



MINSTREL NOTES

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2011 Programs Reach More Kids Than Ever

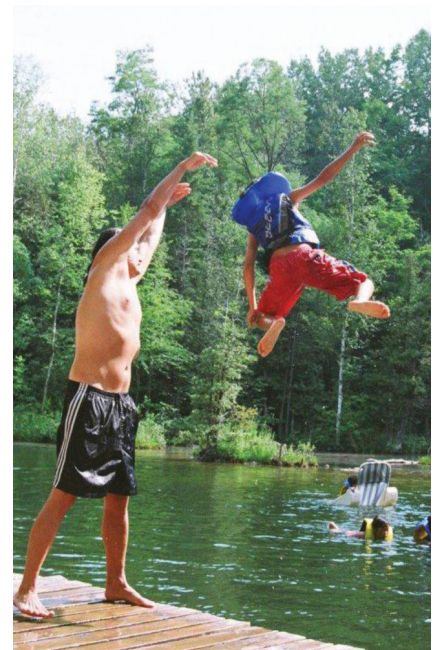
Thanks to our generous donors, we were able to assist **Regent Park School of Music** with an ambitious summer program of music education and summer camping experience. Led by Zambian music educator, Akufuna Sifuba, RPSM provided six weeks of fun and musical training in choir, recorder and bucket drumming for 250 children in six of Toronto's most at risk neighbourhoods including Jane Finch, St. Jamestown, Malvern, and Regent Park. After



a successful summer, RPSM hopes to turn the summer programme into a year-round venture. We hope to be there to assist them in their vision.

Once again, we were able to send children to summer camp and substantially increase our numbers from last year. Seventeen students attended the **Dixon Hall Music School** overnight camp at Hart House Farm. There was plenty of fun and a great escape from the city.

Twenty students enjoyed a break at the Harbourfront Camps; another twelve went to the National Music Camp in Orillia for two weeks, for more proficient youngsters. Three auditioned and were selected for the month long masters programme at Port Milford. At the same time, we assisted six students with their fees for the Royal Conservatory exams and they all passed!



March Break Programs

Dixon Hall Music School provided a fun week at Hart House Farm for fifteen youngsters who enjoyed arts and crafts, nature walks, outdoor play and lots of music. Another five DHMS students attended the Harbourfront March Break Camp for outdoor fun. We were able to send more children because Harbourfront subsidized DHMS youngsters for 75% of the cost of the camp. A great programme and the kids loved it!



2011 programs

We're always looking for new ways to help kids who love the arts. We continue to support musical programmes at Dixon Hall, University Settlement House, and the Regent Park School of Music. One exciting new programme this year has been The Hammer Band: From Violence to Violins which supports 250 young people in 12 schools. All students receive music lessons once a week and a violin for the year all free of charge. They perform in assemblies and in recitals for their teachers and parents. This programme began in April 2009 with 60 students in three schools and the demand continues to escalate.

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Annual Gala raised \$110,000

It was a wonderful June evening when some 220 revellers gathered at the Granite Club for Minstrel Foundation's annual gala. Along with great food and ambiance, there was an abundance of terrific music, all of it introduced in grand style by Heather Bambrick, the host of Jazz.FM91's "Sunday Afternoon Jazz" and weekday's "Dinner Jazz".

Students Lily Liao, Xiao Ling, and Maxwell and Tonia Tong showed their considerable skills on the piano and viola, while the Humber College Jazz Ensemble, featuring Minstrel Scholarship student, David Diao on flute, rocked the room with an original composition by Canadian pianist Nancy Walker.

Don "The Auctioneer" Stewart led the spirited live auction featuring a luxury week in Ireland, golf in South Carolina, holidays on the Spanish and Portuguese Rivas, a week in Scottsdale, lessons in flying a Boeing 747, and even a Persian rug that may or may not be magic.



That was just the beginning with the silent auction covering everything from gourmet meals to designer duds. By the end of the evening, the event raised \$110,000 for Minstrel's increasing list of projects. The night signed off with a superb performance by Heather Bambrick and her Quartet and a special guest performance from Chris Donnelly. Everyone agreed that it was the best Minstrel Gala until the next one.

The Presentation of the student awards is always a major feature of the annual Minstrel Gala and this year was no exception. Five talented and hardworking young people received awards to encourage their continued study.

The **Cassels Brock Music Award**, went to **Tonia Tong**, student of Gloria Saarinen at the Royal Conservatory. Tonia is preparing to enter university and is experimenting with composition, as well as competing in provincial music competitions.

The **Fan Po Chu Music Award** was awarded to one of our oldest and best students, **Li Zhu**. Thanks to a previous Fan Po Chu grant, Li is currently studying with Lawrence Pitchko and has made great strides. This award will enable her to continue her master studies.

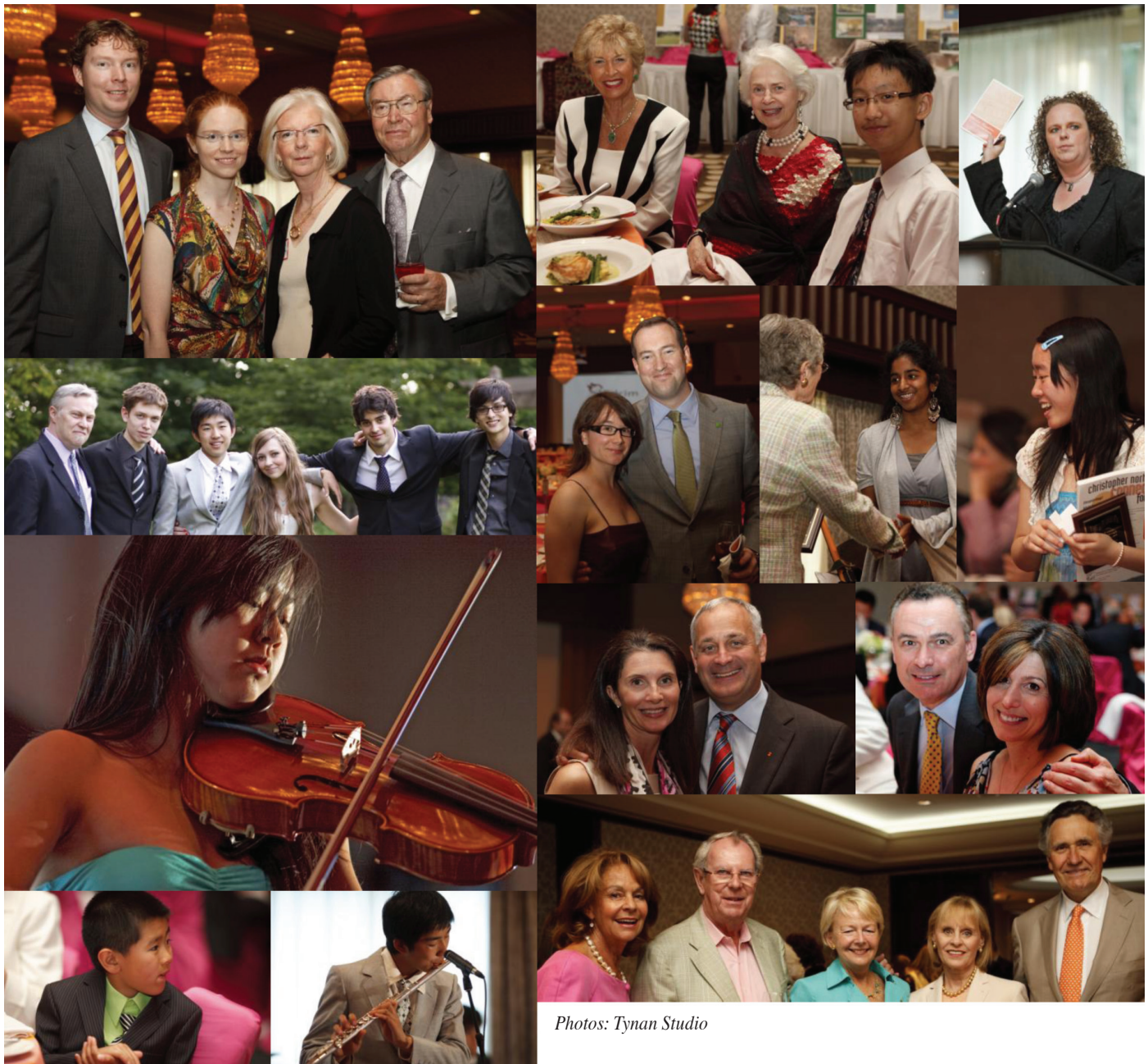
A second Fan Po Chu Award went to **Jack Hang**, 15, a student with Gloria Saarinen, a leader at the Dixon Hall Music School, an honour student in math and science, and winner of too many music awards and competitions to list. The Fan Po Chu Award will enable Jack to continue his studies.

The **Freda Clarendon Griggs Award**, presented by patron Christina Blair, went to **Sintthu Nageswaran**, a student at the Dixon Hall Music School, who has just recovered from a long illness and hospitalization. She has bounced back to excel in both piano and violin. The Freda Clarendon Griggs Award recognizes her achievements and assists her in studies to come.

The **Hagood Hardy Protégé Award**, presented by Martha Hardy, recognizes both achievement and hard work by a talented young musician. This year Mrs. Hardy gave two awards. The first went to **Clara Nguyen Tran**, whose teacher nominated her for her careful work, her dedication, and her progress in performance. This year Clara plans to enter more festivals and the Hagood Hardy Award will assist her.

The second Hagood Hardy Award went to **Tommy Tang**, 12, of the University Settlement House music program, and whose teacher describes him as a young man "who lives and breathes music and the arts." What could be more appropriate for a protégé for one of Canada's most revered composers?

The **Lister Sinclair Music Award** went to **Aarane Thevapaskaran**, a student at the Dixon Hall Music School. This November she was selected as one of ten students to attend a Master Class with the pianist Ling Lang. This marks a major turning point in her studies and the Lister Sinclair Award recognizes her achievement and supports her further study.



Photos: Tynan Studio

MANY THANKS TO OUR GALA COMMITTEE, VOLUNTEERS AND EVENING SPONSORS



Gerry & Caren Ruby Family Foundation • Carolyn Keystone



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Frances Carmichael and Jack Cushman • The Honourable Margaret McCain • Frances and Timothy Price

Programs from page 1

The Canadian Children's Opera Chorus engages children and youth ranging in age from 3 to 19 years, has six choruses and over 200 singers. The CCOC also has also launched an outreach programme in schools for children who are able not, for many reasons, to audition for the chorus itself. This year The Minstrel Foundation has agreed to become a major supporter of this programme, known as **OPERation KIDS**, thanks to you.

The Foundation was also able to support the bursary programme of the **Pia Bouman School for Ballet and Creative Movement**. Ms. Bouman reports that 24 parents with children in classes from Early Dance 1 on to Grade 5 requested bursary assistance this year. "Our" students include Lia, a Colombian immigrant whose single parent is studying for a degree in education. Since Lia suffers from scoliosis, dancing is difficult for her but she benefits from the creative movement. Beth received a partial bursary and is a talented student choreographer, planning a career in dance after graduation. Kaitlynn is studying contemporary dance and is part of the Bouman YMI dance company. And 11 year old Assantewa has applied to the summer programme at the National Ballet School. These are only four of ten students at Bouman who benefited from Minstrel funds, thanks to you.

The Minstrel Foundation will subsidize 45 students at **University Settlement House (USH)** this year and another 30 students in their summer program, continuing a long-term commitment to their excellent music program. USH has seen a huge increase in need due to the economic downturn.

Minstrel is pleased to report three new scholarships for advanced musical studies in the Community Youth Jazz program at **Humber College**. The course will allow technically proficient students to explore advanced improve concepts in the context of both the traditional body of repertoire in the jazz idiom and more challenging contemporary compositions. Minstrel has awarded tuition assistance to both Anoop & Jinu Isac, gold medalist winners and according to their teachers "two gifted, hardworking and interested to learn young men". Minstrel has also awarded a full scholarship to Daniel Guerette, a recipient of the Zildjian Outstanding Drummer Award at the 2010 Ottawa Musicfest and the Humber Junior Jazz Drummer Award thru 2008 – 2011. This dedicated and talented musician has been a member of the Jazz FM91 Youth Big Band and the Hannaford Street Youth Band.

Our Graduates Continue To Shine

Thompson Egbo-Egbo, currently a student at the Berklee School of Music in Boston, was the star of a feature article in the Harvard Crimson newspaper. **Matthew Brown**, the multitalented young actor (Jersey Boys, Dream Girls and the TV mini series, The Kennedys), has been selected as one of eight students to participate in the 2011 class at the Canadian Film Center's actor conservatory. **Anthony Toth**, who plays both the drums and trumpet, received a substantial scholarship to attend Berklee and the Minstrel Foundation was pleased to be able to assist him as well.



Save March 1st, 2012 for an Evening of Music & the Arts at The Navillus Gallery

Kids Write To Us

One of the delights of the Foundation is receiving notes from "our" youngsters. They range from the very formal to the very informal and they are all much appreciated.

Dear Minstrel Foundation,

This letter is a brief thank you for the great opportunities that you all have granted me over the past six years I've been attending Dixon Hall's overnight camp, as well as sponsoring me to go to National Music Camp for the past 2 years, and going to Harbourfront's Counsellor-in-Training Camp. These camps always make the highlight of my summers.

Dear Minstrel Foundation,

I'm 10 1/2 years old. I've been taking music lessons at Dixon Hall for 5 years.....This is my second year at the Hart House Farm Overnight Camp. This camp is extremely fun.....I love going out at night for a campfire and roasting marshmallows, especially when the marshmallows come out nice and gooey. Camp has given me memories that I shall treasure and carry with me throughout my life.

Dear Minstrel Foundation,

...the camp was a lot of fun and we got to go swimming every day, plus I like the fresh air and I like being in the quiet country instead of the noisy city.