PHILANTHROPY CHANGES LIVES

Impact of Giving: 2017-18

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Schulich School of Music
École de musique Schulich
Thank you for your generosity.
I joined the Schulich School of Music knowing about the many qualities that make it so successful. But since taking on my responsibilities as Dean in July 2017, I’ve learned much more about the scope of its excellence and the unique nature of the musical education experienced by our students.

The Schulich School of Music has an outstanding reputation that continues to grow through the students, faculty and alumni who represent it proudly nationally and internationally. For one sterling example, we can turn to Opera McGill. Celebrating 60 years this past year, it continues to attract generations of young singers who work with globally renowned faculty to mount professional-level productions of baroque, classical and new experimental works. Thanks to strong leadership, from founding directors Edith and Luciano Della Pergola to its current director, Professor Patrick Hansen, Opera McGill productions fully deserve the accolades they have earned from their audiences, and exemplify the exceptional professional and artistic education the School offers students.

I’d also like to applaud the success in May 2017 of the Milton String Quartet, coached by the incomparable Professor André Roy, which took first place in the 44th annual Fischoff Chamber Music Competition, one of the most prestigious competitions of its type.

These are just a couple of high-profile instances of how the School is thriving; you will read about many more in this report.

I have also been thrilled to discover just how deeply committed the School’s supporters are. There’s no one better than Joan Ivory to illustrate such devotion to our community. In this report, not only will you meet Joan and many other supporters, friends and alumni, but you will also see how your generosity has enabled us to grow and excel. You have helped build Opera McGill, you have consolidated many of our programs – including the audio-video and webcasting program – and you have established exciting initiatives, such as the Graham Sommer Competition for Young Composers and the important travel awards that enable our students to enrich their education by participating in the festivals, competitions and auditions that are a fundamental part of the life of a professional musician.

Another important element in the School’s success has been excellent leadership. I am honoured to follow in the footsteps of the previous Dean, Professor Sean Ferguson, and the interim Dean, Professor Julie Cumming, who have handed me a strong, vibrant and exciting environment. I am looking forward to the privilege of meeting with and working alongside you, our dedicated supporters, as well as our students, faculty and staff to sustain and enhance this vitality, furthering the School’s status as one of the premiere teaching institutions in music performance and research of the 21st century.

Thank you,

Brenda Ravenscroft
Dean
Schulich School of Music
Celebrating Opera McGill’s 60th
Founded in the 1956-57 academic year by Edith and Luciano Della Pergola, Opera McGill at 60 is both venerable and vibrant. However, building the program was no simple task. “My parents had very successful careers in Europe, but when they came to McGill, opera was terra incognita and the Faculty of Music was a unit in search of a building,” recalls Felicity Blatt, the daughter of the Della Pergolas. Undaunted, the Della Pergolas established the McGill Opera Studio, which eventually evolved into Opera McGill, and they led the program until 1989, nurturing and refining the talents of many who would become world-renowned performers, including current faculty members Professors Dominique Labelle, LMus’86, and John Mac Master, LMus’81.

Opera McGill’s 60th anniversary season celebrated not only this illustrious past but also its present, all while looking toward the future. The season opened with George Frideric Handel’s baroque classic Ariodante, the first work Opera McGill’s director Professor Patrick Hansen presented upon joining the University 10 years ago. “We are one of the very few schools in North America to perform a baroque opera every year, complete with period instruments and tuning,” he notes. “It’s one of the outstanding features of Opera McGill.”

Ariodante was followed by Johann Strauss’ Die Fledermaus, mounted off-campus at the Monument National, a historic landmark theatre on Boulevard St-Laurent. The production also celebrated the program’s proud heritage, while also featuring a talented next generation.

In 1987, the program’s thirtieth anniversary was celebrated with a very successful production of Die Fledermaus, with sets created by Blatt, who worked with her parents as set designer for 18 years. “I was very happy and touched by the anniversary celebrations, especially as Die Fledermaus was the production we had done 30 years ago,” she says. The remount not only paid homage to that performance but also brought back some world-renowned alumni, Daniel Taylor, LMus’92, Joshua Hopkins, MMus’04, and Lara Ciekiewicz, MMus’07, to share the stage with students.

“These established performers represent our history working with our present, our young performers,” says Hansen. “Presenting Die Fledermaus at the Monument National showed that we can present an opera that looks and sounds like a professional production, and the audience response was extraordinary.” The media coverage was enthusiastic, with Le Devoir calling Die Fledermaus "luxueuse" in a rave review.

Die Fledermaus was accompanied by a gala cocktail reception hosted by the Austrian Consulate in Montreal for McGill supporters and members of the international consular corps. “Austria and music have very strong ties – Strauss as well as Schubert, Haydn, and Mozart, among others – so it is natural for the consulate to have a relationship with the Schulich School of Music and to support this production,” says Marc Bissell, the Honorary Consul General for Austria. “Consular representatives from different countries attended and were very impressed by the calibre of the performance. I felt great pride in promoting McGill and Austrian culture, and helping people recognize that the Schulich School of Music has emerged as an international success.”

People came to me saying ‘I had no idea your students were so talented!’ They’re shocked by the level of professionalism. This is a student opera company – but we have spectacular students!

– Patrick Hansen, Director, Opera McGill
Hansen completed the anniversary season by packing seven shows into different venues across Montreal over 24 hours on March 10-11 in an Opera Binge, breaking new ground in performance. “As with Die Fledermaus, we wanted to get off campus and into the city,” says Hansen. Aiming to show a wide range of operas, the Binge opened March 10 with a traditional rendition of Henry Purcell’s 1689 Dido & Aeneas in Redpath Hall and closed with two one-act operas the following evening at Théâtre Paradoxe, a converted church that hosts hard rock and heavy metal concerts. The experience was a tremendous success. “We were turning people away at the doors,” says Hansen. “And students did something never done anywhere before: a 24-hour opera marathon.”

Overall, the 60th anniversary took Opera McGill and its students to new heights. “We sold more tickets than we have ever sold in our history, and we’re creating non-traditional audiences. Many people at the Binge told me they had never seen opera before, and I’m hoping we can build on this success,” says Hansen. “People came to me saying ‘I had no idea your students were so talented!’ They’re shocked by the level of professionalism. This is a student opera company – but we have spectacular students!”

Opera McGill has come a long way. “My parents’ success at McGill was a combination of their perseverance, love and plain hard work,” says Blatt. “I think they would have been enormously emotional seeing how Opera McGill has evolved to where it is now. The seed they planted has truly taken its place in the world of opera. McGill should be proud to have such a beautiful program.”

“I’m very happy with Opera McGill.” adds Elizabeth Wirth, one of the School’s most devoted and generous benefactors. Her support for Opera McGill, including funding for the Wirth Opera Studio, has played a significant role in its success. “It’s impressive in the scope, and the performances that I’ve seen and voices I’ve heard over the last 20 years have been superb.”

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**The Della Pergola Scholarship**

The Della Pergola Scholarship, created in 1987 in celebration of Opera McGill’s 30th anniversary and named in honour of the founders of the McGill Opera Studio, offers support to talented opera students at the Schulich School of Music.

Thirty years after the award’s creation, the Schulich community came together for a day of giving on March 15, 2017 for which the Scholarship was the main focus. More than 120 donors participated, raising nearly $20,000, with a large portion of the total going to support this award.
Stellar Alumni: Opera McGill Graduates Recall Their Student Days

In 60 years of training singers, Opera McGill has nurtured some truly stellar talents. They have graced stages around the world, have shaped how we listen to music and the opera, and gone on to share their knowledge and experiences with countless other young performers. Here, some of them share their Opera McGill memories.

During the 2016-17 season, conductor Jordan de Souza, BMus’09, MMus’11, led 13 performances of a new production of Carmen with the Vienna Symphony at Austria’s Bregenz Festival, and conducted Il Barbière di Siviglia, Don Giovanni, Eugene Onegin and various symphonic programs at the Komische Oper Berlin – where, since early 2017, he has been Kapellmeister. “My love of opera was ignited at Opera McGill. Patrick Hansen and Julian Wachner encouraged me early to join the music staff of Così fan tutte and I felt an instant sense of belonging,” he says. “The greatest gift that Opera McGill offers its students is the chance to be their own musicians by giving them true responsibility and a deep stake in every choice they make. What better preparation for a life in music?”

Mezzo-soprano Julie Nesrallah, ArtDip’97, captivates audiences with her engaging personality and rich, expressive voice, whether singing with leading opera companies, or hosting CBC Radio 2’s national classical music program Tempo. “My favourite Opera McGill moment took place during Rossini’s La Cenerentola,” she recalls. “It was the first major role I had ever learned, and the first major production I had ever taken part in. When I walked out on stage to take my bow, the audience roared with applause, and it was truly one of the most thrilling experiences of my life. You never forget your first!”
Praised as “luminous” by Opera News, soprano Gianna Corbisiero, BMus’13, MMus’15, first studied at Opera McGill in 1987 with Edith and Luciano Della Pergola before going on to perform with l’Opéra de Montréal. She also studied at the Juilliard School at the recommendation of Luciano Pavarotti after winning his international vocal competition in Philadelphia. “Edith and Luciano Della Pergola instilled in me a professionalism and respect for this beautiful art form,” she says. “Coming back to McGill to finish my Master’s degree, I encountered the tremendous talent of Patrick Hansen and saw that Opera McGill is in good hands. Thank you, Opera McGill, for all your inspiration!”

As the Artistic Planning Manager at San Francisco Opera, Sean Waugh, BMus’08, helps oversee the company’s casting, season planning, and artistic operations, and has helped lead many of its initiatives. Sean has also served on the artistic staff of the Metropolitan Opera, Gotham Chamber Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, and the Castleton Festival. At McGill, he founded the Schulich Ambassador Program and helped launch the Musicians’ Health Series and the Career Workshop Series for Performing Artists. “I have many fond memories of my time at Opera McGill as a singer. Now working on the management side of the industry, I am immensely proud to see McGill graduates coming through the ranks,” he says. “I hear constantly from leaders in our field how impressed they are with the calibre of McGill graduates.”

Coloratura soprano Marie-Eve Munger, BMus’05, MMus’07, was recently appointed Chanteuse Associée at the Paris Opéra Comique. Marie-Eve debuts this coming season at La Monnaie in Brussels, the Liceu in Barcelona, and in Opéra de Montréal’s Roméo et Juliette as Juliette. “From my first year – when I barely spoke English and struggled just to make myself understood – to my last year when I sang Cunegonde in Candide, so much happened!” she says. “I hold very dear memories of all the people who influenced me at Opera McGill.”
JOAN IVORY
Philanthropist and Volunteer Extraordinaire
Joan Ivory’s impact on the Schulich School of Music is nothing short of profound. From her gifts to the School – many of them made on an anonymous basis – to her dedicated volunteerism, including serving on the School’s advisory board, it is difficult to find any aspect of the School that hasn’t been touched by her generosity.

For example, in 2012, Ivory established and supported the New Musical Instruments Fund to purchase much-needed new musical instruments for the school, or to repair and maintain existing instruments. “The McGill Symphony Orchestra is absolutely fantastic, but I found out in conversation with [former Dean] Sean Ferguson that there were certain pieces of music that they couldn’t play, not because they weren’t gifted enough but because they didn’t have the instruments,” says Ivory. “So I thought they should have the opportunity to play anything they could technically play. They shouldn’t be held back because of a lack of instruments.”

Since she created it, the New Musical Instruments Fund has attracted another 277 donors and almost a quarter million dollars in funds, enabling the purchase of a wide range of high-quality instruments, among them a five-string double bass, a celesta, and two drum sets.

The Music Multimedia Room (MMR) is another beneficiary of Ivory’s generosity, as renovations supported by Ivory have enabled the School to complete this unique facility. “No other space has its combination of size, equipment, and variable acoustics,” says former interim Dean Julie Cumming. “Whether for research, performance, or recording, the MMR is unparalleled. Thanks in large part to Joan’s dedication and support, the Schulich School of Music is home to a combined research lab and sound stage that is truly unique in the world.”

She has also helped the Marvin Duchow Music Library to address a critical gap in its score collections, especially in chamber music scores, and to pave the way for the Library’s Open Lab. The lab gives students access to a wide variety of recording and editing equipment, as well as tools for playback and production. Students can now borrow mixers, cameras, speakers, and more, along with high-quality digitization equipment, for up to two days.

Students are her primary consideration, and the Joan Ivory Music Student Travel Fund enables them to travel for performances and learning opportunities across the country and around the world. For instance, the Fund supported the McGill Symphony Orchestra’s first performance in Toronto’s prestigious Koerner Hall on November 15, 2015, before almost 1,000 enthusiastic music lovers.

Her commitment to and connection with the School’s students extends beyond providing them with funds and resources. Ivory has offered some lucky Schulich students a rare and personal form of assistance by providing them with a home in her coach house, which has the space and privacy to double as an all-hours rehearsal studio. In addition, she has hosted visiting professors and performers, welcomed McGill International String Quartet Academy (MISQA) musicians, and even opened her doors on numerous occasions for performances and receptions for the Schulich community.

The Schulich School of Music is only one of the beneficiaries of Ivory’s energy and generosity. She began giving back to McGill immediately upon her graduation in 1954, and has since supported, both as a philanthropist and a volunteer, the McGill University Health Centre, the Royal Victoria Hospital, the Montreal Chest Institute, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and the National Ballet of Canada, among many others. In 2015 her deep-rooted commitment to volunteerism and philanthropy was recognized with her appointment to the Order of Canada, and in 2016 she was named Philanthropist of the Year by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, acknowledging 55 years of service to Montreal and its institutions.
Schulich students are consistently recognized in the most prestigious local, national, and international competitions. In 2016-17:

- Mezzo-soprano Simone McIntosh, MMus’17, won the Canadian Opera Company’s Centre Stage Competition
- Doctoral students in Sound Recording Matthew Boerum and Bryan Martin, founders of the company Audible Reality, won first place in the McGill Dobson Cup for Innovation Driven Enterprise
- Four students received the Award of Excellence from the National Youth Orchestra of Canada
- Student ensemble Milton String Quartet won the Gold Medal and Grand Prize at the 2017 Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition

In 2017, the Schulich School of Music was named the No.1 Canadian school in the Performing Arts category by QS World University Rankings for the second consecutive year.

Schulich faculty members are full-time performing members of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal.

In the last five years, Schulich School of Music alumni have won auditions for positions in 15 of Canada’s top 20 orchestras and have joined more than 20 international orchestras, including:

New York Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, China’s National Performing Arts Centre Orchestra, Russia’s Tyumen Philharmonic Orchestra

Since 2005, Schulich alumni have won 19 Grammy Awards and 9 Juno Awards
The 2016–17 Schulich concert season featured a total of 728 performances. The season attracted a total audience of 35,671, a 20% increase in attendance.

A SAMPLING OF SPECIAL EVENTS

- Last year, the School hosted more than 40 masterclasses and workshops by artists including saxophonist Sam Newsome (New York), pianist Robert McDonald (Philadelphia), jazz vocalist Theo Bleckmann (New York), violinist James Ehnes (Florida), cellist Truls Mørk (Oslo), tenor Michael Schade (Toronto/Vienna), and pianist Alexei Lubimov (Moscow).

- McGill International String Quartet Academy (MISQA) is a two-week festival, held every year in August, that features eight student quartets from around the world and hosted distinguished faculty members in 2017. All concerts are free and open to the public.

WORLD-CLASS FACILITIES

The Music Multimedia Room is currently under renovation, with $17M in public and private funds in a collaboration between the Schulich School of Music, CIRM MT, and the Université de Montréal to transform the space into one of the world’s leading facilities for music performance research.

An increasing number of instruments are available for student use, including:

<table>
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<th>177 pianos</th>
<th>55 electronic keyboards</th>
<th>160 percussion instruments</th>
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<td>585 woodwind, brass, and string instruments</td>
<td>16 harpsichords</td>
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Access to organs both on campus and in churches throughout Montreal.

DONOR SUPPORT

In 2016–17, students received over $4M in funding. This included 120 undergraduate and 104 graduate students who received scholarship awards from the Schulich School of Music.
Graham Sommer Competition Opens the Door for a New Generation

This fall saw the launch of an exciting new competition for Canadian composers 35 and under: the Graham Sommer Competition for Young Composers, created with a very generous gift from the late Dr. Graham Sommer. “There are currently no other national competitions for young composers in Canada,” says Professor Julie Cumming, who as interim Dean finalized the structure of the competition. “We’re filling that gap.”

The competition will run biennially, with composers submitting their work and a group of five finalists being chosen. Unique to this competition is the requirement that the works submitted have the potential to engage a wide audience and become part of the standard chamber music repertoire. The finalists of the inaugural competition are asked to write a composition for a piano quintet – that is, a string quartet and piano – which will be submitted in August 2018.

The School has enlisted Schulich Professor and pianist Sara Laimon and the Molinari String Quartet to perform the finalists’ works in a concert in Pollack Hall on September 29, 2018 which will be webcast simultaneously. The jury, made up of international and Canadian composers, Canadian musicians, and seasoned chamber music concertgoers, will make the final decision at the concert. All finalists will receive financial awards ranging from $5,000 to $15,000 and an “audience choice” award is also being planned.

Dr. Graham Sommer, a 1972 graduate from McGill’s Faculty of Medicine and an accomplished pianist and passionate music lover, died on October 2, 2016, leaving a legacy of excellence in medicine and a love for the transformative power of music. Several years before establishing this award, he had created the Dr. Graham Sommer Piano Fund to support the restoration of pianos in McGill residences and to purchase a new piano for Douglas Hall.

“With the Sommer Competition for Young Composers, we are supporting not just our own students but Canadian music in general,” says Cumming. “The competition positions McGill as an essential place to support Canadian music, and having an international composer on jury helps raise the profile of new Canadian music outside Canada. And finally, with this award, we’re enhancing McGill’s visibility as a major cultural force.”
Graham Sommer Competition for Young Composers 2018

Key dates
Application deadline: December 1, 2017
Finalists announced: March 15, 2018
Finalists submit commissioned works: August 1, 2018
Final concert and prize gala: September 29, 2018

Meet the Five Finalists!

ASHKAN BEHZADI
HOME TOWN: Tehran, currently living in New York City
EDUCATION: BMus’12 McGill; currently a doctoral student at Columbia University
Works performed by Nouvel Ensemble Moderne and the Esprit Orchestra

TAYLOR BROOK
HOME TOWN: Toronto, currently living in New York City
EDUCATION: BMus’07 MMus’10 McGill; currently a doctoral student at Columbia University
Recipient of the grand prize SOCAN Young Composers award, and works performed by the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne and the Quatuor Bozzin

CHRISTOPHER GODDARD
HOME TOWN: Ottawa, currently living in Montreal
EDUCATION: BMus’08 McGill; Masters degrees from the Manhattan School of Music and Rice University; currently a doctoral student in composition at McGill
Works performed by National Youth Orchestra of Canada and at Koerner Hall’s 21C Festival

ALISON YUN-FEI JIANG
HOME TOWN: Nanjing, currently living in Chicago
EDUCATION: Degrees from Manhattan School of Music and New York University; currently pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Chicago
Recipient of a Serge Garant Award from the SOCAN Foundation and a winner of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Call for Scores

THIERRY TIDROW
HOME TOWN: Ottawa, currently living in Cologne
EDUCATION: BMus’09 McGill; Degrees from the Conservatorium van Amsterdam and the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg
Recipient of the Canada Council for the Arts’ Jules-Léger Prize and selected for the ECM+ Generation 2018 tour

Follow the competition online: www.mcgill.ca/gsc
The John Rea Travel Award in Composition

The inaugural recipient of the John Rea Travel Award in Composition, Takuto Fukuda, chose McGill to pursue his doctoral studies in composition because his research using computation technology and artificial intelligence to create and perform contemporary music fit perfectly with the School’s Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Music Media and Technology (CIRMMT). In addition, Montreal has a vibrant contemporary scene. “It’s important to be in touch with the music scene outside the University,” says Fukuda.

Professor John Rea, who created the award, agrees. “Young music scholars, particularly composers, need to see the world and meet people. Such experiences enrich their studies and help them progress toward their goals,” says Rea, an award-winning composer, long-time professor and former Dean in the Schulich School of Music. Fukuda spent from late May to late July 2017 in Europe, where he participated in four events that have helped him develop his skills and extend his professional network.

The John Rea Travel Award in Composition enables student composers to benefit from the experiences and exposure so critical to their artistic and professional development. “Over the course of my long career as a professor and a Dean, I have had the good fortune to interact with wonderfully talented, imaginative, creative and dynamic young music scholars, researchers and artists,” says Rea. His gift includes a provision to continue support for students through a planned gift, in which McGill is the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. “I am pleased to share with students what the University offered me, and it is gratifying to know that this support will continue into the future.”
At Design Month/Designmonat 2017, a prestigious biannual festival held in Graz, Austria, Fukuda and his electroacoustic group Elektrichka performed several of his compositions for their self-made sensor instruments. Also in Graz, he participated in "In Between," an international collaborative project where he worked on an intermedia initiative with other artists. "Collaboration is amazing," he stresses. "Other artists share their ideas with me, so we are able to blend ideas and I can broaden the extent of my work. It was a really beautiful experience."

He also presented a piece composed at McGill at the International Conference on Music/Sonic Art: Practices and Theories 2017 in Karlsruhe, Germany. "This was my first conference presentation," he says. "I received very helpful feedback from the audience, including someone telling me about a British composer, James Saunders, who is creating a type of music similar to mine. After I returned to Montreal I contacted him."

Fukuda’s European travels concluded with the International ilSUONO Academy for Young Composers in Italy, and the performance of a new piece composed for it. "Participating in this academy had many advantages for me," he says. "Especially in meeting participants from different countries and really expanding my professional network."

Young music scholars, particularly composers, need to see the world and meet people. Such experiences enrich their studies and help them progress toward their goals.

– John Rea, composer, professor, and former Dean of the Schulich School of Music
Bringing Students to New Challenges: the Ann & Barrie Birks Travel Fund
Several years ago, when Schulich opera students performed at a McGill dinner Ann Birks, BA’70, was attending, she was, in her words, “totally blown away.” She learned more about the School’s students, and liked what she saw. “It’s a thrill when I hear the McGill Symphony Orchestra, because it’s so inspiring to see kids that age excelling.” And to help Schulich students in their drive to excel, she created the Ann and Barrie Birks Travel Fund. “Travel opens your eyes and ears – it introduces you to so many new things,” she says. “And it gives students different goals to achieve, ones not in their day-to-day lexicon, bringing them to challenges beyond Montreal and raising the bar of excellence.” Professor Stéphane Lemelin, Chair of the Schulich School’s Performance Department, agrees. “Music students are always travelling to competitions, festivals, and auditions, and these events outside the curricular context are just as important to a young musician’s training as the time they spend in school. The Ann and Barrie Birks Travel Fund is enormously helpful in allowing us to support some of those projects and to provide enhanced opportunities for our students.” Some of the initiatives supported by the Ann and Barrie Birks Travel Fund are profiled below.

The Milton String Quartet, composed of Schulich student violinists Roman Fraser and Maïthéna Girault, violist Evan Robinson and cellist Joshua Morris, won the Grand Prize and Senior String Division Gold Medal at the 44th Annual Fischoff Competition at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. The Fischoff Competition is the world’s largest chamber music competition of its kind, with an average of 125 ensembles, representing 22 nationalities, competing each year. “It was an honour to win,” says Joshua Morris, the quartet’s cellist and winner of the 2016 Golden Violin Award. “The previous year we made it to the semifinals, and we wanted to improve on that performance. So we’re overjoyed.” The ensemble followed their victory with a week-long residency in May at the Universität Mozarteum in Salzburg, and enjoyed a packed performance schedule as part of their victory, including an October tour of the western US.
Sarah Rossy, now a graduate student in Jazz Vocal Performance, was a member of a McGill student jazz group, the McQ Sextet, that in January 2017 travelled with professor John Hollenbeck, also a jazz composer and drummer/percussionist, to the Jazz Education Network Conference in New Orleans. “The experience was great for many reasons,” she says. “New Orleans is the birthplace of jazz, and it was cool to see the park where Louis Armstrong played as a kid and to savor the culture of the music there. And getting to perform was an amazing bonus.” Hollenbeck put together the group in September 2016, and they played several gigs in preparation for New Orleans, where they performed some of Hollenbeck’s compositions during a workshop he presented and also performed in an off-conference venue. “Our gig was really fun: it was late at night, in a part of town none of us had been to, and the crowd was receptive,” says Rossy. “It came at the end of five months of rehearsing and playing together, so it was very musically fulfilling. This trip brought everything together I had learned in a classroom.”

It was very musically fulfilling. This trip contextualized what we have learned in school.

– Sarah Rossy, graduate student in Jazz Vocal Performance
In June 2017 Professor Hank Knox, renowned harpsichordist and director of the McGill Baroque Orchestra, travelled with eight students of the McGill Baroque Ensemble to the Boston Early Music Festival, the largest festival and conference for early music in North America. In addition to attending concerts from some of the field’s leading performers, the Ensemble played a 60-minute set of works by Strozzi, Telemann and Bach in a prestigious central-Boston venue. Says Élise Paradis, a baroque violinist, “This was my first experience at an early music festival and it was great to represent McGill and meet other musicians interested in early music.” Paradis also took advantage of an exposition of baroque instrument makers to purchase a new violin. “I played maybe thirty violins that day, including some original restored baroque instruments, and this violin that was only two weeks old was the one for me.”

Knox is emphatic about the positive impact of such experiences. “The students had the opportunity to perform before a knowledgeable audience that responded very warmly. To take a body of repertoire and bring it to a polished level is a fantastic experience for young professionals, and they were totally pumped when they came back to McGill,” he says. “And without the Travel Fund we wouldn’t have been able to do this.”
François Lamoureux’s Unusual Path to Success

“I never tried to travel off the beaten path,” says François Lamoureux, BMus’91, who, with his brother Pierre, BMus’88, runs Fogolabs, an award-winning company that directs and produces films of musical performances. “I wanted to walk up to the main door, but that never worked for me.”

Lamoureux veered off the beaten path upon finishing high school in Sudbury, Ontario, when he hesitated between science and music studies, but chose the latter too late for auditions. Pierre, who was already studying music at McGill, facilitated a meeting with Dean John Rea, who arranged for him to study as a “special student.” He excelled in his studies and the next year was accepted to the classical program, but taking his performance exams in jazz – initially sax, and eventually guitar.

Lamoureux, “spent my undergraduate years studying, practicing or recording myself in the recording studio. I didn’t realize it then, but I was stubborn. But I was just being myself: very determined and reaching for the stars.” After completing his coursework, he moved to Toronto and after graduating was offered a job teaching science in the high school system. But instead of taking that route, he hit the road with Brasse-Camarade, a band he had formed with Pierre. The brothers chose to perform songs in French, and they found modest success touring Canada, the U.S. and Europe.

But new adventures called, and in 1999 the brothers returned to North America, with Pierre taking a job with a New York start-up that evolved to concentrate on filming music shows, where he quickly became head of production. He enlisted his brother to work on the films, which began back at McGill. They worked with the likes of Willie Nelson and Pete Townsend, and soon their films were winning industry awards for best audio. “So I found myself in a pickle,” says Lamoureux. “I had scored a couple of films for an L.A. director, and I was playing with my band, in commercials and as part of Quebec singer Isabelle Boulay’s backing band, so I had to choose what direction to take.” In the end, when Pierre left the New York company, Lamoureux joined him to form Fogolabs.

“And for 17 years, the phone has never stopped ringing,” says François. Fogolabs’ performance films – from rock, jazz and country concerts to classical performances, opera and dance – have won a bushel of awards: a Grammy, two Emmys, two Junos, two Geminis, and numerous other industry honours. Their “Front and Centre” television series, launched in 2012 on PBS in the States, and picked up by other networks internationally, has presented an eclectic mix of performances by the likes of Cyndi Lauper, Richard Thompson, Ginger Baker, and the Goo Goo Dolls.

“The people I listened to as a kid, heroes of mine like Pete Townsend and Rush, and new stars like Deadmau5 – I’ve been able to work with them,” he says. “I get to extend the creativity of the people who inspire me as a musician, and that is really fulfilling.” Most recently Fogolabs led production of the November 2017 Leonard Cohen memorial concert held in Montreal’s Bell Centre and featuring an international cast of performers.

François Lamoureux’s circuitous path to success began at McGill, and was supported by donors: his spartan existence as an undergraduate was bolstered by annual named scholarships that kept him fed and paid the rent. “Those little kickers meant a lot,” he says. “They were extremely helpful.”
Brenda Ravenscroft: New Dean of the Schulich School of Music

In July 2017 the Schulich School of Music welcomed Brenda Ravenscroft as its new Dean. Born in South Africa, Ravenscroft received her Master’s in Music from King’s College, London, and her doctorate from the University of British Columbia. Prior to joining the Schulich School of Music, she served at Queen’s University in Kingston as Professor of Music Theory and as Associate Dean in the Faculty of Arts and Science; she also taught Music Theory at McGill from 1991-93.

A specialist in the music of twentieth and twenty-first century American composers, she also has a strong interest in women and music, chairing the Society for Music Theory’s Committee on the Status of Women from 2006 to 2009, and is co-editor and contributor to the four-volume *Analytical Essays on Music by Women Composers*. She has also researched teaching and learning in higher education, presenting her work at national and international pedagogical conferences.
Since 1821, McGill has been offering outstanding educational opportunities to students from across the globe, pioneering new areas of research and discovery, and changing how we understand the world. As we approach our University’s 200th anniversary, McGill’s professors, researchers and students continue to tackle the biggest questions in science, culture and human endeavour.

Looking towards McGill’s third century, we hope you will join with us in celebrating and supporting this important work as we embark on The Road To 200 and beyond, and as, together, we create an even better world and a brighter future.