



JOHANN STRAUSS  
FOUNDATION

CELEBRATING  
**50**  
YEARS



## OUR MISSION

The principle goal of the Johann Strauss Foundation is to encourage and support young musicians from Alberta, who wish to continue and further their advanced studies of music in the cultural environment of Austria.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

The Foundation Raises funds through its annual Johann Strauss Ball and holds recitals of previous scholarship winners every two to three years.

All profits from these events, as well as individual donations, are added to the endowment fund. The endowment currently has a value of \$400,000 and its interest return funds the scholarship program.

## THE BALL

The Johann Strauss Ball is one of the most elegant events in Edmonton drawing over 200 guests and donors each year. Ticket sales support scholarships for young and upcoming musicians in Alberta and the event include a 5-course gourmet dinner as part of the evening.

Experience the live music performances by our scholarship recipients, solo artists, and dance groups. Our guests enjoy dancing, listening to the music, visiting with friends, and meeting new ones.

*Join us at the  
next Johann  
Strauss Ball and  
experience a  
unique, fun, and  
elegant affair.*





## WELCOME to the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Johann Strauss Foundation.

I am honoured to be part of the 50 year history of the Johann Strauss Foundation and applaud the initiative and foresight of our founders.

Four Austrian ex-pat couples met around the Leeb's kitchen table to give birth to the Johann Strauss Foundation—Walter and Annie Leeb, Harald and Elsa Schwarz, Joseph and Melitta Kandler, and Otto and Elfie Werner.

Their vision and seed money has led to over 190 scholarships awarded at a value of \$1 million. What a success to celebrate! With the Johann Strauss Foundation's endowment now housed and administered by the Wirth Institute it is ensured that Johann Strauss Foundation scholarships will be available into the future.

The Foundation continues to build the endowment with proceeds from the annual ball as well as events like today's.

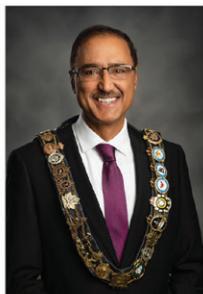
Thank you,  
Karin Fodor, President

*SPECIAL THANKS  
to Dr. Mikolaj Warszynski whose  
generous contribution paid for the venue.*



## *Message from His Worship Mayor Amarjeet Sohi*

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On behalf of City Council and the people of Edmonton, congratulations to the Johann Strauss Foundation on your 50th anniversary celebration.

Edmonton has a strong and vibrant arts community made up of many talented people. Since 1975, the Johann Strauss Foundation has supported young musicians from Alberta who wish to advance their musical studies. The Foundation has provided more than \$1 million worth of scholarships, and their dedication has been a valuable asset in strengthening our city's reputation as an arts and culture hub.

Thank you for supporting our local artists' as they strive to reach their full musical potential; and thank you to the many staff and volunteers who have contributed to the success of the Johann Strauss Foundation over the past 50 years.

May this evening's performances fill your hearts with joy and pride as you celebrate this momentous occasion! Happy anniversary!

*A. Sohi*

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**Amarjeet Sohi**  
MAYOR, CITY OF EDMONTON





# MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER OF ALBERTA

On behalf of the Government of Alberta, it is my pleasure to send greetings for the Johann Strauss Foundation 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

Through nearly 200 scholarships presented since 1975, the Johann Strauss Foundation has helped talented artists from our province continue their musical education and experience Austria's rich musical culture. I deeply appreciate the commitment of past and present foundation members, donors and sponsors to the arts and to honouring Austrian heritage in Alberta. Thank you for your passion, and for the impact you have made on our province's arts industries through the lives and careers of 50 years of scholarship and grant recipients.

Please accept my very best wishes as you gather to mark this incredible milestone. I hope everyone enjoys the opportunity to share memories and hear from past scholarship recipients.

Congratulations and have a wonderful afternoon.

**Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta**





### **KIM MATTICE WANAT *scholarship recipient, 1993***

Kim is a performer, teacher and director. She founded Opera NUOVA in 1998 and has acted as the Artistic and Managing Director since its inception.

Her commitment to sharing her expertise with young singers, actors, teachers and choral directors has earned her extensive recognition including Global Edmonton Television's Woman of Vision Award, The City of Edmonton's Salute to Excellence in the Arts Award and The YWCA's Woman of Distinction in Arts and Culture Award.



### **LEANNE REGEHR *scholarship recipient, 2000 and 2001***

Leanne is a versatile and sensitive pianist who is widely recognized for her intuitive ability to collaborate with other musicians across an extensive range of repertoire.

Leanne's reputation in opera has grown through engagements as a répétiteur with Shreveport Opera, Mercury Opera, and Edmonton Opera. Her dedication to the development of young singers has been shown through her work as a faculty member with Opera NUOVA and Cowtown Opera Summer Academy, as a staff pianist for Sherrill Milnes' VoicExperience Program in Florida, and as a Coaching Fellow at the Aspen Music Festival. She has performed with many organizations including the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, the Okanagan Symphony Orchestra, Pro Coro Canada, Da Camera Singers, Luminous Voices, and the Academy Concert Series in Toronto.



### **MIREILLE RIJAVEC *scholarship recipient, 2002***

Professional singer, instructor, adjudicator, administrator and board member, Mireille has 30 years of experience in the arts, education, and the non-profit sector.

Mireille has been heard on the CBC as a soloist and has appeared with Pop Goes the Opera, the Alberta Baroque Ensemble, the Richard Eaton Singers, Pro Coro Canada, the Edmonton Metropolitan Orchestra, Concordia University Chorus and Orchestra, Opera Breve Vancouver, Western Concert Opera, Opera Lyra Ottawa, and in productions supported by Edmonton Opera. Mireille has also been presenting her cabaret Brie, Baguette and a Broad to a variety of audiences for over 15 years. Presently she is the vocal pedagogue and alto vocal coach for the Edmonton Metropolitan Chorus.



### **MIKOLAJ WARSZYNSKI *scholarship recipient, 1997 and 2000***

A Canadian pianist of Polish origin, his performances of Chopin and Szymanowski in particular have garnered critical acclaim on the world stage. Invitations to many prominent music festivals and societies have led to recent performances in South Korea, China, France, Czech, Poland, and across Canada.

Mikolaj also performs regularly as a piano duo with his wife, Zuzana Simudova. Mikolaj is the Artistic Director of the Mazurka Music and Art Society and serves as the Music Liaison for the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies. His latest record, Mikolaj Warszynski Piano Solo, was just released on the French label Anima Record, featuring works by Haydn, Liszt, Szymanowski, and Chopin.



### **JOSIAH MAXFIELD *scholarship recipient, 2025***

Josiah is a recent graduate of Concordia University of Edmonton, where he is currently completing a certificate in Vocal Pedagogy and Performance. He teaches and performs as a soloist, choral singer, and conductor. He has performed with Pro Coro Canada, the Schola Cantorum of St. Joseph's Basilica, and the Chronos Vocal Ensemble. In May 2024, he joined the National Youth Choir of Canada. With his Johann Strauss Foundation scholarship he studied German Lied and Oratorio at the Mozarteum International Summer Academy in Salzburg.



### **MARNIE GIESBRECHT *scholarship recipient, 1976 and 1977***

Marnie has performed in major cities and universities throughout Canada, the United States, South Africa and Europe. A versatile keyboard artist, she performs regularly as an organ soloist in recitals and with orchestra, and as a choral accompanist and chamber musician. Artistic director of the University of Alberta Davis Concert Organ Noon Hour Series and the Noon Hour Organ Recital Series in Convocation Hall, she has performed and presented students, faculty and guest artists in a broad array of solo and chamber works as well as concertos in Edmonton.

Marnie Giesbrecht and Joachim Segger are Duo Majoya. Their duo repertoire includes piano duets, organ duets, duets for organ and piano, and duets for organ and harpsichord. Concert programs are eclectic and innovative, spanning original and commissioned works to transcriptions and jazz; they usually combine solo and duo works and frequently include improvisation.

# PROGRAMME

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY JOHANN STRAUSS FOUNDATION

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**KIM MATTICE WANAT** – Opera NUOVA  
with performance by Helen Hassinger, Soprano  
& Jeremy Spurgeon, Collaborative Pianist

“Czardas” from *Die Fledermaus* – Johann Strauss (1825 - 1899)

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**LEANNE REGEHR** – Piano

*Romance* – Germaine Tailleferre (1892 - 1983)

*Impromptu*

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**MIREILLE RIJAVEC** – Mezzo Soprano  
with Jeremy Spurgeon, Collaborative Pianist

*Hébé* – Ernest Chausson (1955 - 1989)

*Spinning* – Michael Clark (born 1987)

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**MIKOŁAJ WARSZYNSKI** – Piano

*Étude Op. 10, No. 3* – Frédéric Chopin (1810 - 1849)

*Heroic Polonaise in A-flat major, Op. 53* – Frédéric Chopin (1810 - 1849)

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**JOSIAH MAXFIELD**, Baritone  
with **LEANNE REGEHR**, Collaborative Pianist

“It Is Enough” from *Elijah* – Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 1847)

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**JIN YU** – Baritone  
with **LEANNE REGEHR**, Collaborative Pianist

“Nemico della patria” from *Andrea Chénier* – Umberto Giordano (1867 - 1948)

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**MARNIE GIESBRECHT & JOACHIM SEGGER** – Piano Duet

*Slavonic Dance in E-minor, Op. 72, No. 2* – Antonín Dvořák (1841 - 1904)  
*Hungarian Dance No. 8 in A-minor* – Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)

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**MICHAEL CLARK** – MC

Michael is the *Artistic Director of the Edmonton Pops Orchestra*,  
a composer, director, horn player, and keyboardist  
with a passion for storytelling and community building.



## JOHANN STRAUSS FOUNDATION

15706 94A Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
T5R 5L8

**Karin Fodor, President**  
[kgfodor@telus.net](mailto:kgfodor@telus.net)  
+1 780 238 7623

[johannstrauss.ca](http://johannstrauss.ca)

**fb:** @JohannStraussBall  
**ig:** @johannstraussfoundation  
**x:** @J\_StraussBall