

# Manitoba Choral Association Annual General Meeting

## Executive Director's Report

Although this was already reported on at the June 2023 AGM, it is worth repeating that the 2022-23 year was a year to remember! MCA lost no time getting back into the swing of things, with a full year of in-person and hybrid events for the first time in several years. The post-pandemic world has had its share of challenges, but all the while MCA has focused on keeping singing and community at the core of all we do. Since our last AGM, we have re-launched our old programs and created new ones, expanded our resource offerings, grown our membership, and increased our staff capacity. I am both thrilled and humbled to be part of this great work.

### 2022-23 BY THE NUMBERS

Performers	5,745
Workshop Attendees	1,070
Audience Members	1,950
Volunteers	125
Guest Conductors/Facilitators	31

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## PROGRAM & RESOURCES HIGHLIGHTS

### Awards & Competitions

- [Emily Gayleard](#) received the 2022 Bert Kroeker Scholarship and [Lauren Fehr](#) received the 2022 David G.H. Waters Hymn Sing Memorial Award.
- Awards of Distinction were given out at our June 2023 AGM:
  - Derek Morphy – Award for Artistic Excellence
  - Millie Hildebrand – MCA Spirit Award
  - Marla Fontaine – MCA Spirit Award
- We encourage the MCA community to nominate individuals, choirs, and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to our choral community for an [Award of Distinction](#). Nominations are received on a rolling basis and recipients are honoured and celebrated at various MCA events.
- 2022 Frances Seaton Choral Composition Competition (FSCCC) winner: [Leanne Cooper-Carrier](#) won for her piece *Refraction*.
- After a board meeting discussion in March, it was determined that the FSCCC would be put on hold for the time being, with the plan to review the competition for 2024-25.
  - *Thanks to FCMM for providing a grant to cover the 2022 FSCCC prize*

## Choir 101

We offered a two-day hybrid workshop on September 9-10, 2022 for beginner/novice singers just in time for the choral season to start. Dr. Stuart Sladden led singers through the basics of sight-singing and theory and the fundamentals of vocal technique over two days at the CMU South Campus.

- *Thanks to FCMM for providing a grant to support this event.*

## GATHER

MCA's first outdoor choral festival on October 1, 2022 at the Assiniboine Park Lyric Theatre was a great success! It was a chilly overcast day but that didn't stop people from coming out. We estimate about 1,000 attended throughout the day. Nine choirs performed, from Winnipeg and the Interlake: CMU Chamber Choir, Ecco Singers, Fort Richmond Collegiate, Margaret's Choir, MBCI Singers, Quarry Choristers, Rainbow Harmony Project, St. James-Assiniboia Divisional Senior Choir, and UofM Upper Voices.

We also featured performances from Buffalo Gals, Juvel, Those Guys, and JP Hoe (who collaborated with the university choirs for the finale performance) and we held three workshops: Rose Van der Hooft presented morning and afternoon yoga workshops, and Cory Campbell presented a mid-day participatory workshop on his original song [Gratitude](#).

We were fortunate to secure four food vendors and 10 artisans to sell at the festival. We also invited several community organizations to promote their services and programs in our community tent. We organized an arts & crafts tent and a face painting tent.

- *Thanks to The Winnipeg Foundation for providing a grant to offset the cost of running this event. Thanks to our other sponsors: Assiniboine Credit Union, The Winnipeg Free Press for providing advertising, RBC for providing volunteers, St. James Assiniboia School Division for providing risers & tables, and Tim Hortons & Red River Co-Op for providing food for volunteers.*

## TEMPO

This annual one-day professional development event was held virtually on October 21, 2022 by the Manitoba Music Educators' Association (MMEA, of which MCA is an affiliate partner organization). It provided an opportunity for Manitoba music teachers to gather individually or in small groups to view virtual presentations on various musical topics throughout the day. Among the choral presenters were Charlotte Botha, Marla Fontaine, Melissa Remus Spragg, Terrence Taylor, and Rose van der Hooft.

## ChoralFest

We were excited to hold our first in-person ChoralFest in three years from November 14-23, 2022. Adjudicators and clinicians included:

- Senior Years/Community Choirs: Dr. Jennifer Lang (Saskatoon, SK), Dr. Tracy Wong (Toronto, ON), Dr. Andrée Dagenais (Brandon), Hussein Janmohamed (Vancouver, BC)
- Vocal Jazz Ensembles: Duane Davis (Grand Rapids, MI), Kerry Marsh (Naples, FL), Julia Dollison (Naples, FL)
- Early Years/Middle Years Clinics: Liz Kristjanson (Winnipeg), Marla Fontaine (Brandon, MB)

We took several calculated risks by hiring nearly all of our adjudicators and clinicians from outside of Winnipeg, offering in-school early and middle years clinics, and offering French adjudications to Senior Years choirs. NEW for 2022, all SY/Community choirs received two 20-min clinics from different clinicians instead of the normal 30-min clinic. Despite these changes, registrations were not as high as in years past.

We had the following registrations:

**Senior Years – 57**  
**Community Choirs – 14**  
**Vocal Jazz – 21**  
**Middle Years Choirs – 9\***  
**TOTAL = 101 choirs\*\***

\*No early years choirs signed up, though the in-school clinics were offered to all ages. Some MY choirs shared the clinic time with other schools (ex. one school invited others to their clinic; another had 2 clinics for their 2 choirs; and 3 choirs from 1 division came together for a pod-like experience)

\*\*For comparison's sake, in 2019 we had **133 choirs** participate in ChoralFest (**68 SY, 12 Community, 27 Vocal Jazz, 25 EY/MY**).

We recognize that it will take time for choral programs to rebuild their numbers, which directly impacts participation in ChoralFest. We are looking forward to expanding ChoralFest even more for 2023 and are optimistic that this program will reach even more singers and choirs by doing so.

- *Thanks to Sing Canada Harmony and Manitoba Arts Council for contributing grants to offset the cost of running this program. We also received a FCMM grant to cover costs related to a ChoralFest tour, which we will defer to next year.*

### **Senior High Choral Workshops**

We held two workshops for senior high singers: one with MB Sings guest conductor Dr. Melissa Morgan (Regina) on January 27, 2023, and another one with BEYOND presenter Melanie DeMore (Oakland, CA) on May 26. Overall these workshops engaged **450 singers** from high schools around the province in group singing.

### **MB Sings**

After a three-year hiatus, the Provincial Honour Choirs program returned under a new name – MB Sings – with a new look and a new concert venue. With these intentional and meaningful changes, the feelings of community and togetherness, the celebration of song, and joy of music-making remains strong and steadfast in Manitoba.

Under the direction of our talented guest conductors, Dr. Melissa Morgan (Regina), Alisa Wiebe (Winnipeg), Jorrel Camuyong (Winnipeg) and Nancy Gomes Fast (Niverville), we welcomed 200 singers from across The Singing Province on January 27-29, 2023:

115 – Adult Choir  
 57 – Senior Choir (gr. 9-12)  
 28 – Junior Choir (gr. 5-8)

Singers came from all over Manitoba and beyond to participate:

Central	48	Parkland	1
Eastman	27	Winnipeg	89
Interlake	9	Westman	22
Other (Kenora & Melville, SK)			4

The finale concert took place at Portage Avenue Church with an opening song by Indigenous drummer and singer Jordan Bighorn (Winnipeg) and guest choir [Horizon](#) (Winnipeg), who sang *Refraction*, the 2022 winning composition of the [Frances Seaton Choral Competition](#) by [Leanne Cooper-Carrier](#).



We look forward to continuing our traditions, establishing new ones and most importantly, inviting our community into song again in 2024 for our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MB Sings.

- *Thanks to Triple E RV/Philipp Ens, Long & McQuade, and the Winnipeg Free Press for sponsoring this program.*

## BEYOND

MCA was thrilled to hold our first-ever choral symposium, [BEYOND](#), on May 26-27, 2023. The event drew over **40 attendees** from around the province and took place at CMU (day sessions) and St. Norbert Arts Centre (closing event). The weekend featured sessions from presenters:

- Melanie DeMore (vocal activist, San Francisco, CA) and Doug Friesen (arts educator, ON) focused on vocal activism and improvisation respectively
- Cory Campbell (traditional singer & drummer, Winnipeg), Ray “Coco” Stevenson (traditional singer & drummer, Winnipeg), and Jordan Bighorn (traditional singer & drummer, Winnipeg) offered Indigenous music and teachings for choral leaders
- Nicole Stonyk (graduate student, Winnipeg) encouraged attendees to move beyond “Indigenous inclusion” in music
- Jenel Shaw (Executive Director of Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba, Winnipeg) presented a session on accessibility in choir
- Caleb Rondeau and Roan Regan (choral singers & postsecondary students, Winnipeg) spoke to transgender/non-binary singer inclusion in choir

We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback about this new professional development program, an indication that we will surely look at holding it again in the future.

- Thanks to Canada Council for the Arts; the Province of MB Arts, Culture, and Sport in Community Fund; the MB Arts Accessibility Fund; and Assiniboine Credit Union for funding this program.

## Library

With choirs back in person, our choral lending library was busier than ever! In 2022 we scanned and uploaded thousands of pieces of music to our online platform, making it more accessible to people all over the province and beyond. It is an incredible amount of work to keep the library running smoothly and efficiently, but it is well worth it to provide this valuable resource to our community.

For 2022-23, **148 orders representing over 7,000 individual pieces of music** were sent out to individuals/choirs in the following regions:

Winnipeg = 106	Eastman = 4	Norman = 1	Saskatchewan = 7
Central = 8	Interlake = 2	Alberta = 1	Ontario = 3
Westman = 8	Parkland = 2	British Columbia = 2	Nova Scotia = 4

## OUTREACH & ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

### Membership

In 2022 we began using a new membership platform, *MembershipWorks*, to manage our membership, donation, and event data. Members are now able to log in to register for events, post choir events, and update their own profiles and choir information, which now appears in the Find a Choir section of our website.

We were glad to see members old and new taking out MCA memberships in 2022-23, and it is heartening to see that we have even surpassed pre-pandemic numbers! With the return to in-person TEMPO for 2023, and with expansion of our flagship programs into rural areas, we anticipate membership numbers to increase even more in 23-24.

	2022-23	2021-22	Pre-pandemic 2019-20
<b>Choir memberships</b> (School, community, and church choirs)	101 memberships (representing 198 choirs and over 7,000 singers)	133 choirs	164 choirs
<b>Individual memberships</b> (Adult, student, retired individuals)	111 members (78 adult, 15 student, 18 retired)	136	146
<b>Organization memberships</b> (Businesses, non-profits)	8	5	4
<b>TOTAL MEMBERSHIPS</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>314</b>

### **Membership distribution by region (total choir/individual/org memberships):**

<b>Central – 26</b>	<b>Eastman – 20</b>	<b>Interlake – 10</b>
<b>Norman – 5</b>	<b>Parkland – 2</b>	<b>Westman – 26</b>
<b>Winnipeg – 224</b>	<b>Other – 4</b>	

### **Choral Events**

MCA attended performances of the four regional youth choirs in October 2022, as well as performances of various choirs around Winnipeg and beyond throughout the year, as a way to demonstrate support to our membership and to connect with individuals in each community. We plan to make efforts to attend performances around the province on a regular basis going forward and are now exploring an opportunity to collaborate amongst the regional youth choirs in the future.

### **Intra-Provincial Special Interest Group**

We held our first Intra-Provincial SIG meeting in January. Six people attended and there was representation from Norman, Westman, Central, and Winnipeg. The purpose of the group is to provide a space to liaise regularly with and provide support to all Manitoba regions so that MCA may build and strengthen relationships with choirs and members and strategically plan programs and support existing initiatives around the province. We will aim to meet 3-4 times per year to start.

### **Inter-Provincial Meetings**

MCA continues to meet with representatives from other Choral Arts Service Organizations (CASOs) from across the country on a regular basis. I attended an in-person meeting in Montreal in June 2023 to connect with my counterparts and explore topics in the areas of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Accessibility (IDEA), membership, and more.

- *Thanks to The Winnipeg Foundation, Winnipeg Arts Council, and Manitoba Arts Council for providing professional development funding for this trip.*

### **External Memberships**

MCA continues to contribute as an affiliated member and board representative for the Manitoba Music Educators' Association (MMEA) and the Foundation for Choral Music in Manitoba (FCMM). Recently we have also established memberships with Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba, Creative Manitoba, the Association for Music Administrators of Manitoba (AMAM), Manitobans for the Arts, the Assiniboia Chamber of Commerce, Unison Canada, and Musica International.

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## **OTHER HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Communications & Marketing**

We have been very busy in this area for 22-23, sharing regular posts and updates through our website, social media platforms, and e-newsletters. This year we also ordered merchandise and promotional materials with our new logo, all of which has been well received by the community. Merchandise is now available for sale on our website.

### **Strategic Planning / Fund Development**

In 2022 the MCA board worked with Pamela Simmons of Corniche Consulting to update our strategic plan and create a fund development plan. Our new strategic plan (Attachment 3c) will guide MCA over the next 2-3 years. We are now working on a plan to determine how best to implement the fund development plan Pam has created for us.

- *Thanks to The Winnipeg Foundation for providing an organizational development grant to cover this project*

### **Human Resources**

MCA recently significantly increased our capacity on our staff team: in 2022 we hired Kathleen Murphy and Jenica Sul through the Canada Summer Jobs grant to digitize our music library, and in September, we were able to increase Brittany Mielnichuk's position to a full-time role. We have benefitted immensely from a larger staff team and at the end of 2023 were fortunate to be able to create another position (Administrative Assistant), for which we hired Alexis Chlopecki. Welcome to the team, Alexis!

### **Fundraising**

Donors continue to be a vital component to our fundraising activities. We are grateful to all those who have supported MCA financially in 2022-23! In total, MCA **supporters** gave **over \$16,000** to the organization, **sponsors** provided **over \$2,000** in funds/in-kind sponsorships, and **funding agencies** provided **over \$130,000** in grants to our organization. A complete list of donors and funders appears at the end of this report.

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## **ACTIVITIES FOR 2023-2024**

The 2023-24 year is again shaping up to be a busy one, with new, innovative, and expanded programs and services being offered to the choral community. I am continuing to focus on work behind the scenes, overseeing our programs, operations, and fundraising activities. Specifically on the slate are:

- **Programs:** Plan, implement, and expand programs and events, specifically ChoralFest (regional tour), MB Sings (40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration), and other Winnipeg 150: City of Song events; review and improve program evaluation process (see Program Slate, Attachment 5a)
- **Music Library:** Purchase new shelving, add donations into inventory, finish digitizing library holdings
- **Fund Development:** Implement the fund development plan to focus on building financial stability for MCA

- **Funder & Donor Relations:** Focus on building and strengthening relationships with major donors, sponsors, and funding agencies
  - **Policy Work:** Develop policies in the areas of finance, volunteers, IDEA, etc.; continue to update Terms of Reference for board and committee positions
  - **Human Resources:** Explore expanding staff team and focus on volunteer management
  - **Awards:** Review criteria and strengthen application processes
  - **FSCCC:** Review competition and decide on what it will look like going forward
  - **IDEA Special Interest Group:** Launch this group and hold IDEA events accordingly
  - **PODIUM 2024:** Attend Choral Canada's PODIUM on behalf of MCA
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## FINAL THOUGHTS

There are so many people who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make 2022-23 a success. I am deeply grateful to our dedicated board, staff, and volunteer team, who have been integral in moving MCA forward in our program and operational goals. I truly feel part of a mutually supportive team, working together towards a common goal: seeing the Manitoba choral community flourish.

Our board members and volunteers stepped up in new and important ways in 2022-23, particularly for our new events, GATHER and BEYOND, and of course, the re-launch of our flagship programs, ChoralFest and MB Sings. I want to extend a huge thank-you to our program committees, and especially Kelsey Shiaro and Catherine Robbins, who chaired MB Sings and BEYOND committees respectively. Thank you to our staff as well: to Brittany for stepping up in every area of MCA's work (including those that were not in her job description); thanks to the newest member of our team, Alexis, who hit the ground running in fall 2023 and has taken on many important behind-the-scenes tasks. I have been so grateful for our small but mighty team!

Since the June 2023 AGM, we were fortunate to have found a treasurer, so thank you to Robyn for stepping into that role and has made the transition so seamless! I also want to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Past President, Stuart, who has contributed in countless ways to MCA's programs and operations over the past six years. The organization has benefitted immensely from your experience and expertise in the ChoralFest, Vice President, President, and most recently, Past President roles. I have enjoyed working with you and wish you all the best. Please don't be a stranger to MCA!

I am so proud of the work we have accomplished in 2022-23, and yet I know there is still much work to do. I look forward to continuing this great work with the MCA team for 2023-24 and beyond!

*Submitted by Jenny Steinke-Magnus  
February 13, 2024*



## Appendix A: 2022-2023 Committee Members & Portfolios

### **GATHER**

Jenny Steinke-Magnus (chair)  
Avonlea Armstrong-Green  
David Sawatzky  
Katie Donnelly  
Scott Reimer  
Jorrel Camuyong  
Stuart Sladden  
Kelsey Shiaro  
Brittany Mielnichuk

### **ChoralFest**

Jenny Steinke-Magnus (chair)  
Sonya Williams  
Stuart Sladden  
David Sawatzky  
Jana Zens  
Jorrel Camuyong  
Heather Neufeld  
Brittany Mielnichuk

### **MB Sings**

Kelsey Shiaro (chair)  
David Sawatzky  
Sonya Williams  
Katrina Lengsavath  
Ben Campbell  
Janet Isaac-Martens  
Nancy Gomes  
Jack Roeder  
Shayla Davidson  
Jorrel Camuyong  
Brittany Mielnichuk  
Jenny Steinke-Magnus

### **BEYOND**

Catherine Robbins (co-chair)  
Jenny Steinke-Magnus (co-chair)  
Brittany Mielnichuk  
GiUng Lee  
Philip Lapatha  
Jordan Bighorn

Katrina Lengsavath  
Kristel Peters  
Kendra Obach  
Edward Cloud  
Sonya Williams  
Marla Fontaine  
Jenny Steinke-Magnus

### **Program Committee**

Jorrel Camuyong (chair)  
Sonya Williams  
Philip Lapatha  
Stuart Sladden  
David Sawatzky  
Kelsey Shiaro  
Brittany Mielnichuk  
Jenny Steinke-Magnus

### **Board of Directors**

Dr. David Sawatzky, President  
Dr. Stuart Sladden, Past President, Nominations  
Chair, FCMM Representative  
Naomi Russell, Vice President, MMEA  
Representative, Archives Portfolio  
Adam Kilfoyle, Treasurer  
Katie Donnelly, Outreach & Advocacy Director  
Crystal Kolt, Intra-Provincial Director  
Jorrel Camuyong, Program Director  
Philip Lapatha, Director, TEMPO Portfolio  
Katy Harmer, Director, Library & Resources  
Portfolio  
Nancy Gomes Fast, Director, Communications  
Portfolio

### **Other Portfolios**

Dr. Catherine Robbins, IDEA Special Interest  
Group Chair  
Kelsey Shiaro, MB Sings Chair  
Fund Development – Vacant  
ChoralFest – Vacant

## Appendix B: 2022-23 Donors, Funders, and Sponsors

### **Masterworks \$6,000+**

Canada Council for the Arts  
Philipp & Ilse Ens/Triple E RV  
Foundation for Choral  
Music in Manitoba  
Harbourfront Wealth  
Management Inc.  
Manitoba Arts Council  
Province of Manitoba  
The Thomas Sill Foundation  
The Winnipeg Foundation  
Pembina Trails Voices  
St. John's Music  
Winnipeg Arts Council

### **Oratorio \$1,000 - \$5,999**

Assiniboine Credit Union  
Gregory Fearn  
Elroy Friesen  
Heartland CPAs  
Adam & Joanne Kilfoyle  
Sharon & Eric Marshall  
Sandi & Ron Mielitz  
Catherine Robbins  
Naomi Russell

### **Cantata \$500 - \$999**

Long & McQuade  
Riverwood Singers

### **Madrigal \$250-\$499**

Scott Armstrong  
Marie Craig  
Ernest Babyne  
Andrée Dagenais  
James Fast  
Ed & Millie Hildebrand  
Shirley Lysack  
Judy Pringle  
Marilyn Redekop  
Winnipeg Free Press

### **Canon \$100-\$249**

Carolyn Boyes  
Jorrel Camuyong  
Aline Caron  
Stephen Cocks  
Eastman Youth Choir

Maureen Ferley  
C. Susan & William R. Finlay  
Nancy Gomes Fast  
Katy Harmer  
Kimberly Harms  
Vic Hooper  
Janet Isaac  
Jennifer Lang  
Peter & Stella Maruca  
Sue McIntosh  
Derek Morphy  
Morna-June Morrow  
Tim Preston  
Scott Reimer  
Ed Reynolds  
Margot Sim  
Jenny Steinke-Magnus  
Roberta Velarde  
Pearl Von Zuben  
Bruce Waldie

### **Solo \$10 - \$99**

Accent Ensemble  
Janine Brémault-Barnford  
Ashley Buck  
Colton Buhler  
Carole Carlson  
Dennis Chambers  
Nancy Chappell-Pollack  
Xiaotong Chen  
Shayla Davidson  
Lottie Enns-Braun  
Henry Engbrecht  
Karly Epp  
Nancy Faulder  
Alison Grant-Preville  
Jeff Green  
Sam Greve  
Johanna Hildebrand  
Cathy Horbas  
Sharon Hyndman  
Rosemary Komadowski  
Donna Kormilo  
Anita Kroeker  
Ron Krug  
Karen Lamb  
Julie Leduchowski  
Jacob Lee  
Jennifer Lidstone

Monika Lukomska  
Martha Mason-Miller  
Leah Mclsaac  
Brittany Mielnichuk  
Pamela Miller  
Maureen Morrison  
Beverly Morton  
Kendra Obach  
Patti Lynne Pauls  
Bill Quinn  
Erika Rasmussen  
Red River Co-Op  
Corina Ruus  
Tania Sablatash  
Don Sharpe  
Jenny-Lynn Sheldon  
Pietra Shirley  
Stuart Sladden  
Muriel Smith  
Melissa Spraggs  
Heather Steinhoff  
Strathclair Theatre  
Committee  
Marni Strome  
Becki Thiessen  
Tim Hortons  
Elaine Thomson  
Carolyn Truong  
Judy Urbonas  
Shianne Uschold  
Westgate Mennonite  
Collegiate  
Alisa Wiebe  
Colson Wiebe  
Erica Wiebe  
Dorcas Windsor  
Val Wood  
Betsy Wrana  
Roberta Velarde  
Westgate Mennonite  
Collegiate  
Alisa Wiebe  
Erica Wiebe  
Sonya Williams  
Dorcas Windsor  
Terence Wu  
Debra Young  
Diane Zielonko