



President's Report

For a concert presenter that relies on ticket sales for a significant proportion of its revenues, the prospect of a season with no live performances, as was the expectation at the outset of the 2020-2021 season, was daunting. Much to our surprise however, the 2020-2021 season turned out to be both remarkably busy and tremendously successful.

The Covid-19 pandemic curtailed our 2019-2020 40th Anniversary season, stretched into 2021 and has continued into 2022. It would have been easier to go quietly into the night until the end of the pandemic, but as we all know (and appreciate), Leila and the VRS don't do quiet well.

The season that wasn't quickly became the season that was. The VRS found its way into the digital sphere, establishing a series of online interviews featuring artists, managers, and other interesting individuals with whom the organization has crossed paths over the years, aptly named *Beyond the Concert Hall*. In addition to *Beyond the Concert Hall*, we filmed performances with two outstanding British Columbian pianists, Jaeden Izik-Dzurko and Tristan Teo. Jaeden and Tristan's performances, along with a 4-concert series presented in partnership with Young Classical Artists Trust, and a filmed performance by the Jerusalem Quartet, formed what we now know as *Virtually VRS*. *Virtually VRS* performances have allowed us to continue presenting incredible young artists to an expanded online audience, and we're thrilled that so far, we've been able to offer these concerts free of charge.

We learned many lessons over the course of the 2020-2021 season, and we took what were, for us, many risks. Through it all, our sponsors and supporters were steadfast in their encouragement. 2020-2021 wasn't the season we'd planned, but it turned out to be a season to remember, complete with exciting new programming, the discovery of wonderful young artists, and a vision for the future that we are deeply proud of.

Our incredible group of sponsors have stood by us throughout the pandemic, and last season was no exception. To the Peak Group of Companies, the Estate of Edwina and Paul Heller, the Martha Lou Henley Charitable Foundation, RBC Foundation, the Alan and Gwendoline Pyatt Foundation, the Deux Mille Foundation, Elaine Adair, Elizabeth Arnold-Bailey and Robert Bailey, Richard Carswell in memory of Allison Kirkley, Robert & Denise, Maryke Gilmore, Ann Harding, an Anonymous sponsor, Allison Hart, Lynn Kagan, the John C. Kerr Family Foundation, The Estate of the late Denise Mara, Ric and Lynda Spratley, Joyce and Tony, and my fellow board members, on behalf of the organization, I offer sincere and heartfelt gratitude.

Over the course of last season, several doors that had not previously been open to the organization opened. We must express our thanks to the City of Vancouver, the Province of British Columbia, and the Government of Canada for their support of our programming and recovery efforts through programs including the BC Arts Council's Pivot Program, the CEBA, and CEWS.

As always, I would also like to express our appreciation of the following people who work so hard and diligently behind the scenes to make sure that, 41 years on, the VRS is standing strong:

- Our auditors at Baker Tilly WM LLP
- Lydia Avsec of Copilot Design
- José Verstappen
- Donald Gíslason, our resident musicologist
- Scott Harker
- Ewa Borkowska of Valiant Accounting,
- Our small but incredibly dedicated staff which consists of Founder & Artistic Director, Leila Getz; General Manager, Sara Getz; Marketing and Communications Manager, Niamh Small; Box Office Manager, Alex Glynianyi; Fundraising and Special Projects Manager, Melodie Corbett.

I have been fortunate to chair the VRS's Board of Directors for a number of years, and it has been a learning experience and a pleasure. I am deeply indebted to my colleagues: Mamie Angus, Casey Ching, Valerie Hunter, Susan Wong Lim, Christine Mills, Tony Yue, Tobin Robbins, Jessica Yan Macintosh, Jim Smith, and Yoram Minnes. You are an outstanding collection of talent, and I and the VRS are all the better for your leadership.

Tobin and Tony are stepping down as of this AGM, and over the course of the year, Rebecca Hunter and Mary Jane Mitchell stepped away. I want to acknowledge their dedication to the organization throughout their respective terms and let them know how much we appreciate their involvement.

Last, but certainly not least, on behalf of the board, I would like to express deep gratitude and heartfelt thanks our donors and our ticket buyers. Quite simply put, without them, we would not exist. We are forever grateful, and we cannot wait to see you in the concert hall again later this spring, and we look forward to delighting you for years to come.



Stephen Schachter, Q.C.
Board President