



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EIGHT EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG PERFORMING ARTISTS RECEIVE PRIZES FROM THE HNATYSHYN FOUNDATION: SEVEN DEVELOPING ARTIST GRANTS OF \$10,000 EACH AND ONE OF \$15,000 FOR THE CHRISTA AND FRANZ-PAUL DECKER FELLOWSHIP IN CONDUCTING**

**OTTAWA, September 29, 2021** — Eight young performing arts students will receive grants this year from The Hnatyshyn Foundation, supporting their studies for the 2021–22 academic year. This brings the amount invested in post-secondary grants for performing artists to more than \$1.2 million since the Foundation began programming in 2005.

The awards include seven \$10,000 grants for Developing Artists, and one \$15,000 fellowship for a Young Conductor, presented in partnership with the Schulich School of Music at McGill University in Montreal.

Announcing the winners in Ottawa today, Gerda Hnatyshyn, C.C., President of The Hnatyshyn Foundation, said, *“The Hnatyshyn Foundation is pleased to celebrate the accomplishments and promise of these extraordinary young performers. By providing this financial support we are, at the most fundamental level, investing in the development of the world-class artists of tomorrow. We are also proud of our association with the Schulich School of Music and the Decker family towards helping remarkable young talents pursue their studies at one of the world’s finest educational institutions.”*

Through these programs, The Hnatyshyn Foundation continues to extend its support to exceptionally talented young Canadian students in the performing arts. *“We are very grateful to The Hnatyshyn Foundation for partnering with us in supporting training of the next generation of Canadian conductors,”* said Professor Stéphane Lemelin, Chair of the Department of Performance at the Schulich School of Music.

All of the winners were selected by expert juries from across Canada. The Hnatyshyn Foundation sincerely thanks all the jurors for their generous assistance.

## **Recipients of 2021 Developing Artist Grants**

### **David Liam Roberts – Classical Music (Orchestral Instrument)**



Winner of the 2021 Michael Measures Prize, David Liam Roberts is establishing himself as one of the most exciting Canadian cellists of his generation. Recent engagements have included an appearance as soloist with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra under Maestro Daniel Raiskin, as well as debut recitals presented by Cecilia Concerts (Halifax), Virtuosi Concerts (Winnipeg) and the Women’s Musical Club of Winnipeg. David Liam is Red River Métis and is originally from Winnipeg. He currently studies with Hans Jørgen Jensen and Andrés Díaz at the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto.

*“It is such an honour to be this year’s recipient of the Developing Artist Grant in Classical Music - Orchestral Instruments. This award will help me as I complete my studies at the Glenn Gould School and continue to learn and perform in Canada and abroad. I look forward to contributing to the musical landscape in Canada, and I am so thankful for the support the Hnatyshyn Foundation is providing Canadian artists during this crucial period in our studies and career development.”*

### **Naomi Wong – Classical Music (Piano)**



Toronto-born pianist Naomi Wong is currently a third-year performance student at the University of Toronto studying with Dr. Enrico Elisi. Naomi is an active performer, collaborator, and teacher, and enjoys being involved in her community. She regularly performs in outreach concerts at retirement homes, hospitals, and fundraising events, and maintains a private teaching studio. As the Grand Prize winner of the International Music Festival and Competition, Naomi looks forward to performing Chopin’s Second Concerto with the Kindred Spirits Orchestra in their 2021-2022 season. Naomi is extremely grateful to her current and past teachers for guiding and inspiring her: Dr. Enrico Elisi, Ken Marple at the University Settlement Music & Arts School, and Rachel Yu.

*“For me, music is such a hopeful form of expression because it is born out of sound – vibrations in the air, which unlike words, cannot communicate hostility or prejudice, and unlike actions, cannot inflict violence or exploit the powerless. However, music is not merely sound; the artist plays an indispensable role in molding and shaping the physical vibrations that generate sound into something that is meaningful and inspiring. This grant inspires me to step into my*

*responsibility as an artist, to play a role in realizing music's tremendous potential to bring beauty, kindness, and understanding into the world."*

**Elizabeth Polese – Classical Music (Vocal Performance)**



Praised as “powerful and engaging” [The Globe and Mail], Canadian soprano Elizabeth Polese is a recent alumna of l’Atelier Lyrique de l’Opéra de Montréal, a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Centre, winner of the prestigious 2019-20 Sullivan Foundation Gail Robinson Award for Soprano, and of the 2021 Hnatyshyn Foundation Prize for Classical Voice. Highlights of her time at Opéra de Montréal included performances of Alice B. Toklas in the Canadian premiere of *Twenty-Seven* (Gordon + Vavrek), Miss Jessel in *The Turn of the Screw* (with Orchestre de l’Agora), Contessa di Ceprano in *Rigoletto* (with René Barbara as Duca), and covers of Marzelline in *Fidelio* (Orchestre Métropolitain), Agnès in *Written on Skin*, and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* (COVID-19 cancellation).

*“ Throughout my years of study, I have witnessed this generous grant fund the projects of my colleagues, who each are dedicated, excellent, and inspirational. To be recognized by the Hnatyshyn Foundation in this way is deeply meaningful, and I am dedicated to applying this grant to my studies to be a more empathetic performer. My goal is to reach audiences all over the world and make each concert-goer feel seen, connected, and transcended by the power of music – this grant will allow me to deepen my study as a physical embodiment of music making and vocal empathy.”*

**Jacob Chung – (Jazz Performance - Instrumental)**



Canadian saxophonist/composer Jacob Chung has garnered several accolades including the 2019 Prince Edward County Jazz Festival Rising Young Star Award and acceptance into the 2018 National Youth Jazz Combo. He is also the recipient of the 2018 Yamaha Passion and Performance Award and the 2017 Rico Golden Reed Award. Jacob has had the honour of sharing the stage with the likes of Dennis Mackrel, Rich Perry, Robi Botos, Jodi Proznick, Mike Murley, and Carn-Davidson 9. Jacob is featured on Jacob Wutzke’s 2019 EP *Stop & Go* and Thomas Steele 10tet’s 2020 EP *10tet*. He also appears on the University of Toronto Jazz Orchestra’s 2020 album *Embargo*.

*“I am deeply grateful to be receiving the 2021 Oscar Peterson Grant for Jazz Performance. This honour provides me the freedom and opportunity to continue honing my craft and pursuing my artistic ambitions without barriers. I would like to thank the Hnatyshyn Foundation for supporting young artists, Mike Murley for nominating me, and my bandmates (Jacob Slous, Evan*

*Gratham, and Felix Fox-Pappas) for their time and talent during the process of recording my submission.”*

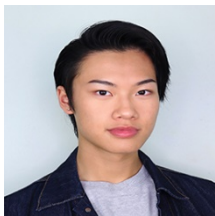
### **Jérôme Zerges – (Contemporary Dance)**



Following his experience in artistic gymnastics and the circus arts, Jérôme Zerges discovered dance at the École de danse contemporaine de Montréal. This gave him a valuable opportunity to meet and work with inspiring performers and choreographers, including Linda Rabin, Lucie Grégoire and Marc Boivin. He has since absorbed a wide range of styles and approaches, helping him to shape his identity as an emerging dance artist in Montréal. This fall, he will begin his final year in the program, as well as an apprenticeship with the company Cas Public.

*“First of all, I am grateful for the honour this scholarship represents, as well as for the generosity of the Hnatyshyn Foundation. This prize validates my choice of career, and will greatly facilitate my third and final year at school, allowing me to concentrate on my studies and my transition to the professional world. I am also grateful for the importance the Foundation places on the arts, encouraging young Canadian artists in their career choices — choices that are not always easy to pursue, but which are so essential to our communities. Thank you.”*

### **Anton Ling – (English Theatre)**



Anton Ling is a 21 year old actor from Toronto and is this year’s recipient of the grant for Acting - English Theatre. Anton is pursuing his studies at York University's Acting Conservatory and will be entering his fourth year this fall.

*“Theatre has played such a huge part in my self-discovery in both the arts and in life. With theatre, I have the opportunity to explore my personal identity, as well as challenge myself to push past obstacles in life. As a Queer Asian artist, I am grateful for the platform that I have. My goal is to be a role model for the next generation of Queer Asian youth, to be a person they can look up to. I strive to inspire them to never give up and to keep pushing forward.”*

## Doriane Lens-Pitt– (French Theatre)



Following her studies at the Montréal theatre school, École Robert-Gravel, Doriane began focusing on Arts and Literature at the post-secondary level. Captivated by the possibilities of combining the performing arts with language, in 2019 she applied to, and was accepted at, the Conservatoire d'art dramatique de Montréal. She has since explored theatre games in their many forms, alongside a number of inspiring artists. Next Spring 2022, she will have completed three years of studies at the Conservatoire. She looks to the future with a keen desire to create new works, while perfecting her skills in singing, dancing and writing. Although her aim is to work in participatory theatre — her true passion — championing all genres, lies at the heart of her artistic approach.

*“What an honour! I would like to thank all my professors and the Hnatyshyn Foundation jury for this vote of confidence. The scholarship will generously support my final year at the Conservatoire. It will also encourage me to act on my artistic aspirations: I want to create, acquire more training, and push the limits of the language of the stage!”*

## Recipient of the 2021 Christa and Franz-Paul Decker Fellowship in Conducting

### Dr. Gohar Manvelyan – Young Conductor’s Fellowship



**Dr. Gohar Manvelyan** began her music studies at the age of four and at five years old, was accepted into the Tchaikovsky Music School for gifted children in Yerevan. At ten, she moved with her family to Moscow where she pursued her studies at the Myaskovsky Music School in both piano and organ. After completing her studies there, Gohar entered the P. I. Tchaikovsky Academic Music College of the Moscow Conservatory where she double majored in piano and choral conducting, graduating with Distinction in both subjects.

In 2005 she obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Music Performance Studies, with Great Distinction and a Graduate Diploma in Advanced Music Performance Studies, specializing in Piano Performance at Concordia University, in Montreal. She was the piano finalist in the Canadian Music Competition of 2008. In 2013, she acquired her first Master's degree in Choral Conducting at the University of Sherbrooke and in 2014, her second Master's degree in Piano Performance at McGill University. In May 2019, Gohar obtained her Doctorate in Choral Conducting with her thesis on *Makar Yekmalyan's Divine Liturgy: The Introduction of Polyphony in Armenian Sacred*.

Dr. Manvelyan has been teaching piano in her studio since 2012, and enjoys working as a collaborative pianist, accompanying singers and instrumentalists at festivals, recitals and auditions.

Since 2019, Dr. Manvelyan has been the Artistic Director and Conductor of *Les Muses Chorale* and the *Saint-Bruno Carousellers Community Choir*. Most recently she has been appointed Artistic Director and Conductor of *La Chorale Harmonia* (an upper voice community choir). In 2021, Dr. Manvelyan was among the top applicants accepted by McGill University to pursue a Master's in Orchestral Conducting, with Maestro Alexis Hauser.

*"Gohar Manvelyan is a uniquely well-rounded musician, holding graduate degrees in both piano performance and choral conducting. Further studies in Orchestral Conducting will now contribute to round off an already highly accomplished set of skills and prepare her for a successful future on the musical stage. Again, we thank the Hnatyshyn Foundation for its generous support which helps us further the development of young Canadian conductors."* Stéphane Lemelin

## **About The Hnatyshyn Foundation**

The Hnatyshyn Foundation is a private charity established by the late Right Honourable Ramon John Hnatyshyn, Canada's twenty-fourth Governor General. The Foundation assists emerging and established artists, in all disciplines, with training and professional development, and promotes the importance of the arts in Canadian society. Its programs are funded by donations from government, other foundations, corporations, and individuals. Since it began programming in 2005, The Foundation has provided more than \$3.7 million in support of Canadian performing artists, visual artists, and curators.

For more information:

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## *Jurors of the 2021 Hnatyshyn Foundation Developing Artist Grants*

### **Classical Music: Orch. Instruments**

Calvin Dyck - Concertmaster - Vancouver Island Symphony, Director - Abbotsford Youth Orchestra

Metro Kozak – Founder of the Sudbury Youth Orchestra (Violonist)

Wayne Toews – Founder of the Conductors School, Sask. (Conductor)

### **Classical Music: Piano**

Elaine Keillor - Musicologist, Carleton University (Pianist)

Michael Kim - Director/Prof. University of Minnesota (Concert Pianist)

Kathleen Solose - Music Professor - University of Saskatchewan

### **Classical Vocal Performance**

Julie Nesrallah - CBC Media Centre (Mezzo Soprano Signer)

Deantha Edmunds-Ramsay - Award (REVEAL) (Classical singer/composer)

Christiane Riel – Professor, Ottawa University (Soprano)

### **Contemporary Dance**

Mark Schaub - Artistic Director, Cirque du Soleil

Tony Chong – Choreographer, Interpreter, photographer

Peggy Baker - Artistic Director, Choreographer, Dancer

### **Jazz Performance: Instrumental or Vocal**

John Geggie - Performance Instructor: Jazz/Classical Double Bass.

Joshua Rager - Pianist, arranger, composer & teacher at Concordia U.

Renée Rosnes - Canadian Jazz pianist and composer

### **English Theatre: Acting**

Bob White - Director of New Plays, Stratford festival, Member of the Order of Canada

Brian Quirt - Artistic Director | [Nightswimming](#)

Sarah G. Stanley - Ass. Artistic Director – English theatre -NAC

### **Théâtre français**

Robert Reid - Directeur/professeur - Théâtre ACCT

Anne-Marie Olivier - Auteure, raconteuse et actrice, Directrice artistique et co-executive directrice, le Théâtre du Trident

Alain Jean - Directeur général – Centre des auteurs dramatique

### **Young Conductor**

Profs. Alexis Hauser, Guillaume Bourgogne and Alain Cazes – McGill University’s Schulich School of Music : Conducting program.



