movements. The entire project was supported by grants from the Victoria and Vancouver Foundations and the BC Arts Council.

Another noteworthy project came in January, when Principal Guest Conductor Bernhard Gueller led a performance of Mendelssohn's incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Along with the women of the Victoria Choral Society and actor Duncan Regehr, this performance delighted everyone with Mendelssohn's colourful music. Just two weeks afterwards, pianist Stewart Goodyear joined me and the orchestra for an astounding

performance of Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2. I'm thrilled to have done so much with Stewart over the years, and very excited that he will be the soloist for our spring 2016 tour.

Several other soloists made a big impression during 2014/2015: cellist Zuill Bailey, on a return visit, performed Bruch's haunting *Kol Nidrei* and Tchaikovsky's delightful Variations on a Rococo Theme, bringing down the house; and Sara Davis Buechner, a regular soloist with the VS, wowed us all in Richard Strauss's virtuoso Burleske for Piano and Orchestra. The Strauss Burleske with Sara will soon be available for viewing on our website and YouTube. We were thrilled to bring back superstar



TANJA MILLER & PAVEL KOLESNIKOV WITH WAYNE STRANGLUND & ELENA MARKOS OF FISGARD FINANCIAL

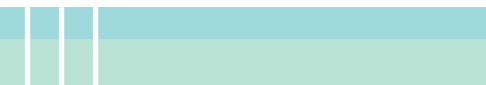


pianist Jan Lisiecki and beloved soprano Suzie Leblanc, and to have the debuts of Finnish Violinist Elina Vähälä, young pianist Charlie Albright, and pianist Joyce Yang. This season the VS presented three of its own musicians as soloists. Principal Trumpet Ryan Cole made his VS solo debut with the Arutiunian Trumpet Concerto; Concertmaster Terence Tam beautifully performed the Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1; and harpist Annabelle Stanley was featured in the Classics series.

During spring 2015, the last two compositions from Michael Oesterle’s tenure as Composer in Residence premiered: *The Walton Running Club*, a musical tribute to computer scientist Alan Turing, and *Entr’actes*, Michael’s whimsical musical impression of a lively intermission audience. The suite of six works from Michael’s three years forms a musical treasure for all of Canada.

Our new Composer in Residence, Jared Miller, started in the 14/15 season and will have his first premiere this fall with our orchestra in addition to presenting a new premiere on the 15/16 season closing concert. Jared has been active in planning and programming and has worked

alongside me in curating the New Music Festival. He acted as host and organizer for the 14/15 New Music Festival and hosted the Hugh Davidson Young Composers’



Our supporters make the Victoria Symphony the strong organization that it is.

Reading Session. Jared also continued to deepen our outreach to young composers in his teaching and organizing of vsNew with high school composers and members of the Victoria Symphony.

Our New Music Festival focused on Irish composer Gerald Barry and presented, among others, his works *La Jalousie Taciturn* and *Wiener Blut*, and included works by Canadians Andrew Toovey, Jocelyn Morlock, James Rolfe and Linda Caitlin Smith.

April 2015 saw our “Celebration of Poetry,” in which readings from BC authors alternated with performances by acclaimed soprano Suzie Leblanc. The authors were present for the concert and

included George Bowering, Susan Musgrave, Steven Price, and Alice Munro (her words were read by her daughter Sheila). Suzie Leblanc performed two Canadian works that were written for her by Christos Hatzis and Alisdair MacLean, based on the poetry of Elizabeth Bishop. This wonderful performance was videotaped and can be viewed on our website as well.

During our season, three of our Pops programs stand out in my memory. The first joined the wonderful pianist Ian Parker with our beloved former Principal Pops Conductor Brian Jackson in a celebration of all things Gershwin. Not only did they perform such favourites as *Rhapsody in Blue*, *An American in Paris* and many popular songs; their banter kept the audience laughing throughout. Then the amazing young performers from the Canadian College of Performing Arts joined the Symphony in music from *Oklahoma*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Beauty and the Beast* and more. Our Pops season ended with the debut of Jim Witter in his show “The Piano Men – Music of Billy Joel and Elton John.” Jim’s charm and brilliance made him an immediate audience favourite.



JOYCE YANG



ELINA VÄHÄLÄ

In our last two major concerts of the season, we were again blessed by the extra strings provided by Wayne Strandlund and Fiskard Capital. This full-bodied orchestra lent special musical power to our performances of Sibelius Symphonies No. 4 and 7, Stravinsky’s Symphony in Three Movements, Debussy’s *Nocturnes*, and Ravel’s iconic *Bolero*. The Sibelius Symphony No. 4, the Stravinsky, and the Debussy were all VS premieres. These last concerts were videotaped for webcasts and can already be watched on our website or on YouTube.

August 2014 saw the 25th anniversary of Victoria Symphony Splash. It has become an unbelievable community event and it was incredible to celebrate such an amazing iconic Victoria Symphony event this year. To make Splash special, we invited Vox Humana and friends to perform in the first ever inclusion of choir. Their participation was a highlight of the evening, with a performance of part of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, and in their inclusion in the opening hymn of the 1812 Overture. Erik Lin became the youngest ever Symphony Splash soloist at the age of 9.

I am deeply grateful to the people who support this orchestra. These are people that believe that music has the power to make a community vibrant, imaginative and expressive. These are people who understand that our orchestra brings people of a community together through shared experiences of beautiful music and that the orchestra elevates their community and their own personal lives. Our supporters make the Victoria Symphony the strong organization that it is and empower our dynamic and talented orchestra. I know that all of you in the room here tonight belong to that group of people and I thank you.

One of the most dedicated group of supporters is our Board of Directors. Thank you to the Board for serving our organization with so much care, intelligence and dedication. I want to say a special thank you to our outgoing President Harry Swain who has led the orchestra through numerous decisions and issues that have required the utmost of wisdom, diplomacy, and commitment, both in time and focus. Harry has given us all of these while drawing on his immense intelligence, talents and wit, and has managed to lead the organization well through the

successful years of his tenure. We will miss you, Harry. I look forward to working with our incoming President, Brian Butler.

Thank you to the staff for your dedication. I know that you put in so much time, professionalism and care into your work as you endeavour to support the orchestra and its performances to the utmost of your abilities. Thank you to Mitchell for your constant dedication and love for the orchestra and organization. You have been tireless in your positive and professional support and leadership in all of the areas of this organization. Thank you to Joey Pietraroia for his wonderful work as our Conductor in Residence. And of course, thanks to our wonderful orchestra for their passion and love for the music. It has been an honour to conduct this fine orchestra in the 14/15 season and I look forward to the upcoming 75th anniversary season.

Respectfully submitted,

Tania Miller | Music Director

musicians' report



JANET PARKER, DAN MOSES AND MICHAEL OSWALD

The 2014/2015 season was an exciting and busy season for the musicians of the Victoria Symphony. During our 34-week season, we performed 86 concerts of 36 unique programs. Our collaborations included productions with the Pacific Opera Victoria, The Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Ballet Victoria, the Victoria Choral Society, and the Vox Humana Choir. In addition to the regular season, the 2014 summer season included four unique programs, three at Butchart Gardens, and of course Symphony Splash.

It is nearly impossible to point out a single highlight from this past season. For myself there were so many memorable concerts – and I attribute this a great deal to my colleagues. This orchestra is a wonderful place to work, and I have been fortunate to be surrounded by a group of people who strive to perform at a high level. Our musicians are a close-knit and supportive bunch – how uncommon this is in a workplace where you sit beside the same person every day for your whole career, and where every

tania miller

Music Director

bernhard gueller

Principal Guest Conductor

giuseppe pietraroia

Conductor in Residence

jared miller

Composer in Residence

orchestra violins

Terence Tam, concertmaster

Christi Meyers,
assistant concertmaster

Tori Lindsay,
principal second violin

Cory Balzer

Müge Büyükçelen-Badel

Courtney Cameron

Michele Kwon

Emily Salmon

Christopher Taber

Julian Vitek

violas cont.

Kenji Fuse, principal

Stacey Boal

Kay Cochran

Mieka Michaux

Christine Prince

celli

Brian Yoon, principal

Martin Bonham

Joyce Ellwood

Perry Foster

basses

Mary Rannie, principal

Darren Buhr

Alex Olson

colleague's work output so closely intersects with your own! The Lest We Forget concert at the Bay Street Armoury was an outstanding example of artistic vision from our Music Director.

Whilst showcasing many of our own, including Terry Tam and Ryan Cole in solo roles, the orchestra stepped out of familiar acoustics to experiment in a building enveloped by atmosphere and poignancy. Tania's above-and-beyond effort in developing this concert is an example of what it means to be a modern day music director. It is more than delivering downbeats and creating programs out of an "Overture, Concerto, Symphony" template; it is how to make an orchestra relevant in an era of an overwhelming number of entertainment possibilities.

As a Musician Representative, I have enjoyed getting to know the members of the Board. It truly enhances my experience as a performer to see friends in the audience and at the stage door. It is my hope that our audiences at large can get to know us by beyond the music we make on stage. The musicians of this orchestra are not only members of the community, but also active in all sorts of community enrichment. As

individuals, many of us are teachers for a new generation of music lovers, and we perform in chamber groups that visit schools and play recitals in churches. As an organization, we are excited to explore ways to reach new audiences and share orchestral music outside the concert hall.

There is an excitement in the air at the Victoria Symphony. We are proud of what we've accomplished in our first 74 seasons, and we are looking forward to celebrating our 75th in a very big way. We will have the responsibility of representing our institution in the hometown of our "big-brother" orchestras in

Toronto, Quebec City, Vancouver, and Ottawa. I am confident that we will show Canada that good things can come in smaller packages, and that Victoria punches above its weight.

I'd like to close by thanking all of you who contribute to the well-being of the Victoria Symphony family; staff, board, volunteers and audience members. We look forward in sharing another successful season with you.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Oswald | Chair, Victoria Symphony Players Association



flutes

Richard Volet, principal
Sally Harvey

piccolo

Sally Harvey

oboes

Michael Byrne, principal
Russell Bajer

english horn

Russell Bajer

clarinets

Keith MacLeod, principal
Jennifer Christensen

bassoons

Jennifer Gunter, principal
Anne-Marie Power

horns

Alana Despins*, principal
Mike Oswald, acting principal
Dan Moses, acting second
Janet Parker
Darnell Linwood, acting fourth

trumpets

Ryan Cole, principal
David Michaux

trombones

Brad Howland, principal
Marcus Hissen

bass trombone

Robert Fraser

tuba

Paul Beauchesne, principal

timpani

William Linwood, principal

percussion

Corey Rae, principal

harp

Annabelle Stanley,
principal

education and community

Bringing orchestral music to the community remains an extremely important initiative of the Victoria Symphony. Through the support of government funders, sponsors and generous individuals, over 130,000 people have had access to the orchestra, including 12,000 school children. From bringing musicians into elementary schools to an instrument petting zoo for adults to leading workshops for youth composers, the Victoria Symphony continues to grow and develop our education and outreach programs.

youngest splash soloist

Symphony in the Summer 2014 saw the celebration of our 25th

Victoria Symphony Splash. Part of the celebration was the young soloist – Eric Lin was only 8 years old for his performance in front of 40,000. Eric was the youngest soloist ever to perform at Splash with the VS, and he wowed the crowd with his performance of Haydn on piano.

volunteers

Volunteers are an extremely important part of Victoria Symphony operations. From distributing programs at concerts to selling chocolates to collecting donations from a kayak at Splash, over 400 volunteers help the Victoria Symphony each year. Without the incredible assistance from this loyal supporters, many

things that the VS does would simply not be possible. Linda Ryder, the VS Chocolate Coordinator, led the Rogers' Chocolates sales teams over the 2014 holiday season. Her team sold every box of chocolate we had, raising over \$3,000 for the VS. At Splash 2014, Rilla Ballantyne volunteered for the 16th consecutive year. Overall, VS volunteers contribute thousands of hours to the organization, and we are forever grateful for their help.

youth composer wins national award

vsNEW student composer Carmen Slater may only be 15, but she's already making waves in the

“This is a wonderful experience for our students as it builds their cultural and musical awareness, inspires them to get involved in music and builds a foundation for their future as well-developed citizens.” - a teacher whose class attended the 2015 Education Concert

EDUCATION CONCERT



world of composition. In 2014/15 Slater participated in vsNEW for her 5th year, writing a new work for small ensemble under the guidance of VS Composer in Residence Jared Miller. Slater's composition, *Sleuth*, won first place in a national composition as well as a commissioning competition with Vancouver's Turning Point Ensemble. Slater will be working with Turning Point this fall on her first paid composition.

50 children dance onstage

Each year the Victoria Symphony performs seven concerts for elementary school-aged children. Over two days in Victoria and one in Duncan, more than 6,000 children have the chance to see a live orchestra perform. This year's concert examined the relationship between music and nature, and featured over 50 student dancers onstage with the orchestra. For many children who attended, the opportunity to see other students participating in the concert gave them a greater appreciation of classical music.

“The Moldau was also soft like Morning and it had dancers and my favourite part was when the people in the brown bags came out and one was my friend Luke.”

- Parker, aged 8



SPLASH YOUNG SOLOIST ERIC LIN



vsNEW 'COMPOSERS' WORKSHOPS



VS VOLUNTEERS



EDUCATION CONCERT

report to our supporters

Without generous support from ticket buyers, donors, sponsors and funders, the Victoria Symphony would not be able to bring music to the Greater Victoria community. The VS is touched by this continued dedication from local arts patrons. The 2014/15 year saw a 9% overall growth in philanthropic support.

individual donations

Annual giving remains a crucial part of fundraising for the Victoria Symphony. Gifts from individual donors rose by \$142,216 in 2014/15, a 23% increase over the previous year. We would like to acknowledge the generosity of

these seven benefactors, who account for nearly 1/4 of all donations received from individuals:

Brian Butler
Hugh Davidson
Dr. Marsha Hanen and Dr. Robert Weyant
Sandra Lackenbauer
Sheila and Ray Protti
Julie and Harry Swain
Beverly Unger

Through the support from these individuals, the Victoria Symphony has commissioned a new composition, invited Yo-Yo Ma to perform in Victoria, and brought music programs to 30 public schools.

sponsors

This season saw the continued support from a variety of sponsors, from Seaspan lending us a barge to perform at the 25th Victoria Symphony Splash to Telus helping us bring 50 children onstage to dance at our Education Concerts. One notable supporter is Fisgard Capital and the Strandlund Family, whose sponsorship has enabled a growth of artistic excellence for the orchestra. As Music Director Sponsor, Fisgard Capital's funding paid for additional musicians for several concerts and with the production of "Lest We Forget" and "A Celebration of Poetry: I am in need of music."



events

Fundraising events continue to be excellent ways to engage the community and increase resources. In addition to the Victoria Symphony Splash, this year a gala event was held in the spring of 2015. The *City of Stars* gala took place on the 75th anniversary of our first concert – and in the same location – the Crystal Ballroom at the Empress Hotel. Over 70 supporters gave auction items to help us raise funds to send musicians on the 75th Anniversary tour. Stars Olympic kayaker Adam Kreek, radio personality Bob McDonald and Grand Patron Eric Charman each shared their passion for music in the evening’s brief concert – including one of them singing with the orchestra! This

memorable event is being planned with new guest stars for 2016

foundations

Various foundations make an enormous impact on Victoria Symphony operations. Funds from the Victoria Foundation provides a scholarship for our Splash Young Soloist, the Vancouver Foundation supports special projects, and on April 27, 2015, the President of Montreal’s Roasters Foundation came onstage to announce a very special gift. In memory of Philip Potash, and in honour of his wife Barbara and daughter Kim, the Roasters Foundation has pledged a gift of \$1 million over ten years. Philip was a great lover of the Victoria Symphony, and Barbara and Kim continue to support the

Symphony and attend regularly. For each of the ten years, the gift will be acknowledged as underwriting a section of the orchestra; for 2015/2016, this will be the violin section – Philip’s favourite instrument.

The entire Victoria Symphony family is overwhelmed by the generosity of all our supporters, and thankful for your continued kindness.



selected statistics

SEASON CONCERTS

	EVENTS	ATTENDANCE
Signature Series	10	8,994
Legacy Series	5	5,597
VS Pops	18	14,507
Classics Series	5	5,077
Concerts for Kids	3	2,679
Specials and Explorations	6	4,943
Camelot (production with POV)	2	2,019
Total Season Concerts	49	43,816

SUMMER SEASON

Symphony in the Summer ensembles concerts	5	750
Butchart Gardens	3	3,500
Symphony Splash	1	40,000
Total Summer	9	44,250

FUNDRAISER

City of Stars	1	250
Total Fundraisers	1	250

EDUCATION

Education concerts	7	7,000
Musicians in Schools and Masterclasses	35	1,498
Open Rehearsals	5	230
vsNEW	5	260
Composers' Workshop	1	85
Instrument Petting Zoos	8	2,700
Symphony Story Time	13	205
Total Education	74	14,009

TOURS

Duncan	4	2,432
Qualicum	2	1,080
Nanaimo	1	812
Total Tours	7	4,324

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

Pacific Opera Victoria	17	17,340
Dance Victoria - The Nutcracker	4	5,435
Ballet Victoria - The Gift	2	2,435
Total Professional Engagements	23	25,210

TOTAL	163	131,859
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sponsors and supporters

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