



YOUTH SINGERS OF CALGARY

ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019

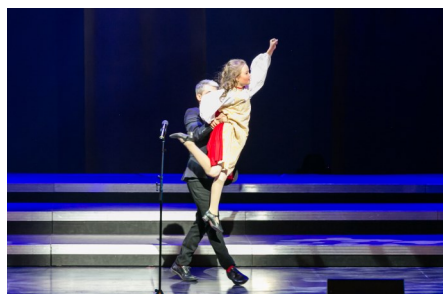


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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Catherine Barclay, Chair

As Chair of the Board I would like to congratulate the Youth Singers of Calgary for an excellent year in 2018-19. This annual report documents this dynamic year and chronicles how the teaching, artistic, financial, management, and enrolment goals were met.

Through performance skill development, mainstage shows, community performances, rehearsals, competitions, and touring, our singers grew as performers, individuals, leaders, and as a community.

The board of Directors has two priorities. One is to provide strategic direction to the management of the organization. In this year we completed a revitalization of the mission, vision and strategic plan. We are grateful for Anne Smith, JA Smith Consulting, both for her skill and expertise in leading us through this process and for the generous donation she made of her professional strategic planning and facilitation services.

The other priority is the financial soundness of YSC. Board members have been instrumental in fundraising, through organizing and participating in Hearts Out and in leading the Performing Arts Youth Centre Committee. Our thanks go to Eugene Beaulieu and Eric Daku for their leadership in these areas.

The entire Board is committed to a balanced budget and, particularly in this economy, recognize the importance of increasing revenues while managing expenditures. We are grateful for the donations and contributions from individuals, foundations, and governments and proud of the adaptability, creativity and resiliency of the staff and volunteer management.

Our members and other organizations and businesses with whom we interact benefit from the outstanding YSC artistic and administrative staff. They are professional, experienced, and committed. Each one of them has and exercises leadership skills. Each one of them has gone beyond in their commitments to YSC and to our members. I have the pleasure of providing a volunteer support role to the production team at the mainstage shows and witness, first hand, the planning that goes into each show, and the respectful relationships that exist within the extended team as they work through issues, accept suggestions and coax the best performance out of each individual and division. Thank you to our CEO, Shirley Penner and the administrative team and to Tricia Penner and the Artistic team for all you do and how you do it.

My personal thanks go to each Board Member. I am honoured to chair this team - they are thoughtful and realistic in the contributions they make to the work we do. This year we said good-bye to members Megan Emmett and Jim Silovs. They each made a contribution to Youth Singers by being on the Board and we are better for it.



CEO

Shirley Penner, Founder

Why has YSC has chosen to build a youth program through Music & the Performing Arts? Music is a Science; it is Mathematical; it is a Foreign Language; it is History; it is Education; it develops insight & demands research; it trains the brain and most of all it is Art!

We do not expect our performers to sing, dance & act all their life; but we believe this training and experience makes our youth more human; more receptive to recognize beauty; have more love, compassion, gentleness, goodness; develop leadership & life skills as well as become confident, resilient, contributing members of society.

2018-2019 was a challenging season and YSC was successful in operating a not for profit charity during difficult financial times. This is the new reality and the challenge we face daily. Each day the Youth Singers organization, like all of the arts community, must discover solutions to operate in the current climate by using our creative intelligence towards developing new and different methods of fulfilling our mission.

YSC programs continue to foster and promote a lifelong interest in choral music as a basic human experience. From early childhood through adulthood, we offer a comprehensive choral/music/dance education performance program in a diversity of styles. In addition to our highly developed performance educational program resulting in a professional product, we believe in and promote the development of human potential.

This season YSC once again provided an enjoyable environment in which young people developed a sense of social responsibility through interaction with their peers and staff. Our performers were taught to strive for excellence in all facets of performance. YSC's goal is to provide our performers with unique opportunities for memorable and life-changing experiences.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Thank you to the approximately 50 Artistic (part time) & Administrative (6 full time & 7 part time) professional staff who "made it happen" once again for 15 Divisions/Levels, ages 3.5 & up as well as piloting a number of new initiatives. We are thrilled with the professional level of expertise and dedication within our YSC Staff.

The Christmas main-stage production *Fa La Land* on Dec 9th, was once again an original spectacular production including performers from 6 Youth Singer's divisions. We've set our standard high through these difficult years to maintain our Jubilee ticket revenue at a minimum of \$30,000. *Fa La Land* ticket sales broke the record with ticket revenue at nearly \$35,000 which together with the sponsorship enabled us to break even financially. Our performers and audience loved the production. Thank you to ATCO who was the Christmas Mainstage Sponsor for the 26th year.

The May 11th spring main-stage production *COME ALIVE!* was also an outstanding original theatrical choral production with 7 YSC divisions performing at the Jubilee. This fantastic show was so appropriate to share with the world during YSC's 2019 *COME ALIVE! International European Tour: The Human Experience in Concert*. The show challenged us to step outside our comfort zone, live our best life, try



something new and truly come alive!! This show also broke the record with ticket revenue at \$38,600. Mainstage expenses are higher as well but we did break even financially.

This season included excellent Divisional Shows for various divisions. Self-produced Divisional Shows included the most adorable KIDS & MUSIC (PreK/K/Grade 1 & 2) presentation of 'TUNES FOR TALENTED TROUBADORS' at Bethany Chapel on April 27th; special guest artists for this show were our KIDAZZLE and KIDZXPRESS Divisions. SECOND CHANTS featured 3 showings of 'LEGENDARY' (Moments on Screen, Lyrics, Loves & People) on May 24th & 25th at PAYC. This was a wonderful entertaining presentation by a very talented adult division. ENCORE'S *ENCORE:Encore!* was presented April 27th at PAYC. Their entertaining concert included a great variety of challenging repertoire, which showed the depth of this division's talent and expertise. Their guest artists were variety acts from their own membership. Everyone loved the delightful STAR & STAR Young Adult's Show 'PURE IMAGINATION,' June 10th. The PAYC Theatre was full of enthusiastic fans. Our STAR performers were excited to show off their new look, thanks to a grant from the Heritage Rotary Club.

The YSC semi-professional divisions, ONCUE & SHINE continue to represent YSC and share their amazing talent as they perform at many various community events including corporate, Family Day, Canada Day, Summer Festivals, Hearts Out etc. ONCUE delighted the audience with a concert 'TONE IT UP' featuring an acapella program, 13 of the 21 pieces performed were arranged by their current and past ONCUE directors. Each member of this talented ensemble was featured in various creative ways. We are proud of all YSC Divisions who performed nearly a 100 Shows throughout this season.

Talent Shows included the very successful fourth annual cross-divisional Talent Showcase 'BRAVO' held at PAYC on January 26th. This Show provides a unique opportunity for performers from all divisions to participate. ACT3's 'DEJA VU' on April 6th featured ACT3 performers with special guests from SENIOR HI. One is always amazed at the wealth of talent at YSC. SECOND CHANTS hosted a fun social night March 23rd, featuring a sing-along of the musical 'The Greatest Showman.' These were licenced events so the audience could enjoy refreshments while watching a variety of individual and small group music talent acts from our aspiring and talented artists.

KIDZXPRESS, JUNIOR HI, SENIOR HI & ACT3 participated in Choralfest (the Provincial Choral Festival) the week of March 11th at Knox United Church. Each division performed a set of concert repertoire and achieved 'Excellent' ratings from all adjudicators.

The same 4 divisions plus KIDAZZLE experienced a very successful day of performances as a part of our self-produced Downtown Live on June 1st. These free community outdoor shows were held at Eau Claire Market and Olympic Plaza. Amidst a rainy cool spring, the weather on the 1st was gorgeous and we enjoyed record attendance. The goal for program initiatives such as this is to upgrade community awareness of YSC and our amazing programs. While the events were very successful towards achieving our goals, the artistic staff & administrators are continually in the process of improving of all aspects of YSC programs and their impact within the community.

A new initiative this season in partnership with JB Music Therapy was piloting of the Memory Lane Chorus (MLC), a choir for adults with dementia and their care givers. Following an additional pilot of a Fall '19 MLC, we will determine the future of this awesome program. Another new initiative was mounting our first YSC School Residency April 8 – 15 in Ecole Holy Name School. A great deal of time was spent on developing and piloting a model for a residency program for YSC to launch this season and grow in the future. This Wed afternoon program's success was certainly beyond any expectations. A fairly new



popular addition to YSC programs is the HUB. Anyone Junior High age and up can come to PAYC on Wed evenings and sing a variety of choral arrangements to favourite tunes with family and friends. Various of our choral directors conducted the six summer and two Christmas sessions this season.

YSC CAMPS offered not only the usual four weeks of summer camps, but also mounted a spring break camp ages 6 – 10, March 25 – 29 ‘Barking in Tune: A Meowsical.’ Summer Musical Theatre Camps took place as follows: July 20 – 25 Pizza Wars (ages 6 - 8); July 30 – Aug. 3 The Flashdance before ‘Christmas-Ween’ (ages 12 – 15); Aug. 13 - 17 ‘When the Circus Comes to Town’ (ages 8 -10); Aug 20 - 24 ‘We’re Not Gonna Take It’: A story of musical triumph (ages 10 -12). YSC also offered a number of camps during professional school ‘Day Off!’

We completed the fifth year of the STAR (Special Talents in Arts & Recreation) program. We had a varied and talented group of performers with special needs and their performances result in outstanding reviews. The addition of STAR’s successful third class is specifically for special needs adults ages 18 & up.

The SENIOR HI & ACT3 European Tour July 15 – August 1st was another ‘best tour ever.’ As guest artists of the International Jazz Festival in Croatia, YSC lived in an ocean resort and travelled to a different site every night performing an action packed *COME ALIVE!* Show to large appreciate audiences. They also toured Spain, Italy with a memorable stop in Slovenia. This International tour was a life changing experience for all performers & entourage. Thank you to Culture Path for organizing another awesome international tour.

ORGANIZATION & GOVERNANCE HIGHLIGHTS

We are grateful for the strong leadership throughout all levels of the YSC organization. Thank you to our Board Executive – Catherine Barclay (BOD Chair), Ernie Abbott (Vice-Chair), Eugene Beaulieu (BOD Past Chair/Chair of the PAYC committee/HEARTS OUT Chair) Sabrina Pannu (BOD Treasurer), as well as all BOD Directors for their wise leadership through another challenging season. Our Board of Directors (BOD) is committed to strong governance, policies and finance. Their goal is the success of our organization and they are truly examples and partners with all levels of YSC stakeholders including performers, staff, alumni, management and membership to achieve their goals. YSC’s new Strategic Plan 2019-2023 was developed and adopted by the BOD during this season. The Board strives to adapt to changes in the environment and develop innovative solutions to current challenges.

Revenue generation, (outside of tuition) for a ‘not for profit’ organization such as YSC is its greatest challenge. Over the past 10 years we have invested approximately \$2.5 million into our building. Thanks to a Government of Canada grant, ‘Community Infrastructure Program’ (commemorating Canada’s 150 Birthday), we completed various improvements to the Performing Arts Youth Centre (PAYC) including the replacement of front windows; painting the exterior, upgrading the lighting through major portions of the building to LED and automatic systems; a beautiful lighted sign on the building front; additional pipe & drape for our large studios and an initial purchase of theatrical lighting. We are now able to convert Studio A into various version of a theatre setting.

The PAYC committee continued their work on the feasibility of purchasing the building. Despite our diligent work we have yet to receive any funding from the City of Calgary for PAYC, a cultural space serving YSC and many other arts & recreational groups. Purchase of our home will result in reduced rental costs (currently \$15000 + \$5000 utilities) per month. Once we achieve our goal of purchasing PAYC as well as

increasing enrolment, there will be sufficient funds going forward to support our programs, build a small surplus, maintain the building and complete the implementation of the senior leadership succession plan.

YSC hosted the “HEARTS OUT” (HO) Fundraising Gala on March 9th at Hotel Arts. It was an outstanding event and raised approximately \$150,000 much needed revenue for YSC & PAYC. We were on our own for the first time since our anonymous donor paid for the rebranding and management of HO for the prior two years. A large percentage of HO net revenue is the result of income from auctions. The HO auctions (both silent & live) net revenue broke all previous records. Thank you to our hard-working HO event committee!

KUDOS to the bingo & casino managers and the entire membership for the ongoing work to make gaming a major and successful revenue stream for YSC! The Government states increased operating grants are not possible. We are reminded by the Provincial Gov’t they are providing the not for profit organizations the option to raise revenue through provincial gaming outlets and we are thankful for this revenue generating opportunity. Gaming revenue for operations this fiscal was \$267,200.

In 2017-18 YSC gross revenue totalled \$1,722,737 (\$782,248 Earned & \$940,489 Raised.) Once again we are so impressed that our amazing volunteer force and dedicated staff fundraised gross revenue of nearly \$1mil. This number includes revenue from bingos, casino, special events, corporate, foundations, gov’t etc. A great thank you to all of you for our collective amazing accomplishment!! (See the audited ’18-19 Financial Statement)

YSC expenditures totaled \$1,725,958 which breaks out as Program \$560,802; Staff Compensation \$331,802; Tour \$326,479; Administration \$93,266; Fundraising \$85,209; Building \$225,155; Gaming \$63,724; Sales costs \$23,411; Insurance \$16,104.

During this economic downturn and considering our high monthly rental costs, we are grateful for our financial result of remaining very close to a breakeven position. Special thanks to our individual donors whose contributions also assisted YSC to experience a successful financial year!

Where could one find greater commitment in an organization than is invested in YSC by our powerful passionate staff and volunteer force who work at every level of the operation and invest at minimum an enormous number of hours each year? The Board of Directors (BOD) is the governance body. The Volunteer & Staff Management Team (VSMT) is the operational decision-making group that represents leadership and staff from all YSC Divisions & Departments. Division Councils provide day to day support to the operation of their specific Divisions. Event committees mount their specific event/project. Besides YSC staff fulfilling their artistic and administrative contracts, they also contribute many hours of volunteer time to the organization. All of these individuals & committees represent 100’s of volunteers and teams who have once again given tens of 1000’s of hours to support YSC.

Gratitude to YSC’s Artistic Director, Tricia Penner for her leadership of our unique artistic program! Handing over my role as YSC AD since inception of YSC was the first major step of my succession plan. Tricia has not only maintained the integrity of the program and product but also developed and grown it creatively and educationally into what it is today. There are so many outstanding leaders in the YSC organization; what an amazing job you have done again in 18-19!!

Thank you to each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication to this worthwhile cause! Youth Singers love you!! Happy New Year too all!!



CHOREOGRAPHY

Donald Jones, Principle Choreographer

The 2018/19 seasons was another outstanding year for the Choreography team of talented creators and instructors at Youth Singers. This team of talented artists help ensure YSC choreography process and product remains a first-class experience for all performers. The feedback has been wonderful regarding our two professional Mainstage shows *Fa La Land* and *COME ALIVE!*. The artistry was celebrated from every participant on stage and reinforced through the excited applause from our appreciative audience. Our key-strength remains our choreography's team capability at "cross-teaching" which helps round out the education components by exposing students to as many professional instructors as possible. This also helps maintain the bridge for singers to move up through divisions and retain some sense of familiarity.

Major Highlights Include:

- SENIOR HI/ACT3 tour to Croatia, Venice, and Spain. The touring program remains an instrumental component of the program, exposing singers to new cultures and experiences while creating lifelong memories. This tour was jam packed with those vital experiences and we are very thankful to the touring manager and everyone else that contributed to the planning and execution of it. Also, Thank You to the SA touring team and choreographers Julie Stiven, Jeff Diodati, and Chris Thompson for intelligent planning and adaptation of the Mainstage product for this tour.
- The community Christmas performances and Downtown Live shows act as further examples of how strong our Choreography team is at adapting our program for random spaces without full attendance from the greater program.
- The choreographers remain united in making our teaching goal centered on the process. We recognize the importance of have a polished product while striving to ensure each of our singers has a fulfilling personal experience within in our program.
- Our team was flexible when necessary. We'd like to offer a generous Thank You to Kirsten Williams and Alicia Ward who adapted to cover the first semester for KIDZXPRESS and KIDAZZLE while Lauren Thompson was away. This exchange was well planned out and executed to be a positive experience for the singers.
- Special Thank You to our Artistic Director Tricia Penner for her excellent leadership in the planning and execution of our choreography goals for the greater YSC program.

Previous challenges and focuses to continue moving forward:

- We continue to struggle with integrating new singers into the second half of the season.
- Continue to improve communications and collaborations between other creative departments.
- Continue to find new leadership opportunities for singers who express/display interest in the choreography process.



CHORAL

Jason Erhardt, Principal Choral Director

The 2018-19 season was memorable for the choral divisions of YSC. The dedicated team of choral directors did an outstanding job in balancing product and process; assuring excellent performances while at the same time making sure the rehearsal process was as enjoyable and productive as possible for all students/performers. The Mainstage shows, *Fa La Land* and *COME ALIVE!* were very well received by the audiences and were thrilling experiences for all participants.

Perhaps the major highlight for our SENIOR HI and ACT3 Divisions was the tour to Italy, Croatia and Spain in July. Our outstanding tour team lead us on a fabulous performance tour to many exceptional locations and performance venues. Several of these places felt like we were performing in the middle of a period movie set. Each of the performers displayed their maturity and flexibility throughout the tour and were excellent representatives of YSC!

Another highlight from a teaching perspective was the balance and variety of repertoire that each division worked with in the 2018-19 season. Kudos to each of our Core division directors, Jean Louis Bleau, Kathryn Parrotta, Deanna Henderson-McDade for their creativity and wisdom in choosing repertoire for their divisions that challenges and educates as well as honours the specific personnel/voicings they have to work with. Not an easy task! This is true as well for SECOND CHANTS, ONCUE, SHINE, STAR, SECOND CHANTS, ONCUE, SHINE, STAR and KIDS & MUSIC. Kathy Seibel, Dean Lauderdale, Megan Emmett, David Holoboff, Donald Jones, Lloyd Anderson, Dave & Jennifer Morton and Naomi Williams did excellent work with their groups of young and “young” performers in 2018-2019.

The Community Christmas performances and Downtown Live shows were highlights in 2018-19 and once again we were blessed with great weather in June! But from a choral music perspective, a highlight for the choral directors is the opportunity to show off our concert repertoire at choral fest and other opportunities. All of our choirs represented themselves (and their directors) very well in their concert repertoire performances with top excellent & superior ratings.

Each division also has a strong team of assistant directors, accompanists, choreographers and parent/student councils. I know each director feels strongly that we can't do it without these gifted people. Thank you to our amazing teams for all the hard work and talent they brought to leading each division in 2018-2019.

FUND DEVELOPMENT & GAMING

Cathy Inglis Sondergard, Senior Development & Operations Manager

Youth Singers is a registered charitable organization and depends on government, corporate, community and individual support to deliver its mandate. Over 50% of total revenue is raised through fundraising and gaming initiatives. Some of the more significant funding sources this year are summarized below:



GOVERNMENT

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| - Calgary Arts Development (City of Calgary) Operating Grant | \$19,500 |
| - Alberta Foundation for the Arts (Prov of Alberta) Operating Grant | \$55,000 |
| - CIP (Prov of Alberta) Project Grant | \$49,000 |
| - CFEP Large Stream Grant (Prov of Alberta) for purchase of PAYC | \$300,000 |

FOUNDATIONS

- | | |
|--|----------|
| - Calgary Children's Foundation (STAR & Bursary) | \$5,000 |
| - Prosser Charitable Foundation (Bursary) | \$10,000 |

CORPORATE

- | | |
|---|----------|
| - ATCO (Christmas Show sponsorship) | \$15,000 |
| - Shaw Birdies for Kids presented by Altalink – matching donation (Bursary) | \$15,000 |

INDIVIDUAL DONORS – Our most important source of on-going support

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| - Individual donors (cash and gift in kind) | \$148,000 |
| - Individual donors (Capital Campaign) | \$1,010,000 |

MAJOR EVENTS

- HEARTS OUT was held at Hotel Arts and was an outstanding success once again. Over \$100,000 was raised.
- The YSC Charity Golf Classic was not held this year in order to allow our volunteers to focus their efforts on Hearts Out.

BINGO

- 147 events, 292 volunteers, 1900 shifts, \$216,666 raised. What an amazing effort by all involved. A huge shout out to Marge Rusnak for her stellar leadership and many hours of work managing all aspects of our Grey Eagle events. Thank you to Tracey Abbott and Joelle Callaghan for doing the same with Bingo Barn events. And thank you to all the parents, grandparents, and friends who help with the last minutes calls for workers.

CASINO

- No Casino was held in this fiscal year.

FUNDRAISING

- Very successful Purdy's Chocolates campaigns were conducted at both Christmas and Easter this year netting a profit of \$14,800

GOALS FOR 2019/2020

- Launch Capital Campaign for the purchase of PAYC.
- Secure a Spring Show sponsor
- Secure funding for Succession planning.

Our development department staff consists of Shirley Penner, Cathy Sondergard and Janice Schneider, all of whom fill other roles at YSC as well. We are very grateful for the important contributions that our Board of Directors, Development & Marketing Team, special event committees, and gaming and operations volunteers make as we work together to make the Youth Singers organization even better and stronger.



PRODUCTION & PROGRAM

Alida Lowe, Senior Production, Program & Touring Manager

The 2018-2019 season was the second year in the challenge given to us by the Board of Directors and the budget realities of the year we were in: make use of our extensive library of music in order to cut our music and arrangements budget temporarily. After the extraordinary success of *Lights on Broadway*, our 2018 show under the same mandate, we knew that we could achieve a great program and curriculum and a spectacular season. We narrowed our focus to music written in the 21st century, giving ourselves an opportunity to celebrate the composers and art of the last 20 years, as well as dipping into our back catalogue of so many songs we've performed since 2000.

Our Creative Team, led by Tricia Penner, Artistic Director, programmed a season that drew on our library, found recently-published work that fit our shows, and created two original productions that showcased our singers, challenged them artistically, provided fun repertoire to dig into, and, for our spring show, could tour internationally.

A mainstage show in an international tour year is approached slightly differently from any other year: we aim to program our show with recognizable music that will transcend cultures and language barriers, create a show that will work when the music from non-touring divisions is removed, and bring a force field of energy that will draw in audiences no matter where they see our singers.

Our spring mainstage show, *COME ALIVE!*, showcased great music of the 21st century, from modern concert repertoire by living, still-creating composers to pop favourites to songs featured in pop culture juggernauts like *The Greatest Showman*. We started the year as a Creative Team with the desire to challenge our singers to live a big, bold, expansive life; to try new things and reach out beyond their comfort zone; to drink in the world around them and see through the eyes of others. Through voiceover work and silent vignettes, our theatre arts team told the story of adventure in many ways, and our goal was to challenge our singers to come alive at every turn.

Our Christmas show, *Fa La Land*, imagined Christmastime as a fun-loving corporation, making the magic of the season come to life around the world. This opened all kinds of doors for our musical choices – including a literal door to “the naughty list,” as ACT3 came out in full force as the Grinch’s henchmen. Both scripts were written by Jocelyn Jones, and our Theatre Arts department under the leadership of Jeff Diodati and Heather Laubenstein brought both stories to life.

The challenge to reuse as much music as possible was met with flying colours, but we look forward to introducing more of our own arrangements back into the mix. This request was successfully accommodated because we have a vast library to choose from, and we know that we will see the impact of these two years in about 2024, when the music used in these seasons will be eligible to be performed again and we will find fewer songs to choose from than in many other years.

December is a busy month for every performer, and 2018 was no different. The Production office oversaw 37 performances, presentations, or gigs during the holiday season, up just slightly from 2017. Notably, our carolling groups continue to grow, providing a low-overhead way for YSC to get out in the community during the Christmas season, and featuring members of staff and singers from our auditioned adult divisions. The calendar for the rest of year was as busy as ever, with performances by all of our divisions



throughout the city, collaborations with other choirs, corporate gigs and private events, and, of course, opportunities for every division to showcase their work in both Christmas and the spring.

Once again, we hosted many of our shows and events in-house, making incredible use of our space, technical equipment, and other resources. Many of our year-end shows and talent shows were hosted at the Performing Arts Youth Centre, and we continued to streamline the box office and concession/bar experience, driven by our administrative team and ACT3 volunteers, respectively.

The 2018-2019 season also saw, under the leadership of Donald Jones, the launch of The Hub, a drop-in, high-quality choral experience. The 6-week summer session exceeded expectations and brought many members, alumni, family, and friends into YSC during the summer to sing together, learn from our talented staff, and experience the joy of singing and community. Sessions were led by Kathryn Parrotta, Dave Morton, and Malcolm Edwards, with David Holoboff at the keys. We learned a lot in the first session, troubleshooting the unique administrative needs of this program as we went, and the smiling faces on social media were a highlight each week.

In 2018-2019, our artistic staff team remained quite constant from the previous year, but at the end of the year, we said goodbye to Julie Stiven, SENIOR HI's resident choreographer. This introduced some shifting of roles in the artistic staff for the 2019-2020 season, and we look forward to the ways in which these new teams will impact our singers and work together with creative panache.

This year would not have been the success it was without the contributions of some key individuals:

- Our Creative Team – Tricia Penner, Jocelyn Jones, Chris Thompson, and Alida Lowe, who conceptualize the season, lead the repertoire selection process, and bring the diverse needs and desires of each division into a cohesive whole for our program; and then continue with the leadership and guidance of our artistic program throughout the year.
- The artistic staff and leaders of each division.
- John Hildebrand and Colin Lowe, our sound engineers, who have worked with the many varied spaces and performances we throw them into on a regular basis! Colin's additional work as equipment manager, production assistant, and music coordinator also helps to keep the department running smoothly.
- JP Thibodeau and Kris Mish, who continue to do great lighting design for our mainstage shows!
- Stacey Mooney, Kathrin Snyders-Blok, Bonnie Inglis, Heath Kai, Wayne Gosche, and Nicole Barker, our production departmental volunteer managers.
- Jan Rubak, music library volunteer manager.
- And the many other collaborators, staff, partners, and others who make our programs as successful as they are!

TOURING

Alida Lowe, Senior Production, Program & Touring Manager

The 2018-2019 fiscal year did not actually see a tour take place within the July 1-June 30 dates, but the international tour to Croatia, Italy, and Spain, spanning the last 2 weeks of July, while technically inside the next fiscal year, was the culmination of the 2018-2019 season and the cap on a fantastic year.

When our season ended with Downtown Live, our tour singers kicked into gear with another month of rehearsals and a workshop, honing the repertoire that they'd spent the year immersed in, re-staging it for the touring numbers, and preparing a show that would be performed on stages around Croatia and Spain. In an international tour year, repertoire selection is critical—not only because it needs to transcend cultural boundaries in a way that our other repertoire doesn't, but also because our singers spend so much more time immersed in it. We want to love every song all year every year, but that becomes particularly important in a tour year!

On July 15, we departed for Europe, beginning with a day of sight-seeing in Venice, Italy, riding gondolas and eating gelato, getting over our jetlag and preparing for a concert tour like no other. From Italy, we boarded our trusty coach bus to Omiš, Croatia, with a stop in Postojna, Slovenia, and an opportunity to sing in the Postojna Caves, a 24-km cave system that whetted our appetites for the beautiful sights we'd be seeing on our trip.

The first full week of our tour took place from our home base in Omiš, where we stayed at a beautiful beachfront property and travelled to nearby towns each evening to perform. These towns along the Dalmatian Coast see a huge tourist influx during the summer and program entertainment in the evenings in public, outdoor spaces. We performed in front of a 9th century church, on the waterfront, in 3rd century Roman ruins, and in other unbelievable venues, combining modern rock concert aesthetics and lighting with the best of human ingenuity and creativity through architecture and history. Every performance was packed, and we loved seeing music bring together people from so many cultures—Canadian, Croatian, and visitors to Croatia alike.

From Croatia, we flew to Barcelona, where we spent the second week of the tour performing in venues in Spain, from a castle courtyard to a re-invigorated monastery now in use as a concert hall to a small urban theatre. Each city and venue provided new and wonderful experiences, foods, history, recreational activities, and places to explore. We spent our mornings on the beach and on the water, saw the Croatian coast and the Spanish plains from our bus windows, visited cathedrals and museums, and fell in love with this part of the world.

All told, we performed eight full shows, and every person on the tour came home with stories to tell and memories to last a lifetime. The stamina required to put on a concert series like this is an experience that Youth Singers find in only a few places within our organization, touring being the most significant.

The tour ended with a bang as our flight from Barcelona to Toronto was cancelled and our departure delayed by a full 24 hours. As a team, we made the best of our "Barcebonus" day, taking advantage of the extra time to enjoy an extra meal, do some last shopping, go to the beach once more, or just rest up and enjoy a relaxing evening with friends. Our needs were taken care of by the airline, which meant that the delay was actually less stressful than it could have been, and we enjoyed the extra time.



The real adventure began when the next day's flight was delayed, putting the Toronto connection in jeopardy. The tour leadership team stepped up and worked together to ensure everyone got home, was fed, and made the last flight of the night from Toronto to Calgary. In the face of a stressful travel day, the team provided superior leadership and every single person and piece of luggage made it home on the same day, if not on the same flight.

A trip like this doesn't happen without the input of many people, and the leadership on this tour was exemplary. The tour artistic team included Chris Thompson, Jason Erhardt, Jean Louis Bleau, Jeff Diodati, Julie Stiven, and David Holoboff, with technical support from John Hildebrand and Colin Lowe.

Tour Assistants were Ernie Abbott and Karri Quan, as well as the ACT3 council executive, Victoria Hutton and Danica Strocen. Victoria also took on the role of tour nurse, juggling her many hats with aplomb. Ernie was the board liaison, providing support for me from the governance side of Youth Singers, and his leadership was invaluable during the flight delays, as I remained in Europe and was not on the return flight with the rest of the group.

This tour was organized by Culture Path, and we had the privilege of touring with all three principals of the company: John Crozman, Tony Moore, and Dean Marshall. They are building strong relationships in Croatia, and we were honored to be a part of the inaugural Croatia International Jazz Festival. Their partners in Croatia, the leadership of the choral organization Mozartine, were incredible partners; and we were also pleased to share the stage with bands from Caleb Chapman's Soundhouse, a big-band training ground in Utah. All of these partner organizations helped to make the trip a huge success, and it wouldn't have been the same without any of them.

By the time the 2018-2019 season ended, plans were well underway for the 2020 JUNIOR HI tour to California, and we can't wait to hit the road again for our next international adventure!

VOLUNTEER

Megan Emmett, Director, People & Education

The Volunteer Program's year in 2018-2019 provided essential support to the Youth Singer of Calgary's operations, while providing enriching experiences for singers and volunteers along the way.

A shift in the management model as well as staff changes presented some challenges as well as opportunities to renew and refocus this area. This work will continue into the 19-20 and 20-21 seasons.

A highlight was the formalization of the Division Councils terms of reference. Division Councils have been the cornerstone of volunteer operations since Youth Singers' inception.

Volunteers continued to fuel every aspect of our accomplishments, from fund development to governance, rehearsal support to our fantastic productions.

Thank-yous go to every single volunteer who gave their time and their skills in the 2018-2019 season.



FACILITIES

Bryan Clarke, Facilities Booking Manager

Weekly / monthly renters:

- Casey O'Loughlin Academy of Irish Dance
 - (moved to their own studio December 2018)
- Revv52 (performance ensemble) (replaced the Irish dancers rental time)
- Rhythm of the Rockies (Sweet Adelines choir)
- Vykrutas Ukrainian Dance Society
- Music Together (pre-school rhythm class)
- Evergreen Theatre (bus storage)

Single or multi-rental groups:

- Illfx (hip-hop dance)
- Vocal Motion (Sweet Adelines choir)
- Desiri Jones (Cirque du Nuit)
- Edette Gagne (voice lessons)
- Dean Lauderdale (voice lessons)
- AvidDiva (voice recital)
- Front Row Centre (musical rehearsal)
- Adult Recreational Choirs (dress rehearsal)
- YYC Princess Productions (musical rehearsal)
- Randolph College for the Performing Arts (auditions)

In addition, we had a couple of requests for 3-step riser rentals.

As in the past, the Performing Arts Youth Centre (PAYC) is quite under-utilized during weekdays so, as a member of the Youth Singers of Calgary, I would ask that if you are aware of individuals or groups looking for space, please refer them to me at payc@youthsingers.org or have them call the office.

The logistics crew, under the leadership of Jesse Charlton, has provided timely and unwavering support to the organization and I am extremely thankful for their time and expertise. I am very appreciative of the ongoing co-operation of the division directors and the councils, my fellow staff members and finally, all the parents and singers who continue to be a part of the premier choral and theatre arts organization in the City of Calgary, the Youth Singers of Calgary.

MARKETING

Chris Thompson, Associate Producer, Co-Marketing Manager

The 2018/2019 season was another banner year for Marketing, refining the new committee model and starting of new initiatives.

Youth Singers marketing and promotional activities continued to focus primarily on recruitment, followed by events and shows.

This season we were excited to continue to refine our efforts in tackling the Marketing workload for Youth Singers. The design projects alone take a great deal of time and expertise, let alone the logistics of marketing, advertising, special events, publicity, social media and so many programs and events spanning so many different ages, demographics and special interests

DID YOU KNOW? In order to move into the future, a new Marketing Committee was formed by Shirley Penner (CEO) and Chris Thompson (Marketing Lead) in 2017 which was the seed to enable growth in the various aspects of marketing our programs. The committee continued to evolve in personnel and efficiency through the 2018/2019 season.

Highlights:

- Overall registrations for the season were up in 2018/2019 to budget levels, the highest registrations we have seen since moving to PAYC.
- Attendance at both Mainstage shows increased over the past year, with the Christmas show *Fa La Land* selling out.
- Jocelyn Smith became the Marketing representative at the YSC office, working on many aspects of the committee work to keep the balls rolling and heading up Advertising with many new publications and initiatives. Ad swaps with theatre companies, new avenues like Broadway Across Canada, Calgary Philharmonic, partnership with Glacier, Calgary Herald and Sun Arts Guide, Choralfest program, bridge banners, and our continued Calgary's Child relationship were effective for YSC.
- Karma Holoboff rejoined the team and continued our huge focus on Social Media efforts (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) as it is very cost effective and helps to engage a younger demographic as well as gets our current members to help spread the word about our events and shows. She did a great job engaging the public as well as our singers.
- Tara Lima-Coelho continued her work on Publicity. Tara did an exceptional job creating contact lists for media and free publications, and distributing information and press releases, which have contributed greatly to awareness of our shows and programs.
- Chris Thompson lead the extensive Graphic Design projects for the season, working with a team of designers including Callie Boyce, Will Tsoi and Steven Morton. We continued to focus on consistent branding for Youth Singers and saw a leap in quality with what was being produced across several designers working on various projects. Special thanks to Cathy Sondergard for her patience and proofing! Highlight was also seeing a new illuminated building sign on PAYC, thanks to Cathy Sondergard for managing the project and Chris Thompson and Callie Boyce for design.



- Sierra Beaulieu and Cathy Sondergard were responsible for assembling mainstage programs with graphic designer Karen Van Scoyoc. The programs are a major undertaking twice per season, and Sierra and Cathy succeeded in spades, with a smooth and detailed process.
- Partnering with Boom Goes The Drum and Daughter for the third year of marketing Hearts Out fundraising event was a huge success, in addition to the committee taking more of the marketing load.
- Access to schools to market the YSC programs is more challenging than ever, so a focus group was held in the spring with parents and staff who are teachers. Many new thoughts and strategies were discussed.
- YJC summer camps continue to be excellent recruitment tool. The addition of PD Day and Spring Camps were a challenge to market and saw success for fledgling programs.
- We were also present at almost all Summer Festivals in 2019 to push registration for the coming season. Special thanks to the Volunteer coordinators organizing the logistics and volunteers, and SHINE and ONCUE for performing at some of the venues and being ambassadors for YSC.
- THE HUB was a new initiative in the summer of 2018 for a low-key high-quality social singing experience where current singers, alumni, family and friends could get together to sing. This program was a huge success and another avenue to connection to our community and advocacy of the YSC program. A “Christmas Edition” HUB was added to the program in Dec 2018, with huge attendance. Thank you Donald Jones for this inspired project.

Challenges:

- With added programs and the need to market to every demographic, clarity of our messaging and not overloading our social media channels continues to be challenge.
- Streamlining file management and communication continues to be a challenge with most of the Marketing team working remotely.
- Budget clarity and planning across the large team continues to be a focus.
- Website design is challenging from a focus and purpose perspective. We continue to look for a webmaster.
- Recruiting at the SENIOR HI level continues to be a challenge.

So many moving pieces to the Marketing area! I am so proud of everyone’s involvement and contributions... Their joined efforts are working, and we are seeing more people come through our doors than ever before, with a unified image for the YSC organization of personal and artistic development and an incredible, diverse community.

HEARTS OUT

Eugene Beaulieu & Eric Daku, HEARTS OUT Co-Chairs

On the evening of March 9th, the Hotel Arts was the location for the 9th Annual Hearts Out Fundraising Gala. It continues to be a very successful annual event raising approximately \$150,000 for Youth Singers Calgary. The evening was filled with wonderful entertainment, delicious food and outstanding decor which contributed to the enjoyment of the guests and ultimate support of the silent and live auctions. The event was well received by those in attendance and also received an extra boost by the attendance of Bill Brooks from the Calgary Herald. Thank you to Deloitte and Sapient as major sponsors and those who purchased tickets or tables for the event.

Special thanks go out to the Honourary Chairpersons, Diane and Bill Chomik, who graciously donated their time and support to filling the event with prominent Calgary community and business leaders. Marg Southern graced the event with her presence and strong financial support, as did past Honourary Chairpersons

A massive undertaking like this cannot be achieved without a team of Youth Singer Parent volunteers that need to be recognized and thanked. This includes the following contributors:

- Event Planning: Christy Thompson, Wendy James-Smith, Diane Chomik, and Boom Goes the Drum
- YSC Support Staff: Jocelyn Smith, Cathy Inglis, Alida and Colin Lowe for all the behind the scenes work.
- Thanks to Ken Lima-Coelho for another great emcee job!
- Auctions: Stacey Schaub-Szabo and her committee secured awesome auction items
- Marketing and Ticket sales: Cara McCorquodale and Lisa Marion
- Raffle: Shane Simmons
- Danica Strocen for wrangling all the volunteers

On March 7, 2020 the 10th Annual Hearts Out Gala will be held at the Hyatt. We are pleased to have many of our committee members returning to create another successful event!

HOSPITALITY & FOOD SERVICES

Corinne Ball, Hospitality & Food Services Manager

The Hospitality Department ran smoothly this year! For the third year, we used Amilia for all food orders. Having everything online has made food ordering very efficient.

I am so thankful for all of the volunteers that I have at the Jubilee that make it easy for me to be in many different places on show day. Many of them help backstage during the day and then go help with the Director's reception until show time.



HERITAGE & ARCHIVES

Pey Kwong, Heritage & Archives Manager

The H&A office continue success is due to the commitment of our parent volunteers and their fabulous skills. We would not have the large quantity of great photos and video footage of our talented performers without their enthusiasm and support. A huge thank you to: Richard Snyders-Blok & Steve Barker for always bringing their cameras to as many performances as they have. Your incredible photo skills have ensured that we have amazing pictures of our talented singers!

The 2018-19 season presented an incredible opportunity for the performers in SENIOR HI, ACT3 & SHINE to tour Croatia, Italy & Spain. A huge "Thank you!!" to all the performers & travelers for taking lots of photos & video and sharing them on the Google Photo account set up by Alida Lowe. From your impromptu performance in ancient caves to rocking it in seaside towns of Croatia, it was wonderful seeing the tour & sights from your perspective.

As this will be my final report on behalf of the Heritage & Archive department, I want to thank everyone at Youth Singers of Calgary for allowing me to be a part of your amazing organization. It has been my pleasure & privilege to photograph & video record the amazing singers and staffs at Youth Singers of Calgary!!

MUSIC LIBRARY

Jan Rubak, Music Library Manager

2018/2019 was a busy year in the music library. Before the fall semester even began, some helpful volunteer angels had managed to file away all the random individual pieces of music which steadily accrue in the unsorted music return boxes. This was great, as it allowed us to start the year with a "clean slate".

Another delight which greeted us at the start of the year, was that the manual shredder had now been retired. Which is to say that it had ignominiously died mid-shred the previous year, but we now had a new solution in place in the form of a lovely big grey secure disposal bin and an agreement with a mobile shredding company to come empty it once in a while. As any library volunteer will attest who has ever pricked their finger while removing staples or gently hummed "The Girl from Ipanema" while waiting for the shredder to cool down, this is a wonderful change to our operations and will free up many worker hours to be directed to other tasks.

Aside from standard music collection and filing, we focused on three major projects:

- Reviewing and repairing the alphabetization of all the music in the stacks
- Cataloguing all the titles in the stacks and the master copies
- Resizing boxes in the stacks, to prevent music damage and to free up some shelf space

By year's end, we completed 100%, 95% and 66% of these three, respectively.

I've also seized on the box resizing project as an opportunity to institute a more unified approach to labelling, which will make it easier for our artistic staff to browse through the stacks.

Tammy Pfof was an instrumental volunteer for the box resizing project, ensuring that the new boxes were consistently and correctly chosen. Her steady dedication week in and week out kept the project moving ever forward. Sadly, we've now "lost" Tammy to Wardrobe, but she occasionally moonlights in the library. Also, several new volunteers have already demonstrated a great knack for box selection, which can be a more frustrating and finicky process than one might expect.

Also, Tamara Sampson and Kristina Michaels-Aebig were both steadily reliable and broadly helpful volunteers all year. It is largely thanks to Tamara that the Cataloguing project was more than half-completed by the time summer came around.

And of course, many thanks go to all the parent volunteers who assist with our semi-annual music collection, sorting & filing "parties". I'm always amazed by how much we're able to do in one week with their help.

As we look ahead, the box resizing project continues apace. I'm also giving some thought to relabelling the boxes en masse rather than just as-we-go, and I have a niggling worry that we'll need to find a longer term solution to the shelf-space squeeze sometime in the next five years or so. All completely surmountable challenges, I am sure, but a also reminder to any potential library volunteers to reach out if they'd like me to train them on any of our ongoing tasks.

P.S. Did you know? Members of SHINE and ONCUE don't return their music to the library at the end of the year. That way, their groups can quickly incorporate repertoire from previous years when planning and rehearsing their gigs-for-hire.

KIDS & MUSIC

Naomi Williams, Director

We had a great year. Some highlight of the 18/19 season include:

- Large numbers
- Little attrition
- The best final concert yet - very strong performances across all the classes. Also, it was hilarious that the Pre-K's had to take a pee break at the exact moment they were supposed to perform.

We have really great performance turnout for our concerts. Thank you to Alida and Esther for helping get the communication out there, and for Sierra for facilitating that. Lisa and I figured out a great way to manage the Grade 2 choreography and it showed at the final concert. Thank you to her! And a huge thank you to Shirl for coaching me through a few difficult and stressful situations and backing me up.



One Grade 1 singer's father was in India during his daughter's Holiday concert. His family attended without him (I drove them all home after, as the mother doesn't have her license yet) but she live-streamed the concert to India, where he was able to watch with his mother and his family. They were up early in the morning to see it. I thought that was pretty cool. Did you know the Grade 1 K&M Holiday concert was seen in India?!

We had some wonderful moments this past season. I decided for my 40th birthday, I was turning 4 with a silent 0, so I wanted to celebrate like a 4-year-old. I went with a friend to see Frozen 2 and I sat next to a little girl, who ended up being one of my K&M students (I didn't recognize the family in their 3D glasses). It was kind of a blast. She asked if we could sing the music from the show after the movie, and I think she and I both felt pretty special, seeing a movie with so much singing in it with a person we do so much singing with at YSC. Her sister, who I taught for 2 years in K&M, was also there. I feel pretty close to that family, and for some reason, we keep running into each other "out in the wilds of Calgary".

Did you know? I spend close to 7-8 hours each second term preparing all the practice tracks for each level's performance songs. It's why I only swap out one or two of the "big" Holiday songs each year...it just takes so much time preparing those tracks.

KIDAZZLE

Deanna Henderson-McDade, Director

The KIDAZZLE division continues to be a very exciting learning time for both performers and staff. Staff Included: Director Deanna Henderson-McDade, Megan Emmett as Assistant Director, Principle Choreographer Kirsten Williams, Lauren Thompson and Alicia Ward as Assistant Choreographer September 2018-February 2019.

Highlights for KIDAZZLE this season were:

- Large Group enrollment of 20 singers
- Christmas musical production "Elflandia". A fun show with current songs such as "Elfie Selfie" and humorous content in "Silly Humans".
- Winter Performance at the Calgary International Airport with the Youth Singers Core Divisions.
- KIDAZZLE's involvement in the Youth Singer's spring production at the Jubilee Auditorium. This opportunity was extremely exciting for KIDAZZLE, as it gives the singers a chance to experience what the next level of Youth Singers entails.
- Performance at the KIDS & MUSIC final concert as Special Guests
- Downtown LIVE. An opportunity for KIDAZZLE to share their varied repertoire, and blossom into a seasoned performer.

Did you know KIDAZZLE is a wonderful bridging program for singers graduating from our KIDZ and MUSIC program. KIDAZZLE guides our young singers and prepares them for future Show Choir experiences with the Youth Singers of Calgary Program.



KIDZXPRESS

Deanna Henderson-McDade, Director

Jennifer Bridle, Council President

2018 - 2019 was another great year for KIDZXPRESS. Deanna Henderson-McDade (Director) Megan Emmett (Assistant Director) Ingrid Mosker (Accompanist), Principle Choreographer Kirsten Williams (Principle Choreographer), Lauren Thompson (Principle Choreographer) and Alicia Ward (Assistant Choreographer September 2017-February 2018) proved to be a strong team force of fun, friendship, respect, responsibility and a love for music.

Highlights for KIDZXPRESS this season were:

- Large Group enrollment of 61 singers! Over 25 Grade 6 singers allowing for a mature classical tone.
- Winter performances: *Fa La Land* (Jubilee Auditorium), CORE, Calgary International Airport
- ChoralFest: Gold Standing Adjudication
- Spring Performances: *COME ALIVE!* (Jubilee Auditorium), KIDS & MUSIC, Downtown LIVE
- Amazing repertoire for Spring Performances: Let's Get Loud, Defining Moment, Spirit of Adventure, Bold Adventures and We Are One.

Special thanks to Parent Council President Jennifer Bridle and Volunteer Coordinator Yolande Roemer. This parent team led each meeting with professionalism, inclusiveness and efficiency. KIDZXPRESS Council continues to be self-running, responsible, organized and a respected group of parents in the Youth Singers Organization all thanks to the capable leadership of Jennifer, Yolande and their Council team.

Did you know KIDZXPRESS not only fosters vocal, dance and acting skills, it also encourages leadership, confidence and resilience.

JUNIOR HI

Kathryn Parrotta, Director

Tracey Abbott, Council President

The JUNIOR HI division had another successful and rewarding year!

CHORALTEAM: Kathryn Parrotta, Dean Lauderdale, Ingrid Mosker

CHOREO TEAM: Donald Jones, Jessica Eckstadt

As always, the J team strives for excellence, teamwork, respect, and community. We try to instill these values in our singers throughout the year, using music and dance as our vehicle. Through music such as "Kye Kye Kule" we built a sense of community with the KIDZXPRESS division. With "Dare You" and the creative 'choralography' of "Fly On" we challenged the singers to think about what kind of life they choose to lead. "One Foot" encouraged them to always do their best.



In “Shadowland” we took great care to explain the importance of lyrics and respect for our earth. And for some, “Alouette!” was their first time singing in another language. The music and teaching process were both carefully considered and executed to be the most positive experience for our kids.

In addition to the annual performances at the Jubilee and Downtown Live, we were also invited to perform at Choir Alberta’s 2019 gala in which several J and S singers were accepted to be part of the exclusive Alberta Children’s Choir. In March we were given the mark of “GOLD” at Choralfest in, and a small group of JUNIOR HIs were featured at the Hearts Out Gala.

SENIOR HI

Jean Louis Bleau, Director

Shannon Brash, Council President

The 2018-2019 season presented the SENIOR HI group with an opportunity to explore a varied mix of music that was both unique in terms of sound exploration (Epitaph for Moonlight) as well as creative in terms of choral energy (Gaudete and Salmo 150). These selections helped to augment the standard mix of music which is the hallmark of the Youth Singers brand. The group was eager to be challenged and seemed excited by the variety of works and really rose to the music challenges they explored this past season. The group was able to advance quickly on many of the pieces, having adapted to a quicker pace of music learning coupled with strong singers in each section who helped to really lead the group through the music learning stage.

The highlight of course was all the preparation for the tour and again the SENIOR HI group worked really hard to embrace the music and choreography and the busy performing schedule of the tour.

As with the previous year Julie, Kathy, and Jean-Louis continued a productive collaborative working relationship with the addition of Serena whose energy and positive reinforcement helped push the group forward.

ACT3

Jason Erhardt, Director

Victoria Hutton, Council President

The 2018/2019 season for ACT3 was an exciting tour year! We also had some great new additions to the choir and grew as an ensemble and community.

Highlights of the year:

- For most members of ACT3 the summer tour to Croatia, Spain and Italy was the highlight of the year. The tour locations and concerts exceeded everyone’s expectations and the performances of ACT3 and SA were exceptional. Both divisions represented YSC so well off the stage as well. This was an amazing group of travelers who displayed maturity, patience and flexibility at every turn. To have a drama free experience with such a group is a rare occurrence these days!

- Other highlights included our profitable and bonding September workshop, the main stage shows (both Christmas and Spring where ACT3 again proved what great performers they are, delivering their performances with excellence and enthusiasm) and Knox Choral Fest.
- This was another year of great variety in our repertoire; from some challenging popular-choreography songs to modern classical to sacred-spiritual to Latin jazz. ACT3 showed their diversity and comfort level in very diverse repertoire.
- This was also a bittersweet year in that we said goodbye to several long term ACT3 members. They will be missed but leave a significant legacy at YSC.

The success of this memorable year was due in large part to David Holoboff, Assistant Director and Accompanist, Katherine Burrows and Jeff Diodati, Choreographers. I am very thankful for this team of talented, dedicated and fun colleagues.

ACT3 was also represented by a stellar council team lead by Victoria Hutton and Danica Strocen for the 2018/2019 season. These are great leaders who have helped make ACT3 into a tight knit family.

It continues to be an honour to be part of the Youth Singers family and I look forward to another year of great music making and growth with this fine organization.

SHINE

Donald Jones, Manager

The 2018/19 season was an exciting year for SHINE with two notable changes; Cast, and Artistic team. Several SHINE members retired from our program this year. We are happy to see them moving onto bigger and better things and wish them the best of luck. Also, Lauren Thompson and Jeff Diodati who both played a significant role in years of SHINE's programming have left to focus on other things. We thank them for their many contributions to SHINE over their many years of service.

We also would like to thank Chris Thompson, Kathryn Parrotta, Katherine Burrowes, Kirsten Williams, and Shannon Miele whom have joined me in making the new SHINE artistic team. SHINE also welcomed Sydney Callaghan, Melissa Lohues, Victoria Hutton, Ranelle Huward, Carter Ramus, Serena Mazil, and Sehran Aheer to the SHINE division.

Major Highlights:

- Term one saw the addition of our SHINE girl group. This has been a successful addition to the program! The girls performed in both Mainstage shows with new material developed by the new team.
- Term two saw the new SHINE division learn enough spring material to complete our heavy Family Day performance. This was an enormous feat considering all the material was learned and performable within eight rehearsals.

Challenges and focus moving forward:

- To continue to develop our recruiting future strategies. Currently SENIOR HI and ACT3 deliver our singers. Would be great to get out to the high school graduates and post-secondary music students.
- To find talented men to add to our group.
- To continue developing our SHINE program in a way that allows for accessibility and training for potential singers.

ONCUE

Dean Lauderdale, Director

Alida Lowe, Manager

18/19 saw the addition of three new ONCUE members: Alida Lowe came on as ONCUE Manager and Rita Aggarwala and Jessica Dixon returned to the group. Some notable highlights include:

- We had a really strong Christmas gigging season
- ONCUE Retreat in February was a major success; learned a lot of new repertoire and the group had lots of time to bond with one another
- Hearts Out venue and performance was a great fit for ONCUE this year
- ONCUE Show in June was a great success for ONCUE. We showcased an ambitious amount of new material, which was enjoyable for our members as well as our audience. Timing of the show in the year was great for the group, since we still felt strong going into Summer gig season

The above highlights and achievements could not have been done without Alida's involvement as Manager. We really knew our roles as leaders were well-defined for the group and we continue to work well together! I would like to thank Kathryn Parrotta for workshopping her arrangement with us in rehearsal, as well as Donald Jones lending his time to help us with company choreography! It made us that much more prepared for our performances, which we were extremely proud about.

I was very proud with our Year-End Show, "Tone It Up," and without the help from our volunteers, Colin Lowe on sound, and everyone else who pitched in, the show would not have been as successful as it was.

It's always great to see Q's involvement in the YSC Mainstage Shows. We worked really hard this season to put our best foot forward in our own numbers as well as the company numbers. It feels great to be able to set the example to the younger divisions. We felt proud when we nailed the Christmas choreo in one number and one of the choreographers actually acknowledged it!

The group is looking forward to participating in DCINY's Total Vocal Concert with Deke Sharon in March, 2020!

Fun fact: During our retreat we were asked to sing for a couple in a hot tub. Not many groups can say they have put on a private hot tub show!



SECOND CHANTS

Kathy Seibel, Director

Rob Eckstadt, Council President

SECOND CHANTS is the non-auditioned recreational show choir division of YSC. We strive for excellence while having a tremendous amount of fun in the process!

We were overjoyed to once again be able to present three shows thanks to a very loyal following! Audience members know to expect a very entertaining show, and this year's show, "LEGENDARY", didn't disappoint! Songs by Queen, Michael Jackson, Michael Bublé and a show-stopper from "The Greatest Showman" left people wanting more. ACT3's Evan Watkinson, our MC, was outstanding - hosting, acting (Charlie Chaplin), and "performing" Mad-Libs provided by Shannon Miele ... he even had to manage some hecklers in the audience! "Thank You, Five", a song written by Evan for this show, was performed by Evan, with Marvin Alvarado on guitar and Megan and Rob Eckstadt providing back-up vocals. Accompaniment was provided by our regular accompanist, Brent Krawchuk, David Holoboff on keys and Wane Summers on drums. Our 'after party' was an absolute blast, thanks to DJ, René Sloos, and ACT3's Dez Jones, Victoria Hutton and other ACT3 members.

Other highlights of our year included:

- Knox Carol Festival in December
- Performing at the "Fall Showcase"
- Our Christmas Social held at Beth Nicholson's kitchen store, Top Shelf Kitchens
- Sing-Along to "The Greatest Showman" with carnival-like entertainment provided by Dez Jones and "Le Cirque de la Nuit"
- Our year-end party held at Everett & Diana's inner-city gem of a home
- Golf and BBQ in Chestermere thanks to Holly Clifford

As always, costuming / wardrobe for SECOND CHANTS was outstanding! Thanks to Vaughan Lillico and Danette Coady who, in consultation with the choreo team, helped choir members pull together all of the different looks. Lorne Lillico also helped behind the scenes - no car to build this year!

SECOND CHANTS singers love food! Snack schedule for Tuesday breaks is coordinated by Lisa Hildebrand and everyone contributes to the outstanding food table at our four Saturday/Sunday workshops.

Executive for 2018-2019: Rob Eckstadt, Kim Dominguez, Cindy Seabrook, Danette Coady, Lisa Hildebrand and Jane Oliveira.

Artistic team for 2018-2019 was Kathy Seibel - Director, Lloyd Anderson - Assistant Director, Lisa Ryan - Choreographer, Shannon Miele - Assistant Choreographer, Dez Jones - Production Assistant, Malcolm Edwards - Sessional Director, and Brent Krawchuk, - Accompanist

New members are always welcome, even if you have never sung, danced or performed before!



ENCORE

Jason Erhardt, Director

Colin Lowe, Manager

Lois Mafrica, Council President

ENCORE is the Youth Singers adult, auditioned, alumni and friends' choir. The 2018/2019 season was a great success where we welcomed several new, talented members! We had strong representation in each voice part and were able to continue to refine our sound thanks to the talent, dedication and responsiveness of the members.

Highlights of the year included:

- We celebrated our 10-year anniversary with our year end show: *ENCORE; Encore!* The show featured favourites from the past 10 years plus some new gems.
- We adjusted our learning process this year and concentrated on half of our Spring show rep in the first half of the year and the other half in the new year. The concentrated time on each song helped the learning and retention.
- Fall retreat in Canmore was another annual highlight where we achieved a solid start on both our Christmas and Year-end repertoire and where the members bonded through fun times together.
- For our Christmas gigs and community performances, we began the season singing at the Knox Carol Fest and performed 2 sets at the Banff Springs Hotel as well as at a Seniors home in Calgary. Our season ended as guests of the Core Choir for the annual Christmas Concert at First Baptist Church. It was a thrill singing the Hallelujah Chorus with the Core Choir and orchestra!

The success of this year was due in large part to Brent Krawchuk, our fabulous pianist, Alicia Ward, our outstanding choreographer, Colin Lowe, Manager, and Margaret Toye, Year End show Script. ENCORE was also run by an excellent council led by our president, Lois Mafrica. Thanks to all of the council members and volunteers who put so much time, effort and passion into many tasks to make our season a success.

ENCORE is such a wonderful community to be a part of and I look forward to another year of great music making and growth with this enthusiastic group of singers.

STAR

Jennifer Morton & Dave Morton, Co-Directors & Instructors

The 2018/19 program year was one of increased exposure and promotion of STAR and Youth Singers within the community at large and a busy and rewarding one for the group itself.

Some highlights and accomplishments of STAR's 7th season included:

- The departure of Program Assistant Hayden McHugh to pursue other artistic avenues and the addition of Jesse de Haan as a new Program Assistant to work alongside Ashley Miller. The team worked hard to make this as smooth a transition as possible, as Jesse adjusted to her new role,



participants embraced the change with ease and everyone found their “working rhythm” throughout the program year. Jennifer and Dave continued to make a strong musical and leadership team, helping to guide this adjustment as needed for the sake of the group.

- The Young Adult (18+) session entered its second year on strong footing, adding some transitioning STAR members, as well as new community participants to the group.
- Jennifer Morton was interviewed by Global in a short piece featuring STAR and Youth Singers as a community recreation option in Calgary for the special needs population.
- STAR returned for their 4th annual Calgary Children's Foundation's Pledge Day, including a live Global tv interview and footage on the news as well.
- STAR participated in Calgary Disability Pride in early June 2019 for the second year. In advance of this event, Jennifer Morton was featured on a CJSW radio program called Accessible Airwaves to promote the program and talk about STAR and Youth Singers. This was another great opportunity to share more information with the community at large.
- The continued development of musical growth within all of our STAR sessions continues to be a source of pride for our artistic team

Those who are connected to STAR know and understand the impact the group has on its staff and participants. Although our primary goal is to provide a safe, comfortable and fun adapted Youth Singers music program for special needs participants, this season demonstrated that people, organizations and media are hearing about the group, are wanting to learn more and increased inquiries demonstrate how positive that word of mouth has been. We are grateful that this division has touched so many in a positive way.

We closed the 2018/19 season feeling positive about all we had done, learned and performed throughout the year. The participants gave it their all as they do, and Jennifer, Dave, Ashley and Jesse felt they all learned a lot and worked well together within the newly formed team. We are excited to see what the next year has in store, as we are happy with the path we are on!

YSC CAMPS

Dean Lauderdale, Manager, Director & Instructor

I'd like to thank Alicia Ward, Heather Laubenstien, Kirsten Williams for being amazing instructors for the camps, and our office admins Sierra Beaulieu, Helen Liu, and Jocelyn Smith for helping run the camps so smoothly. This year we ran our first Spring Break Camp which was a huge success.

Every camp is unique and It's always a highlight to see one idea of a show go from a title, to a script, to a program cover, to a final show – all in one week! It's rewarding to see the parents' amazement at the end of each of these performances. I am able to witness a group of kids, who start the week being very shy with one another, and discover a passion for performing by working and laughing together.



In one of our camps we had a very challenging situation with a child, and our staff handled the situation professionally and responsibly.

The YSC Camps team will be doing three residencies next year: Holy Name School and Willow Park, and St. Helena

THEATRE ARTS

Jeff Diodati, Lead

Heather Laubenstein, Associate Lead

The 18/19 Season of *Fa La Land* and *COME ALIVE!* was once again successful, now in my 2nd year filling this lead role alongside Theatre Arts Associate Heather Laubenstein. Through 2 brand new original scripts that supported the Christmas and Spring show themes and vision, over 30 theatre arts actors took the stage either as main cast or background actors to tell these brilliant stories. This year's spring show had many different elements to the Theatre Arts program, this year the script's text was delivered by pre-recorded voiceovers, while stage action took place live while underscored by the recordings which were paired with soundscapes to inform the tone of each scene.

Key accomplishments included:

- 1) Casting of multiple performers ranging from their first theatre arts role, to others who have grown through the program as previous background actors and now stepping into main cast roles.
- 2) Setting up a full out Voiceover Workshop with Former YS Theatre Arts Resident Alumni Jonathan Love, who took our Spring lead actors through some instruction and prep the actors for their voiceover recordings.
- 3) Integrating the Theatre Arts storytelling and program with the YS Dance Ensemble program to create the "Human Compass" which was a central part of the narrative for *COME ALIVE!*.

Huge thank you's to:

- 1) Stacey Moony and Nicole Barker who went well over and above in supporting the Theatre Arts props needs. They were incredible and truly brought *Fa La Land* to life with the props they sourced and created for the show.
- 2) Alida Lowe for assistance with setting up the Voiceover workshop for the actors.
- 3) John Hildebrandt and Colin Lowe for the incredible work with the voiceover recordings and making this new element of the spring show & theatre arts program a success!

Last year I shared about my personal experience as a young performer in Youth Singers, and how my passion for Theatre Arts & Drama started here. What I didn't mention is that this passion and spark for a life-long pursuit of theatre was all from the previously mentioned Jonathan Love, who came back this year to run our voiceover workshop. I had the chance to share with him not only how this role was a dream come true for me, but that if it wasn't for him and how he encouraged that passion and to pursue theatre, I would never be in this role.



It is a pure understatement to say that Youth Singers life-changing, and this small but mighty part of the program certainly earns that credit for me.

Did You Know? That our actors get their very own dressing room*. At the Jubilee Auditorium when we perform our mainstage shows, performers dressing rooms are spread across multiple floors throughout the backstage area. With our Theatre Arts actors who have both their costumes/responsibilities within their Division, they also have their acting role costumes and time on stage. Because of this additional demand, it becomes too challenging to track our actors in their divisional dressing rooms and often there isn't enough time. As such, a *freight elevator* in the Stage Left wing serves as our quick-change area for actors, where chaperones help our young (and old!) actors to make there changes and get on stage on time! The magic of theatre is made with the help of many (and the transformation of an elevator into a dressing room!).

