

## Director's report - AGM Sept 2020

### COVID - 19 Response:

- When public health distancing protocols were declared, we only had three group classes left in our season. Rather than scrambling to create an underprepared online substitute for such a short time, we chose to save those classes for when we had a better understanding of what online classes could look like, and spent the extra time researching possibilities.
- The main events in which we participate in the spring, Bach in the Subways and the Edmonton Music and Speech Arts Festival, had also canceled, and our group rehearsal venue was also closed to events.
- As we slowly pivoted our work into an online format:
  - Our online Spring Recital was a great success - realized that online concerts can include audience from all over the world!
  - Our Institute became the Borealis Summer Suzuki Winds Online Workshop: BSS-WOW! - realized that online masterclasses can invite clinicians from all over the world! So we had Nancy Daly from London and Wendy Stern from New York
  - Our summer Teacher Training took advantage of the new SAA seminar format - realized that online teacher training can also include teachers from all over the world! Not only did our course include teachers from the USA, Brazil, and Peru as well as Canada, but we arranged for simultaneous English to Spanish translation through a combination of Zoom and What's App.
  - The Canadian Suzuki community, which has historically been a series of small pockets of activity spread out across the country, has started a series of monthly meetings to collaborate on more online events - realizing that moving online can bring our geographically isolated population together for collaborative projects.
  - The SAA has spent the summer pivoting the teacher training Unit courses into an on line format - so now our teachers can get training from any teacher in the world without needing to incur the expense of travel.
  - I took advantage of this to attend the Kanack School in Rochester, New York, this summer, and received certification as a Teacher Trainer in Creative Ability Development.
  - The Royal Conservatory of Music pivoted its exam program into an online format. So now my student in Yellowknife, who has been taking online lessons for years since she first moved to Inuvik, was able to do her Grade 8 exam, receive a Gold Medal for one of the highest marks in her region for Winds, and attend a virtual Medal Ceremony.
  - And as long as you are willing to let the online "box" push you into thinking "outside the box", the online format even permits creative group classes and lessons, but not in the way you would normally expect.

Given the interesting, positive, and creative results of shifting our program online, and the amount of uncertainty surrounding the return to school this fall, we figured that we could remain online for a while longer so that families would not have to make yet another decision about expanding close contact groups to engage in lessons, and just focus on re-entering the school environment as safely as possible. Once that situation has stabilized, we will reconsider return to some in person lessons or groups WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO DO SO. I am monitoring some musical instrument aerosol and virus transmission research studies in order to determine best practices for an eventual return to some in person work, but we are still waiting for definitive results.

### Registration:

- Enrolment was down in 18/19, up again in 19/20 levelled off in 20/21

### Grants:

- Provincial Society registration process has returned to normal turnaround times
- AB Foundation Operating Grant award has now been divided into four parts - due to continued lack of ongoing commitment to program from provincial government. Alberta Foundation is prepared to make quarterly adjustments based on last minute government announcements. Budgeting is necessarily cautious.

### Financial:

- most families now pay tuition and registration electronically, through e.transfer and PayPal
- this has become rather convenient, given that financial institutions are encouraging online banking whenever possible due to COVID precautions
- after a year of no cheques, we have a couple of new families who are now using cheques again, so payment process is no longer completely automated
- e-transfer capabilities set up:
  - less service charge for receiving payment
  - less awkward waiting for two signatures on cheque to give payment (when appropriate)
  - administration sometimes pays expenses with personal credit card and gets reimbursed through e-transfer. However, reimbursements are awkward at tax time - look like extra income - record keeping is not as straightforward.
  - automation not possible - need to remember / be reminded - we don't have admin capabilities for this

### **Facility:**

- Continued good relationship with Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
- When they are ready to do rentals again, we are assured we can resume our previous arrangement for Thursday night groups
- At this moment they are operating a day shelter as well as a night shelter in the building, so no other rentals

### **Events:**

- At this moment, I am not preparing a full calendar of events for the entire year
- Given the situation, and how much we are all learning about working non line and hosting on line events, I want to be able to incorporate the results of previous events into to planning of upcoming ones instead of deciding in advance how much time each project will take.
- I also want to be able to pivot to in person when the opportunity arises

So here is the plan for the fall:

### **Beginning October 1, groups will meet online on this schedule:**

5:00 - 6:00 pm Toolbox group (students with parents as a team)

6:00 - 7:00 pm Reading & Repertoire group  
(will employ breakouts to create separate groups as required)

7:00 - 8:00 pm Silverwinds

### **Performance events:**

#### **October 29: Hallowe'en Concert at 6:30 pm**

- featuring Toolbox, Repertoire, and Reading groups
- play a piece in the character of your costume

#### **November 26: Canadian Concert at 6:30 pm**

- featuring Silverwinds
- pieces written by Canadian composers

#### **December 17: Seasonal Concert at 6:30 pm**

- featuring Reading and Silverwinds groups
- seasonal music from around the world

Then we will take a break and see how the new year unfolds.