

Report of the President  
Vancouver Recital Society  
Annual General Meeting

The Vancouver Recital Society's 39<sup>th</sup> Season was once again one of discovery, featuring an exciting combination of young up-and-coming artists on the Edwina and Paul Heller Next Generation Series, familiar favourites and superstars. Ever-present in our programming is a steadfast commitment to presenting emerging and established artists, alongside our efforts aimed at nurturing and developing new audiences through innovative initiatives, like Classic for Kids, the Youth Club, Ru35 and our newest endeavour, Music for Munchkins.

First and foremost, we express our sincere gratitude to the **Peak Group of Companies**, which took over the position of Season Sponsor with the commencement of the 2018-2019 Season. Peak been an active partner of the VRS for more than 10 years and we were thrilled to welcome and celebrate their new and expanded role within the organization.

As happened in the previous season, the 2018-2019 season began with an incredible discovery made through the need to replace the scheduled artist. On relatively short notice, the Castalian Quartet stepped in to replace the Zorá Quartet in the first concert of the season, on the Edwina and Paul Heller Next Generation Series. The Castalians earned rave reviews and a special place in our hearts. Following the quartet's performance in September, soprano Julia Bullock made her Canadian debut at the Playhouse with a program featuring both classical and early and mid-century American classics. Pianist Zoltán Fejérvári, winner of the 2017 Concours Musical International de Montréal, appeared on the series in January and participated the VRS's contribution to the VSO's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Zoltán also helped us launch our newest initiative Music for Munchkins, a collaboration with the Vancouver Public Library aimed at providing early musical experiences for children under the age of 5 (alongside their big people). This new program is generously supported by **John and Jean Hodgins**. We were thrilled to welcome pianists Filippo Gorini and Andrew Tyson, along with cellist Jonathan Roozeman, accompanied by his brother, Jan-Paul in their respective Canadian debuts.

For their support of this cornerstone series, upon which the VRS has been built, we are grateful to the **Estate of the late Edwina and Paul Heller, RBC Foundation**, and the **City of Vancouver**. We are also indebted to our individual concert sponsors: **Gaby & Yoram Minnes, Judith & Poul Hansen, Elizabeth Arnold-Bailey**, who sponsored the Roozeman brothers in memory of her mother, Ann Baldwin, **two anonymous concert sponsors** and the **VRS Board of Directors**.

Classic Afternoons Series at the Chan Centre, once again a piano-focused series, saw the return of Igor Levit, who made his sold-out Canadian debut for us in 2016. Following Igor's recital, Andrea Lucchesini returned to Vancouver 28 years after making his Canadian debut at the Playhouse in our 1986-1987 season. Behzod Abduraimov and Yvgeny Sudbin completed the series with outstanding performances in February and March.

As always, we wish to acknowledge and thank The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts and its staff, with whom we have developed a close and deeply rewarding relationship over the years. The **Chan Endowment Fund at the University of British Columbia** has provided tremendous support for the concerts we host at the Chan Centre. **Ann Harding** and the **John C. Kerr Family Foundation** generously sponsored Abduraimov and Sudbin respectively, and to them we express our heartfelt gratitude.

Peak Performances at the Playhouse has become a treasured series, featuring outstanding artists in the intimacy of the Playhouse. The 2018-2019 series welcomed renowned baritone (and distant relative of Leila), Simon Keenlyside with Malcolm Martineau, the ever-popular Danish String Quartet, and the Tetzlaff-Tetzlaff-Vogt Trio. To the concert sponsors on this series, **Lynn Kagan, Joyce & Tony** and **Richard & Lynda Spratley**, we say THANK YOU!

Two of the five Pop Out Performances featured in the season came early on. On October 9<sup>th</sup>, Evgeny Kissin made his long awaited and highly anticipated return to Vancouver after an absence of 19 years, and the following week, the Jerusalem Quartet appeared with Pinchas Zukerman and Amanda Forsyth. We are deeply grateful to the **Martha Lou Henley Charitable Foundation** for its sponsorship of Kissin's performance and to the **Chan Endowment Fund at the University of British Columbia** for its support.

In Pop Outs 3 and 4 Paul Lewis returned to the VRS twice over the season to complete his exploration of the works of Haydn, Brahms, and Beethoven in a series that started the season before, and culminated on March 3, 2019 with a program that included Beethoven's Diabelli Variations, Op. 120. Thank you to **Elaine Adair** for her ongoing support of Paul's Vancouver recitals.

The fifth and final Pop Out Performance of the season was in March and was, in fact, a co-presentation with our friends at Early Music Vancouver featuring the Chiaroscuro Quartet and fortepianist Kristian Bezuidenhout in a riveting program that included Schubert's String Quartet No. 14 in D minor, "Death & the Maiden".

We are grateful to the **Province of British Columbia** for the funding we receive in the form of a Community Gaming Grant. The **Westin Bayshore** provides a fantastic and welcoming 'home away from home' for our visiting artists. Our media partners for the 2018-19 season included the **Vancouver Sun** and the **Georgia Straight**.

In addition to the concerts we present at the Vancouver Playhouse and the Chan Centre, we are proud of the work we do in the community with our partners at the **Vancouver Academy of Music**, the **School of Music at the University of British Columbia**, and the **Vancouver School Board** and the **Vancouver Public Library**, offering master classes, Classics for Kids and Music for Munchkins performances. The **Diamond Foundation** has continued to be supportive of our efforts in this regard and we wish to extend our gratitude to them.



There is an important group of people, many of whom work quietly behind the scenes that the Board of Directors would like to acknowledge and thank. Our honorary auditor **Baker Tilly WM LLP**, has been providing our annual audit since the VRS's inception in 1980.

Our fantastic and committed staff of five, headed by Founder and Artistic Director **Leila Getz**, General Manager **Sara Getz** and Marketing and Communications Manager **Niamh Small**. We said goodbye to our Box Office Manager **Brianne Colon** partway through the season, but were thrilled to officially promote **Alex Glyniany** into the position, and welcome our newest staff member, **Melodie Corbett**, who has proven her weight in gold and who fits in like she's been around from the start.

The VRS has VRS has also a dedicated and devoted **Board of Directors** who provide great support, guidance and leadership. We are fortunate to have such a strong team.

I would also like to call out some of the people who are so critical to our success each season because of the tremendous work they do behind the scenes to keep us on track, on time and on point: our designer **Lydia Avsec** of **Copilot Design**, **José Verstappen**, who painstakingly lays out each of our concert programs, our musicologist **Donald Gíslason**, whose notes and pre-concert talks inform and entertain, **Scott Harker** who takes outstanding care of our Steinway, and **Ewa Borkowska** of **Valiant Accounting**, who has been helping us keep an eye on the bottom line for more than 20 years. Thank you!

Last, but certainly not least, we are indebted to our audiences and donors who keep us working, inspire us and without whom, frankly, we wouldn't exist.

