



Under the Direction of Christine Chepyha & Gordon Miller

SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus

"Raising the Bar"

It has been an exciting journey together as singers, directors, board members, volunteers and SingYourJoy fans participated together in our special year: Raising the Bar.

With the help of a community grant from the NRS Foundation through the Victoria Foundation and encouragement from our team, we imagined,

planned and executed a season that encompassed the arch of a full year; with higher expectations for repertoire, performance, staging and singer / audience engagement.

This report outlines our experience including the successes and challenges, knowing that it will serve to inform and influence our direction in the coming years.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of the 2017 / 2018 season. We are amazed and encouraged by the solid and passionate support of our Board, Patrons, Audience and Singers. We see a long bright future ahead for SingYourJoy as we continue to encourage choral singing as a life-long joy for these young adults.



With respect,

Christine Y. Chepyha
Gordon C. Miller
Co-Founders and Directors,
SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus
Annual Report: Submitted September 2018

Highlights:

[2017/2018 - a year to 'switch it up'](#)

[Estimated Audience reach comparison:](#)

[Victoria Foundation Community Grant](#)

[New Board Member](#)

[Increased Donations](#)

[New Fundraising Ventures: BCCF Raffle](#)

[Singing in the community](#)

[Vancouver Men's Chorus in Concert: 'surprise' show openers](#)

[New Singer-led Initiative: Coffee-house afternoon](#)

[Creating our Future: Visioning a Sustainable, Compassionate World](#)

[Christmas Lights Across Canada](#)

[Our Thanks!](#)

[2017 - 2018 Board of Directors](#)

2017/2018 - a year to 'switch it up'

This 7th year of SingYourJoy we chose to run a *longer*, 23 week season (starting in September 2017 and ending in March 2018), rather than two separate 13 week seasons. The challenges of scheduling around the post-secondary academic calendar and Christmas/Easter dates this year required a different approach. Seizing this opportunity, we planned into our year elements of performance growth that would be better suited to the longer arc to the season.

Specific hopes and objectives in anticipation of new new season format:

- move to a professional concert hall (Dave Dunnet Community Theatre - Oak Bay)
- expanded repertoire (15 songs up from 12)
- more challenging music (meant to be more interesting for the audience and more engaging for our most talented singers)
- more songs learned "off book" - memorized
- introduce some greater variety in visually appealing choir staging
- introduce professional lighting and AV enhancement to performance
- create opportunities early in the season for performances that build skills and confidence in new singers
- create new opportunities (more invested time and preparation) for team building and building of a SYJ culture among the singers

Actual Numbers:

Our intake at September resulted in 70 singers signing on to the chorus. By our March 23rd concert, we were 40 singers on stage. While this represents the biggest decline in numbers from start to finish, the extended season and higher performance expectations played a large role in these results.

New this season was the option to 'pre-register', and 39 singers took advantage of this (including 10 new singers). Of the 70 people at the end of our welcome weeks, 28 were new to the choir.



All performance objectives of the extended season were met. More challenging repertoire was selected and the processes of learning and memorizing the songs along with body movements and multiple stage positions were introduced early into our rehearsal format. More advanced staging and group movement were added later as the full concert concept took shape and more complex AV components were added.

**March 23 Performance:
SingYourJoy in Concert!**
at the Dave Dunnet
Community Theatre.

Annie LePage, a local writer, artist and SingYourJoy alumna acted as our Master of the Concert, helping connect our audience to our message. We used the walkways of the theatre to introduce the concert with a soloist echoed by the choir from the wings



creating a dramatic entrance. The large stage gave us several opportunities for significant formation changes that supported the songs and we were able to make use of the Dunnet theatre's AV gear to drop down a screen to show a montage of photo-stills to support the Alessia Cara song Scars to Your Beautiful.

The Dave Dunnet Theatre was easily accessible for singers and patrons and the hallways and concession made our post concert celebration a relatively easy undertaking.

The venue itself was a challenge for a projected choral sound as the deep stage (lacking in a movable choir shell) sucked up the "presence" and limited the choir's ability to blend together and project into the audience. This problem with the Dave Dunnett has been reported by several other Victoria choirs testing this new venue for the first time.

Several singers reported a higher level of stress around performance than in previous years. This was due to a commitment to have more than half the repertoire memorized, additional choreography, multiple choir positions and (what may have felt like) last minute instructions and program adjustments due to the venue. While the stress was felt by the singers, from anecdotal conversations, our audience (for the most part) did not notice our challenges and was pleased with the venue, the sound and the overall performance of the chorus.

Estimated Audience reach comparison:

Performance	2016 / 2017 Season	2017 / 2018 Season
Vancouver Men's Chorus - Opening Act / Guest Appearance - 3 songs	N/A	500 +/- (First Met UC)
Christmas Lights Across Canada	150 + (in the lower rotunda of the BC Legislature)	150 + (in the upper rotunda of the BC Legislature)
Senior's Homes Concerts (two performances)	50 +/-	N/A
Creating Our Future - musical guest artists - 3 songs	N/A	150 +
Fall Concert	250 +/- (St. Aidan's UC)	N/A
Winter / Spring Concert (two performances)	200 +/- (Oak Bay UC) 150 +/- (Oak Bay UC)	350 +/- (Dave Dunnet Community Theatre)
Total performances	5	4
Total Audience reach	800	1150

This was the first time SingYourJoy offered ONLINE ticket sales for its concert. Using Eventbrite, we were able to sell 69 tickets online, providing ease-of-access to our supporters, and introducing the chorus to another audience.





Victoria Foundation Community Grant

With SingYourJoy being granted Charitable Status in March 2017, our ability to apply to additional funding sources became a potential, and we were exceedingly grateful (and pleasantly surprised) to receive a \$12,000 Community Grant from the NRS Foundation through the Victoria Foundation. The recognition this grant brings to our organization cannot be measured solely in the increase of funds for this season's program. Support from the Victoria Foundation implies that we are a legitimate organization with depth and longevity, working on a project/mission that is important not just to us but to the larger community.

As part of the Vital People program of the Victoria Foundation, CHEK-TV News creates short video segments highlighting grant recipients for broadcast on their Sunday 5pm newshour. ***Vital***

People show host, Veronica Cooper and Don West, videographer, visited a SYJ Monday rehearsal in January 2018 and the resulting segment was broadcast in early March 2018.

The value of this kind of awareness is far-reaching. Within hours of the broadcast we received e-mail notification from a viewer that our online



ticketing option was not working, and the resultant discussion progressed from email to an in-person visit to pick up concert tickets. In casual conversation the segment is often mentioned, even with people who would not normally be aware of the chorus.

The video continues to be available on both the Victoria Foundation and CHEK TV News websites, and was shared through their social media channels. We are authorized to make use of it for our ongoing promotional needs.

You can enjoy it at these links:

[Victoria Foundation YouTube](#)

[CHEK NEWS](#)

[Victoria Foundation](#)

New Board Member

We acknowledged the invaluable support of our outgoing Board Chair, Paul Fraser as he ended his term of office in (September 2017). Paul's tenure on the board came as SingYourJoy transitioned from a small project to one of greater importance to a larger constituency. Paul was instrumental in introducing SingYourJoy to Ted and Helen Hughes, and their roles as Honourary Patrons is a direct result of his influence. The chorus's involvement with the annual *Christmas Lights Across Canada* event is another.

We welcomed our new Board Chair, Peter Scales in January. Peter is a long-time choral singer in the greater Victoria area, and brings a new focus and perspective to the SingYourJoy Board of Directors.

Increased Donations

Private donations have increased considerably since the Chorus achieved Charitable Status with the Canada Revenue Agency.

	Online donations	Donations by Cheque	Monthly donations (online)
2016-2017	\$795	\$7290	n/a
2017-2018	\$3098.30* * with charitable status our Canada Helps page provides a different level of donation data - these numbers reflect the Canada Helps fees taken from online donations	\$9590	1 in place from November 2017 (\$120.63 per month) 2 currently in place, for a monthly deposit of \$149.58 (from January 2018 on)

New Fundraising Ventures: BCCF Raffle

A benefit of membership in the BC Choral Federation is the ability to sell fundraising raffle tickets - each \$2 ticket sold returns \$1.20 to the choir selling the tickets. SingYourJoy joined the BCCF Raffle this year for the first time, committing to selling 1000 tickets for a return of \$1,200. These monies will be directed to general operating costs.

Singing in the community

Vancouver Men's Chorus in Concert: 'surprise' show openers

Through our connections with Willi Zwozdesky (a previous guest conductor for SingYourJoy's 5th anniversary concert), we were invited to be the 'opening act' for the November 2017 Victoria concert of the Vancouver Men's Chorus at First Metropolitan United. Our singers prepared three numbers 'off-book', and had an incredibly positive, uplifting reception from the 500 + audience.



New Singer-led Initiative: Coffee-house afternoon



Choral representative Liam Cline presented a fundraising / community-engagement idea to the Board in the fall which became a singer-led coffee house afternoon. Singers, alumni and board members provided a variety of entertainment over two hours at St. Aidan's United Church hall, and all were well-fed with a great array of snacks and beverages. [VIDEO PROMO](#)

Creating our Future: Visioning a Sustainable, Compassionate World

Twenty-five members of SingYourJoy participated as musical guest artists at this interfaith event hosted by Multifaith Services and the Victoria Multi-faith Society at the David Lam Theatre at the University of Victoria in honour of the UN Interfaith Harmony Week on Sunday, February 4th. The chorus was warmly received by the audience.

Christmas Lights Across Canada

SingYourJoy was thrilled to participate once more at the annual Christmas Lights Across Canada event at the BC Legislature in December. This year SingYourJoy was invited into the Upper Rotunda to entertain visitors.

[VIDEO LINK](#)



Our Thanks!

We cannot exist without the help of many people and our heartfelt thanks goes out to:

Oak Bay United Church who generously gifts us with a warm and joy-filled rehearsal space each Monday evening and provides a community of supporters at our concerts.

Victoria Presbytery of the United Church of Canada who continues to offer financial support to the vision they helped start in 2011.



Ted and Helen Hughes, our Honourary Patrons

Patrons:

Anonymous (3) / Barb Wellington Foster / Robin and Paul Fraser / Ted and Helen Hughes
Sarah Lowen and Daniel Miller / Sherry Ridout / Maja and Richard Sloan
Mary Sloan / Helen and Harvey Waddell

and:

- our individual donors, whose gifts provide financial stability to our organization
- our audiences, those who return every season and those just discovering us.
- SingYourJoy Young Adult Chorus Society Board of Directors
- our Alumni AND Our Singers

Special thanks to:

We're grateful for the support of the NRS Foundation through the [Victoria Foundation](#) as we raised our artistic and performance commitment during our 2017 /2018 season.



VICTORIA FOUNDATION
CONNECTING PEOPLE WHO CARE WITH CAUSES THAT MATTER®

2017/2018 Concert Sponsor: Top Shelf Bookkeeping Ltd.



We are grateful to Brian and Josh and all the staff at Top Shelf for their understanding of how important music can be in the life of a young person making their way.

2017 - 2018 Board of Directors

Chair: Peter Scales

Vice Chair: Logan Richards

Secretary / Treasurer: Maja Kaffanke

Fundraising: Stephen Tyler

Concert/Event Coordinator: Lori Downey

Choral Representatives: Frankie Pryor, Liam Cline

Members-at-Large: Coreen Mason

Ex-Officio: Christine Chepyha (Co-Artistic Director)

Ex-Officio: Gordon Miller (Co-Artistic Director)

