



CASSA NEWS

WINTER 2019/20

In 2019, Cassa once again excelled in providing a high quality all-inclusive performing, literary and visual arts experience.

The Cassa Musical production of *A Vampire's Tale* was a resounding success. Cassa Piano and Adult Piano programs produced some outstanding performances, while Cassa Jazz again proved to be a popular component of the Cassa program.



At Cassa, students forge friendships, develop discipline, leadership skills and confidence, all in a spirit of creativity, community and fun. Participation in well-designed arts programs also improves academic performance in reading, math, and science. Enrolment in our programs is limited. Don't miss your chance to join in a unique arts enrichment experience.



2020 PROGRAMS

- Cassa Kids** - July 13 to 17
- Cassa Playwrights** - July 13 to 17
- Cassa Jazz** - July 13 to 17
- Cassa Composers** - July 13 to 17
- Cassa Recital** - July 19
- Cassa Pedagogy** - July 20
- Cassa Piano** - July 20 to 24
- Cassa Adult Piano** - July 21 to 23
- Cassa Musical** - August 4, 5, 6, 7, 10 & 11



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All programs except Cassa Musical are held at St. Vladimir's Cultural Centre, 404 Meredith Road NE, Calgary.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Please donate to Cassa in 2020. All contributions are most welcome and contributions over \$10 will receive a charitable receipt. Donations may be made at www.cassamusicalarts.com. For more information contact info@cassamusicalarts.com. Cheques may be mailed to Cassa at 201 11420 27th St SE Calgary AB T2Z 3R6.

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a Vampire's Tale

the musical

At the local high school the new students are mostly greeted with suspicion, a feeling that only increases as strange, inexplicable things begin to occur in the school and in the town, often with hilarious results.

Our 2019 Cassa Musical production was *A Vampire's Tale*. This was an original Cassa script written by Ken Morgan and Darren Dyck, with music by Derek Stoll in 2010. The script was edited for production in 2019 by Simon Rose.

Filled with an unforgettable selection of musical numbers and featuring a powerful finale, this lively and energetic contemporary musical was very well received by everyone when it was performed by Cassa last summer.

Another school year in the small town of Moose Falls in Alaska has just begun when some new and unusual students arrive. They are all political refugees that have travelled to their new home in Alaska from a small country in Eastern Europe.

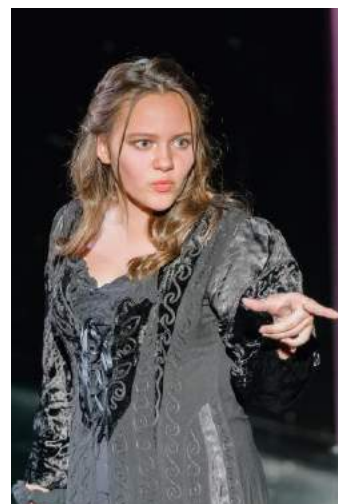


Who are these pale, black-clad strangers who all seem to have some supernatural power? Some of the school's other students welcome them, while others remain hostile. Yet very soon, a crisis approaches, which tests the powers of everyone connected to Moose Falls.

A Vampire's Tale takes a light-hearted look at the troubles of a teenage vampire and his supernatural sidekicks as they confront the scariest of all creations – the North American teenager.



Cassa Musical photos courtesy of Gus van Helden



Our 2020 Cassa Musical production will be *The Secret of the Forest* by Ken Morgan, Darren Dyck, and Mark Limacher. When the S.S. Adventure crash lands on an uncharted planet with environmental problems the crew members meet the local farmers and the stewards of the forests. All three groups must work together to save the planet, the ship and their way of life.



OUR 2020 CLINICIAN

Dr. Christopher Hahn maintains a multifaceted career as pianist, adjudicator, clinician and author. He has been featured as a solo and collaborative artist throughout North America and Europe and has performed in recital at Carnegie Hall—Weill Recital Hall, The Music Gallery in Toronto, and the Haydnssaal in Eisenstadt, Austria. He had the honor of performing for the Archbishop Desmond Tutu with the Metropolitan Opera's Leona Mitchell and has also performed with internationally recognized artists and collaborated with some of the world's leading composers.



Dr. Hahn pursued his early training through the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, and has since furthered his study of performing and teaching in Canada, the United States, and Europe. He holds the Associate Diploma in Performance from the Royal Conservatory, and both the Licentiate and Fellowship Diplomas in Performance from Trinity College of Music in London, England.

Dr. Hahn maintains an active schedule as a member of the CanAm Piano Duo with his partner, Karen Beres. The duo won the Silver Medal at the 2008 International Chamber Music Ensemble Competition in Boston and received a Distinguished Ranking at the 2009 IBLA Grand Prize competition in Ragusa, Italy. As avid proponents of contemporary music, Karen and Christopher perform a varied repertoire of new works and masterpieces of the twentieth century alongside more traditional works. Christopher and Karen are much sought after as pedagogues and artists-in-residence at various universities. Visit www.canampianoduo.com for more information.

Dr. Hahn is frequently engaged as a clinician, adjudicator, teacher, and master class artist. He is a certified teacher with the Royal Conservatory of Music and helped create the Piano Pedagogy Certification Program. He has been a member of the College of Examiners in both piano and piano pedagogy since 2004. A nationally certified teacher of music (NCTM) and Past-President of the Montana State Music Teachers Association, Hahn was elected to the MTNA National Board of Directors for 2016-2018 and continues to promote programs and initiatives that serve the Young Professionals and Collegiate Chapters in MTNA.

Dr. Hahn serves as keyboard division chair and is professor of piano and piano pedagogy at the University of Montana where he teaches undergraduate and graduate students. The recipient of Meritorious Teaching Awards on three occasions, his students have been featured on the NPR program *From the Top*, as national finalists in the *MTNA Chamber Music Competition* in Toronto, as soloists with orchestras in the Northwest, and have been selected as the winners of various competitions in the region. His students have been accepted into prestigious programs at a number of educational institutions and have presented at MTNA National and State Conferences.

The Keyboard Society at the University of Montana was awarded the MTNA Collegiate Chapter of the Year Award with Hahn as their advisor in 2010 and again in 2016. Dr. Hahn is the principal keyboardist for the Missoula Symphony Orchestra, having previously held positions with the Oklahoma City Philharmonic and the Greater Lansing Symphony Orchestra. Dr. Hahn serves as the artistic director of the Celebrate Piano Series at the University of Montana, which brings world-class artists to the University for Missoula audiences.

CASSA PEDAGOGY 2019

Nathene Arthur

I spent a day at the Cassa pedagogy workshop last July, alongside other musicians and teachers. We had a special treat as our clinician, Edwin Gmandt, has a real passion for the life and music of our topic, Fryderyk Chopin. I remember studying about the 'Poet of the Piano' in my university days, this strange musician whose body is buried in one place and his heart somewhere else, at his own request! Having attended the Cassa Recital on July 19th, where Edwin and Dr. Rachel Goldenberg gave a Chopin recital of piano and vocal works, we all had a bit of a teaser that we might hear some new historical information about this amazing composer. We certainly did at this workshop.

Our morning session was in two sections. The first covered the summation of the man himself and his pianistic legacy while the second featured the inner psychological issues that plagued his life, with highlights from Edwin's extensive research in Paris and Valldemossa, which he will present in his upcoming book entitled *The Inner World of Fryderyk Chopin: Psychology, Medicine and the Majorca Period*.

In the morning sessions Edwin played over a dozen Chopin pieces with examples and comments about the influencers behind his style and thoughts. I loved the idea that Chopin united the human voice with piano, a 'Bel Canto' piano sound as opposed to 'Con Belto.' He learned about Chopin integrating improvisation with composition, his preference for sharing intimate poetry over being a virtuosity star, his confinement to mostly piano music, his nationalism, love of traditional and folk dances, his rich range of emotions, and the link between his life of anguish with politics, social, and health issues.

We discussed many aspects of Chopin's personality, based upon Edwin's studies of letters written by the composer himself, as well as insights by other people that were in his circle. He loved his Polish Thursday Dinners and Evening Soirees, where he and his friends would have a social, play and sing, do silly pantomimes, or share a meal. Did you know that Chopin could imitate monkeys? His composing was very connected to improvising and he really needed to be present at a piano to compose. His influencers included many people, but Bach was huge for him. Did you know that Chopin studied counterpoint several hours a week? Chopin once said, "Bach is an astronomer, discovering the most marvelous stars... Beethoven challenges the universe... a long time ago I decided that my universe will be the soul and the heart of man..."

And there were lots of examples and details on the style of his music, leaps of a 6th, pedaling, trills, rubato, and the best editions of his music. In the afternoon sessions, we looked at understanding Chopin piano style and the soul of the music. Edwin demonstrated the five style differences in performing Chopin's works used by concert pianists, including Classical, Romantic, Virtuoso, Romanic-Virtuoso, and Classical-Virtuoso. One special quote I have from this session is "Technique is like money: it is not everything, but you cannot do much without it."

We then went through a few sections of Edwin's book, *The Soul of Music: Gifts from the Golden Age of Piano*, with a special reference to Chopin's compositions. Edwin played many examples of singing tone, the historical timeline split of composition and improvisation (including where and how Chopin would have been improvising into and above the written notes), prelude, ornamentation, and the current obsession with technical perfection, which developed particularly since recording began. We discussed the concept that 'brain, heart and mechanics should balance' and that we should 'err on the side of self-indulgence versus being bored' as an idealistic goal. We had great discussions and enjoyed the analysis of the pieces being played, following along in the prepared handouts.

Thank you to Cassa for another wonderful summer pedagogy workshop.

CASSA PEDAGOGY MEMORIES

Carolyn Steeves

July 2019! Finally summer! I'd made it through another jam packed musical year! It felt so good to be finished and to have a moment of calm. But I had four students registered for Cassa Piano!

My four very keen students were so enthusiastic! Chopin Waltz's, ensembles, and their performance piece! A frenzied three weeks ensued with practise, practise, practise and prepare, prepare, prepare. They were eager to meet their new piano friends and enjoy a week of music making. I was proud of the work they'd done and what they'd accomplished in such a short period of time.

The Composer of the Year was Chopin. I'd registered for Cassa Pedagogy, a day for piano teachers, and was so looking forward to the day with Edwin Gndt and his research into the mind and music of Chopin. I wasn't disappointed. Edwin was so passionate about Chopin and so proud to share his research and findings in his recent book, *The Soul of the Music: Gifts from the Golden Age of Piano*.

Edwin started with a discussion of Chopin's legacy. This was such an inspiration, all about the man, his music, and his mind. It gave all of us time to reflect on Chopin through a new lens. Edwin delved into in the inner psychological world of Chopin, a dark place filled with paranoia, depression, and fear, and its effects on his life and music.

The afternoon was filled with music. Edwin shared many examples of Chopin's repertoire, focusing on the essence of Chopin's style. Edwin's deep understanding of Chopin's music was so authentic, so real. It was a joy to watch, listen, learn, and reflect.

The afternoon ended with a discussion of the soul of Chopin's music. The 19th century was the Golden Age of Piano. What were its strengths? What made those musicians so great? How can we take the best from the past and harmonize it with 21st century pianistic ideas? There were certainly ideas to ponder and I'm sure we all did!

My students had a great week and I had a great day! Thank you Cassa Piano and Pedagogy!

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT CASSA PIANO

I was really looking forward to going to Cassa Piano this year. After having such a great experience the year before I was eager to go again. My favorite experience at camp was when I was allowed to play my piece for everybody in the audience. I also liked the lessons about the composer of the week because I got to learn about Chopin. He's one of my most favourite composers. Another one of my favourite parts was the Improv Class, because I like composing music. For me, the most inspiring part about the program were the teachers and how influential they were. I hope to be able to attend Cassa again next year." *Julian*



MY CASSA EXPERIENCE

Chelsea Taylor

Cassa Musical is an absolute amazing experience that's worth every penny! I was surprised how challenged I was with the level of the dancing, songs, and acting. It took hard work, which was everything I expected from Cassa. Each song was so different with its own set of challenges, such as timing, key changes, or difficult words.

Unlike the junior high musicals in which I've previously been involved the dancing was at a new level that was showcased throughout and was an important part of the story. Even acting brought a few challenges. There were many parts in which the performers had to memorize multiple monologues or speeches on top of the lines they already had. There were also roles that required an accent.

I loved the diversity in ages. Having the age range from nine to twenty-one created a strong sense of community. I felt looked after and loved helping out the younger kids, although most of them are so talented they didn't even need it. I also loved the trust placed in the actors to work hard. The memorization of lines, songs, and dances had to be done at home and finished over the weekend. Everyone was accountable to be ready for the performance. This made Cassa feel much more professional. I didn't feel like a kid at a summer camp, but like a real actor and still had the time of my life.

THE CASSA CREATIVE PROCESS

Derek Stoll

The creative process is a fascinating thing! Many people have difficulty describing the process involved in bringing new ideas into being. This is largely because so much of the creative process is subconscious and we can only easily describe in words those processes of which we are clearly aware.

I want to thank Cassa for asking me to write the music for *A Vampire's Tale* in 2010 and for deciding to present it again in 2019. It was great fun to see a new cast, new instructors and, in part, new musicians work so hard to present the show. For those unfamiliar with Cassa Musical, the workshop involves the presentation of a musical, including learning the script, the music, choreography, building the sets, and making the costumes in essentially one week! Most school programs would take many months to present such an undertaking.

The primary theme of *A Vampire's Tale* is a classic one, namely immigrants and their challenges while integrating into a foreign country. For a composer this particular combination of elements created some fun opportunities. The teenage immigrants in the story came to North America from a fictitious eastern European country. That in itself presents a rich pallet of musical possibilities, but these young folk each possess a 'supernatural' power of some sort presenting an even broader musical history to draw from. North American pop, eastern European folk tunes, and classic 'spooky movie' musical influences are used in the various tunes. Several exhibit a hybrid of styles, an underlying groove that could be considered 'new world' and other elements, such as time signature, that is definitely eastern in character. These might also contain 'spooky' harmonic elements.

In the original collaboration with Darren Dyck and Ken Morgan, we played around with several approaches. For some songs they already had lyrics so I simply set them to music to suit the situation. In some cases I already had ideas for a melodic line, so I asked them to create lyrics to fill out the musical line and they adapted to that approach.

It was great fun to see a very young cast under largely new direction work so quickly through the complexities of the production and present it in so short a time. It was most impressive and indeed humbling.

Best wishes to Cassa in the future. There's still a lot of momentum and interest and I'm certainly pleased to be involved in whatever manner is possible. Congratulations!

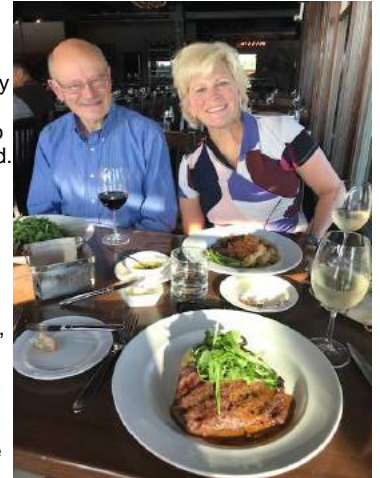
CASSA ADULT PIANO

Alison Crabb

There were only four adults in the 2019 Adult Piano program and we got to know each other well, with plenty of personal instruction from the excellent teachers. Both Edwin Gmandt and Joseph Friedman are both exceptional musicians and pedagogues and they challenged and inspired us in the master classes. We also had valuable input from the other teachers on staff, including Dr. Laura Bell, Karen Gerelus, and Eric Nyland.

A feature of the program I personally really enjoy is the chance to work on collaborative pieces with another participant. I was able to work on two interesting pieces this year. Teaching group sessions were led by Edwin Gmandt and were also for the young participants. Chopin was the focus this year. I thought I knew quite a bit about him, but my knowledge and understanding were expanded greatly by these lively presentations by someone who had studied Chopin's life and music in depth. The final afternoon *Musicale*, when adult participants performed our solo and collaborative pieces, was a little shorter than usual this year, but we still managed to fill an hour. The improvement all us had made in only three days was, as always, incredible. For some, this is their only chance to perform in this way.

The feeling of excitement and dedication to music engendered by a multi-age group coming together for a few days is a priceless experience. I would like to thank Linda Kundert, who has worked so hard to continue to bring this unique opportunity to Calgary. Come and try it for yourself!



CASSA ADULT PIANO MEMORIES

Edel Larkin

I attended the Cassa 2019 Adult summer program and have probably attended five or six before, so why do I keep coming back? Once again, the clinician and instructors were fabulous. They know where to meet you on your musical journey. Spending three days just playing piano, talking piano, getting to participate in master classes, and trying an ensemble piece all gives you the opportunity to learn and grow. Getting advice on how and what to practise and the valuable feedback that's always given in a positive and constructive way is also very helpful.

When I went to my first Cassa program I was at a grade one level and now I'm studying for my grade eight. I've found attending the summer programs helps me to stay motivated and inspires me to keep moving ahead. The master classes and the *Musicale* performance at the end of program help with getting used to playing in front of other people. I've also found that many of the same instructors return each year and I appreciate the feedback, as they think I've improved over the year. Going to Cassa has definitely given me more musical knowledge, understanding, confidence, and inspires and pushes me to keep going and to keep improving.



Thank you to all of the clinicians and the instructors for enhancing my musical journey. I look forward to returning to Cassa in 2020.

CASSA MUSICAL

Vanessa Meister

As a first-time participant in the Cassa summer musical program, I was pleasantly surprised to discover how all-inclusive and amazing the program turned out to be. I didn't know anyone there and had no idea what to expect. However, when I arrived on the first day, it was clear almost immediately that the Cassa learning environment values teamwork and having fun above all else. Everyone was extremely welcoming and newcomers and people that had been members for years instantly began getting to know one another, help with anything anyone was struggling with, and by the end of the first day it felt as though I'd known and worked with some of these people for years. One unique aspect was that although our ages ranged from nine to twenty-one, anyone could just strike up a conversation with ease.

Six days may sound extremely ambitious and an almost impossible time frame in which to put together a musical, but it's truly astounding how dedicated the directors/choreographers/designers and students are. This group really comes together and no matter the difference in age or where anyone comes from, everyone was able to work with and have fun with each other, helping each other grow and learn and nail whatever aspect of the production they were having trouble with.

Although the program only lasted six days, including the performance, each day was filled with such work and dedication that it felt as if we'd been preparing for weeks. The actual performance also just really solidified how much effort we'd made in such a short time and it was very rewarding to be able to present the finished product to friends and family, as well as show the directors the result of all their dedication.

What truly made this program so great was the opportunity to work alongside people with the same interests, all dedicated to theatre and working towards the common goal of putting on a fantastic show. The attitudes and personalities of everyone in the cast harbored unity, teamwork, and the desire to do our best and also have fun while doing it. My time so far with Cassa has been exciting, filled with hard work, and has given me the opportunity to grow as an actor. The experience I gained working with my fellow actors as well as learning under such talented professionals is so incredibly valuable to me and I hope to be part of more productions with Cassa in the future.



CASSA JAZZ

Jennifer Latta

This year Cassa Jazz program had a new clinician, Mark Limacher, who was assisted by Lorna MacLachlan. Mark spent the week imparting not only knowledge, but passion for jazz music and where Mark poured into us a vast amount of technical and background knowledge, Lorna balanced out the sessions with the down-to-earth 'just groove it' advice of an easy going school band teacher.

Mark, a prominent member of our local jazz scene and an active composer, taught us one main component of jazz music each day, supplemented with audio examples of classics he pulled up on a play list or performed at the piano himself off the cuff. Day one of Cassa Jazz focused on building jazz chords, Major 7th vs. 7th vs. minor 7th, and how each of these different flavours of chords functioned in a jazz harmonic motion. Mark emphasised each of his lessons the best way any teacher could, by sitting us down at the piano to play it. As a piano teacher that is by far more comfortable in the teaching chair than the performance chair, I was thankful that he started these playing demonstrations with the entire group, each one of us playing our own part to become a full 12-bar Blues piece. As a professional jazz performer, Mark was able to give us advice learned from his years of playing in a jazz trio.



The week played on from chords to chord voicing, a lesson I desperately needed to learn in order to prepare my upcoming Contemporary Idioms exam students. Mark took the time to assign me an exercise of starting with the 3rd, 7th and 9th degrees of a chord, then changing to the next chord by moving my fingers as little as possible. "What can you keep?" he asked me in respect to common tones between the first chord and second. "What needs to move?" He then showed me how changing a chord could be as simple as moving two fingers to the keys 'next door.'

When Mark gave away a little too much background information that left us wide-eyed and brain tired, Lorna expertly stepped in with a more down-to-earth explanation of the technical figure at hand. Her way of humming or singing the syncopated melody while tapping out a subtle jazz beat helped me experience and feel the jazz music. As clinicians to this jazz program, they complemented each other well, each one filling in and rounding out for the other as needed.

The week led nicely into melody writing where Mark gave us the advice to ask ourselves, which melody notes are prevalent, then to do something different to land on those notes. This was so simple yet so effective. Along with other melody writing techniques that we learned, I know I'll use these in my compositions and teaching for years to come.

"We get to play in a professional jazz trio!" I excitedly announced to anyone that would listen as Friday, the last day of the program, approached. Mark had invited his two good friends, a drummer and a stand up bass player, both professional musicians who performed in jazz trios, to join us for an afternoon rehearsal and evening jazz cabaret performance, complete with wine and cheese. I'd never performed in the jazz triangle of piano, drums and bass before and although I was nervous to perform, I couldn't contain my excitement. We had the delicious adventure of preparing and performing a jazz standard complete with formatting from introduction variations, tag-team solos and "Ellie" (Duke Ellington style) endings. One of the highlights of the evening for me was hearing Lorna sing *The Girl From Ipanema* with one of the students that performed that jazz standard. Jazz vocals enhanced an already beautiful evening of smooth music. We then pumped up the tempo when it came time to jam out on our own compositions, jazz trio style.

I left Cassa Jazz with a head full of jazz technique and a body full of swing. Most of all I left with the spark of new ideas and newfound confidence in myself as a musician. If you're looking for a musical experience next summer, consider the mind-opening adventure of Cassa Jazz. It definitely put a spring in my step!



CASSA MUSICAL James Goodacre



I went to Cassa for their six-day musical *A Vampire's Tale*, directed by Daren Dyck. This was my first year in the program and I didn't know anyone else there. The first thing I noticed on day one was instantly feeling the belonging that went along with being surrounded by 22 people with a shared goal. The way the program is structured is amazing. We all have things in common, most notably the fine arts. The environment is so friendly, troubles were left at the door and everyone got right to work.

We were all kept very busy but there was never a feeling of being rushed, despite only having six days to put together an entire musical. All the instructors were very calculated and we had all the time needed to learn all the different scenes, songs, and dances with extra time granted if anyone felt any uncertainty before moving on.

Critiquing Cassa was incredibly difficult as it was one of the best six days of my life. I can honestly say that I've never felt as confident, as accepted, or as loved and appreciated as I did during my time with Cassa. I'd recommend it to anyone, young or old, that has ever struggled with social anxiety, confidence deficits, or anything else that a caring, equal, and structured environment can help. However, that's not why I went to Cassa. I did so because Darren Dyck is one of the best directors, acting coaches, and mentors you can find when seeking to make a career in the fine arts. All the Cassa staff are all extremely smart, qualified, and efficient teachers. They teach you everything you need to know to be 100% successful in whatever task or goal you have. I can't wait to see you all next year!

REMEMBERING DOROTHEA JOHANSON



We lost our dear friend, colleague and teacher, Dorothea Johanson, on November 8th, 2019. Dorothea supported Cassa from its beginnings in 1993, first as a teacher sending students to the programs then as a volunteer photographer and videographer. She later became a popular instructor and would be particularly memorable to those that worked with her on C.S. Theme and Variations. In 1996, Dorothea became an original board member. She spearheaded the retirement residence recitals as our special projects convenor and was our interim treasurer for many years. She became an emeritus board member after her health forced her to stop working. A big thank to Dorothea for all that she did for us, as a personal example of elegance and excellence and for the great blessing we all received just by knowing her.

THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME Raymond De Guzman

I was so honored to be a part of the 2019 Cassa play, *A Vampire's Tale*. Those six days were the experience of a lifetime. Everyone became friends on the first day and soon became close. I was so glad that I could meet people of different ages that share the same interest in the fine arts. I've learned many things from Cassa, like how to remember a bunch of lines in less than a week, how to be a leader, and how to improve my public speaking skills.



I wish there were more than just six days. I just couldn't believe how close I became with all the people at Cassa. Everyone was nice and kind, not just the kids in the camp but the teachers too, who were so supportive. They'd only be there if we needed help with singing or dancing and would say yes on the spot, with no hesitation. Overall, I feel like the best part of Cassa is the performance day because all of our hard work paid off and we were able to celebrate our success.

I'm really sad that it's over but can't wait to see what's in store for next year. Hopefully, I'll make new friends and see old ones again.

CASSA MUSICAL MEMORIES Kailee Meckelborg

The beginning of my Cassa week began the same way as always, meeting the incredible people I was going to get to know and reconnecting with friends I'd made in previous years.

The next six days were a rollercoaster of fun, learning, bonding, and experiences with a group of people sharing the same passions and motivations, providing us with the ability to produce an hour and a half musical that is fully choreographed and memorised. Although this was only my second year, I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunities that this program has given me and the amazing and driven people that run the program that I've had the pleasure of getting to know.



CASSA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Throughout the year remember that you can always catch up with all the news about Cassa Musical Arts on social media.

We have a Facebook page where you'll always find news and updates about what's going on with Cassa all year round. Be sure to visit our page and like us so that you'll always be up to date with everything that's happening. You can also connect with Cassa on Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat.

Cassa news updates also appear in the blog section of our website, along with regularly posted articles about interesting local events, upcoming camps, our many instructors and students, the world of arts education, and much more.

WHAT MUSIC MEANS TO ME

"I play the piano for the satisfaction it gives when I can both enjoy the music in a piece and share it with others. Music will integrate itself into our lives, no matter what we do, so I think it's important to learn, if not in depth then at least a little bit about the art that appeals to our ears. And just like the visual arts, each and every person has their own composing or performing style that appeals to different people.

However, while the visual arts consist of creating or composing, then enjoying the art of performance is unique to music. Everyone's performing interpretation is different, which makes it unique. Music can also convey heavy emotions. One can almost picture what a composer felt or the story of the piece or work if it's well interpreted." *Riley*

"To me music means life and beauty. Life because when you play music life comes out of your fingers like silk. The way music speaks to you is straightforward beauty. The way music speaks to your soul is beautiful. It helps take your mind off of the problems in the world and in your life. The way it fills your soul with life and energy. The energy that you receive from the piano fuels you from the inside out." *Brianna*

"I play the piano because I think music is an important part of life. It appears in everyday life, on the radio, in concerts, and even in parks where bands are playing. If we had no music we'd all be sad. Music has emotions, just like we do, and if we know what they are then we can think about what happened in the piece and why the composer wrote it. If they wrote the piece when they were sad then you can play it like that. You need to be mentally ready to play because there can be distractions when you play. Everybody has a unique way of playing, which is why I like piano. We would always know what everybody would be doing in their piece. Therefore I think music is an important element of all things." *Chanan*

"Music is a powerful force in my life. It helps me with my emotions. Music is a way to celebrate or to curl up in our rooms alone. That's what music means to me. For example, if you get a good mark on an exam, you dance at home with happy music or if you just broke up with someone or your team lost a game, you listen to sad music. Some music makes me think about my actions in the world toward others. *The Sound of Silence* by Simon and Garfunkel is particularly meaningful to me. It's almost empowering. It makes me want to dance, a slow pick up dance. Music is empowering and makes us feel good and that's what music means to me." *Joy*

"To me, music means a lot. Music is essential in my life. Without music, I wouldn't be the me I am now. Every living human on Earth pretty much needs music to live. Music is a powerful force and there are many types of music. Everyone has their own music they like because everyone's different and that's the beauty of music. Music is infinite." *Mark*

"I love piano. It gives me a sense of fun and I really enjoy the feeling of the notes being played and the resonance that's left. The piano is the thing that gives me a sense of music and grace in the air. Piano is my favourite instrument in the world. I enjoy playing the piano. My parents also love the piano and love how I play. The piano is an historic instrument and inspires me to finish my Grade 10 RCM. It also inspires me to persevere in my piano and gives me a lot of confidence in everything I do. When playing piano it takes your mind off everything and it's as if it takes me to a different universe." *Elizabeth*

"Ensembles, as most teachers agree, are an important part of learning how to play an instrument. With piano, ensemble playing looks a little different, since more than two pianos at a time is fairly irregular. Once you and another person, often someone you've never met before, are thrown together and asked to play a piece of music that essentially demands alignment, you can no longer change the dynamics and tempo on your own, even when such commands are marked in the music itself. Without speaking, you must convey your wishes to your partners, who might interpret your sign as something completely different than what you mean to say.

The results can be fantastically amazing. Duets, trios, and quartets, when played correctly, all display super human coordination as the two, three, or four different parts create the effect of one person playing. For this to work, everyone must be playing at the same measure number, counting at the same rate, slowing down, or speeding up at the same time, and sometimes even breathing in sync. If this sounds as impossible as drinking the sea with a veggie straw, hold on. People have actually accomplished this feat.

Learning how to play with another person, no matter what instrument you play, is actually training your ear more than your telepathic powers. The parts were specially designed to fit together. All you have to do is listen. If you hear your partner slowing down, don't try to speed them up by inching on ahead. The ultimate goal to sound like one person playing, so if your partner drops out because of a mistake, keep on playing for a few bars to allow them time to join you without breaking the flow of the music." *Kendra*



WHAT MUSIC MEANS TO ME

"Playing music is not only enjoyable, but has a positive impact in many areas. It speeds up brain development and learning music broadens the brain's capacity for memorization, enhancing the comprehension of sound. It improves coordination and fine motor skills. Learning an instrument also teaches dedication because you can't improve without it. Listening to music has a direct impact on emotion. It can make you experience joyfulness or mourning. Music can be used as therapy for those with physical illness by lowering blood pressure, improving cardio output, reducing heart rate, and relaxing muscles. While listening to music we enjoy, the cerebellum is highly activated, triggering increased blood flow to the legs. This may be part of why dance is associated with every genre of music. Music can make it easy to remember details, an example being the ABCs. Consider what it would have been like to learn them without the alphabet song. Music is an outlet for expressing creativity, emotions, and ideas."

Samantha

"Music is like another language to me. You're able to understand it in the same way that you're able to understand someone when they're talking to you. Even though there might be no actual words, you can listen to what the piece is representing. You could say that music is also very versatile. There are many things you can do with music. While you have pieces that are already composed, you can improvise and make up your own arrangement. Dynamics, tempo, and articulation are parts of pieces that you're able to adjust on your own and change up. It's also possible to make variations of a piece. There are no wrong ways to play a piece and the markings aren't set in stone. While music might not have any words, it still tells a story. It may be happy in the start, but it can turn dark and gloomy later on. The piece sets up a mood for you and you may feel connected to the music. To me, music is like an art piece and involves different colours. Whether it has bright colours or dull shades of grey, you can imagine what colours a piece can have. The colours match up to how a piece makes you feel, either excited, anxious, or sad." *Iva*

"I started playing the piano when I was only four years old. Since then, I've been able to discover the benefits that music has brought to my life. I love playing a favourite piece of music on the piano at home to relax. I love the way music can affect the way you feel. One thing I enjoy is seeing and hearing how my music makes other people feel. It fills me with happiness to know that I can bring music to the world and that people are grateful for music. Another reason that I love playing the piano is the fact that there is always room for interpretation. Music allows for your personal emotion, expression, and personality to show through. It allows me to express myself in a variety of ways through the pieces I perform and I truly treasure this ability. When I'm older, I'd like to teach young and aspiring musicians. I hope to be able to inspire them and pass on my joy of music to another generation." *Sorena*

"Music lifts my spirit with its beauty. It's something that I can use to calm or awaken my senses. Music is the essence for life and without it, life is dull. I love every aspect of music and appreciate all of the opportunities it opens for me. For me, the cello is the most interesting instrument. It can produce beautiful longing sounds and echo the voice. I'm going to expand my music career by starting band and playing in an orchestra. Music will always be in my life. I want to keep the essence of music in me and all the joy that it brings to me and other people that experience it." *Gabriel*

"Music is in my heart and always has been. I love listening to music, singing, and playing instruments. Music gives me joy! One of the things that I like the most is composing. I like composing music because it gives me freedom to express myself. Every time I play a piece of my own, I like to make it fancier. I experience music everywhere in life. I see music in nature as the trees hum in the wind. I hear it in waves crashing down on the shore. It's wonderful to experience the beauty of music and playing piano and to sharing it with others. I look forward to joining a choir and band next year to explore my musical abilities further." *Joel*

THANK YOU CASSA *Scarlette Booth*

"This summer I had the pleasure of being accepted into the Cassa production this year of *A Vampire's Tale*. Before I went to join my fellow performers, I was expecting only an experience, but I was surprised to learn that I had taken so much more. Cassa has benefited me in many ways, such as providing me with the skills to learn lines in an impressive amount of time. I memorized an entire three-paragraph monologue in two days and I'm excited to say that it secured me the lead role in my school play. During Cassa I have also made great friends with the other kids and I'm so grateful that I had the opportunity to go to Cassa.

My whole Cassa experience this year would never have been possible without the wonderful generosity of the Harry and Martha Cohen Foundation, which paid for my other half of the expenses of the Cassa program.

Thank you Harry and Martha Cohen Foundation for sending me to Cassa."



REFLECTIONS 2019

Janice Dahlberg



Twenty-six years and holding is a pretty good record for a simple idea to establish a summer piano program for student enrichment and teacher employment. The simple idea blossomed into many additional programs, including an introduction to the arts class for preschoolers and early elementary students, a musical theatre experience, play writing, piano pedagogy, jazz, composition, and a piano camp for adults. There were many experiences for student artistic creativity as well as student work opportunities. The innovation was unique at that time and Cassa's fresh ideas have helped to create many new arts summer activities in Calgary. Exposure to the musical arts may lead to exciting diverse futures.

Participants from Cassa's early years are now enjoying careers in medicine, law, education, research, science, humanities, business, government, and the arts. Erika Gundesen began piano camping at age nine and now has advanced degrees in music performance. She's pursuing a career in the U.K., having recently been heard playing the celeste in the Glasgow Opera Orchestra for a production of *The Magic Flute*. Another early piano camper, Rachel (Brager) Goldenberg, soprano, performed beautiful Chopin songs with pianist Edwin Gmandt at Cassa's recital last July. Dr. Goldenberg teaches

voice at Ambrose University. Former piano camper David Dixon, a professional engineer, will compete at the Honens ProAm this year, having been one of its champions in 2011. Darcy van Helden, who began piano programs at age nine, is completing her degree in education at the University of Calgary, plays piano with the orchestra for the Cassa Musical, teaches piano, and is also the valiant Cassa office manager. Obviously, I'm most familiar with piano participants but I know there are special people from other Cassa programs. Please let us know who and where you are.

Cassa's endurance depends upon the talents and expertise of its board of directors, administration team members, artistic directors, clinicians, teachers, volunteers, donors, and businesses. Strong leadership provides positive results in a superior learning environment. Community engagement is invaluable. Please view "In Appreciation" on the web site, which acknowledges Cassa patrons.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Darren Dyck



For over the past 20 years I've been blessed to be a part of our wonderful organization. I've been a drama teacher, a director, a playwright, and a credit course teacher. This year I had the opportunity to solidify my relationship a little more as I was asked to take on the role of Vice President. It's been a wonderful year, I've learned lots, and we've all worked hard together to continue to build our association and offer top quality arts opportunities for children and adults alike.

This past summer was one to remember for me. After breaking my collarbone in July we set off on a journey to produce a play that Ken Morgan, Derek Stoll, and I wrote a decade earlier. With a few rewrites by our newsletter editor Simon Rose, a title change, and a willing and talented group of young people we were able to bring *A Vampire's Tale* to life on the stage at Lord Beaverbrook High School. This was such a special and emotional event for me as I was able to see my words come to life through the songs, dances, and dialogue of our eager cast. Our performers did us all proud as they made the show their own. I'm so thankful to all the cast, crew, and teachers that worked so hard to create a truly aesthetic experience for our audience.

This year has been a bit of a challenge for Cassa. With the downturn in the economy and some of the health issues that have affected our leadership we've been tasked with the responsibility of thinking in different ways and growing creatively. We have a dedicated group of folks on the executive, talented and passionate staff,

and students that live and breathe the arts. This year, and moving forward, we're going to find new ways to improve and new ways to stoke the fires of creativity that live in the hearts and minds of the artists we serve.

Thank you for taking this journey with us and for understanding how important the arts are to our children, our community, and our society. Thank you for going above and beyond the call of duty by sharing what Cassa offers to your friends and family and for inviting them to be a part of this truly unique experience. I invite you all to walk alongside us, support us, and champion us, as we look for dynamic new ways to share the arts with the next generation of artists.

OUR NEW SECRETARY

Viola Olah Hutchinson is the owner of Effortless Marketing, a digital marketing agency in Calgary. Before she started her own business she worked as a systems analyst at Shell Canada. Her passion is to help and educate entrepreneurs who feel lost in the tech world so they can grow their business and succeed online. Viola is Hungarian, born and raised in Transylvania, Romania, and immigrated to Canada in 1983. She enjoys mentoring young immigrant women in her spare time. Viola began working with Cassa in 2011 and had recently been appointed to the role of secretary on the Cassa board. Thank you, Viola!



CASSA PLAYWRIGHTS, CASSA COMPOSERS, AND CASSA KIDS

We'll once again be offering our Cassa Playwrights, Cassa Composers, and Cassa Kids programs next summer, when the theme will be world cultures.

Cassa Playwrights involves a dramatic and fun-filled week of half day programs with creative writing instructor Simon Rose, during which children ages 7 to 12 will learn how to write, rehearse and perform their own unique play in just five days. Children will create the plot, craft the script, write dialogue and hone their acting skills for their very own dramatic production, which will then be performed at the end of the week.

In Cassa Composers, students aged 12 to adult create music with an opportunity to collaborate with a play, learning about composition and lyric writing. Participants have the opportunity to write a song for Cassa Playwrights or a piece or song that can be performed in the Jazz Concert on the Friday evening.

In Cassa Kids, classes are custom designed by a select group of Calgary's top art educators. Our professional teachers provide high quality instruction for an introduction to music, art, drama and movement. Each half-day program includes fifty minutes of each class, covering keyboard, rhythm and singing, varied art techniques, acting and focus games, movement and different dance forms.

"Three words: Creativity, Expression, FUN."

"I felt the instructors are very experienced and extremely supportive!"

"Quality programs that was very engaging for kids. My kids loved the variety of art, dance and music."



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Our sponsors and supporters have been a major part of Cassa's success over the years and we couldn't have done it without you. Your support of Cassa and the local arts community has been outstanding. Thank you to everyone!

The Irina Ginzburg scholarship will become the Dorothea Johanson Memorial Scholarship for the most improved piano student. We would like to thank the donors and Cassa for supporting this scholarship in the past and in the future.

Thank you to St. John's Music for their continued support of Cassa. Their pianos and keyboards are outstanding. Thank you to Harmony Music School/Alberta School of Music for providing us with a home for our office. Thank you to ARMTA Provincial and Calgary Branch for support of our students. Thank you to the Harry and Martha Cohen Foundation for their continued support of Cassa Musical, and to the Bell Family Foundation, Edelweiss Imports, and the Alberta Music Education Foundation, who have also been longstanding donors. We're also extremely grateful for the support of the Government of Alberta and the Calgary Board of Education, without whom our programs in the performing arts would simply not be possible.





FROM THE PRESIDENT'S CHAIR Linda Kundert

For me, this summer seemed calmer than some, and a personal highlight was the Cassa Jazz program as I was able to take the course myself. I had a great experience learning about improvisation, composition, and jazz elements with Mark Limacher and Lorna MacLachlan.

The most memorable moment for me was the opportunity to perform a blues tune that I composed in class in concert with our hired jazz professionals at the Jazz and Composers Cabaret! If you are remotely interested in this, or wanting to improve your classical 'chops,' I highly recommend you join us for one of our outstanding programs in 2020.

Cassa has been working at different marketing ideas in recent months. We are going into the schools with unique presentations and we continue to market our new brand with its innovative and fun look. Watch for changes on the new website, coming soon.

In June, we hosted a performance event in Bridgeland, thanks to Eric Nyland's excellent leadership. Thank you to all who helped with that and especially thank you to all of the performers that played that evening and thank you to the teachers and board members that supported us.

On behalf of Cassa, I would like to thank Rob Whitworth for his incredible contribution to our organization. He was initially an adult piano participant and then a board member for many years. He created and was the first editor of the newsletter and he took many great pictures of all of the programs each year. His most impressive and longstanding contribution was the website, which he created, designed and maintained, and all as a volunteer! His generosity of time, expertise, and excellence was further augmented through monetary donations. Rob has been a core supporter of Cassa and we are forever grateful to him.

You will read your last Vice-President's report from Co-Founder Janice Dahlberg in this newsletter. Her new official title on the board is Cassa Artistic Advisor and she is a volunteer instructor for Cassa Piano. She continues to be a strong member of the team and I personally couldn't have created Cassa without her. Janice has been our secretary since the beginning. We are very grateful to Viola Olah who has joined the board and who has accepted this very important role.

We would like to congratulate Jennifer Aumentado, our Cassa Piano Improv Instructor, who recently celebrated 25 years in business with her own music studio, Imagine Music Inc. This is a wonderful personal accomplishment. We appreciate the great guidance you give our young pianists each summer!

Please note the special tribute of thanks to Dorothea Johanson, who passed recently. Dorothea will be forever remembered by all of us who knew her – a great lady, indeed!

The Cassa Recital was particularly special this year, showcasing a former Cassa camper, Dr. Rachel Goldenberg, with voice, and former instructor/clinician, Edwin Gnant on piano. It was a beautiful evening featuring the music of Chopin. Mr. Gnant did an outstanding job as clinician of piano and pedagogy. His knowledge, performance experience, and communication skills made for a very good session. This summer, we have asked Dr. Christopher Hahn to be our clinician. He was voted back by the instructors and we know that it will be another great summer with Chris at the helm. The composer of the year is Beethoven and pedagogy topics will be on the website coming soon.



Cassa Musical took place in August for the first time and we redid one of our own commissioned works, *A Vampire's Tale*, by Darren Dyck, Ken Morgan, and Derek Stoll. It was once again a beautiful success. Enjoy the articles by the writer and composer of this musical. We will feature one of our commissions again this summer and plan to continue this trend.

If you made it this far, you are a very devoted fan of Cassa. Thank you! There was one huge disappointment for me this year. For the first time, we had to cancel Cassa Kids and Cassa Playwrights, due to insufficient enrolment. These programs are exceptional and we would like to offer them again. Will you help us? We have lowered the costs of all of our programs. We ask that you let your friends, students, and family members know about us. You are our lifeline!

WHY CASSA

<p>BEST ACTING/ SINGING/ DANCING COACHES IN THE WORLD</p> <p>MEET THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE</p> <p>GET RICH QUICK!</p>	<p>MOST TIME EFFICIENT THEATRE PRODUCTION YOU WILL EVER BE APART OF</p> <p>HEAR THEM SING AND FALL OUT OF LOVE WITH THEM</p> <p>LOW PRICE FOR AN INVALUABLE EXPERIENCE</p>	<p>REWARDING EXPERIENCE WITH LIFE LONG FRIENDS</p> <p>#1 DJ IN THE WORLD DUSTY SADDLE #insidejoke</p> <p>DO SOMETHING PRODUCTIVE WITH YOUR SUMMER</p>	<p>IMMORTALITY</p> <p>YOU WIN A CAR! YOU WINE A CAR! YOU ALL WIN A CAR!</p> <p>THERE'S 10 RULES #1 HAVE FUN! NONE OF THE OTHER RULES MATTER</p>
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