



Melanie DeMore

Stephen Hough



VOCALESSENCE

2016-2017
CONCERT SEASON

*A Musical Journey
of the Heart*



ANNUAL REPORT

Sponsored by Thrivent Financial

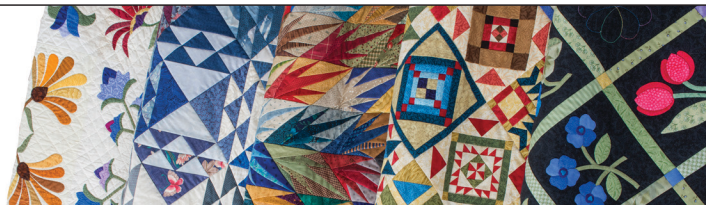


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A PREMIERE PERFORMANCE

QUILT SONGS: WOMEN WEAVING THE FABRIC OF LIFE



Quilt Songs was commissioned in 2015 for VocalEssence by Mike McCarthy to honor his wife Kay, an accomplished quilt maker.

With the support of Philip Brunelle, Mike asked composers Libby Larsen, Alice Parker, Carol Barnett, Ysaÿe Barnwell, and Gabriella Frank to each select a poem that they felt coincided with the inspiration of one of Kay's quilts.

The final product, *Quilt Songs: Women Weaving the Fabric of Life*, features five a capella pieces that stitch together texture and color from different artistic disciplines, unifying them in a single dazzling song cycle. The work was premiered on October 16, 2016 at **The Voyage** concert at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. The music is also published through VocalEssence Music Press and is available through Graphite Publishing.

QUILT SONGS: WOMEN WEAVING THE FABRIC OF LIFE

this is the garden Alice Parker

The Children's Orchard Libby Larsen

Sun Quilt Gabriela Lena Frank

Nearly Insane Ysaÿe Barnwell

Most Holy Night Carol Barnett



Audience members viewed a gallery of Kay McCarthy's quilts.



L-R: Mike McCarthy, Libby Larsen, Carol Barnett, Ysaÿe Barnwell, Mary Easter, Kay McCarthy, Alice Parker, and Philip Brunelle

VOCAL ESSENCE ¡Cantaré! CELEBRATES NINE YEARS



Students from Richard Green Central Park Elementary



Students from Park Spanish Immersion School



Rodrigo Cadet and Samuel Pasco

This season marked the ninth year of VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! School Program. Mexican composers Samuel Pascoe and Rodrigo Cadet served as resident artists at three Twin Cities high schools, the University of Minnesota, and three elementary schools. The program culminated with an inspiring performance during the **VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! Community Concert** at the Ordway Concert Hall in St. Paul on May 2, 2017.

“I appreciated the sincerity of the singers and also their enthusiasm. It was wonderful for these various high school choirs to come together and perform this music.”

—Community Concert Audience Member

This was the first year that the VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! School Program extended beyond Minnesota to schools in Chicago. In partnership with VocalEssence, Chicago *a cappella* helped implement the ¡Cantaré! program in schools around the Chicago metro area and culminated with their own community concert featuring the new music created in their residencies.

“It brings people and different cultures and backgrounds together under one roof to enjoy music.”

—Community Concert Audience Member

- **579** students (grades K-12 and college) from **seven** schools in the Twin Cities area participated in the VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! School Program.
- **85%** of high school participants surveyed said they knew more about Mexican music at the end of the program compared to the start.
- **92%** of elementary school participants surveyed said they enjoyed learning the music taught by Rodrigo Cadet in their music class.

TOGETHER WE SING FESTIVAL

This year, VocalEssence inaugurated a meaningful festival to embody the spirit of our motto, “Together We Sing.” The **Together We Sing Festival** held in January at Central High School in St. Paul provided an opportunity for participants to connect, sing, and give back to the community. Associate Conductor G. Phillip Shoultz, III, and a team of talented guest artists led an array of musical sessions from circle singing to Taiko drumming and stick-pounding. Thanks to strong sponsorships from Thrivent Financial and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the festival also included a service component where attendees helped pack 95 gift bags to donate to teen mothers at Longfellow Alternative School.

“Any time you bring like-minded singers into a room and have them gather and sing together, you have amazing energy and it is not to be missed.”

– Judi Vinar, Guest Artist

“This day is about people from all walks of life singing together and celebrating their similarities or finding common ground.”

– Ryan LaBoy
Music Director, ComMUSICation

TOGETHER WE SING FESTIVAL GUEST ARTISTS:

- Laura Caviani
- ComMUSICation
- Melanie DeMore
- Novelli Jurado
- Iris Shiraishi and Ensemble - MA
- Judi Vinar



SEASON RECAP

1

The Voyage

The season opened with the **VocalEssence Ensemble Singers** presenting a 400th Anniversary Salute to William Shakespeare with guest narrator Joseph Haj, and the **VocalEssence Chorus, Minneapolis Youth Choir, Sabathani Vintage Voices, Voices of Experience**, and an instrumental chamber group all joining together in the U.S. premiere of **Bob Chilcott's** work *The Voyage*, which uses singing to connect generations and to combat loneliness.



2

Miracle Mass

In the spring, pianist and composer **Stephen Hough** joined VocalEssence for a performance of his *Missa Mirabilis* (Miracle Mass) and *Mass of Innocence and Experience*. Hough dazzled concert attendees with his stunning performance of Debussy selections at the piano.



3

Vintage Voices

Conductor **Robert Graham** led another successful season of VocalEssence Vintage Voices at senior centers and assisted living facilities around the Twin Cities. Over 100 singers participated in the program this year.



4

Community Sing

Composers **Alice Parker** and **Ysaÿe Barnwell** led a community sing with 70 participants gathered to unite their voices in song. Selections included familiar tunes like "Shenandoah" and "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child."



MELANIE DEMORE VISITS MINNESOTA

VocalEssence WITNESS guest artist Melanie DeMore inspired singers, students, and audiences alike this season. During her residency in Minnesota, DeMore focused on sharing the spirit of sanctuary exhibited during the era of the Underground Railroad and in our communities today. Over the course of the year, DeMore's energetic and engaging demeanor left a lasting impression on more than **10,000 Minnesotans**.

DeMore presented a workshop at the VocalEssence WITNESS Teacher Orientation Seminar, visited several schools teaching the message of sanctuary, performed at the VocalEssence WITNESS Young People's Concert, and led a community sing with over 130 singers in attendance.

“What we were able to create together with Phillip Shoultz and Melanie DeMore was nothing short of spiritual and magical.”

— WITNESS concert attendee

- **6,046 students** (grades K and 2-12) from **55 schools** (20 urban, 31 suburban and 4 rural) from the Twin Cities metro area participated in the VocalEssence WITNESS School Program where they had the chance to work with Melanie DeMore and other talented and inspirational teaching artists.
- **89%** of student survey participants said they understand the concept of “Sanctuary” after participating in VocalEssence WITNESS.

VOCAL ESSENCE Lullaby Project



Melanie DeMore, joined by G. Phillip Shoultz, III, and VocalEssence Ensemble Singers worked with Longfellow High School mothers to create Lullabies for their children as a part of the Lullaby Project. The Lullaby Project is a national program of **Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute** that provides the opportunity for young mothers to work with professional musicians to write original lullabies for their young children.



MINNESOTA AMBASSADORS: NATIONAL ACDA CONFERENCE

WELCOME TO MINNEAPOLIS CONCERT

The **American Choral Director's Association (ACDA)** held their national conference in Minneapolis, and VocalEssence had the honor of performing in the opening concert of the conference as a welcome for choral directors from around the country to the state of Minnesota.

The VocalEssence Chorus & Ensemble Singers presented a concert in partnership with **The Singers** and the **Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra** at the Minneapolis Convention Center with 2,500 choral directors in the audience. Together, these ensembles represented the strong choral artistry flourishing around Minnesota with a spectacular performance of **Dominick Argento's *Te Deum***, conducted by Philip Brunelle. In addition, the concert attendees enjoyed a rousing sing-along led by *A Prairie Home Companion's* Garrison Keillor.



VOCAL ESSENCE ReMix

A **VocalEssence ReMix** session was held at the ACDA conference where the VocalEssence Ensemble Singers gave life to new pieces composed by participants in the VocalEssence ReMix composer mentorship program. This event helped share the VocalEssence tradition of innovative concerts and support for developing composers with an audience of choral music experts.



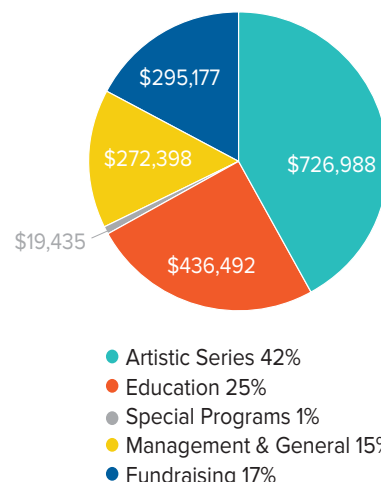
VOCALLESSENCE FINANCIAL HEALTH

VocalEssence continues to maintain a healthy financial position with modest liabilities and a substantial reserve of unrestricted net assets. Fiscal year 2017 saw an increase in contributed revenue, particularly in government grants and multi-year pledges as evidenced by the year-over-year increase in Pledges Receivable and Temporarily Restricted Net Assets below. Both concert expenses and performance revenue were a smaller percentage of the budget for this period due to a shorter concert season. Contributed support accounted for 75% of revenue, while performance revenue and favorable investment gains made up the remainder.

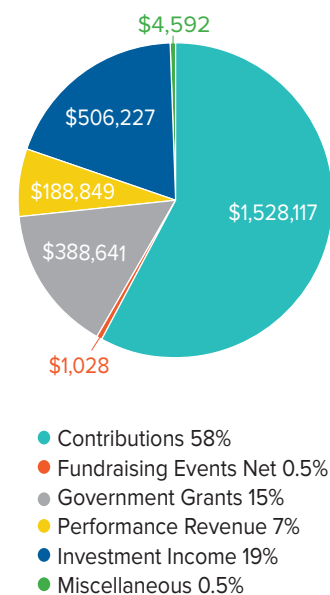
VOCALLESSENCE BALANCE SHEET - JUNE 30, 2017

ASSETS	2017	2016
Current Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$59,650	\$12,341
Accounts Receivable	12,151	9,616
Pledges Receivable	205,371	126,272
Prepaid Expenses	43,105	44,141
Total Current Assets	320,277	192,370
Long-Term Assets:		
Pledges Receivable	366,609	-
Investments	4,331,974	3,952,072
Property and Equipment - Net	36,216	47,474
TOTAL ASSETS	\$5,055,076	\$4,191,916
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	2017	2016
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	\$24,894	\$21,094
Accrued Vacation	27,305	25,149
Capital Lease Payable	11,433	9,355
Total Current Liabilities	63,227	55,598
Long-Term Liabilities:		
Capital Lease Payable	13,972	25,405
Total Liabilities	77,199	81,003
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted:		
Undesignated	1,611,455	1,439,166
Endowment	1,290,048	1,158,061
Total Unrestricted	2,901,503	2,597,227
Temporarily Restricted	1,102,915	540,227
Permanently Restricted	973,459	973,459
Total Net Assets	4,977,877	4,110,913
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$5,055,076	\$4,191,916

OPERATING EXPENSES



OPERATING REVENUE



VOCAL ESSENCE DONORS

THE ENDOWMENT HONOR ROLL

VocalEssence salutes the individuals and corporate and private foundations whose generosity and leadership sparked the creation of the Endowment Fund. This permanent fund was established in 1989 and is now valued at \$3 million. Its interest income provides ongoing support to VocalEssence. We welcome new contributions to the Endowment Fund and extend our deepest appreciation to the following for their generous gifts.

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The Philip Brunelle Founder's Society recognizes those who make a provision for VocalEssence in their will or estate plans. The society is names in honor of our visionary founder, Philip Brunelle, who every day inspires the community to open their ears to new music from diverse cultures.

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VocalEssence gratefully acknowledges all those who made gifts between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Although we make every effort to ensure that our Honor Roll list is accurate and complete, we are capable of error. Please let us know if your name does not appear the way you prefer so we may correct it in the next listing. Please call us at 612-547-1473 to make a correction. Thank you!

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1900 Nicollet Avenue
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403
612-547-1451

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