



## On the MaHRC

The Newsletter of the Music and Health Research Collaboratory

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

My apologies for a long break since the last newsletter in the Spring. I hope you understand that the last 11 months have been a very exciting but at times breathtaking whirlwind tour assuming the directorship of MaHRC. However, it has been a very productive transition – thanks to Lee Bartel’s generous welcome and thorough introduction to the impressive support network he had built for MaHRC as its founding and acting director. It is important to remember that Lee Bartel actually started MaHRC and we owe him a great sense of gratitude for his vision. Another big thanks goes to the tremendous personal and administrative support by Dean Don McLean and Acting Dean Ryan McClelland (while the Dean is on leave) and their great team, and finally another big thanks to the outstanding strategic and significant financial support for MaHRC by the Offices of the Provost and the Vice President for Research.

The response by the university and the affiliated health and research units in Toronto have surpassed my expectations. After 11 months we have about 20+ research projects in various stages of development including continuing projects initiated before my arrival, such as RAS in Cardiovascular Rehabilitation (David Alter), several music and pain projects at Mount Sinai (Allan Gordon), and depression research at CANBIND (Sidney Kennedy, Susan Rotzinger, Sakina Rizvi). The 7 projects now underway, approved, or ready to be submitted for approval, are featured on our website. We are also finishing 3 international projects on the neural basis of rhythmic auditory-motor entrainment with Colorado State University and the University of Colorado Medical School, using EEG, MEG, and fMRI. We have gone through our first rotation of renewal and extension of affiliate faculty for MaHRC. MaHRC has 50+ faculty affiliates from campus and off-campus research institutions which also includes 5 new appointments. The number of students training at MaHRC has also grown rapidly over the past 11 months with 2 postdocs, 6 PhD students, and 3 MA students.

The 7 current projects are partnered with the CAMH Neuroimaging Centre (Centre for Mental Health and Addiction), Toronto Western Hospital, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, St. Michael’s Hospital, the Canadian Biomarker Integration Network in Depression (CAN-BIND), the Centre for Autism Research at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, and the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Toronto. However, we continue to push all projects forward in collaboration with all our partners.

For more information on the slight realignment of our research areas at MaHRC please consult our website. We added a basic research neuroscience trajectory of music perception, music cognition, and music production because (a) it provides foundational knowledge for all the other trajectories, and (b) there is considerable student interest for this area. Translational biomedical and clinical research will continue as one of the international signatures of MaHRC. Several new efforts have been extended into the Musician Health area. MaHRC has been co-applicant for a grant at the U.S. Department of Defense for dystonia research, will partner in hosting the next Regional PAMA meeting here in 2017, and I have been asked to supervise a DMA dissertation on performance anxiety and motor skill deterioration. Music Learning will be an important trajectory for music education and music performance but also for health and quality of life across the age span. Finally, we are in discussion and exploring research

direction with music faculty for 'Music, Culture, and Biology' where music composition, ethnomusicology, and interdisciplinary links with the humanities and social sciences could take on important roles.

MaHRC hosted 3 well-attended colloquia with outstanding presentations from Laurel Trainor from McMaster's University, Frank Russo from Ryerson University, and Joseph Schlesinger from Vanderbilt Medical School. We look forward to another set of 3 colloquia in the Spring and will announce dates as soon as possible. We also partnered with the Room 217 Foundation to co-sponsor their Music Care Conference at the University of Toronto. The conference was very successful with excellent presentations, from very practical to clinical to research and science to vibrant music performances. The attendance was very strong and feedback very positive.

Finally, MaHRC will also become a physical reality when it moves into 2000sft of renovated space at 90 Wellesley with room for offices, student work stations, and lab facilities. Anticipated move completion is middle to end of January 2017. We look forward to this big step.

We will announce important dates for 2017 in January. Happy and restful holidays to all of you.

Michael Thaut  
Professor and Director  
MaHRC

