



MINSTREL NOTES

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Camp Programs Expand to Reach More Kids

Thanks to generous Minstrel supporters more youth were able to attend March Break and Summer Music camps this year.

March Break Camps

Dixon Hall's popular overnight camp at Hart House Farm found 20 youngsters learning music, enjoying country air, games, and companionship. But March Break is more than a trip to the country. Minstrel funds enabled inner city youth to go to camps at Harbourfront Centre, in everything from fine arts to chess challenges. Six youngsters headed to a special day program run by the Canadian Opera Company.

The March Break camps are always popular with youngsters and their working parents who can't afford the fees for traditional March Break programmes. That means there are always more kids than spaces. To insure the future of the programmes, Minstrel patrons David and Judy Galloway have donated \$25,000 to sponsor the March Break camp for the next five years. Thanks from us and from all the delighted kids!



Summer Camps

Dixon Hall had more than 300 kids in their summer programmes this year, all funded by Minstrel's donors. The fun ranged from Hart House Farm for overnight camps to programmes at Harbourfront. Two youngsters attended the Music Camp at Port Milford, for advanced classes and another 10 students spent a week at the National Music Camp in Orillia. Regent Park School of Music summer camps reached more than 600 youth this past summer. Minstrel

donors were responsible for funding a substantial portion of the program in areas like Parkdale, Scarborough, and the Jane/Finch corridor. Youngsters wrote us that they loved being away from the city and enjoyed having fun with the arts, cooking and sports. These programmes are a real treat for marginal and at-risk youth and it's your donations that keep them working. If you yearn to hear bucket drums, then this is your chance.



Christmas Camp

To expand on the extraordinary success of our camp programs, the Minstrel Foundation will be holding our first Christmas music camp this year – an overnight camp at Hart House Farm. In honour of one of our founders and very generous benefactor, the camp will be named The Heather Bryant Christmas Music Camp. Approximately 15 students from the Dixon Hall Music School will be the first to attend for 5 days over this Christmas holiday season.

Other 2012 Programme Highlights

Pia Bouman School for Ballet

We continue to supply bursary funds to the Pia Bouman School for Ballet and Creative Movement. This year's group, selected by Ms. Bouman, include a young woman who was just accepted to the National Ballet School, a young man of 14 who has just discovered that he wants to make dance his life, and an aspiring choreographer who, after 12 years with Bouman, plans a career in Dance. We are thrilled to be able to assist these, and nine other youngsters, to reach their personal goals in dance and creative movement. These bursary students are carefully chosen and "it's never an easy task" writes Ms. Bouman. Parents of bursary students don't expect a handout. "Many of them make an effort to contribute... by helping to do special events, doing small services while waiting for their children... and by assisting in classes."

University Settlement House

USH has had an increase of more than 25% in the number of students requesting music lessons and, regrettably, has had to turn away kids for lack of funds to subsidize lessons. A request to Minstrel for another \$3,719 met some of the demand but as the economy drags, more youngsters will be in need. Your donations keep the programmes in Toronto reaching the kids who need them the most.

Royal Conservatory of Music Exams

Eight students from Dixon Hall Music School successfully passed the rigorous spring exams for a grade raise at the Royal Conservatory of Music. Five young musicians took the piano exam, one the violin, one flute, and one enterprising young man passed his grade 3 in classical guitar. Fees for the exams, totalling \$981, were funded by the Foundation enabling kids to see the results of their hard work.

Awards

The **Hagood Hardy Protégé Award** went to **Wendy He**, 16, of the University Settlement House. Wendy's teacher, Tiina Kliik, who nominated her for the award describes her as "smart, conscientious, and hardworking...with a superb artistic flair for all styles of music..."

A second Hagood Hardy award went to **Jonathan Chapman**, 18, of the Community Music School Humber College. Jonathan's teacher, Kirk Macdonald, calls him "an exceptional musician and among the most accomplished students in his age group I've encountered."

This year's **Cassels Brock Award** went to **Daniel Guerrette**, 15, of the Etobicoke School of the Arts and the Community Music School Humber College. Daniel's list of achievements covers two closely typed pages and includes participation in the Hannaford Street Youth Band, Humber College Youth Jazz ensemble, and the city of Brampton Concert Band. We know this is only the beginning for this talented and committed young man.

Jack Hang, age 16, is the winner of this year's **Fan Po Chu Award**. Jack has a huge list of accomplishments and has been studying with Gloria Saarinen and is a regular performer at Minstrel events. He currently continues his own performing events while assisting younger children with their musical studies. He is an inspiration and role model as well.

The **Freda Griggs Clarendon Award** winner is **Audley Cummings**, a talented 16 year old saxophonist, from the Regent Park School of Music who enjoys mentoring younger students and is a member of their steel band. He is currently focussing his musical studies on the piano.



Photos courtesy of Tynan Studio.

Minstrel Kids Look to the Future

Ever wonder what becomes of the youngsters who receive lessons through the Minstrel Foundation's various programmes? We checked in with a few of our most recent "grads."

Tonia Tong, winner of the Cassels Brock Award and a long time student at Dixon Hall, graduated from Victoria Park CI with an International Baccalaureate and is currently studying Honours Software Engineering at Waterloo University. Didn't know music lessons increase math and computer skills? Yep, they do.

Anthony Toth, who received a full scholarship to the Berklee School of Music in Boston, has completed his first year successfully. He is studying with some of the greats of jazz and even performed with a saxophonist who toured with Beyoncé Knowles. "I am very grateful that you were a part of the beginnings of my studies in College," Anthony writes.

Li Zhu, another Fan Po Chu award winner is studying science and education at Queen's and plans to teach. In her free time she volunteers her musical talents at Kingston's Providence Manor.

Jack Hang, still in high school, and a Fan Po Chu winner continues to win music competitions. He also devotes considerable time (and talent) to accompanying younger students from Dixon Hall for their own competitions and exams. This past summer Jack taught piano to the younger children at the Dixon Hall Summer Camp and participated in a "Trek for Teens" to aid homeless children.

Many of you recall the talented **Eric Tan**, winner of several Minstrel awards over the years. Eric continues his studies at Cornell, with a double major in engineering and music. He plans on a career in music after graduation but "if that happens to be not as successful as I hope ... I've got an engineering degree to fall back on."

Navillus Gallery Event

On March 1st, 2012, 150 guests gathered at the Navillus Gallery on Davenport Road for an evening of music and art in support of the Minstrel Foundation's summer programmes. The Gallery was alive with music from the award winning Humber College Community Jazz Band Ensemble. The guests were treated to great wines donated by the Peninsula Ridge Estate Winery and hor d'oeuvres from La Recolte Catering. Taylor Sullivan, Head Curator of the Navillus Gallery donated the space as well as a percentage of the art sold during the evening. The door prize, an original work of art by Toronto painter, Rundi Phelan, was won by Dr. Grace Petrikowski. Works by other artists including several original oils by Gloria Vanderbilt were available during the event.



An Evening of Jazz Event

On December 2, 2012, nearly 200 guests gathered at the Bram & Bluma Appel Salon at the Toronto Reference Library for an exciting evening of Jazz starring National Jazz Awards winner Heather Bambrick and Robert Pilon. There was also a special performance by Thompson Egbo-Egbo. Students Wendy He, Clara Nguyen Tran, Jack Hang and The Brodkorb Simmons Guerrette Trio showed off their extraordinary talent. Daniel & Daniel was our caterer and Peninsula Ridge Estate Winery was generous in the donation of wine. Robert Pilon volunteered once more as our live auctioneer, which brought generous bids for three luxury vacation properties. During the Evening, the Minstrel Awards (announced on page 2) were handed out to this year's award winners.

From our Thank-You Album



It's my first time there at camp and I really, really, really enjoyed it. It was so FUN!

The part I liked best was the Hikes, playing with Boots (a beagle owned by Steven), the indoor activities and the food. The food is really good.

I really liked Harbourfront Camp. I made friends, went canoeing and saw magic tricks.

We have nature walks, cooperative group games, campfires, a 'music hunt', a recital and of course, a few chores. To think, I'd never done the dishes once before I came to summer camp three years ago!

You barely know me, yet you are greatly appreciated by me.

The point of this letter I'm writing is to thank you. To thank you for granting me the chance to be able to swim in a pond, attend my first ever overnight camp. For granting me the chance to have amazing meals, to compose my first song and of course, the chance to make friends and music.

Many Thanks To Our Gala Committee, Volunteers and Evening Sponsors

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