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# HEALTH ARTS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

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**MEDIA KIT**

2021

A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a man with dark skin, a beard, and glasses, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is seated at a piano, looking down at the keys. The piano is dark-colored, and the background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a window or a wall with a decorative pattern.

# ABOUT US

The Health Arts Society of Alberta (HASA) is a registered charity that elevates the lives of Albertans in care and retirement homes by providing compelling performances featuring local professional artists. We imagine a world where age and disability are not a barrier to accessing the arts.

HASA is one of seven independent societies across Canada, all focused on bringing vibrant artistic experiences to seniors. In addition to live music, HASA has recognized a need to reach seniors isolated by the COVID pandemic, and expanded to include two digital concert platforms that feature weekly performances by local artists. All our concerts and recordings are presented at no cost for the seniors we serve.

We reach over 10,000 Albertans in care with live concerts annually as well as a digital reach to over 50,000 seniors. Our roster of over 100 local, professional musicians performs includes musicians from the Calgary Philharmonic and Edmonton Symphony Orchestras as well as jazz, celtic, world, folk, and blues musicians.

# CONCERTS IN CARE

Launched in 2016, Concerts in Care brings live music to senior care homes and features local artists in an intimate concert setting. Ensembles play different styles of music including classical, opera and jazz for each of the hour-long performances. Concerts in Care is proud to use incredible local artists from all genres, including musicians from the CPO and ESO. All musicians are full-time professionals.

100% of donations go towards artist fees, and concerts are subsidized to keep costs low for the care homes. Executive Director, Meran-Currie Roberts wanted to be able to provide live music to this age group, as age and disability should not be a barrier to accessing the arts. Without Concerts in Care, Albertans in care would have minimal access to professional arts.

Concerts in Care operates in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, and Atlantic Canada.



# Meet the Team

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## **Meran Currie-Roberts, Executive & Artistic Director**

Originally from Victoria BC, Meran Currie-Roberts has a successful career across Canada as a cellist, fundraiser, arts administrator and teacher. She is currently the Executive Director of the Health Arts Society of Alberta as well as a cellist with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra.

After graduating with a B.Mus and M.Mus from the University of Toronto, Meran was an active cellist and teacher in the Toronto area. She frequently appeared with the Kitchener-Waterloo, Thunder Bay, and Windsor Symphonies as well as a five-year stint playing for the Toronto production of The Lion King!

Meran moved to Winnipeg with her young family in 2009, quickly establishing herself with an appointment as Dean of the Manitoba Conservatory of Music and Arts. She was responsible for a music faculty of over forty teachers, as well as programming for locations in Winnipeg and Steinbach, MB. With a subsequent move to Calgary in 2011, Meran was initially responsible for the education and outreach programs at the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. Her fundraising success led to an invitation to move to Alberta Ballet, where she managed corporate and individual giving. Throughout her years as a full-time administrator, Meran continued to play cello, performing with the Winnipeg Symphony and Calgary Philharmonic Orchestras. With her family's move to Edmonton in 2015, Meran was delighted to join the rich cultural fabric that is our city.

In 2016, along with a dedicated board, Meran established the Health Arts Society of Alberta (HASA) as an active musical force in Alberta. HASA is a registered charity that brings over 300 professional concerts to elders in care annually. With a roster of over 100 of Alberta's finest musicians and more than 50 partner care facilities, the organization subsidizes the cost of professional artists so that marginalized elders have access to the same high-quality music that the general public enjoys.

Meran joined the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra after a successful audition in 2018. She is thrilled to "get back to her roots" as a cellist while continuing to further her administrative career and the mandate of the Health Arts Society. In addition to her work with HASA and the ESO, Meran is a sessional instructor at the University of Alberta and is on faculty at the MacEwan Conservatory of Music. She is proud to sit on the Board for the Winspear Centre/Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. She is married to ESO Principal Cellist, Rafael Hoekman, and has two children, Samuel and Anastasia. She spends her spare time training for marathons, baking bread and visiting her public library branch at least twice a week to support her reading habit.

# Meet the Team

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## **Karen Lynch, Board President**

Karen Lynch is a respected community and civic leader, with over 45 years of diverse experience. That's why she has developed a reputation for making things happen and getting things done.

She put herself through the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts by driving trucks as a Teamster on the Syncrude site in Fort McMurray. After senior positions in communications at Alberta College, she brought her passion for community volunteerism to Volunteer Alberta.

As Executive Director, the organization developed into a dynamic and multifaceted resource for engaging Albertans in the non-profit and voluntary sector.

Karen's forte is creating and nurturing networks of people involved in building community leadership. She served on the boards of the Edmonton Public Library, Volunteer Canada and Alberta Ballet, and as the elected President of the Alberta Library Trustees Association and Canadian Parents for French, and chaired the Greater Edmonton Foundation, Alberta's largest provider of homes for low income seniors. She now chairs the Health Arts Society of Alberta and is vice president of GRIT. Karen received the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 for her nonprofit sector leadership. Over 42 years in the political arena, Karen has been involved in over 30 municipal, provincial, federal, leadership and referendum campaigns.

In September 2019, Karen retired from ATB Financial after developing and implementing a successful post-secondary initiative strategy to support student success, recruit the brightest and best, and leverage ATB's presence and investments on Alberta campuses.

Karen is an avid reader, e-bike cyclist and traveler (before Covid!). She is the proud mother of twins (and a new grandmother)– Rowan is a professor at Stanford and Whitney is an entertainment lawyer at Netflix in London UK.

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# Meet the Team

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**Aliya Rota,  
Vice-President**

Aliya is a young professional currently working in the accounting department of Cameron Corporation, an Alberta based real estate development company. Previously she worked in public practice as an auditor with a Big Four firm.

In her various roles she has worked with small, mid, and large-sized clients in ensuring the integrity of the financial information released to stakeholders. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree with a Certificate in Leadership and a Master of Professional Accounting. She successfully completed the Common Final Examination (CFE) in September 2020, a major milestone in her pursuit of a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation, which she anticipates receiving by early 2022.

A competitive dancer from the age of four, Aliya realized she wasn't ready to hang up her dance shoes after high school and chose to continue dancing into her university years with the student-led group, MOD Contemporary Dance Movement.

Aliya experienced first-hand the transformative impact that dance as an art form has on both the individual and society at large, and she remains passionate about bringing the arts to those who do not have the opportunity nor luxury of accessing it through traditional channels.

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# FAQ

## **When did Health Arts Society first start?**

The Health Arts Society of Alberta was created with the support of a decade-old, evidence-based model that works with care homes, musical organizations and individual musicians to bring professional concerts free of charge to the underserved population of elders in care. The Health Arts Society in BC was incorporated in 2006. The value of the program and its success in BC inspired the staff and board to replicate the model across the country. There are now seven independent societies across Canada, including the Health Arts Society of Alberta.

## **When did Concerts in Care launch?**

The Concerts in Care program launched in 2016 and has grown to perform for over 10,000 Albertans in care annually. In addition to live music, HASA has recognized a need to reach seniors isolated by the COVID pandemic, and, in 2020 and in partnership with the Health Arts Society of BC, expanded to include two digital concert platforms that feature weekly performances by local artists

## **How do I get Concerts in Care to come to a care home facility?**

Contact Meran Currie-Roberts at [meran@healtharts.org](mailto:meran@healtharts.org) if you would like to donate a concert to a care home facility or would like Concerts in Care to come to your care home facility. You can also donate online at [healtharts.org/alberta](http://healtharts.org/alberta)

## **What inspired you to start Concerts in Care?**

After successfully launching at Health Arts Society BC, Concerts in Care was launched across Canada to other societies. The main goal was to be able to give access to performances to those who were unable to experience the arts, or for those who were limited to and unable to experience arts culture. Studies have shown that music can be a form of healing, which is why the program launched to be able to perform to people who would benefit from listening to music. Our mission is to be able to give access to the arts to everyone.

100% of donations to the Health Arts Society Alberta goes to providing concerts for residents in care homes, and towards our subscription service so that we can provide virtual performances for free.

## **How do I subscribe to Concerts in Care online?**

You can subscribe for free at [concertsincareonline.ca](http://concertsincareonline.ca)

## **How many artists are usually in a Concerts in Care performance?**

Generally it is usually two to three musicians, but sometimes up to six.





# Contact Us

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