



Westwinds Music Society
Room 38B8 – 2526 Battleford Ave. SW
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

August 19, 2020

Re: Covid-19 and our Fall Program

The word “unprecedented” is becoming heavily used in the last few months. Certainly, we are living a scenario that I’ve never seen before, and that I doubt anyone else has. It is important, however, that we as a board let you, our members, know what our decisions are with regard to our 2020/2021 season

Covid-19 is still pretty new from a medical point of view. The body of knowledge and research is small, and is growing daily, created by a number of sources, some more reliable than others. As a board, we’ve been monitoring the information provided to us throughout the summer, and Jane McLauchlin and I recently met with legal and medical practitioners from our own membership. I want to thank those folks very much for helping us sort through the available information and make some sense of it.

What we now know is that it is too soon for Westwinds to attempt to return to any form of in-person rehearsals. Like you, I want more than anything to be able to make music with the folks in my ensembles, but at this point, the board has decided that the risks of infection are simply too high. We’ve learned that the activities of singing and playing wind instruments “aerosolize” respiratory droplets, making them much smaller and capable of spreading over a much wider area than those from “normal” activities. This makes in-person rehearsals in an enclosed space particularly dangerous. Recently, one example of a single infected person attending a choir rehearsal in the U.S. caused a 90% infection rate within the ensemble. The health and safety of our members is the single most important concern of the board during this crisis, and we are not willing to gamble your safety on a premature start-up to this season. To do so would be nothing short of irresponsible.

So what will we do? Your Artistic Director, Jane McLauchlin, will be working with the directors to create a safe, responsible program to deliver in lieu of regular rehearsals. Your board will continue to monitor Covid-19 research and news as it emerges. Although it seems unlikely at this point, if we can responsibly return to rehearsals in January, we will work toward doing so. In the meantime, I look forward to more great distance learning opportunities from our talented artistic staff.

Best regards,

Bruce Robin
President

Jane McLauchlin
Artistic Director