



MINSTREL NOTES



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Summer Camps welcome more enthusiastic kids

Thanks to your donations, we were able to provide summer music camp experience for many of our best students from the Dixon Hall and Regent Park Schools of Music. Campers worked hard, learned a lot about performance, and reported that it was all lots of fun.

In August, twenty-two Regent Park Music students attended the Erin Gilmour Summer Workshops at Bishop Strachan School. Eight worked in the intensive Strings Workshop; nine were in the choral drama workshop, Shakespeare for Kids. At the end of the session, campers from Regent Park and the BSS community gave a public performance that was enthusiastically received by friends and parents.

Dixon Hall (DHSM) music students had three different summer experiences. Four students participated in the inner-city camp for strings called Downtown Summer Strings. Benjamin Boachie, attending for the first time, was most enthusiastic: "It was the first time I played in an orchestra. I made a lot of new friends, too".

For the fourth year, ten advanced students from DHSM attended workshops, advanced instruction, theory

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Our Mission

The Minstrel Foundation for Music & Arts Advancement is an organization that is dedicated to securing and expanding the opportunity for underprivileged inner city young people to study and excel in music. The Foundation was established in 1999 and has raised over \$700,000 for inner city youth to study music.

The original program was limited to youngsters in the Regent Park area of downtown Toronto. The Foundation subsidized lessons taught at the Dixon Hall Music School by highly qualified instructors in voice, piano, guitar and violin. Over the years, this mandate has been expanded to all youth in the downtown neighbourhoods. Children who began as Minstrel Foundation students have progressed through high school and to post-secondary education. Currently, the Foundation's scholarships are

assisting students studying jazz performance at Humber College, honours music at Wilfred Laurier University and piano and violin at the Royal Conservatory of Music. Another student is studying voice after recently graduating from the Randolph School.

The Foundation now provides funding to the Dixon Hall Music School, the Regent Park School of Music and University Settlement House. In the summer, The Foundation funds student fees to specialty camps such as Mid Summer Music by the Lake and the Erin Gilmour Arts program at Bishop Strachan School. The Foundation is also pleased to administer and award the yearly Hagood Hardy and Casels Brock Music Scholarships.

The Minstrel Foundation is composed of and administered by volunteers. There are no administrative salaries and operating costs are minimal.



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lessons, and master classes at the two week Mid Summer Music By the Lake. Camper Me Ye reported that she got to play in a trio and that mini-recitals, open to the public, inspired her. "In master class, we were coached by really advanced players, who showed us how to interpret music differently."

Nine students accompanied DHSM director Bob McKitrick on a five day outdoor music camp. There were daily practices and lessons but everyone took time to hike in the Dufferin County Forest, swim in local ponds, fly kites, and generally enjoy time away from the city. On the final night, everyone gathered together for an open-air concert at a local farm. The only complaint from campers was that the time was too short!

Scholarships Awarded for Advanced Study

Those who attend our galas and recitals know that some of the children in programs we support have exceptional talent. If they aspire to careers as music instructors or performers, they need advanced study in theory and performance. Fortunately, the Minstrel Foundation is able to assist exceptional students to get the extra study they need.

This year, we are happy to fund advance studies to three very talented youngsters. Regent Park resident, Tomas Kwong, 16, has completed the grade 12 course (with honours) from the RCM. He is an honour student at De La Salle College and has won awards for sports, music, and academics. He also volunteers as a tutor for other disadvantaged youth.

Eric Tan, 12, is known to those who attend our galas. He regularly dazzles us with his exceptional performances. Eric is ready for advanced study in performance and chamber music ensemble as he prepares to complete his grade 8 at the RCM. He has been a student at the Dixon Hall Music School for five years and all his instructors believe that he has a bright musical future ahead.

ShiLin He is 12, a student at the Dixon Hall School and, for the past three years, she's been receiving master class lessons from Gloria Saarinen who reports that her progress is most impressive. ShiLin will spend this year in advanced study in piano, general musicianship, and chamber music.

Hagood Hardy Protégé Award

This has been a great summer for Peter Nguyen. First, he won the Hagood Hardy Protégé Award, named for the celebrated Canadian composer. The Award is presented yearly by Martha Hardy, to an exceptional music student. Peter used his scholarship to attend the prestigious music camp, Le Camp Musicale de Lanaudiere, in Quebec where he honed his skills on the piano and also improved his conversational French.

The Hagood Hardy Protégé Award is open to any underprivileged music students in the Greater Toronto Area and is administered by the Minstrel Foundation.

University Settlement House

When you have more than 100 music students taking lessons, practicing, giving recitals, instruments take a beating. The University Settlement House Music and Arts school sent out a plea for funds to replace worn-out instruments from Grand Pianos to Xylophones. The Minstrel Foundation was pleased to present funds for a new upright piano, and to provide a guitar and clarinet for the student rental program. The rental is especially for low-income children whose families cannot afford the cost of a new or used instrument for practice and performance.