



the WholeNote

Volume 27 No 1
SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 2021

IT'S QUESTION TIME

Blue pages, orange shirts?

**R. Murray Schafer's
complex legacy?**

**What makes theatre
necessary?**

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Volume 27 No 1 | September 15 – November 5, 2021

ON OUR COVER



PHOTO: LUCA PERLMAN

In the last week of June, as the identification of Indigenous children's unmarked graves at former residential schools in B.C. and Saskatchewan was making the truth unavoidable, I took an orange shirt and loosely wove it into a piece of trellis in my Kensington Market front yard, facing along the sidewalk. In time for Canada Day. An orange shirt, in tatters but still somehow in one piece, speaking, if only to myself, to my feelings of helplessness, sorrow, paralyzing complicity.

A bit later in the summer, I took it down and twisted it into a kind of rope, then wove it back into the trellis, more permanently, the way you see it here.

A child came by while I was twisting and weaving the cloth, 16 or 17 years old, maybe, an empty wine bottle in each hand, weaving in a different way. "Do you have a toonie for me?" he asked.

"Sorry, no change" I said, automatically, absorbed in making art. — David Perlman

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Deadline for inclusion in the next print edition index: October 20

Blue Pages and Orange Shirts

DAVID PERLMAN

Fall can be either a rough time or a good one to start feeling hopeful, depending on your point of view. Just like “back to school” means a lot of different things, depending where you are coming from and who is taking you there.

This year in particular, the season of first cold nights and falling leaves brings very mixed feelings. Alongside “fourth wave” pandemic dread that nothing will ever be “normal” again, is a glimmering hope that, yes indeed, there is a chance that some aspects of what we called normal are gone for good, because just like “back to school” what’s called normal depends on where you stand in relation to it.

Blue Pages

Normally, for more than 25 years in fact, the fall issue of *The WholeNote* has been “Blue Pages” time – a special supplement containing dozens of short profiles by music makers and presenters in our community, telling readers about themselves and their plans and hopes for the season underway. Individual profiles could be interesting or not to a reader, depending on your personal musical likes, but collectively they were always more than the sum of their parts, because they gave a comforting sense of who “we” were as a music community, chock-a-block with the familiar, but always offering up something new for the adventurous to explore.

One thing you could count on: when our Blue Pages members – usually more than 150 of them – said in the fall they were planning to do something over the course of the season, that was usually the way it worked out. Not so simple these days, as we all know.

So last year, instead of publishing one official October Blue Pages in the print magazine, we took the Blue Pages online, so music makers could wait till they were ready to announce their plans. Just as important, they’d be able to revise what they’d said if and when the COVID finger of fate summarily disposed of what they had bravely proposed. This year, we are doing the same.

Encouragingly, there are already 40 or so presenters who have taken the plunge: there’s an index of directory members so far on page 29. As always they are more than the sum of their parts: this year reflecting the same mix of hope and dread, tentativeness and caution bravely thrown to the winds, that we at *The WholeNote* and probably most of you are still feeling too.

Choosing a cover for the Blue Pages issue has always been a bit of a challenge: choosing a “flagbearer for the team” has never felt quite right. Why single out some particular ensemble or artist to grace the

cover when the underlying message is that the community’s collective strength is greater than the sum of its individual parts, especially in these complex times?

Collectively, our ideas of what putting on or attending a concert means are being challenged as never before, along with our most comfortable assumptions of what constitutes “our” musical community. The need for good questions is largely what this issue’s cover is about.

Orange shirts

Yesterday (September 14, 2021) the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Red Sky Theatre announced a joint project, titled *Mistatim*, in the works since late winter, to be launched on September 30, now officially Canada’s National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

“[The show] is about a fast-paced horse who will gallop into the hearts of children” says Red Sky Theatre’s artistic director Sandra Laronde. “[It’s] a story of reconciliation that asks its audience, ‘Why tame and punish when we can learn to listen and seek to understand?’” Its release on September 30, she says, “is an opportunity to set the stage for children to dream about the kind of world they want to live in, and an opportunity for us to shift our perspectives in light of historical inequities, and equip young people with the vocabulary to continue these critical conversations about reconciliation and diversity.”

It is a new name for the day, but not a new observance. Under the name Orange Shirt Day it came to be in 2013, intended to promote awareness in Canada about the devastating impact of Canada’s residential school system on Indigenous communities for over a century – an impact that continues today.

As Orange Shirt Day it was a grassroots initiative arising organically from the testimony in spring 2013 of Phyllis (Jack) Webstad from the Stswecem’c Xgat’tem First Nation (Canoe Creek Indian Band) about her orange shirt, given to her by her grandmother and taken from her on entering “the Mission School” at age six or seven in 1973.

I suspect that Orange Shirt Day will not easily be dislodged as the name for the day. National Day for Truth and Reconciliation sounds too much like something you check off the calendar when it’s done – something maybe you only raise a glass to when there is finally, after all the promises, clean drinkable water in every tap.

In my mind, I hear some baffled reader ask What does all that have to do with music? Or theatre, or dance or live art of any kind?

Good question.

Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

Free Event Listings

NEW! Weekly online updates
6pm every Tuesday for
weekend posting

For Volume 27 No. 2
NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2021

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deadline
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IN SINISTRIS MANIBUS

Saturday, October 30, 2021 at 8 pm
Concert season opening night gala

Dukas, *Fanfare pour précéder la Péri*
Prokofiev, Piano Concerto No. 4
Stravinsky, Symphony in Three Movements

REFLECTIONS

Saturday, December 11, 2021 at 8 pm

Tchaikovsky, *Capriccio Italien*
Korngold, Violin concerto, Op. 35
Shostakovich, Symphony No. 15

PASSION AND COLOUR

Saturday, January 29, 2022 at 8 pm

Bizet, *Carmen Suite No. 1*
Ravel, Piano Concerto in G Major
Bartók, Concerto for Orchestra

ENIGMA VARIATIONS

Saturday, March 12, 2022 at 8 pm

Prokofiev, *Lieutenant Kijé Suite*, Op. 60
Chopin, Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 21
Elgar, Variations on an Original Theme

PULCINELLA

Saturday, April 2, 2022 at 8 pm

Stravinsky, *Pulcinella Suite*
Hindemith, *Kammermusik No. 2*, Op. 36

LOVE AND TURMOIL

Saturday, May 21, 2022 at 8 pm

Hindemith, Overture to *Amor and Psyché*
Rachmaninov, Piano concerto No. 4
Prokofiev, Symphony No. 6

METAMORPHOSES

Friday, June 24, 2022 at 8 pm

FATE AND TRANSFORMATION

Saturday, June 25, 2022 at 8 pm

Franck, Symphonic Variations
Shostakovich, Piano Concerto No. 2
Tchaikovsky, Symphony No. 5, Op. 64



Dong Xu



Conrad Chow



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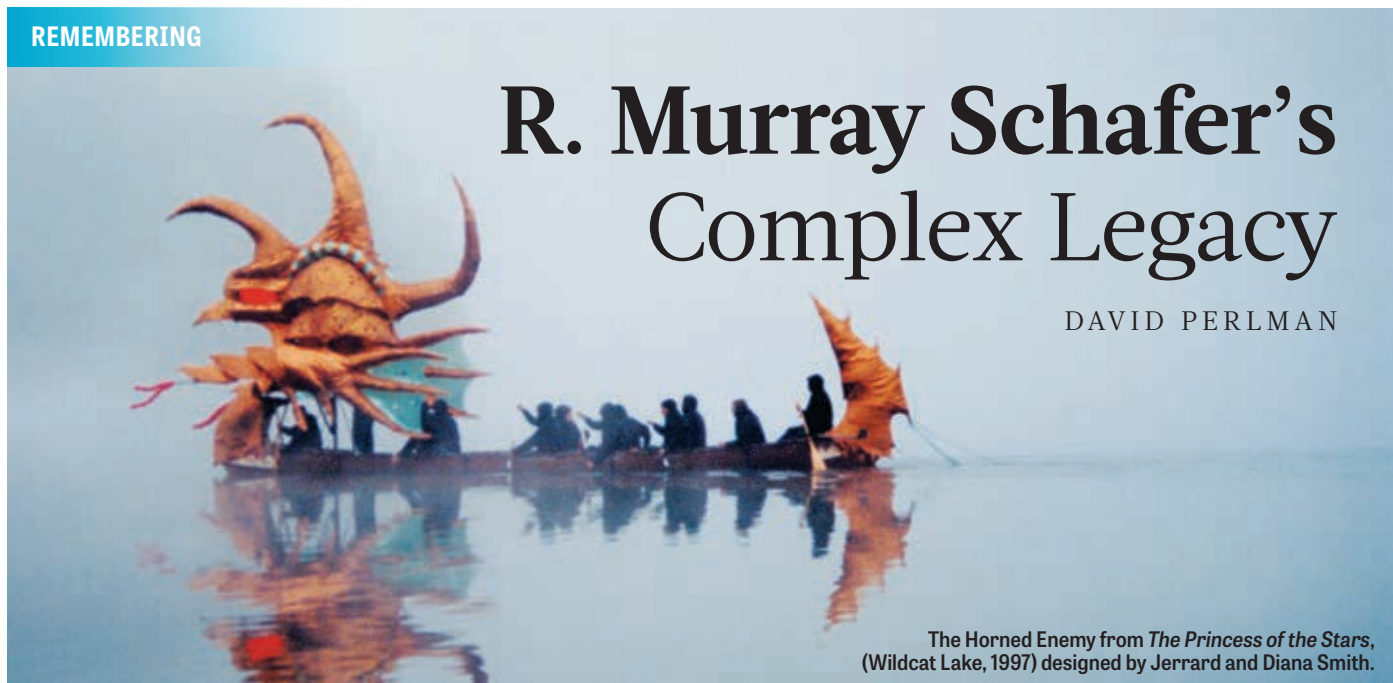
Naomi Wong



J J Jun Li Bui

R. Murray Schafer's Complex Legacy

DAVID PERLMAN



The Horned Enemy from *The Princess of the Stars*, (Wildcat Lake, 1997) designed by Jerrard and Diana Smith.

SEAN HAGERMAN

Murray had the tendencies of a renegade and rascal, but one with a benevolent and honourable artistic purpose in mind,” wrote Esprit Orchestra conductor and music director Alex Pauk, in a September 10, 2021 remembrance for *The Globe and Mail*. And Pauk should know, having, by his own count, conducted more than 80 performances of R. Murray Schafer’s music over the years, with Esprit and other orchestras.



ALEXINA LOUIE

R. Murray Schafer and Alex Pauk, in Schafer's studio.

“He was a consummate artist – a no-holds-barred kind of guy who’d never take on a project or cause without his total commitment” Pauk went on later to tell me. “He’d always be straight and never let you down once he agreed to work with you.”

Esprit was not the start of their relationship though. They had already met, a decade before Esprit was founded – a meeting that Pauk, in his *Globe* remembrance, credits with setting Pauk on his long-term musical path. “[It was] 1973, when I moved to Vancouver and made an appointment to see if he’d hire me for his World Soundscape Project at Simon Fraser University,” Pauk writes.

And Schafer’s response as Pauk remembers it? “Alex, don’t get involved in academia – just go on being a conductor and composer – a much better thing for you to do!”

Esprit’s founding, a decade later, anchored a lifelong relationship between the two men, creating a whole repository of “Murray stories” to confirm Pauk’s “renegade and rascal” characterization of Schafer. One is mentioned in the *Globe* story: the composition *North/White* in which pristine layers of orchestral sound depicting the purity of the Arctic environment are gradually overpowered by sounds of chains and oil drums, culminating with a roaring snowmobile that shows up in the percussion section to represent the deluge of industrial activity brought to Northern Canada by humans. “The audience goes from laughing to spellbound,” Pauk writes, “enthralled at the piece’s powerful, searing visual and sonic imagery having a serious environmental message.”

Another example of what Pauk calls Schafer’s “mischievous ways” dates back to 1971 – Schafer’s piece *No Longer Than Ten Minutes*, commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Strategically placed at the beginning of the concert so as not to unsettle audiences, such commissions had contractual stipulations for the piece’s duration possibly aimed at fulfilling content quotas for government support without too much impact on the audience’s tolerance for new music. “But, audaciously, Schafer’s score specified that at the end of the piece, with its tam-tam fadeouts, each time the audience began applauding, the percussionists should begin a new rolling tam-tam crescendo and fadeout. Each fadeout therefore, would lead to a new wave of sound if the audience began applauding. Thus ensued a loop that could go on for much longer than ten minutes.”

Just naughty or with a deeper intent? “Certainly we can chalk it up to Murray being a trickster with a hilarious sense of humour, but definitely with a deeper intent to make people aware of time, contemplate the piece they’d just experienced and/or consider the relationship between composers, orchestras and audiences? It only works because it is actually a fine piece of music – not just a gimmick. But the audience at the premiere sure was confused!”

The Quiver of Life, 1979

“*Music keeps us in touch with this entire vibrating world both outside and in*,” says Yehudi Menuhin, almost exactly 17:30 minutes into the first episode, titled *The Quiver of Life*, of his eight-part documentary series called, comfortably at the time, *The Music of Man*. As he says the words, the camera cuts from a groomed European cottage garden to a farm hillside near Bancroft, Ontario.

"This is what I would call a hi-fi soundscape, in which the signal to noise ratio is very favourable," says Schafer to Menuhin, as they stand there, listening deeply. "There are very few noises here and therefore every sound around us can be heard, even at a very great distance ... the city by contrast is very low-fi soundscape – that is to say there are so many noises that it's very hard to determine what the signals are."

"Although I had heard of Murray Schafer's soundscapes I never knew what fun they could be," says Menuhin, in voice-over as, a couple of minutes further into the episode, they enter Schafer's Bancroft barn. What follows is six or seven minutes of hilarity interspersed with profundity as they activate the gigantic musical apparatus, built specifically for Menuhin's visit, by riding a teeter-totter in the middle of it. "It's a lesson in listening isn't it," says Menuhin to Schafer as they catch their breath. "It's something every child should have recourse to ... the best training in the world." Schafer's reply reveals the teacher in him: "Actually what they *should* do is *build* one, because when you build a thing you discover the properties of sound that are inherent in each object."

And then he follows with another pedagogical insight: "If you take a group of kids out into the woods, and say 'ok we are going to listen to the sounds' then of course what everyone will do is to talk. So the best way to do it... a very simple thing ... is to say I want everyone to walk one behind the other just out of earshot of the footsteps of the person ahead of you, and the kids love to do that ... listening for the footsteps of the person ahead of them and that puts them in a private cocoon."



Quiver of Life: Schafer with Yehudi Menuhin, in the barn

The Tuning of the World

The road *not* taken by Pauk in Vancouver in 1973 when Schafer declined to hire him for the World Soundscape Project is a path we can follow here in order to understand another aspect of Schafer's complex legacy, his soundscape work and everything that flowed from it. It's a trajectory neatly summarized by Wendalyn Bartley in her story "Valorizing Nature" in the previous issue (Volume 26 no 8) of this magazine – a story which deals with the field now known as sound (or acoustic) ecology.

"This particular field of ecological awareness," Bartley writes, "was originally born on Canadian soil out of the work of composer R. Murray Schafer and his colleagues in the World Soundscape Project (WSP) during the 1970s."

From WSP in the early years came Schafer's seminal book *The Tuning of the World* in 1977 – "Entertaining recreations of soundscapes of past times and places precede a survey of methods for analyzing present-day soundscapes, distinguishing types of sound, and developing an understanding of the effects of sounds on us all" is how the Amazon website describes it now. (At time of writing there are five copies available, used, from \$180 to \$275!)

That book was the catalyst for a Banff conference in 1993, also titled *Tuning of The World*, and, as Bartley explains, the conference in turn "brought about a watershed moment: the birth of the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology (WFAE) and its Canadian spin-off called the Canadian Association for Sound Ecology (CASE)."

Corfu 2011

It's at a WFAE conference in Corfu where we catch up with with Schafer in his own words again, in an informal videotaped waterside interview by Rafael De Oliveira (with a distinctly less favourable signal to noise ratio than the Bancroft hillside in the Menuhin encounter, I should add, but still worthwhile.)

Crossing Listening Paths is the Corfu conference title; a session titled "Schafer's and McLuhan's Listening Paths Convergences, Crossings and Divergences" is presumably the part of the proceedings that De Oliveira, a Brazilian composer with a particular interest in electronic music was taking in. He asks usefully straightforward questions and Schafer's responses are trenchant.

This, for example, when asked how far the idea of soundscape has advanced in thirty years: "When we started using it in Canada people laughed at us. Now I don't think anyone is laughing anymore. The word is used in the language and people even think they understand what it means."

And when asked what future directions research into soundscape as an aspect of acoustic ecology should take, it is Schafer the incipient environmentalist rather than Schafer the composer/sound artist that we hear. "I would say today the only thing I would hope is that we would grow into an organization that would have more influence on the environment," he says. "Directly on the environment and directly on the administrators of the environment."



Schafer in Corfu, interviewed by Rafael De Oliveira

And then he muses on the direction soundscape would have taken if it hadn't been "a bunch of artists" involved at the beginning: "[What if] instead of being associated with art and with music and composition, things like that, it had been associated with other kinds of activity like cleaning up the environment? ... So I think now we just need to continue to expand the meaning of that word. It is a word that is as open as "landscape" is and *everything* is landscape. Well this [gesturing around them] is all soundscape too. We have to study all aspects of the sounds around us."

Equally illuminating is when he is asked how soundscape changed his compositional practice, and Schafer the composer kicks in, downplaying the connection between the two.

"It changed when I left the university and the music program and went to live on a farm, about 200/300 miles north of Toronto, and that changed my whole life," he says. "I wasn't part of a big music department, I didn't have an orchestra at my disposal, I didn't have students, I didn't have anything, and I started writing a different kind of music... performed outdoors rather than in a concert hall. So you have a totally different kind of music. If you think about our music we've been sitting – sitting on our bums for years in rooms called concert hall and playing away like that [mimes a wind instrument] so the music was always very close to the audience. ... It's an entirely different thing, we all know, when you listen for sounds in the distance. It has a different quality and if that sound comes closer to you and then goes away again it is really quite spectacular. You can only do that with the real atmosphere you have."



ANDRÉ LEDUC

The floating stage for *The Palace of the Cinnabar Phoenix*, with the orchestra down in front, Haliburton 2006

Indoors and Out

"As I wrote in the *Globe*, Murray always told me the outdoors, having no walls like those of the concert hall, provided his ideal performing space," says Alex Pauk. "And I've been fortunate to conduct several of the outdoor spectacles that make up his *Patria* series, which will undoubtedly be at the core of his legacy, including *The Princess of the Stars* and two separate productions of *The Palace of the Cinnabar Phoenix* (which we commissioned). But we should remember that in spite of his professed aversion to concert halls, he wrote many brilliant works for the concert stage – his trumpet concerto *The Falcon's Trumpet*, a work with soaring trumpet lines, searing string parts and all musicians spatially distributed throughout the hall; *Scorpius* which provides a sting unlike any other; music of exquisite beauty, tenderness, passion, mystery, allure, like *Dream Rainbow Dream Thunder*; the list goes on.

"As I wrote in the *Globe*, he generated a unique piece every time he composed, with a sure, clear message in every work. All this while staying on top of sonic environmental issues, pioneering educational methods and producing a significant body of books and essays. And through it all maintaining a keen philosophical approach, sense of humour and, yes, demanding attitude about getting things done as he wanted. He leaves a complex legacy."

Signal-to-noise ratios

A complex legacy indeed, and one we have barely scratched the surface of here.

Right after the moment I described in the Bancroft barn, where Schafer describes teaching children to listen for the footfall ahead, is the following exchange: "It's sort of a Red Indian thing!" Menuhin responds. "A Red Indian walk?" "Yes it's a Red Indian walk" Schafer replies and returns to the topic of why it would be good for children to just experiment building something like this because that way you learn about the acoustic properties that are inherent in any object."

"Well the Africans," Menuhin interjects, "the Africans have that approach to any object, I've often noticed that they won't judge by the visual aspect of an object, they'll go to an object and knock it ... "And knock it," Schafer echoes and smiles delightedly. "And knock it," Menuhin repeats. "And they don't judge an object until they hear it."

The signal to noise ratio in that unguarded exchange has changed dramatically over the course of the 42 years since the two men sat on the teeter-totter in Schafer's barn. It's harder to just focus on the delighted essence of an exchange that would end up on the cutting room floor if expressed that way now.

In the necessary reappraisals of legacy, let's hope that "the favourable noise to sound ratio" Schafer spent his life seeking remains a hi-fi soundscape. 🎧

David Perlman can be reached at publisher@thewholenote.com



Thursday, October 21 at 8 pm

Parker Quartet

Limited availability



Tuesday, October 26 at 8 pm

David Jalbert, pianist

Limited availability

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Necessary Theatre is Calling Out to be Created

JENNIFER PARR

ELANA EMER

Back in my M.A. thesis-writing days in the late 1980s at the University of Warwick where I was studying English and European Renaissance Drama, I latched onto the phrase “necessary theatre” to describe a kind of theatre that is calling out to be created, that needs an audience, a shared community, in order to enable us to see the world around us in a new way – so that we are inspired to react, to do something to make the world a better place.

A decade or so later, in 1999, the phrase took on an entirely different resonance, as the title of a book, *The Necessary Theatre*, by Sir Peter Hall, which to this day stands as a powerful manifesto for state support, rather than private patronage, of theatre as an art form. Left to its own devices, he argued, if theatre has to support itself it will stagnate, falling back on the tried and true. (Not that state support is, in and of itself, necessarily a guarantee that stagnation will not ensue, particularly when that support is directed primarily toward large organizations competing for resources, who must meet budget targets for what they do.)

What is equally necessary for the very best theatre to happen, Hall argues, is for permanent companies of actors and technicians, secure in their premises, to feel they have permission to push the boundaries of their art.

So, to merge Hall’s definition with my own, necessary theatre is always uncomfortable, irrespective of how technically polished it is, or how securely funded the companies of players are. What distinguishes it in its discomfort is its vitality – and the current and upcoming season is chock full of music theatre, plays, dance and interdisciplinary works that make us see and think, by giving us space to share the emotions brought to the surface by this time of upheaval.

Shakespeare has Hamlet say, to the players, that the purpose of their work is to hold the “mirror up to nature” (which, granted, lots of theatre often does). But then he goes on to describe an even more essential purpose: to show “the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure.” In other words, to hold a mirror up for us so we can see ourselves within the current state of the world – to make us realize what is happening to us as well as around us.

Is My Microphone On?

The thing that got me thinking along these lines was being struck by the words being used to advertise a new play being presented as part of Canadian Stage’s Dream in High Park season – “powerful, urgent and necessary.” The new play by Jordan Tannahill (with music by Veda Hille) is inspired by, and peppered with, quotes from that unstoppable climate-change warrior, Greta Thunberg, and performed by a group of 17 young Torontonians aged 12 to 17. It aims to galvanize its audiences around the issue of climate change and the world’s seeming inability to do anything about it. The theme is so huge that, for me, the production only scratches the surface of it, although the title *Is My Microphone On?* has continued to resonate. This question that Thunberg posed to the UN was not really asking if her microphone was turned on but if the people she was about to speak to were really going to listen to what she had to say.

The Dream in High Park season as a whole was inspired by necessity; the company, hit with too many unknown variables to plan for a regular Shakespeare play season, had to abandon the tried and true, opting instead for an extraordinary opening up and sharing of resources with many companies of various genres and cultural heritages from around the GTA. These groups have shared the space, bringing with them audiences that may never have been to this part of the city, thereby creating a wonderful gathering of multiple points of view and reactions to our current world in one extremely accessible place.

Surely this is something that can continue on into the future, as, across the country and around the world, artists and arts companies, large and small, grapple with the need to reinvent themselves in the wake of the Black Lives Matter and Me Too protests and the horrific events that triggered them; and with the equally horrifying revelation of Indigenous children’s deaths at Canadian residential schools. A necessary reawakening of our individual and collective consciousness to the inequities existing in the arts as well as other sectors of society is under way.

Stratford

As exciting as the redistribution of artistic resources in the Dream in High Park season, is what can happen when an even larger flagship organization such as Stratford’s classical Shakespearean Festival is called on to respond to the need for change, and responds to the call. With the Festival’s usual tried and true season of

necessity pared down to bare essentials, they went one step further: reimagining the essentials themselves. New faces, new voices, new and lesser-known artists have all come to the forefront as audiences have flocked to the live performances under the canopies outside the Festival and Tom Patterson Theatres.

The two Shakespeare productions have been pared down to the core and given license to reinvent or subvert the usual audience expectations. The American classic, Edward Albee's *Three Tall Women*, is a showcase for a top-notch female creative team and cast led by Diana Leblanc and Martha Henry. Thomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters* is also a showcase for female artists, as well as Indigenous voices. *I Am William* is an anarchic take on our understanding of Shakespeare using adventure and music to subvert expectations and, along the way, empower young watchers to follow their dreams. And Marcia Johnson's *Serving Elizabeth* opens our eyes to the many layers of the story and points of view around Elizabeth II's visit to Kenya in 1952, and to the rewriting of that history now.

On the musical side, the commissioning of five new cabarets has opened the doors to more vital conversations, told through a mix of song and spoken text, each curated by a different artist or team. They have been performed live under the Festival Theatre canopy but, like the plays, also filmed for viewing online on the Festival's STRATFEST@HOME streaming service. The first cabaret, *Why We Tell the Story*, curated and directed by Marcus Nance who also performs, was first seen in an earlier version as part of the 2019 Meighen Forum. Experiencing this passionate journey through the African-American musical canon interspersed with the voices of legendary Black poets, it is obvious why this show was invited back. The second cabaret, *You Can't Stop the Beat*, was equally strong and passionate but focused on the genre of musical theatre itself, wonderfully curated and directed by Thom Allison to celebrate how musicals have always been "the ultimate tonic for the soul in good or troubled times." Three more cabarets follow on a variety of themes as well as introducing lesser-known and new Stratford performers to audiences.



DAVID HOU

Why We Tell the Story: (from left) Neema Bickersteth, Robert Markus, Marcus Nance and Vanessa Sears, in rehearsal

Joining the dance

Meanwhile, the dance world also seems to be exploding with new work as a way to explore our emotional experiences of the last year and a half and the urgent issues that are facing humanity. Taking this to a new immersive personal level is *Touch*, a world premiere by dancer and choreographer Guillaume Côté and multimedia artist Thomas Payette (who collaborated previously on *Frame by Frame* for the National Ballet of Canada). Produced by Lighthouse Immersive at 1 Yonge Street, where many have already experienced the immersive Van Gogh exhibit, *Touch* aims to go beyond that event, combining live dance, music and multimedia projections into an all-encompassing experience that brings us back to what we have been deprived of during the pandemic – the basic human need to touch and hug each other.

Back in High Park, the dance: made in canada/fait au canada Festival is presenting *InTO Focus*, a program of several works that range from a personal human response to the deprivations of the pandemic, to the more political, such as Lua Shayenne Dance Company's *WAVES*

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/ *VAGUES* – a new work of dance, song, music and words (with live musicians on stage) that takes an honest look at the arduous road to justice and unity. Digidance is also back this fall, with a screening highlighting the state of the environment in Brazil with Deborah Colker's *Dog Without Feathers*, in which the mud- and dust-covered dancers explore the beauty and destructive impact of Brazil's Capibaribe River.

Audio immersion

Focusing on sound rather than sight, two more productions coming up this fall grabbed my interest as necessary theatre calling out to be created – focusing on important local historical events that yet relate very clearly to our lives today.

The Hogtown Collective take us on an audio journey back to *The Christie Pits Riot* in 1933 when “Toronto the Good became suddenly ground zero for a series of brazen anti-Semitic acts... with devastating consequences.” Created by Sam Rosenthal and Drew Carnwath as an audio walking tour, the listener is immersed in the story of one Jewish boy's personal journey through the old neighbourhood to the scene of the crime: the notorious Christie Pits ballpark itself.” Described by the creators as “an engaging and dynamic story of innocence and experience; of redemption and hope”, the story will be enhanced by original music written by Measha Brueggergosman including the new song

Champions by Brueggergosman and Lennie Gallant.

Coincidentally, using the same format of an audio-immersive historical walking tour, the Luminato Festival (transposed from June to October) is highlighting a more recent fraught political event, the riots around the G20 Summit in Toronto in June, 2010. *Henry G20*, conceived and directed by Christine Brubaker and co-written by Brubaker and Constantine X. Anastasakis, takes Shakespeare's famously either pro- or anti-war play, *Henry V*, as a starting point, freely adapting and adding to the original to explore the unanswered questions from that fateful weekend where hundreds of people, protesters and innocent bystanders were arrested and detained as part of the largest mass arrest in Canadian history. The PodPlay, with augmented reality experiences that are tied into the walking tour, can also be enhanced by Henry G20 Protest Radio, a curated combination of music and audio memories of the G20 demonstrations that can be played in between the theatrical chapters of *Henry G20*, as you travel between the locations in the city where the drama actually unfolded.

Vital signs

The strong pulse of this rich and varied season of necessary theatre in live and digital formats is a strong answer to tough questions: How can artists help to keep our world vital and safe for all? How can we keep our hearts up while facing the realities of the world around us?

How better to share these stories with each other, experiencing all points of view, all heritages, all cultures, all possibilities, than (in the most fundamental ways) to make a virtue of theatrical necessity?



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QUICK PICKS

To DEC 5: All live and virtual shows at the Stratford Festival. www.stratfordfestival.ca

To SEP 29: Canadian Stage Dream In High Park Season continues. www.canadianstage.com/shows-events/dream-in-high-park

SEP 23 to 25: dance: made in canada/fait au canada Festival. *InTO Focus*. Dream in High Park (PWYC). Plus new podcast The D-Word (free) at dancemadeincanada.ca/festivals beginning SEP 20.

SEP 11 to OCT 29: Seventh edition of Fall for Dance North (FFDN). Live and digital array of original livestreams, global dance films, in-person outdoor performances, installations and more. ffdnorth.com.

SEP 18 to OCT 17: Looking for the Dance – The Photography Exhibit of Mikhail Baryshnikov at the Lighthouse Artspace at 1 Yonge St. artbylighthouse.com.

SEP 29 to OCT 17: *Touch*, presented by Lighthouse Immersive in association with Côté Danse at 1 Yonge St. Running time is 45 minutes. artbylighthouse.com.

SEP 29 to OCT 11: *Dog Without Feathers*. Choreography by Deborah Colker, presented by Digidance. Event link: harbour-frontcentre.com

SEP 23 to OCT 10: *Garden of Vanishing Pleasures*. Soundstreams and Crow's Theatre. Songs by Cecilia Livingston and Donna McKeivitt with texts from filmmaker Derek Jarman's journals. Digital, tickets@crowstheatre.com

SEP 30, LAUNCH DATE: The Christie Pits Riot, radio drama podcast. Find the Audio Walking Tour app at: www.hogtown-experience.com

SEP 30 to OCT 2: Uncovered: The Music of Dolly Parton. Live at Koerner Hall and online; the show is being filmed for further online viewing later from NOV 24 to DEC 11. www.musicalstage-company.com

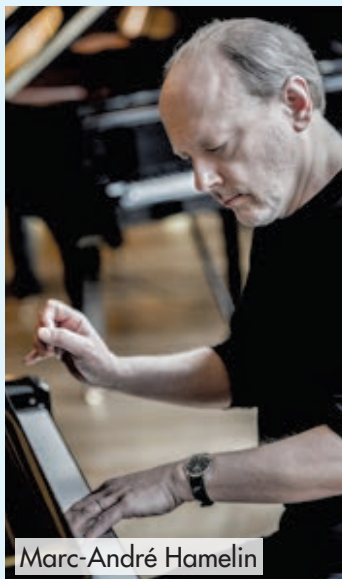
OCT 14 to NOV 11: Luminato: *Henry G20* and other events www.luminatofestival.com

Jennifer Parr is a Toronto-based director, dramaturge, fight director and acting coach, brought up from a young age on a rich mix of musicals, Shakespeare and new Canadian plays.

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SMALL WORLD MUSIC @ 25

ANDREW TIMAR

Twenty-five years is a respectable milestone for an organization dealing with culturally diverse music, and Toronto's veteran leader in this category, Small World Music, is celebrating in style. It has launched "25 for 25", an ambitious yearlong festival, with the initial September 13 to 19 event lineup consisting of eight online and in-person concerts, plus a panel discussion, *Beyond Community*, co-presented with BLOK (Eastern European music summit). Three of the events are online, three in-person at Lula Lounge and the rest at DROM Taberna with its patio/parking-lot stage; the musicians being showcased range from emerging to well-known, and include both local and international talent.



Alan Davis

The Founder's Journey

When I reached Alan Davis, Small World Music's founder, on his cellphone he was relaxing at a Georgian Bay cottage, BBQ-ing and soaking in the last hot days of summer. His comments in our wide-ranging talk on his "baby," Small World Music, were understandably framed within his founder's perspective. He was eager to share thoughts on his music curating career, with its roots going back to his days at Toronto's Music Gallery beginning 35 years ago.

As long as I've known Alan, his passionate appetite for musical exploration and expression has been fundamental. I reminded him

that he was among the first cohort to join Gamelan Toronto in 1995 when I was invited to organize that large community music group by the Indonesian Consulate General, Toronto. "It's very funny that you mention that," he replied, "because I literally just had a conversation about it with a new friend last evening, ... about my music practice and how it intersects with Small World, about playing gamelan at the Indonesian Consulate."

Going further back, Davis grew up on rock music and came to love jazz, appreciating its complexity and nuance as a kit drummer. "Frankly, I was never a trained musician, but was intuitive and very enthusiastic. In fact right now at the cottage I have my clarinet, darabuka, cajon and glockenspiel, and a good friend is coming tomorrow with his bass guitar, keyboard and accordion to jam. So I'm still doing and thoroughly enjoying music all these years later!"

"I think it's not an exaggeration to say that to a certain extent I channelled my desire and passion to be a musician into Small World. I probably realized I didn't have what it took to be a professional musician, but putting music on stage gave me almost the same feeling. That musical charge never gets old."

Small World origins

The impetus to start Small World didn't arise from nothing, David tells me. "It really started well before SW, because while working at the Music Gallery in the late 80s and 90s I had an opportunity to put music from other cultures on its stage. Coming from a rock background, I discovered this music through people like Brian Eno and Peter Gabriel, especially through the latter's WOMAD festival, which was a huge personal influence."

Among his pivotal memories, he says, is watching the Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan family qawwali party at Harbourfront Centre's WOMAD. "I found myself watching them in performance in an intimate room where I was no more than ten metres from the star singer himself, being profoundly moved. I realized I may not understand what he was saying but the spirit and energy in the room was so powerful that it

In the spring of 1997, I presented the first concert under the name Small World featuring the Vancouver Vietnamese duo Khac Chi, along with a Georgian choir. That's the concert I'm tagging as the beginning of our 25-year run. — Alan Davis

left a lasting impression. It really opened my eyes, ears and mind to the power of 'pure' musical experience.

"Essentially what it came down to was that I was learning about what was going on in the world outside my own purview, my own culture. Furthermore, I wanted to share that powerful experience and I had a platform to do it at the MG. So that's where I started."

After a decade at The MG it was time to move on, he says. "Coincidentally, it was exactly at that moment when Montreal booking agent and friend Patrick Darby called and suggested I arrange a concert for a touring Vietnamese group on my own. I'd never considered such a thing, so I slept on it. But in the spring of 1997, I presented the first concert under the name Small World featuring the Vancouver Vietnamese duo Khac Chi, along with a Georgian choir. That's the concert I'm tagging as the beginning of our 25-year run."

Next steps

Our conversation turns again to November 1997, when he and I collaborated on the Gamelan Summit in Toronto. "SW was still in its infancy," he says, so it was actually a very ambitious project with over 75 performers from across Canada and the US playing in three Harbourfront concerts and participating in a week of workshops



DUO KHAC CHI

Duo Khac Chi, more recently

at the Indonesian Consulate General. Luckily it turned out to be a tremendously successful 'kickstarter,' if you will, showing everyone that we're capable of bigger and bolder endeavours. It led to more growth."

But it wasn't all smooth sailing by any means. "Up until the 2000s I was running everything out of my house. It was a one-man shop

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From left: Hossein Alizadeh, Mohammad Reza Shajarian, Kayhan Kalhor and Homayoun Shajarian, in 2005

where I was doing everything. A moment which illustrates that was at a show at The Reverb at Queen and Bathurst where I booked an awesome Tuvan rock band called Yat-Kha. Naturally, I was doing box office (that is after I had shopped for food for the band, because I didn't have a volunteer pool at the time). But when I looked at the mere handful of people in the room I felt totally despondent, thinking, 'Why am I doing this? Nobody really cares.' Ready to throw in the towel, at those low moments I really wondered what the hell I was doing. But then you persevere."

An important milestone, he says, was getting SW's first Trillium grant which enabled him to rent office space, to hire an administrator, to formalize the SW structure, and to move SW out of his house. "Let's not forget that those early years were marked by tremendous sacrifice. As you'd remember, the arts were a place of poverty; we lived in a culture of poverty. We were the last to be paid; everything had to be paid first, the artists, marketing and venue. Fortunately things have changed substantially. Today SW is doing comparatively well, with a team of around a dozen people."

Another turning point in SW's growth was his connection to top Iranian artists through two close friends. "Through them I was able to present the great vocalist Mohammad-Reza Shajarian, and virtuoso kamancheh and setar player Kayhan Kalhor and their colleagues on major stages."

Suddenly SW was functioning at an entirely other level in terms of audience exposure, professionalism and revenue. "We took them to the Toronto Centre for the Arts, sold out shows there, and the next year to Roy Thomson Hall. On the other hand as you know too, doing concerts for Canadians is one thing, but doing them for internationals is another entirely. Suddenly you're talking about visas, hotels, transportation, accommodation, hospitality, special meals and international currency exchanges."

All the stress he took on was exhausting at times. "For instance, at that Toronto Centre for the Arts sold-out Shajarian show, I sat in an usher's chair at the back because there were no house seats – thankfully. But when the wave of emotion from the band on stage reached me, I literally began to weep from feelings of being overwhelmed, combined with release and relief offered by the power of the music. At the intermission a woman I knew well came up and said, 'Congratulations. But have you been crying?' 'Yes, I guess I have,' I confessed. I still can't help feeling very emotional when I tell these stories. I still can't say what made me keep doing it. Insanity or sheer passion for the music?"

From there to here

Two major factors have changed the Toronto scene substantially since those early years, he explains, dictating that SW change shape. "For me the key change is that SW today is a more diversified organization, in which presenting is only one thing that we do," he says. He points to two key changes. "First of all, in the last two decades



The eighth of Small World Music's "25 for 25" concerts features Beny Esguerra, at Lula Lounge.

other organizations have entered the arena. Today we have the Royal Conservatory, Koerner Hall, Aga Khan Museum and others who can put diversity on stage and make money at it. ... It was a pretty open field back when I started. Today it's a more competitive and thus difficult environment."

The second factor he points to is that the communities themselves are much more organized and better equipped to do it themselves. "In this context *Tirgan* comes to mind. It's the largest Iranian festival in North America happening right here in Toronto. It's clear the Persian community doesn't need SW's help. They can deal with it themselves. Community music presentation has shifted significantly over the years."

One way SWM has responded to this changed situation has been with intensive strategic planning, an area where he points to SW's new executive director Umair Jaffar's pivotal guidance in formalizing what they had been doing before. "A good example is artist development. I've always helped, advised, mentored and tried to nurture artists who come to this country and are launching their careers. Now we have a structured program like Emergence that has funding just for that."

Another pivotal moment for the company happened in 2014 when they opened the Small World Centre in the Shaw Street Artscape building. "Although the room is small, it has provided a platform for many young and emerging artists to stage their first professional show, also a place to do high quality audio recording and shoot video. Today we have a near state-of-the-art video production facility by virtue of the emergency COVID funding from various funders."

But some things don't change, even after 25 years. "Even during times when the challenges feel overwhelming, a special, sometimes transformative moment for me begins when the band goes on stage. It's particularly when the audience gets up to start dancing or roars its approval that I can really relax and get the sense of, 'Oh yeah, this is why I do this.' And it still feels beautiful every time ... it still feels beautiful every time."

Returning for a moment to the first eight events of SW's "25 for 25", Beny Esguerra and New Tradition Music, based in Toronto, close the lineup with a Sunday, September 19 concert at Lula Lounge. Esguerra mashes up bilingual socially conscious spoken word, Columbian kuisi bunsu (flute), turntablism, beatboxing and salsa with Afro-Cuban and Colombian drumming. Opening the evening is Nimkii Osawamick from Wiikwemkoong, Unceded Territory in Ontario, a renowned hoop dancer and drummer/singer who blends traditional singing, drumming and dancing with contemporary music and modern dance.

Please visit the Small World Music website for detailed information on the musicians, venues, tickets and times. **●**

Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer. He can be contacted at worldmusic@thewholenote.com.



Take the plunge now? Or wait and see?

PAUL ENNIS

As various musical presenters of all sizes either hunker down for another few months or take a deep breath and take the plunge for a return to live concertizing, it's particularly heartening to see **Music Toronto**, going into their 50th season, among those diving right in. So I started out by speaking to Music Toronto's artistic producer, Jennifer Taylor, for her take on the new season.

WN: With the Parker Quartet opening the strings section of your season on October 21 and David Jalbert opening the piano portion on October 26, I wonder if you can tell me how you approached building your line-up for this special anniversary. You must have acted during the depths of the pandemic.

JT: We originally planned years 49 and 50 together – 2020/21 and 2021/22 – choosing many artists we considered friends of the house, so much of the planning was done before the pandemic. Then COVID meant we cancelled all of 2021/22. So some artists – such as Stephen Hough, Vanessa Benelli Mossell and the Miró Quartet – we had planned in 2020/21 we asked to move to 2021/22.

We always welcome back the St. Lawrence Quartet and the Gryphon Trio; we also wanted to include the Lafayette and Ensemble Made in Canada. The legendary Juilliard are enjoying a renaissance in the 75th year of the franchise, and the young all-female Korean quartet, the Esmé, fulfil our mandate to always introduce new artists to Toronto. The Parker gave us a bright and energetic opening, and we asked David Jalbert to play the work we commissioned from Kelly-Marie Murphy for our 50th.

SIMON FRYER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Vanessa Benelli Mosell

What alchemy produced the wonderful piano concerts? I'm especially pleased that you will be bringing Benjamin Grosvenor back for a fourth time.

We are pleased and proud to present both Stephen Hough and Marc-André Hamelin, giants of the Hyperion label, in one season – thanks in Stephen's case to COVID re-dating. And we have liked

Benjamin Grosvenor since we first heard him in 2014; we are delighted he is sharing his rise into the stratosphere with us. David Jalbert is an established Canadian virtuoso whom we have enjoyed hearing, and Vanessa Benelli Mosell is a rising star especially in Europe as recitalist, chamber musician, orchestral soloist and conductor. We like variety in repertoire and interpretation.

How will the current COVID protocols affect your recitals? Will all attendees need to be double vaccinated? Will mask wearing be required?

We have just been informed that we are allowed 50% capacity of the Jane Mallett Theatre, so seating is not as limited as we feared. The St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts is owned by the city and managed by TO Live; we will be following all the public health advice and regulations. Proof of full vaccination will be required (or a valid medical exemption); masking and social distancing will be required; there will be no concession service – and no intermission cookies!

Will there still be an intermission?

Yes (the call of nature...).

How many seats are you permitted to sell?

Absolute max 250, but probably fewer because of seating patterns and distancing.

The Parker Quartet's program includes works by Schubert, Di Castri and Schumann. As well as the Kelly-Marie Murphy world premiere, David Jalbert will perform a selection of Debussy, Ligeti and Prokofiev.

RCM Presents

The first time violinist Gidon Kremer heard Astor Piazzolla play, he was deeply moved.

He was watching a videotape with Manfred Gräter of the West German Radio and Television Network. Gräter was a good friend and the person who introduced Kremer to Piazzolla's music. Whenever Kremer was on tour in

Europe, he never missed an opportunity to stop off in Cologne and dig around in Gräter's videotheque, "a treasure trove stored in a dark room." Gräter offered to arrange a meeting with Piazzolla once he realized the excitement Piazzolla's music generated in Kremer but died before the meeting could take place. Kremer wrote the booklet



Gidon Kremer



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notes – excerpted from his book *Obertöne* – for his first recording of Piazzolla's music for Nonesuch in 1997. The first time Kremer heard Piazzolla play, on that videotape, and later at a concert in Paris, he felt “enveloped in an atmosphere full of energy – a truly unbelievable force which only a few contemporary composers elicit.”

“When I play his music,” Kremer wrote, “I try to understand it from within in order to create a unity with the composer... In my view Astor's music represents an enormous playing field in which the most divergent emotions are expressed in highly artistic yet simple ways. Piazzolla was daring, honest and uncomplicated, all at the same time... I believe in [Astor Piazzolla's] music because it evokes a better world through the language of nostalgia. All of that – in one single tango.”

On October 31, Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica's Koerner Hall program – from Bach to Piazzolla – will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Astor Piazzolla and 75th birthday of Kremer with a special homage to Glenn Gould.

The Kremer concert is one of more than 90 (including 40 rescheduled from the 2020/21 lineup) in the recently announced 2021/22 season. Keep your ears open for the Dover Quartet's recital on October 24 with Beethoven's Op.18 No.2 and Op.130 quartets book-ending Samel Barber's touching setting of Matthew Arnold's poem *Dover Beach* (sung by baritone Davóne Tines). The Dovers will perform Op.130 (with its ineffable *Cavatina*) finishing up with the *Grosse Fuge*. On November 5, the acclaimed Jerusalem Quartet will team up with Pinchas Zukerman and Amanda Forsyth for sextets by Brahms and Dvořák.

Over the next several months look for Jan Lisiecki's sixth Koerner Hall appearance which mixes Chopin's etudes with his nocturnes, juxtaposing them in an unusual way; also the Danish String Quartet; Joshua Bell in recital with Peter Dugan; Joyce DiDonato; and Gautier Capuçon accompanied by Jean Yves Thibaudet.

Music in the Afternoon and more chamber music

The venerable **Women's Musical Club of Toronto (WMCT)** begins their 124th season on September 30 with a recital by violinist Blake Pouliot and pianist Hsin-I Huang. This recital is a delayed celebration of Pouliot's WMCT Career Development Award, a welcome opportunity for the Music in the Afternoon audience to experience the passion, technique and romantic fervor Pouliot brings to his musical approach. The program features music by Bach, Janáček and Prokofiev and is available in-person or as a livestream.

Music at St. Andrew's – at the corner of Simcoe and King – resumes its 45-minute free noontime series on October 1, with Younggun

Kim at St. Andrew's Bösendorfer Imperial grand piano. The program includes a Haydn sonata.

INNERchamber Ensemble welcomes autumn on September 19 at Revival House in Stratford. The program features Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* Op.73 (arr. Aribert Reimann), Ibert's *Deux Interludes* for flute, viola and harp and works by Paul Raede, Bizet and others, performed by Liesel Deppe, flute; Peter Shackleton, clarinet; Julia Seager Scott, harp; and Judith Davenport, viola. Available in-person or livestream.



Blake Pouliot

OPUS 3 ARTISTS

**FRIDAYS
OCT. 1 -
NOV. 12
12:10 P.M.**

**WE'RE
BACK!**

**FRIDAY
NOONTIME
RECITALS**

- OCT 1** **Younggun Kim** piano
Haydn, Sonata E-flat major
- OCT 8** **Jordan Klapman** jazz piano
Seasonal favourites
- OCT 15** **Brian Hsu** piano
Liszt, *Années de pèlerinage* II
- OCT 22** **Bedford Trio** violin, cello & piano
Schubert, Piano Trio, Op. 100
- OCT 29** **The Ezra Duo** viola & piano
Schumann, *Märchenbilder*, Op. 113

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Tomoko Inui

The Sweetwater Music Festival – September 16 to 19 in Owen Sound – features artists from the Rosebud String Quartet to Tamar Ilana & Ventanas; Tom Allen and Patricia O’Callaghan to the sublime violinist Edwin Huizinga (the Festival’s artistic director) and pianist Philip Chiu. Available in-person or livestream.

The **Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society (KWCMS)** has its fingers crossed for their new season which begins October 2 and 3 with the fifth installment of the Penderecki String Quartet’s traversal of Beethoven’s complete string quartets – Opp.132 and 130 (including the *Grosse Fuge*). Current COVID protocols prevent KWCMS from using their usual venue, the Music Room, so they have moved the concerts to First United Church in Waterloo. Montreal-based pianist Tomoko Inui leads a quartet of musical friends in piano quintets by Dvořák (ever popular) and Bartók (a rarely performed curiosity) on October 16. Eminent Canadian pianist Robert Silverman delves into Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier, Book One* on November 7.

OFF CENTRE
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Season Update

We are busy planning 3 exciting concerts for the 2021/2022 season:

- **Late January**
- **Late March**
- **Early June**

Specific dates and more information will be available on our website in early October.

www.offcentremusic.com

Sinfonia Toronto

Sinfonia Toronto will kick off its 23rd season with a free Ontario Culture Days concert for both in-person and virtual audiences on October 2 at 3pm in the main lobby of Meridian Hall, 1 Front Street East. “This will be an hour of popular gems, favourite melodies from Mozart to Shostakovich,” says music director Nurhan Arman. “It will be an occasion for audiences around the world to access our free livestream ... in a casual concert in the spectacular lobby of Meridian Hall.” Free registration for the livestream is now available through Eventbrite.

The regular season, featuring guest soloist Igor Pikayzen, begins at the George Weston Recital Hall on October 23. The program opens with Toronto composer Alice Ping Yee Ho’s tribute to health workers, *Resurrected Angel II*, continuing with Bach’s *Violin Concerto No.2 in E Major*, Wieniawski’s *Faust Fantasy for Violin and Orchestra* and concluding with Tchaikovsky’s breathtaking *Souvenir de Florence*.

Community Orchestras

A handful of community orchestras are looking forward to getting back on stage after their concertizing was sharply curtailed by COVID-19. **Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra**, a volunteer community orchestra which has been based in Scarborough since 1986, returns to the P.C. Ho Theatre October 2. Pratik Gandhi conducts Beethoven’s *Symphony No.6 “Pastorale”* and Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* with guest soloist Samantha Yang. Christine Fong picks up the baton on November 6 for Brahms’ unjustly underrated *Symphony No.3* and Dvořák’s *In Nature’s Realm*. Fong and Yang are among the finalists auditioning for the currently vacant conductor’s post.



Kristian Alexander and artists of the Kindred Spirits Orchestra

The **Kindred Spirits Orchestra** is a critically acclaimed, auditioned-based civic orchestra whose new season begins on October 30 in the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts with music director Kristian Alexander leading the orchestra in Stravinsky’s *Symphony in Three Movements*, Dukas’ *Fanfare pour précéder La Péri* and Prokofiev’s *Piano Concerto No.4* for the left hand performed by pianist Dong Xu.

Active since 1972, and under the direction of Denis Mastromonaco since 2013, the **Mississauga Symphony Orchestra** – with a combination of 90+ community musicians and professional section leads – has earned a reputation as the best hybrid orchestra in Canada. They are looking forward to a triumphant return to Hammerson Hall on November 30; complete repertoire will be announced shortly.

Orchestra Toronto, a community orchestra under the musical direction of Michael Newnham, is looking forward to welcoming audiences back to their home stage at the George Weston Recital Hall on October 24 for a program of works by Rossini, Respighi and Mendelssohn (*Symphony No.5 “Reformation”*). **●**

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.

For the clubs it's not a moment too soon

COLIN STORY

Ah, September. Across the country – as books are cracked open, backpacks are zipped up, and “back to school” carries a whole different set of connotations: a pervasive sense of COVID-related anxiety weighing heavy on the collective national consciousness. It still doesn't quite feel as though things are getting back to normal. It does, however, feel as though we're gradually heading in the right direction, further potential lockdowns notwithstanding. Let's hope so: for the venues I cover here, it's a knife-edge situation still.

As I have documented in multiple pieces over the last year, the pandemic has been exceptionally difficult for Toronto's club scene, not least, as I outlined in a recent article, the exorbitant insurance premiums that venues have been asked to pay this year. For many venues, this development intensified existing financial hardship, introducing yet another element of precariousness to the Sisyphean task of hosting live music.

The changing season, however, brings with it a kernel of hope. Though jazz venues don't follow the same seasonal cycle as classical institutions, the relatively recent date – July 16 – of the return of live music means that this fall represents a potential turning point for clubs. Having had the summer to hire/re-hire staff, implement new safety protocols, make changes in payment policies, and attend to the myriad other demands of the reopening process, clubs are as ready as they'll ever be to get back to business, whatever that may look like as the fall progresses into winter.

Makeover for The Rex

In the immediate future, however, things are looking good, at least where live shows are concerned. At The Rex – which has implemented a new stage-centred layout (with an accompanying tiered-seating/pricing system, in which seats at the rear of the venue have a lower cover charge than those adjacent to the stage – a new series has emerged. The Rex JUNO Artist Appreciation Series, as it's called, is funded by FACTOR Canada, and entails a new kind of booking for The Rex: a four-night engagement, from Wednesday to Saturday at 8:30pm every week. This format, of course, has a rich history, and a multi-night booking was once the standard for many clubs. (It still is, in a few notable venues, including the Blue Note, in Manhattan.) In Toronto, there are a number of clubs that have had the occasional multi-night booking, but these have typically been limited to three consecutive evenings, usually reserved for high-profile visiting artists; and it will likely be some time until we see regular visits from international artists.

For The Rex, the JUNO Series is a smart move, for multiple reasons. The first: the JUNO name is a great way to apply a bit of brand recognition to their bookings, providing audiences new and old with an easy entry point (though, of course, it is not hard to hear JUNO



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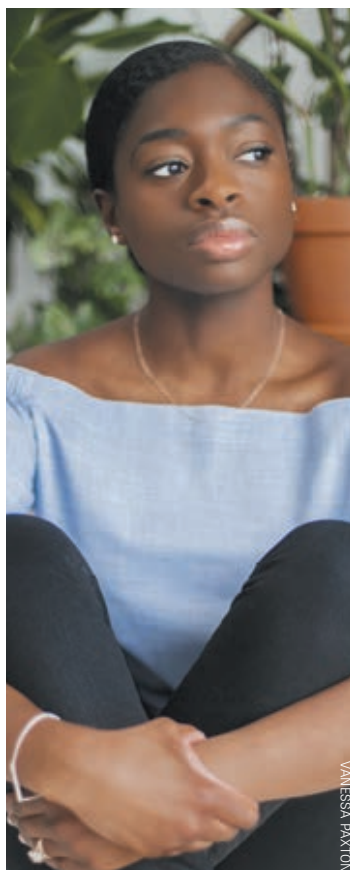
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Clubs are as ready as they'll ever be to get back to business, whatever that may look like as the fall progresses.

winners and nominees on any given night in Toronto). The second, closely tied to the first: the JUNO label must have been a help to the FACTOR application process, which, like all Canadian funding bodies, places an emphasis on Canadian content. And the third: allocating prime weekly time for one artist cuts down on the amount of administrative time that has to be spent coordinating bookings, which must make things just a little bit easier during this novel year.

The JUNO Series started at the beginning of this month, with the incomparable bassist Dave Young bringing two different bands over four nights, then continued from September 8 to 11 with Sammy Jackson, a burgeoning singer whose debut release, *With You*, beat out albums from Diana Krall, Laila Biali, and more this year, to win Vocal Jazz Album of the Year. Jackson is joined by guitarist Tom Fleming, keyboardist Joel Visentin, bassist Mark Godfrey, and drummer Ian Wright, a seasoned band who have been a part of Jackson's project for some time. From September 15 to 18, drummer Barry Elmes brings his quintet to the party, with trumpeter Brian O'Kane, saxophonist Mike Murley, guitarist Lorne Lofsky and bassist Pat Collins. Rex regulars will no doubt recognize the annual John Coltrane tribute shows, running from September 22 to 25; how lucky that bandleaders Pat LaBarbera and Kirk MacDonald are both JUNO Award-winners, though perhaps this is not such a coincidence. Finally, *Peripheral Vision* – the perennial passion project of Trevor Hogg, Don Scott, Michael Herring and Nick Fraser – rounds out the month and carries The Rex into October, with their sensitive blend of jazz, rock, and other influences.

Jazz Bistro

Elsewhere in Toronto, other notable musical events are on offer throughout the month. At Jazz Bistro, Adrean Farrugia's UNICITY

band takes the stage on September 16. Joining Farrugia are saxophonist Kelly Jefferson, bassist Dan Fortin and drummer Ethan Ardelli, a stellar group of technically accomplished, musically intuitive bandmates playing in the modern jazz tradition. For those who missed Dave Young's early-September performances at The Rex, he'll also be at Jazz Bistro, on September 18, with pianist Brian Dickinson, drummer Terry Clarke, trumpeter Kevin Turcotte and saxophonist Perry White. And, for those looking for a vocal jazz hit: Hannah Barstow celebrates the release of her new album, *Beneath*, on September 22, also at the Bistro. Barstow – doing double duty on vocals and piano – is joined by bassist Reknee Harrett, drummer (and brother) Keith Barstow and saxophonist Mike Murley.

The Jazz Room

Outside of the GTA, live jazz has also made something of a return. The Jazz Room in Waterloo will host its Women in Jazz Series, a more-or-less-weekly event featuring a wide range of musicians. Starting things off in September is the guitarist Jocelyn Gould's quartet. Gould – who, like Jackson, also won a JUNO this year: Jazz Album of the Year, for her release *Elegant Traveler* – will be joined on stage by pianist Will Bonness, drummer Mark Kelso and bassist Mike Downes. The series continues through the year, with appearances in September and through October from Laila Biali, Denise Pelley and Teri Parker's Free Spirits quintet.

It is impossible to know, at this point in time, whether or not live music will continue to be presented throughout the winter. With the upcoming election, the return to schools, the Delta variant, and many other factors, nothing is guaranteed. So if, like me, you enjoy live music, don't hesitate to go check out some shows sooner, rather than later. Remember: it's either this or actually learning how to make that loaf of sourdough. 🍞

Colin Story is a jazz guitarist, writer and teacher based in Toronto. He can be reached at www.colinstory.com, on Instagram and on Twitter.

Something Else! + Watch it Burn! at the Bay Series

Hamilton, Ontario

September 25, October 2, October 9

STUART BROOMER

Since 2014, The Zula Arts Collective and director Cem Zafir have been programming the further shores of jazz and improvised music in Hamilton, from an annual festival to various concert series throughout the year. Now, with the lightening of COVID-19 restrictions, Zula launches a series of festive Saturday performances: each presents four groups – some local, some travelling, some interdisciplinary – and, following a dinner service, concludes with a film that's intimately involved with improvised music.

September 25

Film: *Imagine the Sound*

In 1981, Toronto filmmaker Ron Mann (creator of *Grass*, *Altman* and *Comic Book Confidential*) and musician/writer/producer Bill Smith undertook a significant project to document some major figures of the free jazz movement, producing a mix of performances and interviews with Cecil Taylor, Paul Bley, Bill Dixon and Archie Shepp that retains its power today, including some extraordinary footage of Taylor's end-to-end piano runs (7pm). Ron Mann is on hand for a Q&A (8:30pm).

The film and Bill Smith's career are also apparent in other performances. Trombonist **Scott Thomson** presents a solo set of music inspired by Bill Dixon (5:15pm). Hamilton's **Lee/Palmer/Bennett** (bassist David Lee, guitarist Chris Palmer and saxophonist Connor Bennett) presents music performed by the Bill Smith Ensemble in the 1980s when Lee was a member (5:45pm). Another Ensemble veteran, the brilliant guitarist/singer Arthur Bull, performs as part of **Spokes** with longtime collaborator drummer Bob Vespaziani. The duo is then joined in by Lee/Palmer/Bennett to form a blues/rockabilly band called **The Five Spokes** (3pm).

Brodie West Quintet

In the midst of his artful compositions, alto saxophonist Brodie West creates improvisatory puzzles that resolve in surprising ways, carried forth on his laconic lines and subtle timbral shifts. His Toronto quintet includes pianist Tania Gill, bassist Josh Cole and drummers Nick Fraser and Evan Cartwright, with West making fine use of the possibilities afforded by two drummers (4pm).

October 2

The focus is on Toronto bands with highlights on the piano, from the opening trio of pianist **Bill Gilliam**, soprano saxophonist **Kayla Milmine** and drummer **Ambrose Pottie**, a hive of spontaneous invention (3pm) to pianist **Adrean Farrugia's** trio with bassist Jon Maharaj and drummer Ethan Ardelli on drums, creating subtle harmonic weaves (5:30pm). **So Long 7** creates multicultural music from Ravi Naimpally's tabla, Tim Posgate's banjo, Neil

Hendry's guitar and William Lamoureux's violin (4pm). Dancer **Megan English** is accompanied by **Dale Morningstar** (5pm). **Voc Silent Film Harmonic**, led by bassist Ted Harms, provides live accompaniment for a silent film, *The Unknown* (7pm).

October 9

Ochs-Robinson Duo

Tenor saxophonist Larry Ochs is best known for his work with ROVA, the saxophone quartet that has, over its 44-year history, collaborated with everyone from John Zorn to Terry Riley, but Ochs and drummer Don Robinson have been working together for three decades, achieving maximum expressive power with minimal means, whether playing with the economy of elemental blues or the unrestrained passion of free jazz. Their recent CD, *A Civil Right*, is at once manifesto and *tour de force* (6pm).

Film: *New York Eye and Ear Control*, Michael Snow 1964.

For the soundtrack, Snow enlisted a New York free jazz supergroup, including saxophonists Albert Ayler and John Tchicai, trumpeter Don Cherry and trombonist Roswell Rudd, then instructed the band, contrary to their usual practice, to just improvise collectively, no themes, no solos, later mating the music to his flow of New York images. The result? A major film that's also a significant creative contribution to the history of improvised music. (7:30pm)

Also: Composer/guitarist Pete Johnston's song project **Stranger Still** matches his own transit from rural Nova Scotia to Toronto with that of poet Alden Nowlan, setting Nowlan's subtle, rugged words amidst traditional English song and acoustic takes on progressive rock, all realized with bassist Rob Clutton and singers Mim Adams and Randi Helters. Trumpeter Nicole Rampersaud and pianist Marilyn Lerner are **Brass Knuckle Sandwich** (5pm), playing music as spirited as the name, though often far more lyrical. **Eschaton** is the improvising Hamilton duo of Aaron Hutchinson on trumpet and electronics and Connor Bennett on saxophones, bass and vocals (4pm).

Something else, indeed.

Events take place at the gazebo in Bayfront Park, 200 Harbour Front Dr, Hamilton. Admission is pay what you can with a suggested donation of \$15-25. For complete information, consult somethingelsefestival.com. **O**

Stuart Broomer writes frequently on music (mostly improvised) and is the author of Time and Anthony Braxton. His column "Ezz-thetics" appears regularly at pointofdeparture.org.



listings@theWholenote.com

Event listings are free of charge to artists, venues and presenters.

Our listings continue to be a work in progress as we all, musicians, presenters and media alike, explore the best ways to reach audiences in a timely fashion. For us, a comprehensive and reliable monthly calendar of live musical events, in these rapidly changing times is not a realistic goal. Instead what you see here is a snapshot, dated September 12, of our new WEEKLY UPDATES, available both as a regular e-letter and on our website.

In these volatile times, readers are encouraged to check weekly for changes and updates to existing listings, and for the numerous new listings being added each week, both current and further into the future. You can register for the weekly updates at thewholenote.com/newsletter.

IN THIS ISSUE: TWO LISTINGS SECTIONS

• Section 1: Events by date for Sep 15 – Nov 5

These are events with an announced date and time that one could circle on a calendar, in order to “be there” when it happens for the first (or only) time. This includes live and livestreamed performances; first broadcasts and screenings; concerts, workshops, symposia, and so on. If the event in question remains available after that first presentation (e.g. online or on demand), this is noted at the end of the listing.

• Section 2: Ongoing online musical activity including date-related events now available on demand online.

These are musical activities that readers can access in their own time, usefully identified by the name of the presenter or the nature of the event.

HOW TO LIST:

1. Use the convenient online form at thewholenote.com/applylistings
2. Email listings to listings@thewholenote.com.

Please note, we do not take listings over the phone.

Deadlines

1. Weekly online updates: submission deadline is 6pm Tuesday of the week prior to the event in question, for Friday posting.

2. Print: approximately fifteen days before publication.

Our next print issue covers November to mid-December 2021, and the submission deadline for new listings and updates to listings previously processed is **6pm Monday October 11**.

Events by Date | September 15 to November 5, 2021

PLEASE NOTE: All times are Eastern Time unless otherwise noted. Listings are based on information sent to WholeNote in advance by event presenters. Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, some events may be cancelled or postponed. Please visit presenters' websites or contact them directly for updates.

Wednesday September 15

• 7:00: **Small World Music.** *The Borderless Project.* Five remarkable women unite their talents and traditions to explore music from across Asia. Amely Zhou, erhu; Roa Lee, gayageum; Heidi Chan, shinobue; Padideh Ahrarnejad, tar; Nour Kdn, percussion. 416-536-5439 or smallworldmusic.com/shows/the-borderless-project/. Free. ONLINE

Thursday September 16

• 6:30: **SweetWater Music Festival.** *Coming Together Again: A Celebration Concert.* Schubert: String Quintet in C D956; Selections from Tamar Ilana Flamenco Trio. Aaron Schewbel; Keith Hamm; Leana Rutt; Sheila Jaffe; Julie Hereish; Tamar Ilana Flamenco Trio (vocalist Tamar Ilana, vocalist; Benjamin Barrile, flamenco guitar; Justin Gray, percussion). Allder Gallant Home, 438764 Grey Road 15, **Owen Sound.** sweetwatermusicfestival.ca. \$40.

• 8:00: **Small World Music/Lula Music & Arts Centre.** *OKAN & Special Guests.* Elizabeth Rodriguez, Magdelys Savigne, and Danae Olano. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307 or <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/okan-and-friends-live-at-lula-with-opening-set-by-danae-olano-tickets-165832544605>. \$40.07.

Friday September 17

• 7:00: **Magisterra Soloists.** *The Trout - Featuring Guest Soloist Pianist Francine Kayt.* Piano Quintets by Jan Ladislav Dussek, Johann Nepomuk Hummel, and Franz Schubert. Annette-Barbara Vogel, violin; Jutta Puchhammer, viola; Katerina Juraskova, cello; Travis Harrison, double bass; Francine Kay, piano. Museum London Theatre, 421 Ridout St. N., **London.** 519-615-0163 or magisterra.com. \$35; \$30(sr); \$15(student with id); \$10(child under 10).

• 7:00: **Small World Music/BLOK: Slavic Music Meet.** *Polky @ Drom Taberna.* Ewelina Ferenc, Ala Stasiuk and Marta Sotek. Drom Taberna, 458 Queen St. W. 416-536-5439 or <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/okan-and-friends-live-at-lula-with-opening-set-by-danae-olano-tickets-165832544605>. \$199 (Delegate passes).

• 7:00: **SweetWater Music Festival.** *Chamber Music Concert.* Britten: String Quartet No.1 in D Op.25; Carmen Braden: The Raven Conspiracy; Dvořák, Piano Quintet No.2 in A Op.81. Rosebud String Quartet (Aaron Schewbel, Keith Hamm, Leana Rutt, Sheila Jaffe); Philip Chiu, piano; Edwin Huizinga, violin. Harmony Centre Owen Sound, 890 4th Ave. E., **Owen Sound.** sweetwatermusicfestival.ca. \$45. LIVE & LIVESTREAM.

• 7:00: **Westben.** *Laila Biali.* Laila Biali, singer, songwriter, piano. The Barn, 6698 County Road 30, **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Also Sep 18.

• 7:30: **Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.** *The Joy of Beethoven.* Beethoven: Sonata in F Op.10 No.2 (arr. Sitariski); Musgrave: Orfeo

III; Grieg: String Quartet No.2 in F. Stephen Sitariski, conductor. Royal Botanical Gardens, 680 Plains Rd. W., **Burlington.** 905-526-7756 or hpo.org. \$30.

• 8:00: **Small World Music/Lula Music & Arts Centre.** *Ammoye.* Ammoye; Catchfiah (electronics). Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307 or <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/ammoye-release-celebration-with-opening-set-by-catchfiah-tickets-166472468635>. \$18.98.

Saturday September 18

• 10:00am: **Westben.** *Sounds in Nature.* A guided magical sound installation amidst the beauty of the Mary West Trail, just minutes from Westben. Andy Thompson, recording engineer. Mary West Trail, 6698 County Road 30 N., **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Also Sep 11, 25.

• 1:00: **Small World Music/BLOK: Slavic Music Meet.** *Medusa & Turkwaz @ BLOK PARTY.* A daylong outdoor celebration featuring some of the finest Eastern European musicians in Canada. Green P Parking Lot across from Drom Taberna, 458 Queen St. W. 416-536-5439 or <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/blok-party-blok-slavic-music-meet-tickets-167076270623>. \$36.21(1-day ticket); \$199(Delegate pass).

• 2:00: **Westben.** *Leahy.* Willow Hill Amphitheatre, 6698 County Road 30 N., **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Also Sep 19.

• 4:00: **Something Else! Festival.** *Saturday at Bayfront Park.* Eyevin Trio & Togetherness!; Sourpussy; Man Made Hill; Tidal Pool; Film: Night Bird Song. Bayfront Park, 200 Harbour Front Dr., **Hamilton.** www.somethingelsefestival.com. \$15-\$25(door); \$15(adv).

• 7:00: **SweetWater Music Festival.** *Chamber Music Concert.* Barber: Sonata for Violoncello and Piano Op.6; Fauré: Piano Trio in d Op.120; Brahms: String Sextet No.2 in G Op.36. Rosebud String Quartet (Aaron Schewbel, Keith Hamm, Leana Rutt, Sheila Jaffe); Julie Hereish, cello; Edwin Huizinga, violin; Philip Chiu, piano. Harmony Centre Owen Sound, 890 4th Ave. E., **Owen Sound.** sweetwatermusicfestival.ca. \$45. LIVE & LIVESTREAM.

• 7:00: **Westben.** *Laila Biali.* Laila Biali, singer, songwriter, piano. The Barn, 6698 County Road 30, **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Also Sep 17.

• 7:30: **Arcady.** *Voices of Summer.* Colin McMahon: Raspberries; and other works. Cristina Pisani, soprano; Michaela Chiste, soprano; and Sarah McQueen, soprano; Nicole Stellino, mezzo; Kate Walshaw, mezzo; and other soloists; Laura Pin, piano; Ronald Beckett, conductor. Central Presbyterian Church (Brantford), 97 Wellington St., **Brantford.** info@arcady.ca or 519-428-3185. \$37.

• 7:30: **Guitar Society of Toronto.** *In Concert: Henderson-Kolk Guitar Duo.* St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. www.guitarsocietyoftoronto.com or 416-964-8298. Advance: \$35; \$30(sr);

\$15(st); Door: \$40; \$35(sr); \$20(st).

● 8:00: **Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Madhusa.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or www.smokeshowbbqandbrew.com. No cover.

● 8:30: **Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Sonic Curators.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or www.smokeshowbbqandbrew.com.

● 9:15: **SweetWater Music Festival.** *Late-Night Concert.* Mediterranean melodies and flamenco grooves with contemporary interpretations of ancient ballads, plus original compositions. Ventanas; Tamar Ilana, vocalist & dancer. Heartwood Hall, 939 2nd Ave. E., **Owen Sound.** sweetwatermusicfestival.ca. \$40. LIVE & LIVESTREAM.

Sunday September 19

● 2:00: **Westben.** *Leahy.* Willow Hill Amphitheatre, 6698 County Road 30 N., **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Also Sep 18.

● 2:30: **Niagara Symphony Orchestra.** *The NSO at The Pavilion.* Mendelssohn: The Hebrides Op.26 ("Fingal's Cave"); Mozart: Symphony No.35 in D K385 ("Haffner"); Beethoven: Symphony No.7 in A Op.92. Bradley Thachuk, conductor. The Pavilion at St. George Orthodox Church, 6085 Montrose Rd., **Niagara Falls.** www.niagarasymphony.com. Free. Advance tickets required. Rain or shine – covered seating plus adjacent uncovered lawn seating. Bring your own folding chair. Free on-site parking. Food and beverage vendor on-site.

● 3:00: **Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *York Jazz Ensemble.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or www.smokeshowbbqandbrew.com. Also Oct 17, Nov 21, Dec 19.

● 4:00: **SweetWater Music Festival.** *Late-Night Concert.* Enjoy this unique musical experience in a breathtaking riverside location. In August, 1965, American composer John Cage led a group of students on an afternoon walk into the woods in northern Saskatchewan. The students came back. Cage didn't. Tom Allen, narrator & trombone; Lori Gemmell, harp; Pete Gemmell, saxophone; Jeff Reilly, clarinet; Patricia O'Callaghan, vocalist. Gabriel Zufelt Home, 275 4th St. E., **Owen Sound.** sweetwatermusicfestival.ca. \$45. Concert begins at 4 p.m. We ask everyone to arrive at the venue 25 minutes in advance but no later than than 10 minutes before the concert begins.

● 7:00: **INNERchamber Ensemble.** *In the Autumn.* Schumann: Fantasiestücke Op.73 (arr. Aribert Reimann); Ibert: Deux Interludes for flute, viola, and harp; Louis Van Waefeghen: Autumn Evening for viola d'amore and harp; Paul Raede: Suite from the Victorian Kitchen Garden for clarinet & harp; Bizet: Entr'acte from L'Arlesienne Suite; and other works. Liesel Deppe, flute; Peter Shackleton, clarinet; Julia Seager Scott, harp; Judith Davenport, viola. Revival House, 70 Brunswick St., **Stratford.** www.innerchamber.ca. \$40; \$10-\$25 (arts workers/st). Pre-show 6:30pm. A light meal is available for patrons living in Stratford. Contact tickets@innerchamber.ca for arts worker and student codes.

● 7:00: **Westben.** *Kerri Ough and Ben Whiteley.* The Campfire, 6698 County Road 30 N., **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca.

● 8:00: **Small World Music/Lula Music & Arts Centre.** *Beny Esquerro and New Tradition Music.* Beny Esquerro & New Tradition, Fuse bilingual socially-conscious spoken word, beatboxing, Indigenous kuisi buns flute (aka Colombian gaita), turntablism, and Bronx-style 70s salsa, alongside Afro-Cuban and Colombian drumming. Beny Esquerro, New Tradition, and Nimkii Osewamik. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307 or <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/beny-esquerro-and-new-tradition-music-with-opening-set-by-nimkii-osewamik-tickets-166473265017>. \$21.45.

Wednesday September 22

● **Eve Egoyan.** *In Concert.* New works for augmented and acoustic piano as well as Surface Tension, a collaborative work with media artist David Rokeby for piano and real-time images. Eve Egoyan, piano. <https://en.cmmas.com/visionessonoras17-landing>. ONLINE

● 7:00: **Confluence Concerts.** *Bach Cello Suites: Part 1.* Bach: Cello Suites No. 1 in G BWV1007 & No.3 in C BWV1009. Winona Zelenka and Michelle Tang, cellos. confluenceconcerts.ca. Live concert Sep 22. YouTube premiere Oct 1. A limited number of tickets available for in-person attendance. LIVE & ONLINE

● 9:30: **Istituto Italiano di Cultura/Dante Alighieri Society of B.C.** *Julian Gargiulo in Concert: The Piano and the Classical Art of Being Funny.* Standard classical repertoire, tango transcription, and original music. info@dantesocietybc.ca. Free. Donations to the Dante Alighieri Society of B.C. are welcome. ONLINE

Thursday September 23

MUSIC TORONTO

VIRTUAL CONCERT SERIES



Sept. 23 at 7:30 pm MARC-ANDRÉ HAMELIN

● 7:30: **Music Toronto.** Virtual Concert Series. Maria Szymanowska: Nocturne in B-flat; C. P. E. Bach: Suite in e Wq62/12; Schubert: Sonata No. 20 in A D959. Marc-André Hamelin, piano. music-toronto.com. Free. ONLINE

● 8:00: **Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* Works by Cecilia Livingston and Donna McKevitt, with poetry by Derek Jarman. Mireille Asselin, soprano; Lindsay McIntyre, soprano; Rebecca Cuddy, mezzo-soprano; Daniel Cabena, counter-tenor; Tim Alberty, devisor & director. ONLINE,

647-341-7390 or <https://soundstreams.ca/performances/main-stage/garden-of-vanished-pleasures/>. \$20. Also Sep 24-26, 28-30, Oct 1-3, 5-10.

Friday September 24

● 7:30: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Mozart & Martines.* Mozart: Symphony No. 40; Eine kleine Nachtmusik; a work by Marianna Martines. Simon Rivard, RBC Resident Conductor. CityView Drive-In, 20 Polson St. 416-598-3375 or www.tso.ca. \$80-\$220 per car. Also Sep 25. Concert is one hour in length.

● 8:00: **Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Sep 25, 26, 28-30, Oct 1-3, 5-10. ONLINE

Saturday September 25

● 10:00am: **Westben.** *Sounds in Nature.* A guided magical sound installation amidst the beauty of the Mary West Trail, just minutes from Westben. Andy Thompson, recording engineer. Mary West Trail, 6698 County Road 30 N., **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Also Sep 18.

● 2:00: **Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.** *Free Community Concert with the HPO.* Haydn: Mvt IV from Symphony No.83; Bol-ogne: Symphony No.2 in D; Gossec: Mvt I from Symphony in c Op.6 No.3; Bologne: Mvt II from Violin Concerto in A Op.5 No.2; Mozart: Mvt IV from Symphony No.35 "Haffner". Lyssa Pelton, violin; Stephen Sitarski, conductor. FirstOntario Concert Hall, 1 Summers Ln., **Hamilton.** 905-526-7756 or hpo.org. Free. Registration required. Livestream & on demand viewing available.

● 2:00: **Westben.** *Serena Ryder.* Serena Ryder, vocalist/songwriter. Willow Hill Amphitheatre, 6698 County Road 30 N., **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Also Sep 26.

● 3:00: **Something Else! Festival.** *Saturday at Bayfront Park.* Film: Imagine the Sound; Lee / Palmer / Bennett; Scott Thomson; Brodie West Quintet; The Spokes. Bayfront Park, 200 Harbour Front Dr., **Hamilton.** www.somethingelsefestival.com. \$15-\$25(adv); \$15(adv).

● 7:30: **Canadian Opera Company.** *In Concert: Russell Braun and Tamara Wilson with the COC Orchestra.* Verdi: Overture to La forza del destino; Wagner: Dich, teure Halle from Tannhäuser; Verdi: Tutto è deserto... Il balen del tuo sorriso from Il trovatore; Bizet: Entr'acte to Act III of Carmen; Offenbach: Scintille, diamant from Les Contes d'Hoffmann; and other works. Russell Braun, baritone; Tamara Wilson, soprano; Canadian Opera Company Orchestra; Johannes Debus, conductor. www.coc.ca/watch. Free with COC digital membership. ONLINE

● 7:30: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Mozart & Martines.* Mozart: Symphony No. 40; Eine kleine Nachtmusik; A work by Marianna Martines. Simon Rivard, RBC Resident Conductor. CityView Drive-In, 20 Polson St. 416-598-3375 or www.tso.ca. \$80-\$220 per car. Also Sep 24. Concert is one hour in length.

● 8:00: **Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Lady Strange.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or www.smokeshowbbqandbrew.com.

● 8:00: **Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Sep 26, 28-30, Oct 1-3, 5-10. ONLINE

Sunday September 26

● 2:00: **Westben.** *Serena Ryder.* Serena Ryder, vocalist/songwriter. Willow Hill Amphitheatre, 6698 County Road 30 N., **Campbellford.** 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Also Sep 25.

● 3:00: **Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Red Hot Ramble.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or www.redhotramble.ca or smokeshowbbqandbrew.com.

● 8:00: **Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Sep 28-30, Oct 1-3, 5-10. ONLINE

Tuesday September 28

● 6:30: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music on Film: Best Worst Thing That Ever Could Have Happened.* Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, 506 Bloor St. W. www.rcmusic.com/performance or 416-408-0208. \$17; Members - \$12, \$10, Free.

● 8:00: **Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Sep 29-30, Oct 1-3, 5-10. ONLINE

Thursday September 30

● Sep 30: **The Hogtown Collective.** *The Christie Pits Riot.* An audio walking tour immersive experience. Created by Sam Rosenthal & Drew Carnath. Original music by Measha Brueggengosman. Measha Brueggengosman (Nala); Sam Rosenthal (The Narrator); Drew Carnath (The Tour Guide); and others. Find the Audio Walking Tour app at: www.hogtownexperience.com. ONLINE

WOMEN'S MUSICAL CLUB OF TORONTO

MUSIC IN THE AFTERNOON

SEPTEMBER 30, 2021 | 1.30 PM

BLAKE POULIOT

violin, with Hsin-I Huang, piano

416-923-7052
wmct.on.ca

● 1:30: **Music in the Afternoon.** *Blake Pouliot.* Sonatas by Bach, Janáček, and Prokofiev. Blake Pouliot, violin; Hsin-I Huang, piano. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park. wmct.on.ca or 416-923-7052. ONLINE

● 8:00: **Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Oct 1-3, 5-10. ONLINE

Friday October 1

● 12:10: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Haydn: Sonata E-flat. Younggun Kim, piano. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstoronto.org. Free.

Events by Date | September 15 to November 5, 2021

Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.

● **7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Pride Together.* From Tchaikovsky to Lady Gaga, Saint-Saëns to Sister Sledge, the TSO invites you to experience a glittering rainbow of genre-spanning music. Includes "Vogue", "Somewhere Over the Rainbow", "Time Warp", and more. Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, Barrett Principal Education Conductor and Community Ambassador. City-View Drive-In, 20 Polson St. 416-598-3375 or www.tso.ca. \$80-\$220 per car. Also Oct 2. Concert is one hour in length.

● **7:30: Upper Canada Choristers/Cantemos Latin Ensemble.** *To Sit and Dream.* A concert of women composers. Dr. Rosephany Powell: *To Sit and Dream*; Sarah Quartel: *Snow Angel*; Carlotta Ferrari: *O Splendid Gem* (arrangement of *O splendissima gemma* by Hildegard von Bingen); Vittoria Aleotti: *Two Renaissance Madrigals*; Elaine Hagenberg: *The Music of Stillness*; and other works. Laurie Evan Fraser, conductor; Hye Won Cecilia Lee, piano. www.uppercanadachoristers.org or info@uppercanadachoristers.org or 416-256-0510. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & STREAMED.

● **8:00: Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Oct 2-3, 5-10. ONLINE

Saturday October 2

● **3:00: Sinfonia Toronto.** *Sinfonia Toronto's Greatest Hits.* Works by Mozart, Shostakovich, and others. Nurhan Arman, conductor. Meridian Hall (formerly Sony Centre), 1 Front

St. E. 416-499-0403 or sinfoniatoronto.com. Free registration through Eventbrite. LIVE & ONLINE.

● **3:00: Something Else! Festival.** *Saturday at Bayfront Park.* So Long 7; Adrean Farugia Trio; Gilliam / Milmine / Pottier; Megan English & Dale Morningstar; VOC Silent Film Harmonic; Film: *The Unknown*. Bayfront Park, 200 Harbour Front Dr., **Hamilton**. www.somethingelsefestival.com. \$15-\$25 (door); \$15 (adv).

● **7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Pride Together.* From Tchaikovsky to Lady Gaga, Saint-Saëns to Sister Sledge, the TSO invites you to experience a glittering rainbow of genre-spanning music. Includes "Vogue", "Somewhere Over the Rainbow", "Time Warp", and more. Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, Barrett Principal Education Conductor and Community Ambassador. City-View Drive-In, 20 Polson St. 416-598-3375 or www.tso.ca. \$80-\$220 per car. Also Oct 1. Concert is one hour in length.

● **8:00: Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra.** *In Concert.* Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 "Pastorale"; Schumann: Cello Concerto. Pratik Gandhi, guest conductor; Samantha Yang, cello. P.C. Ho Theatre, Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, 5183 Sheppard Ave. E., **Scarborough**. 416-879-5566 or cathedralbluffs.com or cbsoboxoffice@gmail.com. \$30-\$48; \$25-\$38 (sr/st); Free (under 12).

● **8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society.** *Penderecki Quartet: Beethoven Quartets V.* Beethoven: String Quartet No. 15

in a Op. 132; String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat Op. 130 with original "Great Fugue" ending Op. 133. Jeremy Bell, violin; Jerzy Kaplanek, violin; Christine Vlakj, viola; Katie Schlaikjer, cello. First United Church (Waterloo), 16 William St. W., **Waterloo**. 519-569-1809. \$40; \$25 (st). Also Oct 3.

● **8:00: Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Oct 3, 5-10. ONLINE

Sunday October 3

● **8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society.** *Penderecki Quartet: Beethoven Quartets V.* Beethoven: String Quartet No. 15 in a Op. 132; String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat Op. 130 with original "Great Fugue" ending Op. 133. Jeremy Bell, violin; Jerzy Kaplanek, violin; Christine Vlakj, viola; Katie Schlaikjer, cello. First United Church (Waterloo), 16 William St. W., **Waterloo**. 519-569-1809. \$40; \$25 (st). Also Oct 2.

● **8:00: Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Oct 5-10. ONLINE

Thursday October 7

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Andrei Feher Conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra.* Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Op. 55. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. www.rcmusic.com/performance or 416-408-0208. \$25-\$60.

● **8:00: Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. Also Oct 8-10. ONLINE

Friday October 8

● **12:10: Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Seasonal favourites. Jordan Klapman, jazz piano. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstontoronto.org. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.

Saturday October 9

● **3:00: Something Else! Festival.** *Saturday at Bayfront Park.* Larry Ochs - Don Robinson Duo + Brass Knuckle Sandwich; Stranger Still; Eschaton; Film: *New York Eye & Ear Control*. Bayfront Park, 200 Harbour Front Dr., **Hamilton**. www.somethingelsefestival.com. \$15-\$25 (door); \$15 (adv).

● **8:00: Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Beverly Street Trio.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or www.smokeshowbbqandbrew.com.

Sunday October 10

● **8:00: Soundstreams.** *Garden of Vanished Pleasures.* See Sep 23. ONLINE

Thursday October 14

● **7:30: Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.** *Haydn & Mendelssohn.* Mendelssohn: String Symphony No. 10 in b; Copland: Quiet City for solo trumpet, solo English horn and strings; Keiko Devaux: ebb; Haydn: Symphony No. 71 in B-flat. Nancy Nelson, English horn; Michael Fedyshyn, trumpet; Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, conductor. Cotton Factory, 270 Sherman Ave. N., **Hamilton**. 905-526-7756 or hpo.org. \$30.

Friday October 15

● **12:10: Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Liszt: *Années de pèlerinage*, Book II. Brian Hsu, piano. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstontoronto.org. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE

& ONLINE.

● **7:30: International Resource Centre for Performing Artists (IRCPA).** *Ten Singing Stars - New Generation.* Live broadcast on The New Classical 96.3 FM and livestream. Brett Polegato, baritone (Mentor); Ten singers performing arias and art songs; Rachel Andrist, piano. <http://classicalfm.ca>. ONLINE

● **8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra.** *Parade on Bourbon Street.* Michael Kaeshammer, piano; Lucas Waldin, conductor. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. \$15-\$100 per stream. Available Oct 15-8pm to Oct 17-11:59pm. Purchase 1 stream per household. ONLINE

Saturday October 16

● **7:00: Rezonance Baroque Ensemble.** *Un Viaggio Fantastico.* A journey through the Baroque era in Italy. Works by Cima, Castello, Castaldi, Veracini, and Vivaldi. Rezan Onen-Lapointe, Baroque violin; David Podgorski, harpsichord; Erika Nielsen, Baroque cello; Benjamin Stein, theorbo and lute. 647-779-5696 or <https://fantasticjourney.eventbrite.com>. \$15. Join Rezan and David before the concert online for an informative and entertaining introduction and afterward for an interactive Q&A session. Available until Oct 23. ONLINE

● **7:30: Bravo Niagara!** *Laila Biali Trio.* FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., **St. Catharines**. bravoniagara.org. \$50.

● **8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society.** *Piano Quintets by Bartók & Dvořák.* Tomoko Inui, piano; Jung Tsai, violin; Frederick Bednarz, violin; Judith Davenport, viola; Rebecca Morton, cello. First United Church (Waterloo), 16 William St. W., **Waterloo**. 519-569-1809. \$40; \$25 (st).

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Season Gala: Follies in Concert.* Book by James Goldman. Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Cholina Kennedy, Eric McCormack, Cynthia Dale, Thom Allison, Mary Lou Fallis and others. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$99-\$350. Also Oct 17(3:00pm). In support of The Fund for Koerner Hall.

Sunday October 17

● **3:00: Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *York Jazz Ensemble.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or www.smokeshowbbqandbrew.com. Also Sep 19, Nov 21, Dec 19.

Tuesday October 19

● **6:30: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music on Film: Strings Attached.* Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, 506 Bloor St. W. rcmusic.com/performance or 416-408-0208. \$17; Members - \$12, \$10, Free.

Thursday October 21

● **7:00: Confluence Concerts.** *Bach Cello Suites: Part 2.* Bach: Cello Suites No. 4 in E-flat BWV 1010 & No. 6 in D BWV 1012. Keiran Campbell, cello; Elinor Frey, violoncello piccolo. confluenceconcerts.ca. Live concert Oct 21. YouTube premiere Oct 29. A limited number of tickets available for in-person attendance. LIVE & ONLINE

● **7:30: Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.** *Intimate & Immersive: Earthshine.* Roydon Tse: *Down the Rabbit Hole*; Jeffrey Ryan: *Earthshine*; Andrew Clark: *Heliacal Rising*;



TEN SINGING STARS – NEW GENERATION PERFORM LIVE ON THE NEW CLASSICAL FM!

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BRETT POLEGATO, Friday, Oct. 1st
Mr. Polegato has generously stepped in for
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James O'Callaghan: The Earth, Split Open; Jessie Montgomery: Starburst; Norbert Palej: Rorate Coeli. Andrew O'Connor, video artist; Eugene Astapov, conductor. Cotton Factory, 270 Sherman Ave. N., **Hamilton**. 905-526-7756 or hpo.org. \$30.

Music TORONTO



October 21 at 8 pm PARKER QUARTET

● 8:00: **Music Toronto.** *The Parker Quartet.* Schubert: Quartet in c D703 "Quartettssatz"; Di Castri: String Quartet No.1; Schumann: Quartet in A Op.41 No.3. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. \$47.50-\$50.

Friday October 22

● 12:00 noon: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noontime Recital.* Schubert: Piano Trio Op.100. Bedford Trio. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstontoronto.org. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.

● 6:00: **Estonian Music Week.** *Hybrid Festival 2021.* Rita Ray, Kaili Kinnon, Estyr. 416-925-9405 or www.estonianmusicweek.ca. \$25(in person); Free(online). Venue TBA. LIVE & ONLINE

● 8:00: **Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society.** *Fredonia String Trio.* Mompou: Transcriptions for violin and viola; Caroline



HYBRID MUSIC FESTIVAL OCTOBER 22+23 DIGITAL + LIVE

Mallonee: Storm King Suite for viola and cello; Mozart: Divertimento in E-flat for String Trio K563. Jessica Tong, violin; David Rose, viola; Natasha Farnhy, cello. First United Church (Waterloo), 16 William St. W., **Waterloo**. 519-569-1809. \$40; \$25(st).

Saturday October 23

● 4:30: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Taylor Academy Showcase Concert.* A concert by the leading young classical musicians in Canada. Mazzoleni Concert Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. www.rcmusic.com/performance or 416-408-0208. Free.



HYBRID MUSIC FESTIVAL OCTOBER 22+23 DIGITAL + LIVE

● 5:00: **Estonian Music Week.** *Hybrid Festival 2021.* Duo Ruut, Beatrice Deer Band, Väike Hellero, Erik Laar. 416-925-9405. \$35(in person); Free(online). Venue TBA. LIVE & ONLINE

● 7:30: **Guitar Society of Toronto.** *In Concert: Chormaduo.* St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. www.guitarsocietyoftoronto.com or 416-964-8298. Advance: \$35; \$30(sr); \$15(st); Door: \$40; \$35(sr); \$20(st).

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *RCO Concerts Series: Trevor Pinnock Conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra.* Mozart: Symphony No.39 in E-flat K543; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No.5 in E-flat Op.73 "Emperor". Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$25-\$60.

Sunday October 24

● 3:00: **Orchestra Toronto.** *Reformation.* Rossini: Overture to L'italiana in Algeri; Respighi: Antiche Danze ed Arie, Set 1; Mendelssohn: Reformation Symphony. Michael Newnham, conductor. George Weston Recital Hall, Meridian Arts Centre (formerly Toronto Centre for the Arts), 5040 Yonge St. 1-855-985-2787 or ticketmaster.ca. \$45; \$39 (sr); \$19(OTOPus ages 13 to 29); \$15(ages 5-12). OTOPus patrons may purchase one additional ticket at the discounted rate for a guest of any age. Pre-concert chat at 2:15pm.

● 3:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Chamber Music Concerts: Dover Quartet with Davóne Tines.* Beethoven: String Quartet No.2 in G Op.18 No.2; Barber: "Dover Beach" Op.3; Shaw: By and By; Beethoven: String

Quartet No.13 in B-flat, Op.130 ("Lieb") including Grosse Fuge. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$35-\$90. Proof of vaccination required.

Tuesday October 26

Music TORONTO



October 26 at 8 pm DAVID JALBERT pianist

● 8:00: **Music Toronto.** *David Jalbert, Piano.* Murphy: Smoke Darkened Sky (world premiere); Debussy: Images I: Reflets dans l'eau, Hommage à Rameau, Mouvement; Images II: Cloches à travers les feuilles, Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut, Poissons d'or; Ligeti: Etudes Book 1: Arc-en-ciel, Auytomne à Varsovie; Prokofiev: Sonata No.6 Op.82 in A. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. \$47.50-\$50.

Thursday October 28

● 7:00: **Opera Atelier.** *Angel.* 70-minute film fully staged and filmed at St. Lawrence Hall. Music by Edward Huizinga, Jean-Philippe Rameau, William Boyce, Matthew Locke, and Max Richter. Measha Brueggengergsman, Mireille Asselin, Meghan Lindsay, sopranos; Colin Ainsworth, tenor; Jesse Blumberg, baritone; and others; Marshall Pynkoski, stage director; Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg, choreographer; Artists of Atelier Ballet; Nathaniel Dett Chorale; Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra; David Fallis, conductor. . . www.OperaAtelier.com. Single tickets on sale Oct 1. Available until Nov 12. ONLINE

● 7:30: **Niagara Symphony Orchestra.** *Steven Page with the NSO.* Steven Page Trio; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., **St. Catharines**. www.niagarasymphony.com or 905-688-0722 or 905-688-5601 x3700 or 1-855-515-0722. \$68; \$60(sr); \$39(arts worker); \$15(st & youth).

● 8:00: **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.** *Music and Magic.* Purcell: Excerpts from The Fairy Queen; Vivaldi: Concerto for Violin in "Spring" from The Four Seasons; Handel: "What passion cannot music raise or quell" from Ode for St Cecilia's Day; Bach: Andante from Sonata for Solo Violin in a; Handel Overtures to Flavio & Ode for St. Cecilia's Day. Nick Wallace, magician; Quinten Melo, contortionist; Ryan Joyce, stage director; Elisa Citterio director. info@tafelmusik.com.

org or 1-833-964-633. Single tickets available Oct 7. ONLINE

Friday October 29

● 12:10: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Schumann: Märchenbilder Op.113. The Ezra Duo. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstontoronto.org. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.

● 8:00: **Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra.** *Beethoven and Prokofiev.* Prokofiev: Violin Concerto No.2 in g; Beethoven: Symphony No.7 in A. Kerson Leong, violin; Andrei Feher, conductor. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. \$15-\$100 per stream. Available Oct 29-8pm to Oct 31-11:59pm. Purchase 1 stream per household. ONLINE

Saturday October 30

● 7:30: **Canadian Opera Company.** *Gianni Schicchi.* By Giacomo Puccini. Roland Wood (Gianni Schicchi); Hera Hyesang Park (Laurietta); Andrew Haji (Rinuccio); Meghan Latham (Zita); and other soloists; Canadian Opera Company Orchestra; Jader Bignamini, conductor; Amy Lane, stage director. www.coc.ca/watch. ONLINE

● 8:00: **Kindred Spirits Orchestra.** *Opening Night Gala: In Sinistris Manibus.* Dukas: Fanfare pour précéder La Péri; Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No.4 (for the left hand); Stravinsky: Symphony in Three Movements. Dong Xu, piano; Michael Berec, host; Kristian Alexander, conductor. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St., **Richmond Hill**. 905-604-8339 or ksorchestra.ca. \$20-\$40. LIVE & STREAMED.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix Series: Daniel Lanois and Heavy Sun.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$40-\$105.

Sunday October 31

● 3:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica: From Bach to Piazzolla.* Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Astor Piazzolla and 75th birthday of Gidon Kremer with a special homage to Glenn Gould. Valentin Silvestrov: Hommage to J.S.B. for violin and vibraphone; Bach: Harpsichord Concerto No.7 in g BWV1058; Piazzolla: Three Pieces for Piano and Strings; Two pieces from Art of Instrumentation (based on Bach works and dedicated to Glenn Gould; Bach: Variations on "Goldberg Aria" (arr. Tickmayer); and other works by Bach and Piazzolla. Gidon Kremer, violin; Georgijs Osokins, piano; Per-Arne Glorvigen, bandoneon; Andrei Pushkarev, vibraphone; Kremerata Baltica Chamber Orchestra. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. www.rcmusic.com/Tickets. From \$50. ONLINE.

● 3:00: **Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Red Hot Ramble.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or www.redhotramble.ca or smokeshowbbqandbrew.com.

Tuesday November 2

● 7:30: **Toronto Mendelssohn Choir.** *Coming to Carry Me Home.* Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem; Dett: The Chariot Jubilee. Jonelle Sills, soprano; Brett Polegato, baritone; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Toronto Symphony Orchestra;

Toronto Mendelssohn Choir

Jean-Sébastien Vallée
Artistic Director

COMING TO CARRY ME HOME

November 2 7:30pm

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Wednesday November 3

● 7:00: **Confluence Concerts.** *Bach Cello Suites: Part 3.* Bach: Cello Suites No.2 in d BWV1008 & No.5 in c BWV1011. Andrew Downing, double bass; and Ryan Davis, viola. confluenceconcerts.ca. Live concert Nov 3. YouTube premiere Nov 10. A limited number of tickets available for in-person attendance. LIVE & ONLINE

Friday November 5

● 7:30: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Glenn Gould School Chamber Opera: Ana Sokolović's Svadba.* Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$20. Also Nov 6. Proof of vaccination required.
● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Jerusalem String Quartet with Pinchas Zukerman & Amanda Forsyth.* Bruckner: Adagio from String Quintet in F WAB112; Dvořák: String Sextet in A Op.48; Brahms: String Sextet in B-flat Op.18. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$44-\$110. Proof of vaccination required.

Still Available Online

● **Arts@Home.** A vibrant hub connecting Torontonians to arts and culture. Designed to strengthen personal and societal resilience through the arts. Visit www.artsathome.ca.
● **Capella Regalis Men & Boys Choir.** *Choral Concerts.* A number of concerts are available at <http://www.youtube.com/capellaregalis>.
● **Humbercrest United Church.** *If Music Be the Food of Love.* Call 416-767-6122 or visit <http://www.humbercrest.ca>. Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert.
● **Recollectiv.** A unique musical online meeting group made up of people affected by memory challenges caused by illness (such as dementia) or brain injury (stroke, PTSD, etc.) and their care partners. Volunteers of all ages also form part of the band, providing a positive intergenerational experience for all. Participation is free with pre-registration. Email info@recollectiv.ca for meeting times, information and registration.

Blogs, Podcasts, Streaming

● **Kevin Barrett.** *Live from Lockdown.* Kevin Barrett does a live-streamed set of solo guitar tunes, coming directly from his Lockdown studio. Tune in to Kevin's Facebook page on Friday at 4pm at <http://www.facebook.com/kevin.barrett.165470>.
● **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music of My Life.* Available at <http://www.royalconservatory.live/music-of-my-life>. Free. ONLINE
● **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Academic Performances.* Available at <http://www.royalconservatory.live/academic-performances>. Free. ONLINE
● **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.** *Video Series.* Continuing through to September, two new videos each week highlighting some of the greatest performances from this past digital concert season, as well as informative educational clips which explore baroque and beyond music history and artistry. Visit our <https://e.wordfly.com/click?sid=OTU3Xzk2NzZfMTYwNzlfNzlwMQ&l=d5832777-f7e0-eb11-a828-0050569d715d&uid=12202&promo=10050> and click the subscribe button to be alerted each week about new videos. ONLINE

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WHO'S WHO?

The WholeNote Online DIRECTORIES INDEX

Under the tab **WHO'S WHO** at **THEWHOLENOTE.COM**, you will find four directories containing detailed profiles of active participants in four areas of community life: music makers and presenters (our "Blue Pages"); the choral community ("Canary Pages"); summer music performance ("Green Pages"); and Summer Music Education.

Traditionally we have published a single annual print supplement for each of these (Blue Pages in the fall, Summer Music Education in late winter, the Canary Pages in May, and the Green Pages in early summer.)

During these extraordinary and changeable times, it has become more useful to allow for rolling deadlines for all these directories and to move them entirely online, so that directory participants a) can wait till their plans for the season have taken shape, and b) revise them as frequently as necessary if COVID-19 continues to thwart their best laid plans.

So what follows here is an up-to-the-moment (September 15 2021) list of whom you will currently find in the four directory areas, with the BLUE PAGES heading the list as the most active of the four areas right now; profiles are being added or, as important, being updated on a weekly basis. And while most of the Green Pages and Summer Music Education participants activities may have ended for this year, we leave these indexes here for your awareness and future planning.

This index serves two distinct purposes.

It tells you who, in these uncertain times, is sufficiently far along in their planning to have joined the directories.

And (via the website addresses that accompany every name in the index), it offers you a handy way to window-shop those websites directly. This is particularly easy to do if you are reading these pages in the online flipthrough edition, accessible via kiosk.thewholenote.com.

I wish you happy browsing, and if you have any questions about the directories, either as a reader or prospective directory member, contact me at karen@thewholenote.com

Karen Ages, directory and member services



BLUE PAGES 2021-22

Directory of Music Makers

- Aga Khan Museum
www.agakhanmuseum.org
- Azrieli Foundation
www.azrielifoundation.org/amp
- Barrie Concert Association
www.barrieconcerts.org
- Barrie Concert Band
www.barrieconcertband.org
- Canadian Opera Company
www.coc.ca
- Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra
www.cathedralbluffs.com
- Church of St. Mary Magdalene
www.stmarymagdalene.ca
- Counterpoint Community Orchestra
www.ccorchestra.org
- DaCapo Chamber Choir
www.dacapochoir.ca
- Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western U
music.uwo.ca
- Edison Singers
www.theedisonsingers.com
- Estonian Studies Centre
www.vemu.ca
- Etobicoke Community Concert Band
www.eccb.ca
- Etobicoke Philharmonic Orchestra
www.eporchestra.ca
- Hannaford Street Silver Band
www.hssb.ca
- INNERchamber Inc.
www.innerchamber.ca
- Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts
www.queensu.ca/theisabel
- Jubilate Singers
www.jubilatesingers.ca
- Ken Page Memorial Trust
www.kenpagememorialtrust.com
- Kindred Spirits Orchestra
www.KSOrchestra.ca

Continues

BLUE PAGES 2021-22, Continued

- Mississauga Chamber Singers
www.mississaugachambersingers.ca
- Mississauga Symphony Orchestra
www.mississaugasympphony.ca
- Music at Metropolitan
www.metunited.ca
- Music at St. Andrew's
www.standrewstoronto.org
- Music in the Afternoon (Women's Musical Club of Toronto)
www.wmct.on.ca
- Music Gallery
www.musicgallery.org
- Music Toronto
http://music-toronto.com
- Opera Atelier
www.operaatelier.com
- Orchestra Toronto
www.orchestratoronto.ca
- Pax Christi Chorale
www.paxchristichorale.org
- Peterborough Singers
www.peterboroughsingers.com
- Sine Nomine Ensemble for Medieval Music
www.pims.ca/article/sine-nomine/
- SoundCrowd
www.soundcrowd.ca
- Soundstreams
https://soundstreams.ca
- Tafelmusik
www.tafelmusik.org
- Toronto Chamber Choir
www.torontochamberchoir.ca
- Toronto Mendelssohn Choir
www.tmchoir.org
- Toronto Mozart Players
www.mozartproject.ca
- Upper Canada Choristers
www.uppercanadachoristers.org
- Wychwood Clarinet Choir
www.wychwoodclarinetchoir.ca

Arts Services

- Eric Alper Public Relations
www.thatericalper.com
- International Resource Centre for Performing Artists
www.ircpa.net
- Linda Litwack Publicity
www.facebook.com/Linda-Litwack-Publicity-1174901622575289



CANARY PAGES 2021/2022

Directory of Choirs

- Achill Choral Society
www.achill.ca
- Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto
www.amadeuschoir.com
- Annex Singers
www.annexsingers.com
- Bel Canto Singers
www.belcantosingers.ca
- Canadian Celtic Choir
www.celticchoir.ca
- Cantabile Chamber Singers
www.cantabilechambersingers.com
- Chorus Niagara
www.chorusniagara.org
- Chorus York
www.chorusyork.ca
- City Choir
www.citychoir.ca
- Cummer Avenue United Church Choir
www.cummeravenueuc.ca
- Echo Women's Choir
www.echowomenschoir.ca
- Ensemble vocal Les voix du cœur
www.lesvoixducœur.com
- Etobicoke Centennial Choir
www.etobicokecentennialchoir.ca
- Exultate Chamber Singers
www.exultate.net
- Georgetown Choral Society
www.georgetownchoral.ca
- Harbourfront Chorus
www.facebook.com/harbourfrontchorus
- Jubilate Singers
www.jubilatesingers.ca
- King Edward Choir
www.kingedwardchoir.ca
- Leaside United Church Choirs
www.leasideunited.org
- Men of Note
www.menofnote.com
- Milton Choristers
www.miltonchoristers.com
- Mississauga Chamber Singers
www.mississaugachambersingers.ca
- Novi Singers Toronto
www.novisingerstoronto.ca
- Oasis Vocal Jazz
www.oasisvocaljazz.com
- Oriana Choir
www.orianachoir.com
- Pax Christi Chorale
www.paxchristichorale.org
- Peterborough Singers
www.peterboroughsingers.com
- Serenata Singers
www.serenatasingers.ca
- Society of Singers
www.societyofsingers.ca
- Tempus Choral Society
www.tempuschoralsociety.com
- Toronto Chamber Choir
www.torontochamberchoir.ca
- Toronto Children's Chorus
www.torontochildrenschorus.com
- Toronto Classical Singers
www.torontoclassicalsingers.ca
- Toronto Concert Choir
www.torontoconcertchoir.ca
- Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir
www.welshchoir.ca
- Upper Canada Choristers
www.uppercanadachoristers.org
- Vesnivka Choir
www.vesnivka.com
- Village Voices Community Choir
www.villagevoices.ca
- VIVA Singers Toronto
www.vivayouthsingers.com
- VOCA Chorus of Toronto
www.vocachorus.ca
- West Toronto Community Choir
www.facebook.com/groups/westtorontocommunitychoir
- Windsor Classic Chorale
www.windsorclassicchorale.org



GREEN PAGES 2021

Summer Music Festivals & Series

- Brott Music Festival
www.brottmusic.com
- Collingwood Summer Music Festival
www.collingwoodfestival.com
- Domaine Forget International Festival
www.domaineforget.com/en/international-festival
- Humbercrest Summer Concert Series
www.humbercrest.ca
- Markham Village Virtual Music Festival
www.markhamfestival.com
- Music Mondays
www.musicmondays.ca
- No Strings Theatre - Many Voices Many Stories
www.nostringstheatre.com
- Something Else! Festival
www.somethingelsefestival.com
- Stratford Summer Music
www.stratfordsummermusic.ca
- SweetWater Music Festival
www.sweetwatermusicfestival.ca
- Symphony in the Barn
www.symphonyninthebarn.com
- TD Niagara Jazz Festival
www.niagarajazzfestival.com



SUMMER MUSIC EDUCATION 2021

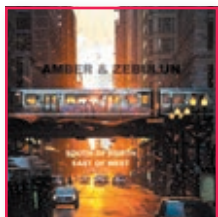
Camps, Programs & Workshops

- CAMMAC
www.cammac.ca
- Creative Strings Workshop Online
www.christianhowes.com/csw_online6
- Domaine Forget de Charlevoix International Music and Dance Academy
www.domaineforget.com/en/academy
- Interprovincial Music Camp
www.campimc.ca
- Lake Field Music
www.lakefieldmusic.ca
- No Strings Theatre - Teen Summer
www.nostringstheatre.com
- Orchestra North UX
www.orchestranorth.com
- Stratford Summer Music Vocal Academy
www.stratfordsummermusic.ca/education/vocal-academy
- Summer@Eastman
summer.esm.rochester.edu
- Tuckamore Festival Young Artist Program
www.tuckamorefestival.ca

Editor's Corner

DAVID OLDS

I have enjoyed the extended hiatus since the last issue and took advantage of the break to spend almost a month away from my computer and my stereo system; a kind of purge during which the only music I experienced was the sound of waves pounding the shore of Lake Erie, loon calls across Canning Lake and the wind in the trees in my backyard accompanying the chattering of squirrels and chirping birds. Oh, and some homemade string music with a few friends. It was lovely to be “unplugged.”



When I was back at my desk, I found solace in a unique recording by two (now) local musicians **Amber & Zebulun** whose self-described “ambient instrumental post-rock music” provided a perfect background as I faced the daunting task of editing nearly a hundred reviews that had been filed in my absence. **South of North, East of West** (amberzebulun.bandcamp.com) also

rewards as foreground listening, but its gentle ambience was just what I needed to help keep me focussed. Born in Yellowknife NT, and raised in Marysville ON, Amber Walton-Amar is a classically trained cellist. Husband Zebulun (Zebulun X Barnow, although I had to do some Googling to find that out), originally from Marquette MI via Chicago IL, is a multi-instrumentalist who seems to be responsible for the plucked and bowed bass lines, drum kit and melodic mallet instrument layers here. They have been making music together for more than a decade since first getting together in a Chicago-based Tom Waits cover band (an unusual context in which to find a cello). The liner notes tell us “*South of North, East of West* is about who you are, as defined by where you are. [...] The meaning of each of [the] four directions is defined by its opposite, its relationship to the others. If we remove the meaning of our origin, of our destination, we are either lost or exactly where we should be.” With intriguing titles such as *Cognitive Dissonance*, *Advice by Coincidence* and *Forgiving Garden*, the music itself is mesmerizing; mellow and melodic, generally slow-paced with long cello lines, often in tandem with bowed double bass, soaring over compelling rhythm beds. It did indeed place me “exactly where I should be.”

A disc that I had spent some time with before my self-imposed exile from technology provided a welcome re-entry into the craggy world of contemporary string writing upon my return. Icelandic composer **Anna Thorvaldsdottir** has embarked on a long-term multidisciplinary project



with the **Spektral Quartet** and video artist Sigurdur Gudjonsson entitled **Enigma**. Ultimately there will be a 360-degree immersive film magnifying the music when it is performed in the Adler Planetarium in Chicago and later taken on a national planetarium tour, but like so many current projects that has been put on hold during COVID-19. What we have at this point is a **Sono Luminus** audio recording of the striking three-movement, half-hour-long quartet (**DSL-92250 sonoluminus.com**). Like much of her music, which has garnered the Nordic Council Music Prize, the New York Philharmonic's Kravis Emerging Composer and the Lincoln Center's Emerging Artist Awards, *Enigma* is replete with extended techniques, extra-musical effects, unusual timbres and juxtapositions. There are few melodies per se, but rather moments and strings of events that constantly surprise and command rapt attention. Ranging from near silence, eerie harmonics and glissandi to percussive bursts, scratches and scrapes, there is also a meditative final section reminiscent of medieval harmonies that gradually rise in pitch and fade into breath sounds or, perhaps, the gentle lapping of waves upon a shoreline. The three-time Grammy-nominated Spektral Quartet is obviously well within its comfort zone with this challenging though beautiful music, even while the listener is sometimes left discomfited.



The final disc this month is the most traditional, although there was a time not too long ago when the music of **Astor Piazzolla** (1921-1992) was considered outside the mainstream. There has been a wealth of discs released in recent months in celebration of his centenary – you'll find Tiina Kiik's appraisal of one of them in the Modern and Contemporary section of this issue.

Another is **A Piazzolla Trilogy** (**BIS 2385 SACD bis.se**) which features violinist **Karen Gomyo** who was born in Tokyo, raised in Montreal and studied at the Juilliard School at the invitation of Dorothy DeLay, before embarking on an international career as soloist and chamber musician. She is heard here performing a selection of unaccompanied *Tango Etudes* (1987), joining guitarist Stephanie Jones in *Histoire du Tango* (1986) and as soloist and director of **L'Orchestre national des Pays de la Loire** in *Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas* (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires).

What we're listening to this month:

thewholenote.com/listening

We Want All the Same Things Erin Propp & Larry Roy

With an all-star line-up, this album reaches into the everyday and blurs the edges, with songs that are at once deeply personal and achingly relatable.



Saskatchewan Suite
Saskatchewan All Star Big Band
The Saskatchewan All Star Big Band communicates the beautifully unique history of Saskatchewan in a live recording with one of Canada's most talented composers, Fred Stride



aufs Lautenwerk Daniel Lippel

Three iconic Bach suites in a period Well temperament on an adjustable fret guitar, highlighting the subtle coloristic differences between keys.



Drifting, Volume 3 of the New Lullaby Project Aaron Larget-Caplan

Beautiful 2-5 minute guitar solos in the malleable genre of lullaby. Simple and yet complex – by over 55 composers in 10 countries.

Among the interesting biographical information included in Eric Johns' extensive essay in the program booklet is that, at its first performance, Piazzolla's *Sinfonía Buenos Aires Op.15* (1951) "scandalized the audience to the point of fistfights and shouting, supposedly in response to the inclusion of two bandoneóns [concertinas] in an orchestral work." It seems that he managed to alienate the tango community as well, with his introduction of classical stylings, techniques and instrumentation to the traditional form. Eventually, as we know, his *Nuevo Tango* style became widely accepted and is now lauded in concert and dance halls alike. Although originally written for flute, both the *Etudes* and *Histoire* are published in alternate versions for violin, and are well suited to the stringed instrument which, along with bandoneón and flute, was a staple in the traditional tango ensemble. In fact, again from Johns' notes, "When performed on violin, *Etude No.5* allows for the inclusion of double-stops, impossible on flute, to outline the alternation in the rhythmic pattern between 3+3+2, 3+2+3 and 4+4."

Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas was originally scored for Piazzolla's quintet of violin/viola, piano, electric guitar, double bass and bandoneón but is heard here in a string orchestra arrangement by Leonid Desyatnikov. It is the earliest work presented here, having been written between 1965 and 1970. It was not originally conceived of as a suite – the first movement *Verano* (Summer) was written as incidental music for a play by Alberto Rodríguez Muñoz – nor evidently as a tribute to Vivaldi, but there are a number of quotations from that Baroque master's own *Quattro Stagioni* and it certainly serves as one.

Gomyo's playing is stellar throughout, full of idiomatic nuance and enthusiasm, with a rich warm tone in the lilting melodies, but suitably gruff as the sometimes gritty music requires. The same is true of Jones' guitar, lyrical and percussive by turns. There is a lovely cello solo in *Otoño Porteña* (Autumn) superbly performed by Paul Ben Soussan, but the highlight of the movement is Gomyo's extended and extravagant cadenza. A fine disc, and a wonderful centennial tribute to the Argentine master.



Well, I thought that was all I had this time around, but as I was putting the finishing touches on my screed I received an advance copy of the latest from Toronto (former) *wunderkind* **Stewart Goodyear**. **Phoenix (Bright Shiny Things BSTC-0154 brightshiny.ninja)** will be released on October 8 and adds a glimpse into yet another side of this many-faceted musical

force to an already impressive discography. The press release tells us that "The ashes from which *Phoenix* rises are, as the pianist says: the 'soundworld, past traditions, and gestures of Franz Liszt' [who was] thought to have had a profound influence on Debussy and Ravel, the latter of whom famously orchestrated Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*." Mussorgsky's masterwork, masterfully performed in the original solo piano version, is the centre-piece of this impressive sonic essay. The disc is bookended by unaccompanied renditions of original works by Goodyear himself – the quasi moto perpetuo *Congotay*, recently released as a single with his jazz quintet, and the ebullient *Panorama*, extracted from *Callaloo*, a Gershwin-inspired work for piano and orchestra – both based on his half-Trinidadian heritage. Jennifer Higdon's *Secret and Glass Gardens*, called by the composer "a journey of wonder and discovery" that "reflects the paths of our hearts," is contrasted by Anthony Davis' more introspective and ultimately tumultuous *Middle Passage*, inspired by a poem of Robert Hayden that, according to Davis, "speaks to the essential irony of our people and culture born of the horror of slavery." *Middle Passage* includes two sections in which the performer is instructed to improvise and this recording marks Goodyear's debut as an improvising pianist. Two works by Debussy, *L'isle joyeuse* and *La cathédrale engloutie*, complete a thoughtful and fascinating disc.

We invite submissions. CDs, DVDs and comments should be sent to: DIScoveries, WholeNote Media Inc., The Centre for Social Innovation, 503 – 720 Bathurst St. Toronto ON M5S 2R4.

David Olds, DIScoveries Editor
discoveries@thewholenote.com

STRINGS ATTACHED

TERRY ROBBINS



The new CD **Debussy-Franck-Szymanowski** finds the Canadian duo of violinist **Marie Bégin** and pianist **Samuel Blanchette-Gagnon** in quite superb form (**ATMA Classique ACD2 2850 atmaclassique.com/en**).

Bégin's Carlo Bergonzi violin from 1710-1715 produces a glorious sound, and there's a lovely range of tone colour from both players in the Debussy *Sonata in G*

Minor and in the shimmering, atmospheric performance of the three Szymanowski *Mythes Op.30*. The heart of the disc is a wonderfully expansive and insightful reading of the Franck *Sonata in A Major*, with a slow build-up through the opening *Allegretto*, a brooding and passionate *Allegro* second movement, a heartfelt *Recitativo: Fantasia* and a final canon of depth and strength.

Two short transcriptions – Fauré's *Après un rêve* and Debussy's *Beau soir*, the latter in the Heifetz arrangement – complete a superlative CD.



Roots, the debut CD from the young American violinist **Randall Goosby** has been attracting a lot of interest, and with good reason. Described as "an exploration of the music written by Black composers and inspired by Black American culture" it's a strong recital that features fine playing from Goosby and pianist **Zhu Wang** (**Decca Classics 4851664 store.deccaclassics.com/* / CD-Classics/Roots/6Z5A16YW000**).

Xavier Dubois Foley's *Shelter Island* for violin and string bass (with the composer on bass) is a world-premiere recording, as are the three pieces by Florence Price: *Adoration* and the two *Fantasies, No.1 in G Minor* and *No.2 in F-sharp Minor*. Also here are Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson's *Blue/s Forms for Solo Violin*, four songs from Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* in the Heifetz transcriptions, William Grant Still's *Suite for Violin and Piano* (with its gorgeous second movement), Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's *Deep River* (in an arrangement by violinist Maud Powell) and Dvořák's three-movement *Sonatina in G Major*.

Goosby draws a full, warm tone from the 1735 "Sennhauser" Guarneri del Gesù violin, and has a lovely feel for line and phrase. Wang provides excellent support on an impressive debut disc.



From the opening bars of **The Viennese Viola: Emma Wernig**, the debut CD from the winner of the 2017 Cecil Aronowitz competition with **Albert Cano Smit** at the piano, it's clear that we're in very good hands. Wernig's warm, assured playing is supported by Cano Smit's perfectly matched accompaniment in a beautifully balanced recording of Austrian rarities for viola and piano (**Champs Hill Records CHRCD163 emmawernig.com**).

Hans Gál wrote his *Viola Sonata in A Major Op.101* in Edinburgh in late 1942, having fled Austria in 1938. It's a lovely work, lyrical and passionate but with moments of melancholy and gloomy introspection.

Two fine works by Robert Fuchs are at the centre of the recital: his *Sechs Phantasiestücke Op.117* from 1927 and his *Viola Sonata in D Minor Op.86* from 1899. Brahms greatly admired Fuchs, and his influence – as well as that of Schubert – is keenly felt.

Four Schubert songs – *Am See*, *Frühlingstraum*, *An die Musik* and *Litanei auf das Fest Aller Seelen* – chosen and arranged by the two performers, complete an outstanding CD.



A third – and equally accomplished – debut CD is **Elegy: Toby Hughes**, featuring the young English bassist accompanied by pianist **Benjamin Powell** in a recital that Hughes feels offers an insight into the instrument's versatility (**Champs Hill Records CHRCD162 toby-hughesdoublebass.com**).

Hughes' bass is built for solo playing, custom made for him, and what a sound it

has – the warmth and agility of a cello, but with heft.

The *Aria et Rondo* from 1952 by the French composer Alfred Desenclos opens the disc, followed by Reinhold Glière's *Four Pieces* – the *Prelude and Scherzo Op.32 Nos.1 & 2* and the *Intermezzo and Tarantella Op.9 Nos.1 & 2* – the *Tarantella* drawing dazzling virtuosity from Hughes. The brief *Eksskize No.1*, in a transcription by its composer Richard Dubugnon, was originally for voice and piano.

The other major work on the CD is the four-movement *Sonata No.2 in E Minor Op.6* from 1911 by Czech composer Adolf Mišek; it's a passionate work with shades of Brahms and Dvořák. Bottesini's lovely *Elegia No.1*, which takes Hughes to the instrument's highest register, brings an impressive debut CD to a close.



On the outstanding **Bach's Long Shadow**, his first solo album, the Spanish-American violinist **Francisco Fullana** builds a program of interlinked yet contrasting works around the Bach *Partita No.3 in E Major BWV1006* (**Orchid Classics ORC100165 orchidclassics.com**).

Ysaÿ's *Solo Sonata Op.27 No.2* directly quotes the Bach *Partita*. Kreisler's *Recitativo & Scherzo Op.6* was dedicated to Ysaÿ, and Fullana is playing Kreisler's first Guarneri violin, the 1735 "Mary Portman" Guarneri del Gesù which, for the Bach, is set up with gut strings, Fullana using a Baroque bow and historically informed ornamentation for that performance.

Striking transcriptions of Albéniz' *Asturias* and Tárrega's *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*, the latter particularly difficult and effective, end a dazzling solo recital, Fullana being joined in an "encore" by **Stella Chen**, the most recent winner of the Queen Elisabeth Competition, in the first movement of Ysaÿ's *Sonata for Two Violins*.

On **Richard Strauss/César Franck** the French duo of violinist **Brieuc Vourch** and pianist **Guillaume Vincent** present the Strauss *Sonata in E-flat Major Op.18* together with yet another recording of the Franck *Sonata in A Major* (**FARAO Classics B 108112 farao-classics.de**).



There's a strong, bright tone to Vourch's 1690 Francesco Ruggeri violin in a suitably passionate performance of the Strauss.

Interestingly, the performers' booklet notes for this and the Bégin/Blanchette-Gagnon disc both mention the tough challenge of trying to find an authentic personal voice in the much-recorded Franck sonata, but the resulting performances could hardly

be more different. Vourch and Vincent push the tempo throughout, especially in the *Allegro* and in a final canon faster than any of the four other Franck CDs I've received recently, but at times it simply feels rushed and lacking in subtlety – certainly not as thoughtful or satisfying as the Bégin disc.



Diffusion, the outstanding debut CD from the **Verona Quartet** is described as exploring a mosaic of folk cultures through the lens of three quartets from the early 20th century (**Azica Records ACDF-71339 veronaquartet.com**).

As musicians hailing from across the world, the quartet wanted their first album to reflect the essence of the cultural migration

that is such a big part of their identity. The performances of the three works – Janáček's *String Quartet No.2 "Intimate Letters"*, Szymanowski's *String Quartet No.2 Op.56* and Ravel's *String Quartet in F Major* – are quite superb in all respects.

The intensely personal intimacy and passion of the Janáček, written near the end of his life and inspired by his unfulfilled love for a much younger married woman, are beautifully captured in a performance that penetrates to the heart of the work. The Szymanowski, similar in style and tone, is equally striking, and a shimmering performance of the Ravel completes an extremely impressive disc full of breathtaking interpretations and playing.



The two guitarists who form the contemporary FretXDuo, **Daniel Lippel** and **Mak Grgic** have both issued solo CDs of music by Johann Sebastian Bach played on the well-tempered guitar. The guitar is by the German luthier Walter Vogt, using his invention *The Fine-Tunable Precision Fretboard*, in which each fret is split into six individual moveable frets, placed according to the Well-Tempered

III tuning designed by Johann Kirnberger, a composer who studied with Bach. This not only enables the music to be heard in its original keys but also retains the specific Baroque character of each key that

What we're listening to this month:

thewholenote.com/listening



Twelve Sacred Choral Concerti Luminous Voices
In these sacred a cappella choral concerti, composer Artem Vedel (1767-1808) introduces an innovative tendency of "romanticizing" traditional Ukrainian partnesny singing.



Rasa Vitkauskaitė plays Mozart & Beethoven Piano Concertos
Rasa Vitkauskaitė
"She plays the solo part as boldly as Rudolf Serkin, and he conducts with more dramatic force than George Szell..." (Fanfare Magazine)



Reimagine: Beethoven & Ravel
Inna Faliks
Commissioned works by Billy Childs, Timo Andres, Paola Prestini, Richard Danielpour and more, alongside exquisite performances of Beethoven's Bagatelles Op. 126.



Quest
Elisabeth Remy Johnson
Solo harp works by a dozen historic and contemporary women. Original transcriptions and premiere recordings. "Exquisite" Gramophone, "Dazzling" EarRelevant, "Revelatory" Lucid Culture.

is lost with today's equal temperament, where the subtly varying interval sizes are smoothed out.

The Lautenwerk was a Baroque keyboard instrument, essentially a lute-harpsichord with gut strings that could be plucked with different quill materials at different points along their length. On **aufs Lautenwerk**, Lippel performs two works for the instrument – the *Suite in E Minor BWV996* and the *Sonata in C Minor BWV997* – along with the *Prelude, Fuga & Allegro in E-flat Major BWV998*, written for lute or harpsichord (**New Focus Recordings FCR920/MicroFest Records MF 18 microfestrecords.com**).



On **MAK/Bach** Grgic presents a simply beautiful recital of solo masterworks and chorales: the *Flute Partita in A Minor BWV1013*; the *Solo Violin Sonata in G Minor BWV1001*; and the *Cello Suite in D Major BWV1012*. Four brief chorales fill out the disc (**MicroFest Records MF19 microfestrecords.com**).

To be honest, it will probably take a very good ear to fully distinguish the nuances in the tuning here, but there's no denying the beauty of the sound or the beauty of the playing, with both performers displaying faultless technique – no easy task given the variations in individual fret placements – and an unerring feel for the period style. The Grgic CD, especially his own transcriptions of the *Violin Sonata* and the *Cello Suite* is perhaps the more satisfying program of the two, but with music and playing of this remarkable quality there's no need to choose between them.



The guitar works of Ludovico Roncalli have long been popular in modern transcriptions, but on **Roncalli Complete Guitar Music** they are performed by **Bernhard Hofstötter** on a Baroque guitar attributed to Matteo Sellas of Venice, c.1640 (**Brilliant Classics 2CD 95856 brilliantclassics.com**).

The five-course Baroque guitar had five pairs of gut strings (the first course often single-strung, as here) with the fourth and fifth sometimes octave-strung (here with a low octave on the fourth course only).

Roncalli's 1692 *Capricci armonici sopra la chitarra spagnola* consists of nine *sonate* (suites), with eight paired in major and relative minor keys, an opening *Preludio* and *Alemanda* being followed by various dance forms. Movements are really short – mostly under two



minutes. There's no indication of pitch or tuning, but the actual pitch heard is down a minor third from the listed keys.

Monica Hall's excellent booklet essay notes that Roncalli's "exquisite melodic lines and elegant counterpoint are seamlessly combined with the strummed five-part chords which were still a defining feature of guitar music at the time."

Hofstötter's masterful playing is an absolute delight throughout.

The addition of a sixth string (the low E) in the 1790s established the guitar form that would flourish throughout the 19th century. In his second volume of **Histoires de guitares** Quebec guitarist **David Jacques** features 15 historical guitars from his astonishing private collection, all but one from the period 1800–1880, and each one illustrated in colour in the excellent booklet (**ATMA Classique ACD2 2821 atmaclassique.com/en**).

The 28 short, charming pieces by Giuliani, Sor, Carulli, Paganini and 13 lesser-known composers were chosen specifically to showcase each instrument's individual qualities and character, and they include some real gems – the three pieces by the English composer Ernest Shand, for instance.

They're all beautifully played too, with clean technique, sensitivity and a nice range of tonal colour.



Drifting, Volume 3 of the New Lullaby Project is the latest CD from guitarist **Aaron Larget-Caplan** in his excellent series of specially commissioned guitar solos which began in 2007 (**Six String Sound 888-03 stonerecords.co.uk**).

The 15 short pieces here were written between 2010 and 2020 by 15 different composers, and while they're not intended to help children get to sleep there's nothing strident or challenging to the ears. "The compositional language leans tonal and the tuning remains mostly standard," says Larget-Caplan, "but don't worry, harmonics still abound." Indeed they do, in another captivating addition to a significant series that continues to add miniature gems to the contemporary guitar repertoire.

You can find my review of **Nights Transfigured – Volume 2 of the New Lullaby Project** in the May/June 2021 edition of *Strings Attached*. **O**

VOCAL

On the Wings of Song

Kira Braun; Peter Krochak
Independent (kirabraunsoprano.com)



► The soprano Kira Braun has been a performing soloist since just 2014. Yet she has already released six recordings – five with pianist Peter Krochak – the latest

of which is, very possibly her best. Picking up from where their last album *The Echoing Air* left off, *On the Wings of Song* – with more art songs by Poulenc, together with works by Mendelssohn and Obradors – is a ravishing duet between a singer who excels at being both a lyric and dramatic soprano and a pianist who springs and leaps with much agility and nuance.

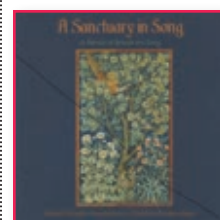
All the songs receive terrific performances and although the program is weighted slightly in favour of Poulenc and Obradors, Mendelssohn's *Wanderlied* is particularly radiant – perhaps predictably so, given Braun's German heritage. She strikes an ideal balance between a certain compassion and sophistication, something that makes Mendelssohn seem quite ideally suited for Braun as she delivers his songs with affectionate communication of the poetry. Her command of Poulenc is unrivalled and she proves this with her airy sculpting of *Les chemins de l'amour*. She also grows into the characters of Obradors' songs with great feeling and intensity.

Krochak's contribution to the unique musicality of this disc cannot be overestimated. Being a singer himself seems to give him an added edge over others who might have accompanied Braun. This is what gives his playing a beguiling refinement, enabling him to traverse this repertoire with judicious melodiousness and delicacy.

Raul da Gama

A Sanctuary in Song

Daniel Cabena; Stephen Runge
Chestnut Hall Music
(chestnuthallmusic.com)



► *A Sanctuary in Song* is a collaboration between countertenor Daniel Cabena and pianist Stephen Runge. The album follows a man's journey via the stages of life,

love, loss and death. We follow him first in a prelude, and then, in his wanderings and sanctuary explorations interspersed with instrumental commentaries.

Although the repertoire is mostly curated from the English art songs of composers born in the 19th century (York Bowen, John Ireland, Roger Quilter, Charles Villiers Stanford, Peter Warlock and Ralph Vaughan Williams), other more contemporary composers are also featured

(Australian-Canadian Barrie Cabena – the singer's father – as well as British-born Gerald Finzi and Edmund Rubbra). The influence of, training in, or adherence to musical practices associated with Romantic music are felt throughout the album. Runge's playing is sophisticated and elegant, all the while creating both intimate and grand pianistic expressive soundscapes for Cabena to soar above. Cabena's commitment to the texts gives life to the various layers of emotional meaning that one can find in nature, love, beauty, solitude or spirituality.

With 26 pieces of music and over 70 minutes of repertoire *A Sanctuary in Song* is a generous offering and a thoughtfully curated story that showcases a great number of composers and poets to (re)discover. Kudos to the Canadian duo for also featuring two compositions by Canadian composer Cabena.

A Sanctuary in Song was recorded December 12 & 13, 2017 at the Maureen Forrester Recital Hall, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario.

Sophie Bisson

Artem Vedel – Twelve Sacred Choral Concerti
Luminous Voices; Spiritus Chamber Choir
Leaf Music LM244 (leaf-music.ca)



► The choral concerto is a uniquely Eastern European form, arising in the Russian Empire in the 17th century and continuing to be written well into

the 19th. In general terms, the choral concerto was defined by its multi-movement form and psalm-based texts, written for unaccompanied chorus and containing passages for full ensemble as well as soloists. While parallels can certainly be drawn between the choral concerto's form and that of the Western instrumental concerto, this similarity

is more coincidence than correlation, as the developments of these like-minded styles occurred largely contemporaneously.

The most renowned and oft-performed composer of choral concertos is Dimitri Bortniansky, an Italian-trained, Russian-Ukrainian musician whose 45 concertos are considered by many to be the pinnacle of the form. At the same time as Bortniansky was putting pen to paper, another Ukrainian composer was authoring his own essays in the choral concerto style, and it is these works by Artem Vedel that are the focus of *Vedel: Choir Concertos Nos. 1-12 & Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*.

While a relatively unknown composer in modern times, Vedel was widely respected in his homeland during his lifetime and was one of the "Golden Three" composers, along with Maxim Berezovsky and Bortniansky. Vedel's concertos are strikingly expressive yet deceptively simple, many of them written for three- or four-part chorus, and often set anguished texts from the psalms: nine of the eleven intact concertos are written in minor keys and are of a pleading, mournful nature.

Far from being pessimistic and despite Vedel's angsty outlook, there are moments of great beauty and striking optimism contained within each work, particularly as the texts turn to the goodness and saving power of God; these cadences are arguably some of the most delightful and satisfying in the oeuvre and are magnificently executed by the performers.

This double-disc collection is immense, containing over 150 minutes of material, all of it performed by the Calgary-based ensemble Luminous Voices. A seven-year project, this recording is a testament both to the compositional capabilities of Vedel and the musical skill of Luminous Voices and its director, Timothy Shantz.

Matthew Whitfield

Mozart – Così Fan Tutte
Eriksmoen; Dragojevic; Schuen; Peter; Kulman; Werba; Concentus Musicus Wien; Arnold Schoenberg Choir; Nikolaus Harnoncourt
Unitel Edition 804108 (naxosdirect.com/search/804108)



► Collaborations between composer and librettist always create happy results, often the composer's best operas, e.g. between Verdi/Boito, R. Strauss/Hoffmanstahl or Wagner/Wagner (as he wrote his own librettos). This is the case with Lorenzo

Da Ponte with whom Mozart produced three of his masterworks: *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan Tutte*.

Nicholas Harnoncourt's long-cherished dream has been to conduct all three of them, one after the other, as authentically as possible, in an intimate setting with close collaboration with singers while still maintaining complete control. This is a concert performance, with bare stage, no sets or costumes. Singers sing from scores, but act and move freely, interact with each other and the emphasis is entirely on the music; the most beautiful music of the three operas according to connoisseurs.

Così fan Tutte means all women are fickle, deceitful (even Verdi's Duke of Mantua sings it: *La donna è mobile*), a thesis proven by the philosopher Don Alfonso (Markus Werba, baritone) with an experiment on two sets of lovers Fiordiligi (Mari Eriksmoen, soprano) and Dorabella (Katija Dragojevic, mezzo) vs. Ferrando (Mauro Peter, tenor) and Guglielmo (André Schuen, baritone) in this hilarious comedy. And in the music, one beautiful piece after another. Like Fiordiligi's angry outburst: *Come scoglio immoto resta in*

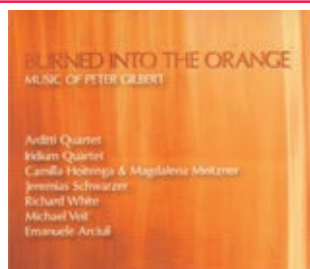
What we're listening to this month:

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Trinité
Ofer Pelz

A celebration of an eight year collaboration with Israeli based Meitar Ensemble, Trinité features five works that highlight Pelz' intricate hybrid ensemble textures



Burned into the Orange
Peter Gilbert

Gilbert's music explores rich, sensual ensemble textures that highlight the uniqueness of individual timbres and the ephemerality of the crystalline moments that contain them.



À Claude

Benedetto Bocuzzi

Bocuzzi's debut album aims to be a family reunion, an ancestral tree starting with Claude Debussy and branching out into all the subsequent generations



Blow

The City of Tomorrow

The centerpiece on *Blow* is an ambitious new work by Hannah Lash, bookended by riveting pieces by Franco Donatoni and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Act One, or Ferrando's *Un aura amorosa* so beautiful that even Harnoncourt sings along. Dorabella's *È amore un ladroncello* is tempestuous and Guglielmo's *Donne mie la fate tanti* is a swaggering boast of male pride. The clever and worldly chambermaid, Despina (Elisabeth Kulman), the interlocutor who helps Don Alfonso carry out his scheme, also sings a lovely aria *Una donna a quindici anni* that delights Harnoncourt and garners big applause.

"Something we had never heard before like this" says the Serbian newspaper Kurir, and that just about sums it up.

Janos Gardonyi

Malcolm Arnold – The Dancing Master Vocal Soloists; BBC Concert Orchestra; John Andrews Resonus Records RES10269 (resonusclassics.com)



► London, 1952: Malcolm Arnold, Oscar-winner-to-be for *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, is rapidly churning out one film score after another; his friend, filmmaker

Joe Mendoza, has written a screenplay based on a 1671 comedy, *The Gentleman Dancing Master*. For years, they've discussed collaborating on an opera; now, Mendoza turns the screenplay into a made-for-television opera libretto. Only two weeks after receiving Mendoza's draft, Arnold completes the score for a one-act, 75-minute opera. Deemed "too bawdy for family audiences" by BBC executives, *The Dancing Master* languishes until an amateur concert performance with piano in 1962; it finally receives its first full production in 2015 in London.

Miranda faces an unwanted marriage to her Frenchified cousin, "Monsieur" Nathaniel, arranged by her pompous father and puritanical aunt. Supported by her maid Prue, Miranda attempts to pass off her ardent but maladroit admirer Gerard as her dance instructor. Comic complications inevitably ensue.

Mendoza's libretto (included in the booklet) boasts sharply drawn characters and abundant clever rhymes. It's hardly "bawdy" – mildly risqué only when Prue tries to seduce Nathaniel. Arnold's score is brightly orchestrated, poignant in Miranda's lament, boisterous in the ensembles, unashamedly cinematic in the climax of Miranda and Gerard's love duet, wickedly satiric in Nathaniel's absurd serenade, clearly echoing Beckmesser's hapless effort in *Die Meistersinger's* song contest.

The Dancing Master is a melodic, laugh-inducing romp. While a more distinguished cast might have been desirable, this CD promises guaranteed operatic entertainment.

Michael Schulman

CLASSICAL AND BEYOND

J. G. Graun – Chamber Music from the Court of Frederick the Great Augusta McKay Lodge; Georgina McKay Lodge; Eva Lymenstull; David Schulenberg Brilliant Classics BRI96289 (naxosdirect.com/search/bri96289)



► Frederick the Great's patronage of classical musicians is well known; Frederick was himself an accomplished player and composer.

Surprisingly, several of these composers did not perform before the King and are therefore less well known than they should be. This CD seeks reversal of the situation.

A comment is made in the CD notes that the pieces bridge a gap between Baroque and mainstream classical music. This is borne out in Janitsch's *Allegretto* which possesses a liveliness worthy of Mozart or Haydn. When it comes to Johann Gottlieb, the slightly older Graun brother, we are treated to a highly spirited *Allegro scherzando* from violinist Augusta McKay Lodge, echoed literally by David Schulenberg's harpsichord playing before all instruments proceed to a real virtuoso performance of which J. S. Bach would have been proud.

It is Bach's oldest son Wilhelm Friedemann who tutored one of the stars of this CD, Franz Benda. Benda's *Sonata for viola* brings out the best of Georgina McKay Lodge's playing. Listen, for example, to her stately and measured approach to the *Adagio*. Benda, in fact, moved in exalted circles, being a pupil of Wilhelm Friedemann but also having as patron one Sarah Levy, great-aunt of Felix Mendelssohn. And yet it is the Grauns who dominate the CD. Johann Gottlieb's *Trio sonata in A* showcases the string playing of both McKay Lodges. All in all, this well-chosen collection demonstrates the tremendous array of talented composers Frederick the Great attracted – which paved the way for Haydn and Mozart.

Michael Schwartz

Bach; Beethoven Andrew Von Oeyen Warner Classics 0190295020514 (vonoeyen.com)



► After the silence descended over concert halls in 2020, many performing artists focused on exploring the possibilities of new sonic places through

repertoire, musical approaches or unusual physical spaces. Intimate solo sessions offered these artists the opportunity for introspection and extended a salute to their audiences. According to Andrew Von Oeyen's liner notes, his desire to turn to the repertoire that expressed the essence of current times and fortified noble feelings of resilience and perseverance resulted in this album. And what an album it is! Every piece carries a deeper meaning of our collective experiences in the times of the pandemic and Von Oeyen conveys it on both the intellectual and emotional level. The performance goes beyond his dazzling technique and splendid phrasing. It is as if he simply knows where the heart of each composition lies and he is unveiling it for the listener.

Bach's *Overture in the French Style*, a quest for order and clarity, is particularly well played. Not being a Bach specialist allows Von Oeyen to hear the interweaving voices in a slightly more juxtaposed – rather than contrasting – way. Beethoven's piano sonatas (Nos. 13 and 23), embodying vitality and determination, bring in the currents of energy. The choice to end the album with Kempff's piano arrangements of the movements from Bach's *Flute Sonata No. 2* and *Harpsichord Concerto No. 5* are surprising but welcomed. These solitary musings of one artist are well noted and well appreciated.

Ivana Popovic

Mozart – Piano Concerto No. 20; Beethoven – Piano Concerto No. 3 Rasa Vitkauskaitė; Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra; Anima Musicae Chamber Orchestra; Jonathan Cohler Ongaku Records 024-129 (ongaku-records.com)



► Released in honour of Beethoven's 250th birthday anniversary, this album also honours the long and beloved tradition of the classical piano concerto. The concept is cleverly

simple: choosing to record the first concertos written in a minor key by both Mozart and Beethoven allows Lithuanian pianist Rasa Vitkauskaitė to explore the multitude of interrelations in the ways both composers approached piano playing and piano writing. Furthermore, her extensive and thoughtful liner notes not only offer a wealth of historical information but also aid the listener's aural comprehension of these two masterpieces.

Vitkauskaitė's performance is buoyant and certainly does not lack fully fledged ideas. Whether it is the poetic opening of Mozart's concerto or the relentless dancing bounce in the concluding movement of the Beethoven, Vitkauskaitė has a strong presence and willful execution. Each composer

chose specific minor keys (D minor for Mozart and C minor for Beethoven) as ideal canvases for expressing tempestuous feelings and darkness, and they continued to do so in their later works. Vitkauskaitė understands that darkness perfectly. She is capable of bringing forth the intensity and tension while still retaining the lyricism of the melodies. She favours her own improvisations and embellishments in the cadenzas, which makes this performance exciting as we are able to hear something new and surprising. Jonathan Cohler is a perfect collaborator to Vitkauskaitė, directing both orchestras with clarity and conviction.

Ivana Popovic

Mozart – Piano Concertos Vol.3 K449 & K595

Anne-Marie McDermott; Odense Symphoniorkester; Sebastian Lang-Lessing
Bridge Records 9538 (bridge-records.com)



► This Bridge recording is the third in a series of Mozart piano concertos featuring American pianist Anne-Marie McDermott with the Odense Symphony conducted by

Sebastian Lang-Lessing, this time presenting *Concertos No.14, K449 and No.27, K595*.

A graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, McDermott has earned a reputation as a consummate artist during the last 25 years, one who continues to appear in concert internationally both as a soloist and a chamber musician. Her first two recordings in this series were met with considerable critical acclaim and this one is equally impressive.

Written in 1784, K449 is regarded as the first of Mozart's mature works in the genre and was the first composition to be entered

into a notebook of his music he retained for the next seven years. McDermott approaches the score with a thoughtful intelligence, her phrasing at all times carefully nuanced, while the Odense Symphony is a sensitive and formidable partner. The second movement *andantino* is all heartfelt lyricism while the optimistic and sprightly finale is carried out with great gusto.

Concerto No.27, Mozart's last contribution to the concerto form, his "swan song" so to speak, was probably written between 1788 and 1789, but the manuscript is dated January 5, 1791. Once again, McDermott's performance is wonderfully expressive, the brisker passages marked by an adept precision. Throughout, the warm strings and woodwinds under Lang-Lessing's skilful baton further contribute to a most satisfying performance.

While recordings of Mozart piano concertos continue to be plentiful, this one – by an exemplary soloist and orchestra, both of whom deserve greater recognition – is a welcome addition and we can look forward to further editions in the series.

Richard Haskell

MM 1785 – Mozart Momentum
Leif Ove Andsnes; Mahler Chamber Orchestra
Sony 19439742462 (naxosdirect.com/search/194397424621)



► 1785 was a landmark year in Mozart's all-too-brief existence. He had finally achieved a degree of financial security, he commenced a period of tremendous creative

energy and he was beginning to "push the boundaries" with respect to his musical style. This Sony two-disc set titled *Mozart*

Momentum, is an intriguing presentation of seven works all composed that year – three piano concertos, the *Piano Quartet K478*, the *Fantasia K475* and the *Masonic Funeral Music K477* performed by Leif Ove Andsnes and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra.

The *Piano Concerto No.20* – the first of two Mozart wrote in a minor key – took some time to be fully accepted by Viennese audiences, but they ultimately embraced it wholeheartedly. The overall theme of "light triumphing over darkness" clearly fore-shadows the 19th century, and Andsnes with the MCO are a formidable pairing, delivering a polished performance.

Similarly, the *Concertos No.21 and 22* (the latter the first to make use of clarinets) demonstrate a buoyant confidence – tempos in the outer movements are brisk but never rushed, the cadenzas are creative and there's a solid connection between soloist and orchestra.

For the *G-Minor Quartet*, Andsnes drew upon the principals from the ensemble and what a wonderfully intimate sound they produce! Here the listener is struck by the enthralling interplay of the musicians, particularly in the third movement scherzo where they engage in a true game of "cat and mouse" including a false ending before the jocular conclusion performed with great panache.

Andsnes sits on the sidelines for the brief *Masonic Funeral Music* but returns for the *Fantasia in C Minor*, a score that clearly anticipates Beethoven.

Kudos to all concerned – this set is a treasure, bound to be enjoyed for many years to come.

Richard Haskell

What we're listening to this month:

thewholenote.com/listening



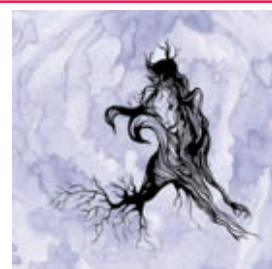
Now Pronouncing: Caity Gyorgy
Caity Gyorgy
 An exciting and beautiful new release from one of Canada's up and coming jazz musicians where she serves as the vocalist, composer, lyricist, arranger, and bandleader!



John MacMurchy and Dan Ionescu LIVE
John MacMurchy
 Recorded live before a studio audience at Canterbury Music Company, Toronto. CDs and Digital Downloads available at johnmacmurchy.bandcamp.com. www.johnmacmurchy.com



L'Impact du Silence
François Bourassa
 When used wisely, silence is emotional, poetic. This musical adventure combines improvisation, lyricism, and abstraction and features integrity and emotion as the main themes.



Dressed in Borrowed Light
Clara Engel
 "A deeply immersive and rewarding experience"
 - LOUDER THAN WAR
 "Absolutely intoxicating, and full of soul" - THE SLEEPING SHAMAN

The Schumann Project: Robert – Symphonic Etudes; Clara – Sonata in G Minor
Inna Faliks
MSR Classics MS 1763 (msrcd.com)

Reimagine: Beethoven & Ravel
Inna Faliks
Navona Records nv6352
(navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6352)



► The name Inna Faliks may not seem familiar to music lovers today, but the credentials of this Ukrainian-born American pianist are impressive indeed.

Currently head of the piano department at UCLA, Faliks has made a name for herself both as a performer and pedagogue, and has appeared in concert throughout the world including a tour of China in 2016. The recording, titled *The Schuman Project*, is the first in a series designed to juxtapose the music of Robert Schumann with that of his wife Clara, who for too long has had the unfortunate reputation as “a pianist who also composed.”

The 19th century wasn’t kind to women composers (or any women involved in the creative arts) and Clara was no exception. Her *Piano Sonata in G Minor*, which opens the disc, was an early work dating from 1841 when she was all of 22. It was composed specifically for Robert and despite her youth, there is much to admire here including solid construction and fine thematic development among the four movements. Faliks approaches the unfamiliar score with a clear understanding of the music, delivering a compelling and heartfelt performance.

Schumann’s renowned *Symphonic Etudes* were begun in 1834 and have long been regarded as one of the most challenging of his large-scale piano works. Faliks easily proves her grasp of the material, rising to all the technical demands. But she is no mere technician – at all times her phrasing is carefully articulated and, beginning with the mysterious opening theme, her performance is a captivating musical journey right through to the jubilant finale.



Faliks turns her attention to very different material in the disc *Reimagine: Beethoven and Ravel*. Here she focuses on putting a new “spin” on standard repertoire, in this case,

the Beethoven set of *Bagatelles Op.126* and Ravel’s suite *Gaspard de la Nuit*. These were used as a basis for new compositions by modern composers such as Peter

Golub, Tamir Hendelman and Richard Danielpour. Just as the Beethoven set is a study in contrasts, so are the reinterpretations. For example, the mood of the *Bagatelle* by Golub based on the first in the Beethoven set is pensive and contemplative, closely following that of the original, while Ian Krouse’s *Etude 2a* based on the second is a true *perpetuum mobile*. For whatever reason, Faliks didn’t include any original movements from the Ravel suite, but pieces such as *Variations on a Spell* by Paola Prestini are an evocative reimagining of *Ondine*.

These are fine recordings demonstrating two sides of a gifted artist – and recorded during a pandemic no less. We can hope to hear more from Inna Faliks in the future.

Richard Haskell

Brahms – Symphony No.3; Serenade No.2
Budapest Festival Orchestra; Ivan Fischer
Channel Classics CCS SA 43821
(channelclassics.com/catalogue/43821)



► “There is no more magnificent opening of a symphony than the first 38 bars of Brahms Third” says Ivan Fischer, and obviously he is very partial to the work.

Fischer is known to pursue unjustly neglected works and restore them to mainstream repertoire. Brahms *Third Symphony* is certainly the dark horse, the least performed of his four. Granted, it is different from the others: it’s the shortest, terse, vivid, passionate and intensely alive. It begins with a great heroic theme in an optimistic F Major *fortissimo* that dominates the work, but it’s also capable of becoming soft and tender as at the end of the first movement and the very end of the symphony.

The nickname *heroic* fits only the outer movements. The second is quiet and peaceful and simply glows with one beautiful melody after another. It comes to a gorgeous climax and then a hushed magical moment of dialogue between various woodwinds and the lower strings echoing one another. The third movement should be a scherzo, but it isn’t. It has a “beautiful, caressing theme, loving and slightly melancholic, but all in a mildly rocking rhythm” (Clemens Romijn). It is in 3/4 time and so catchy that it became a pop song. The last movement is intense, dramatic like a battle, heroic, but the main theme returns in a quiet, peaceful manner that ends the symphony gently.

Brahms wrote the two *Serenades* before he composed symphonies and I first heard them by the late, great Brahmsian István Kertész and fell in love with them instantly. The graceful *Serenade No.2* provides a nice contrast to the heroic *Third Symphony*, performed here in a thoroughly delightful manner by the wonderful musicians of the

Budapest Festival Orchestra, the pride of Hungary and one of the top ten of the world.

Janos Gardonyi

Johannes Brahms – Piano Concertos
Andras Schiff; Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
ECM New Series 2690/91
(ecmrecords.com/shop)



► Perhaps like many classical music listeners and lovers, I mainly (and perhaps limitingly) associate the Hungarian-born pianist Sir András Schiff with J.S.

Bach, whose music Schiff plays beautifully, frequently and with an insight and mastery that few have equalled. Accordingly, it was a pleasure for me to dig into Schiff’s recent double-disc recording of the reimagined piano concertos of Johannes Brahms, accompanied capably by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Captured following a string of highly acclaimed European concerts in the spring of 2019, the resulting recording is magical. Doing double duty as pianist and conductor, Schiff leads this unique United Kingdom-based period-piece orchestra through some of the most musical and challenging pieces in the Western art music canon (*Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No.1 in D Minor, Op.15* and *No.2 in B-flat Major, Op.83*), mining the depths of Romantic-era dynamics and expressivity for which Brahms is revered. Further, the recording, captured at London’s Abbey Road studios, contains all of the fidelity hallmarks for which ECM Recordings has earned its blue-chip reputation over the last near half-century, exhibiting the tell-tale expansive sonic thumbprint of executive producer Manfred Eicher, who helps realize here a recording that captures Schiff, and the 1859 Blüthner piano on which he performs, beautifully.

Andrew Scott

Brahms – Double Concerto; Tchaikovsky – Romeo and Juliet; Liszt – Les Preludes
Lisa Batiashvili; Gautier Capuçon; Staatskapelle Dresden; Christian Thielemann
C Major 757108
naxosdirect.com/search/757108



► Christian Thielemann had already established himself as a card-carrying, man-about-Brahms when he recorded the complete symphonies, the piano concertos with Pollini and the violin concerto with Batiashvili; DG was

still attempting to develop a successor to the late Herbert von Karajan.

Of course this concert with the Dresden Staatskapelle could be nothing less than a memorable event given the incomparable technique and sonorities of the soloists, violinist Lisa Batiashvili and cellist Gautier Capuçon, with Thielemann in command. This Blu-ray has had lots of play in the past weeks as I just had to hear, just one more time, my very favourite Brahms concerto. The encore, *Il Zingaresca: Allegro giocoso*, is a pleasing interplay between violin and cello by Schulhoff. The Tchaikovsky and Liszt war horses each enjoy a well-controlled, commanding performance,

Bruce Surtees

Busoni – The Six Sonatinas
Victor Nicoara
Hanssler Classic HC20086
naxosdirect.com/search/hc20086



► Victor Nicoara, a bona fide exponent of the piano music of Ferruccio Busoni, joins an increasing number of musicians determined to familiarize audiences

with the Italian composer's catalogue, bringing them "closer to an emotional understanding of... neglected masterpieces." As such, Nicoara has fashioned an aesthetically pleasing album featuring Busoni's *Six Sonatinas* – out of chronological order – set amongst smaller pieces. It is immediately apparent that Nicoara has long been devoted to Busoni's art and brings a depth of interpretation and impressive conviction to his performance. The pianist displays attributes of expression not perennially associated with Busoni: a tenderness of line and sense of satirical gesture (with playfulness); a dreamy, almost absent-minded notion of soundscape, a rational *lingua franca* of harmony. (Busoni's

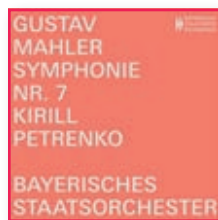
harmonic language can sometimes seem out of reach for many listeners.)

This is a disc to be thoroughly enjoyed, varied in scope with intimations of dusted-off treasure. The musical gemstones Nicoara brings to our ears from vaults below are not unknown, they're just rarely heard and must therefore be reclaimed and *re-appreciated* in the natural light of day. Here is the conceit of Nicoara's newest recording and he succeeds in its conveyance, admirably.

Outside of the sonatinas, a more novel highlight is the *Nuit de Noël, BV 251*. Without knowing, one might guess this music to be written by Debussy, Grieg or even a proponent of the Romantic English school. Finally, Nicoara's own, *Quasi Sonatina*, illuminates the nooks and crannies of our aforementioned museum finds in "an attempt... to distill the spirit and compositional procedures of the works recorded..." As listeners, we revel in his sensitivity for the material: material he plays with an earnest, even humble, brand of pianistic expertise.

Adam Sherkin

Mahler – Symphony No.7
Bayerisches Staatsorchester; Kirill Petrenko
Bayerische Stattooper BS0rec0001
naxosdirect.com/search/bs0rec0001



► The Bayerisches Staatsorchester, the resident orchestra of the renowned Bavarian State Opera, launches a new label featuring their purely orchestral performances

with this 2018 live performance under their former music director Kirill Petrenko, recently appointed to succeed Simon Rattle at the Berlin Philharmonic. The reclusive and modest Petrenko has very few recordings to his credit to date; that he would choose to heighten his profile with this most neglected though utterly fascinating example of Mahler's symphonies is certainly a provocative move.

In general we have here a quite satisfying result, revealing an excellent orchestra at the top of its game. The opening bars of this five-movement symphony seemed a bit underwhelming to me at first, though it eventually became evident that Petrenko is playing the long game as the interpretation grew increasingly incandescent throughout the remainder of the movement. A certain Apollonian reticence is also evident in the flanking pair of *Nachtmusik* movements; the echoing horn calls that open the second movement for example are, unusually, strictly in tempo, while the expressive tempo modifications in the archly sentimental fourth movement are almost non-committal in their fleetness, though both movements are otherwise sonically luxurious and expertly balanced. He does however display a commanding

hand throughout the psychedelic central Scherzo and truly comes into his own in the dense polyphony of the grandiloquent Finale which zips along jubilantly.

Though it's certainly not the finest recording of this work available (I would recommend Bernstein/NY or Abbado/Lucerne) it nevertheless shows great promise that Petrenko interprets this demanding work with such alacrity. Stay tuned!

Daniel Foley

Quest
Elisabeth Remy Johnson
Albany Records TROY1863
albanyrecords.com



► This compelling new recording from world-renowned principal harpist (Atlanta Symphony) Elisabeth Remy Johnson, is a magnificent celebration of not only the harp itself,

but of 12 radiant female composers. Both historic and contemporary artists are represented here by way of Johnson's transcriptions of venerable piano works by Cécile Chaminade (*Aubade* – 1911), Amy Beach (*A Hermit Thrush at Morn* – 1921), Mel Bonis (*Cinq Morceaux* – 1894 to 1927), Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (*Mélodie* – 1846), Clara Wieck Schumann (*Romanze* – 1853) and Lili Boulanger (*D'un vieux jardin* – 1914). Contemporary contributors to this superb collection include Australian flutist/composer Johanna Selleck, British composer Freya Waley-Cohen, British violist/composer Sally Beamish and Canadian composer Kati Agócs.

The title track is by contemporary Iranian-American pianist/composer Niloufar Nourbakhsh. Written in 1992, the composition reflects Nourbakhsh's thoughts and feelings as she embarked on her "quest" of becoming a composer. Delicate, gossamer and provocative, this world-premiere recording and transcription for solo harp is nothing short of breathtaking. *Aubade* has a whimsical aspect, made even more magical when performed on harp and *A Hermit Thrush at Morn* embodies contemporary motifs in classical music that were just beginning to come into focus in the 1920s. Of special beauty and elegance is the five-movement *Cinq Morceaux*, as is *D'un vieux jardin* where the listener experiences a stunning, Parisian garden gently emerging out of the mist.

The contemporary pieces presented here are no less notable, particularly Agócs' *Every Lover is a Warrior* and Waley-Cohen's *Skye*. This is a recording to be savoured, just like all of the works of the brilliant female artists who have contributed to Johnson's laudible recording, infused with her incredible skill and taste.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Matthew Larkin Organist – Casavant Opus 550

Matthew Larkin

ATMA ACD2 2857 (atmaclassique.com/en)



▶ Not only is the pipe organ one of the world's oldest musical instruments, it is also one of the most complicated. Comprised of thousands of pipes ranging in size from

that of a small pencil to 32 feet in length, as well as innumerable internal mechanisms and electronic controls all managed by one musician at an equally complex (and appropriately named) "console" containing up to five separate keyboards. It takes a significant amount of training and dexterity to successfully maneuver these marvels of musical engineering.

When executed properly, the organist's job is to make the technical operation of the instrument a behind-the-scenes process, secondary in nature to the music itself. The audience need not (and should not) be aware of every button that is pushed, every pipe that is activated, but rather these small adaptations should be incorporated into the whole in a subtle and organic way, a challenging objective that grows increasingly complex as the size of the instrument increases.

The Casavant organ at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Bloor Street is one of largest such instruments in Canada, with over 7,500 pipes at the organist's disposal; it is also one of the finest. *Matthew Larkin Plays Casavant Opus 550 at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Toronto* illustrates just how magnificent and convincing a superb instrument can be in the hands of an equally gifted performer.

A fascinating collection of international works, including those by a number of notable Canadian composers, ensures that this double-disc offering has something for every listener. Whether it is Healey Willan's *Passacaglia and Fugue No. 2*, Keith Jarrett's *Hymn of Remembrance*, or César Franck's legendary *Chorale No. 3*, Larkin and the organ of St. Paul's provide interpretations that rise above the technical challenges (both musical and material) presented by the pipe organ and enter the realm of the sublime.

With expertly crafted material spanning continents and centuries, this recording is highly recommended to all who have an interest in the organ, its history, and its music.

Matthew Whitfield

Paris, La Belle Époque

Robert Langevin; Margaret Kampmeier

Bridge Records 9555 (bridge-records.com)



▶ Robert Langevin, a native of Sherbrooke, Quebec has served as associate principal flute of the Montreal Symphony and, since 2000, principal flute of the New York Philharmonic. In this CD, he and pianist Margaret Kampmeier scintillate in ten delectable works composed during France's "Belle Époque" (1871-1914), when Paris, rebounding after France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, again became a leader of European arts and culture.

The luxuriantly liquid melodies of Charles-Marie Widor's *Suite, Op. 34*, offer a musical counterpart to the entrancing beauties of Monet's celebrated, willow-draped lily pond in Giverny. Jules Mouquet's three-movement *La flûte de Pan, Op. 15*, depicts the nature-god cavorting with shepherds, birds and nymphs. The second movement, *Pan et les oiseaux*, is especially ravishing, as "ancient" modal melodies float over harp-like piano plinks and arpeggios.

Gabriel Fauré's *Fantaisie, Op. 79* and *Morceau de concours*, the latter a sight-reading test-piece for students at the Paris Conservatoire, are in Fauré's familiar ambulatory, lyrically captivating style. George Enescu's *Cantabile et presto* and Philippe Gaubert's *Nocturne et allegro scherzando* were also composed for Conservatoire competitions. Both are very Fauré-like in character, as is Gaubert's lovely *Madrigal*. Gaubert's charming *Fantaisie* suggests the influence of Debussy, who closes this CD with two treasures of the flute repertoire, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (arranged for flute and piano) and *Syrinx* for solo flute.

Throughout, Langevin's flute seems a living thing, a "magic flute" with a mellifluous voice and amazing acrobatic agility, yet always exquisitely graceful. Bravissimo!

Michael Schulman

Ink

Merz Trio

Bright Shiny Things BSTC-0148 (brightshiny.ninja)



▶ Subtlety is the overarching quality that violinist Brigid Coleridge, cellist Julia Yang and pianist Lee Dionne – the Merz Trio – convey so luminously in the works of Vincent Scotto, Lili and Nadia Boulanger, Maurice Ravel and Claude Debussy interspersed between spoken words from Anna de

Noailles, Jean Cocteau, Guillaume Apollinaire and other writers. All of this comes together seamlessly in the trio's extraordinary debut disc, *Ink*.

The recitation often doesn't raise its voice much above a whisper, and even when it does, the narratives and music are skillfully and intricately interwoven to maintain a certain expressive decorum. The trio alters spoken word, harmonies and structural elements with impressive restraint, heading in directions that surprise and captivate the ear.

Most of the movements in the pieces presented here have a somewhat programmatic basis, though it isn't always necessary to know the storyline to appreciate the result. Moreover, both written word and musical notes spring off the page and rise in graceful, elliptical arcs pirouetting in balletic movement. Just when you think that things couldn't get any better than Lili Boulanger's *D'un vieux jardin*, it is Ravel's *Piano Trio in A Minor* that unfolds in a series of ethereal gestures, emerging in a panoply of colours and harmonic implications. Throughout, the Merz perform with consummate artistry, blending superior control and tonal lucidity with a breathtaking sense of line and motion.

Raul da Gama

Piano Protagonists – Music for Piano & Orchestra

Orion Weiss; The Orchestra Now; Leon Botstein

Bridge Records 9547 (bridgerecords.com/collections/catalog-all)



▶ All of the *Piano Protagonists* works are "firsts." Erich Korngold's *Piano Concerto in C-sharp Major for One Hand* (premiered 1924) was the first Paul Wittgenstein-

commissioned left-handed piano concerto. It has one dramatic movement in the style of Korngold's opera *Die tote Stadt*, more complex than his later *Violin Concerto*. Its tough-minded, ceremonial character was appropriate for the commissioner/pianist Wittgenstein, who lost his right arm in World War I. There are also tender-minded and mysterious moments in the middle section, *Reigen* (Round Dance – used ironically). Pianist Orion Weiss conveys these subtleties well. His technical mastery of massive octaves and chords, and of the lightning-fast *burlesk* section, never falters.

Chopin's *Variations on "La ci darem la mano"* (from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*) for piano and orchestra first brought him to public attention. The variations' intensity and freedom of piano ornamentation and passagework were striking, prefiguring his piano concertos. I particularly like the runs with double notes in Variation I, and the

polonaise variation and finale demonstrating the composer's celebrated style achieved in his teens.

Rimsky-Korsakov's *Piano Concerto in C-sharp Minor* (1882-3) was a first for the non-pianist composer. An expert orchestrator, Rimsky-Korsakov plays to his strength in emphasizing piano-orchestra interplay over virtuosity. The wealth of musical invention applied to a simple Russian theme is what sustains this compact concerto. Weiss and The Orchestra Now under Leon Botstein convey the lively work's spirit and its intricacies well.

Roger Knox

History of the Russian Piano Trio Vol.1 (Alyabiev; Glinka; Rubinstein); Vol. 2 (Tchaikovsky; Pabst); Vol. 3 (Rimsky-Korsakov; Cui; Borodin); Vol. 4 (Arensky; Taneyev); Vol. 5 (Dyck; Sternberg; Youferov)
The Brahms Trio
Naxos 8.574112-6 (naxosdirect.com/search/8574112-6)



► This *History of the Russian Piano Trio* is remarkable for several reasons. Firstly it brings together piano trios, some of which were rarely performed (if at all). Secondly it

features works by composers such as Alexander Alyabiev who is all but forgotten, and Vladimir Dyck, who was murdered by the Nazis in Auschwitz; and by others – Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky and Borodin – better known for large-scale works. Moreover, the trios by Dyck, Sternberg and Youferov are world premieres. Most significantly these five discs (the first releases in a proposed series of 15 CDs) are a magnificent attempt to resurrect the nobility of classicism that is uniquely Russian and that came into being as the country itself was in the throes of defining its own nationalism. All of these reasons make the undertaking of such a musical task uniquely challenging, but judging by the sublime performances throughout it is an uncommonly successful one.



Most histories of Russian music are either written from a European perspective or with a Eurocentric bias in documenting events and achievements; something

that you could hardly fault as the overarching influence – political and cultural – on Russian music came from outside its Western borders. But if the emancipation of the serfs was a political tipping point in Russian history and culture, it was the power of the so-called Big Five (Balakirev, Glinka, Cui, Borodin and

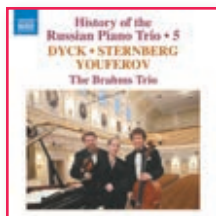
Rimsky-Korsakov) that initiated the painting and sculpting of the significant landscape of a unique Russian musical character, quite apart from Western Europe; one which was later altered by the Russian Revolution, the horrors of Nazism, as well as the dénouement of Communism.



phenomenally Eurasian in its cultural construct, and echoes with elegant and sometimes rustic flavours that are special to Slavic and Russian literary and other (folk) cultural traditions. All of this, though ancient in many respects, came into being just over 200 or so years ago. And so, just as Russia adopted its unique script late in history, so did the music reflect these momentous changes, as if to bring to life its singular cultural topography. This is not only captured by the composers represented here by their work, but in large measure by this stellar ensemble: The Brahms Trio of Moscow.



Violinist Nikolai Sachenko, cellist Kirill Rodin and pianist Natalia Rubinstein bring Alyabiev's lost work magically alive before turning to Glinka's *Trio pathétique* in *D Minor* and Anton Rubinstein's *Piano Trio in G Minor* with orchestral intensity, playing white-hot in ensemble and soli. Tchaikovsky's piano trio in *A minor* and Paul Pabst's in *A major*, are delivered with power and uncommon élan. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Piano Trio in C Minor*, Cui's *À Argenteau*, *Op.40*, No.2 and Borodin's *Piano Trio in D Major* are all superbly textured and delivered with delicate instrumental colouring and balance.



and tragic stature to the monumental architecture of Dyck's turbulent *Piano Trio in C Minor*. Sternberg's *Trio No.3 in C Major* is played with effortless distinction and Youferov's *Piano Trio in C Minor*, with debonair virtuosity and aristocratic grace. It is not only thrilling to listen to these five discs one after the other, but also seems poetic justice that such characterful music should be literally brought to life by this spectacular

The character of Russian music may be influenced by, but is unlike anything in, Western Europe. It is music significantly "younger" than that of Europe,

contemporary Russian trio.

Raul da Gama

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

Clifford Crawley – Moods and Miniatures
Maureen Volk; Christine Carter; Michelle Cheramy; Beverley Diamond
Centrediscs CMCCD 28621 (centrediscs.ca)



► "Cliff was a master of the miniature," writes pianist Maureen Volk, Memorial University professor emeritus. This CD presents 39 of them, most under

two minutes, one only 17 seconds! It begins, though, with the three-movement, 13-minute *iPieces*, composed for Volk in 2010. *iOpener* and *iDeal* feature Gershwin-esque bluesiness and dreamy nostalgia; *iDears* is a perky succession of different dance rhythms and a Gershwin-esque finishing flourish.

England-born Clifford Crawley (1929-2016) came to Canada in 1973 and taught at Queen's University for 20 years. In 2002, he moved to St. John's where his wife, pianist-ethnomusicologist Beverley Diamond, joined the Memorial University faculty. Volk writes, "My colleagues" – including this CD's flutist Michelle Cheramy and clarinetist Christine Carter – "and I met a soft-spoken and generous man with a ready smile and a sly sense of humour who soon became a good friend. We also discovered a composer who had written a trove of wonderful music that deserves to be more widely known."

Listening to *Toccatas* and *Twelve Preludes* for solo piano, *Ten a Penny Pieces* for clarinet and piano, *pieces-of-eight* for flute, clarinet and piano and *Kalamalka* for piano-duet (Volk and Diamond), I was often reminded of Poulenc who, like Crawley, enjoyed juxtaposing dancehall and circus music with poignant, melancholic lyricism. Crawley's playful waltz, tango, polka and foxtrot rhythms, combined with his innate melodic gift, created music that was surely gladdening to compose and, for this listener, definitely gladdening to hear.

Michael Schulman

**Linda Catlin Smith – *Ballad*
Apartment House
Another Timbre at176 (anothertimbre.com)**

**Barbara Monk Feldman – *Verses*
GBSR Duo with Mira Benjamin
Another Timbre at177 (anothertimbre.com)**



► New discs from two Canadian composers – Linda Catlin Smith and Barbara Monk Feldman – and both are stand-outs. They are the latest releases in the

invaluable Canadian Composers Series from Another Timbre. As we've come to expect from this innovative British label, the sound is stellar and the performances, by some of Britain's top contemporary music specialists, are consistently terrific. As well, there are some significant recording premieres here.

Like many composers on Another Timbre's roster, Smith and Monk Feldman engage directly with 20th-century game-changers John Cage and Morton Feldman, so tempos are slow, dynamics are subdued and textures are spare. But Smith and Monk Feldman have distinctively personal voices. Smith, a dynamic presence on the Toronto new music scene, has developed an ardent international following, while Monk Feldman remains the only Canadian woman composer to have had an opera, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, staged in the Canadian Opera Company's main hall (inexcusably rare for a Canadian, even rarer – so even more inexcusable – for a woman).

It was a recording of Smith's music, *Drifter*, which launched the Canadian Composers Series in 2017. *Ballad* is now her fourth album for Another Timbre. She wrote the two works here for her brother, cellist Andrew Smith. In *Through The Low Hills*, from 1994, cellist Anton Lukoszevieve and pianist Kerry Yong, both members of the much-fêted British ensemble, Apartment House, stylishly trace the twists and turns of Smith's intriguing harmonic transformations.

The title work, *Ballad*, is a lyrical, open-hearted, gorgeous, and, at 46 minutes, expansive work. Lukoszevieve and Yong listen to each other so intently that every phrase communicates eloquently.



Monk Feldman's realm extends from the enchanted vistas of *Duo for Piano and Percussion* and the eerie mists of *Verses for Vibraphone* to the uplifting chorale-like contours of *Clear Edge* for solo piano.

The I And Thou, from 1988, is dedicated to Monk Feldman's teacher and husband, Morton Feldman, who had died the previous year. Here she weaves a fabric of luminous

stillness. Yet beneath the shimmering surface an uneasy presence stirs, unarticulated but palpable, especially with pianist Siwan Rhys' sensitivity to the mood of longing that suffuses this moving work.

Monk Feldman has written that *The Northern Shore*, a trio for percussion, piano, and violin, takes inspiration from the landscape of the Gaspé region of Quebec. Reflecting such an immense expanse, this work is the longest here. And it covers a vast expressive territory, from precisely shaped and positioned tones to an unexpectedly effulgent passage of delicate piano chords marked "freely". The responsiveness of percussionist George Barton and pianist Rhys is beautifully matched by the imaginative palette of colours from Canadian violinist Mira Benjamin (a member of Apartment House).

Pamela Margles

**Music of François Tousignant
Myriam Leblanc; Catherine St-Arnaud;
Vincent Ranallo; Ensemble Paramirabo
Centrediscs CMCCD 28821
(cmccanada.org/shop/cmccd-28821)**



► The varied career of François Tousignant (1955–2019) included music critic for *Le Devoir* (1994–2005), Radio-Canada columnist, professor at Universities of

Ottawa and Montreal, and composer of over 40 works. In commemoration of the second anniversary of his death, this double-disc release features a memorable tribute concert recording of Montreal-based instrumental Ensemble Paramirabo, with three guest vocalists, brilliantly performing eight of his chamber pieces from 1973 to 1987.

The first disc features five earlier compositions. Lyrical colourful solo *Conflits* (1973) has artistic director/flutist Jeffrey Stonehouse musically perform the long meditative phrases with alternating high and lower pitches. It is also an introduction to Tousignant's widespread compositional tool of attention-grabbing silent breaks between phrases. *Quatre incantations* (1974) is another easy-to-listen-to early work, with wide-ranging soprano Myriam Leblanc vocals set to Tousignant text answering pianist Pamela Reimer's clear melodies and well-placed occasional atonalities. *La muse vénale* (1975), set to a Charles Baudelaire text, is an intelligently contemplated atonal yet never dense work, featuring cello (Viviana Gosselin) and flute (Stonehouse) plucks, detached notes, and trills and slides, magnetic tape effects (Tousignant) and baritone Vincent Ranallo's low mysterious singing and closing shining laughter. More atonality and large silent breaks in the alternating crashing and reflective piece *Anatole, sans paroles* (1982)

for cello and piano. Reimer's virtuosic solo performance *Sonate pour clavecin* (1983) features a multitude of contemporary harpsichord effects.

The second album features three later works. Virtuosic contemporary *Histoire* (1984) opens with Reimer's contemplative piano detached notes and Charlotte Layec's held, reflective, clarinet notes. Shifts in mood, like loud piano ringing notes and clarinet swells and changes in articulation, create a slow, sad and occasional explosive mood. *Étude pour Shyol No.3* (1986) is set to a Rainer Maria Rilke poem. Violinist Hubert Brizard and soprano Catherine St-Arnaud perform this very contemporary piece with atonalities, string vibrations, vocal high held notes and spoken words, and more Tousignant compelling "what's next" silences between phrases. The closing *Trois paysages proustiens* (1987) is considered Tousignant's most famous work – set to words by Marcel Proust. Reimer and St-Arnaud are joined by percussionist David Therrien Brongo. Longer abstract percussion and piano atonalities, spoken/sung vocals, shorter mood section and silent breaks abound.

Understandably, Tousignant did not compose during his years as the music critic. His output reflects a composer with modern atonal technique, clear delicate lyrical scoring and respect for the written word.

Tiina Kiik

**Robert Lemay – *Cinq Études for Alto*
Saxophone
Jean-François Guay
Centrestream CMCCT 11621
(cmccanada.org/shop/cd-cmccct-11621)**



► Our world of streaming media has a few benefits including how the creation and distribution of music projects is less expensive and simpler than

a decade or two ago. This ease of production makes niche products more accessible and an excellent example is *Cinq études* for alto saxophone by Robert Lemay (commissioned and exquisitely performed by Jean-François Guay).

The five movements total just 18 minutes and *Cinq études* is released as a stand-alone digital offering. While *Cinq études* works as a concert piece, its unique purpose is to demonstrate different playing techniques, including double and triple tonguing, multiphonics, altissimo, rapid register changes and subtones. These techniques are heard in most contemporary saxophone works, but can pass by so quickly we may miss identifying them. *Doublez ou triplez la mise* is a great demonstration of double and triple tonguing which Guay performs cleanly and with verve, while *Additions &*

multiplications has some subtle and quiet melodic lines leading into some excellent multiphonic work.

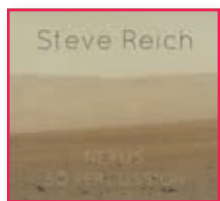
The liner notes state: "Each piece is a tribute to a great saxophonist/pedagogue: Marcel Mule, Jean-Marie Londeix, Eugene Rousseau, Frederick Hemke and Daniel Deffayet." I am surprised the altissimo section is not dedicated to Sigurd M. Rascher whose *Top Tones for the Saxophone* (which I purchased decades ago) is a standard in saxophone literature. This small quibble aside, *Cinq études* is worth a listen for its inventive and musical demonstration of multiple techniques.

Ted Parkinson

Steve Reich

Nexus; Sō Percussion

Nexus 11042 (nexuspercussion.com)



► A collaboration between two leading percussion groups, veteran Toronto-based Nexus and younger-generation New York-based Sō Percussion,

this album features four percussion-centred scores by American composer Steve Reich.

Reich's music is generally characterized by repetition, canons, slow harmonic changes and, for a time, the adoption of selected musical notions from West Africa and Indonesia. By the mid-1960s Reich sought to create music in which his compositional process was clearly discernible by the audience in the music itself. From 1965 to 1971, his style was dominated by a process called "phasing," a kind of Escher-like perceptual magic where incremental changes to the music being performed are revealed to the listener in real time.

All those compositional and performative approaches deeply colour the brilliantly performed music on this album: *Clapping Music* (1972), *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices, and Organ* (1973), *Mallet Phase* (2016, based on *Piano Phase* 1967), and *Quartet* (2013). The first three, controversial in their day, have become contemporary standards. *Quartet*, a jazz-inflected work scored for two vibraphones and two pianos, is an outlier in this program. Reich called it "one of the more complex [pieces] I have composed." While frequently shifting key and continuity by restlessly changing metres, the outer sections maintain a pulsed momentum, a recognizable link to Reich's earlier compositions. In stark contrast, the middle slow movement introduces chordal harmonies unusual in his music, evoking a peaceful, pensive mood.

This is Nexus' 31st commercial album release – and a resounding way to celebrate both its 50th anniversary and its deep and enduring relationship with Reich.

Andrew Timar

Ofer Pelz – Trinité Meitar Ensemble; Quatuor Ardeo New Focus Recordings FCR303 (newfocusrecordings.com)



► Intricate prepared-piano ricochets and barbed ensemble alchemy converge to permeate the Meitar Ensemble's latest release – a portrait of music by

Montreal-based Israeli composer Ofer Pelz.

The five pieces on the disc represent an eight-year collaboration between the composer and the virtuosic ensemble.

Pelz's clear and punctuated sound world is well suited for the bravura and precision of intent capable by the Meitar musicians. The first work, *Backward inductions*, for augmented piano, evokes a process whereby reverse reasoning achieves a sequence of optimal actions. This dynamic music produces fluidity through compartmentalized yet spinning lines and tempestuous interruptions. A piece titled *Convergence* for alto flute and electronics is a wondrous barrage of granulated tinctures that envelopes the ear and the mind. The chamber work, *marchons, marchons*, performed in Toronto when New Music Concerts presented Meitar at the Music Gallery in 2017, offers delicate and distant conversations spoken in metallic whispers. Finally, a piece written in two movements for flute, prepared piano and amplified string quartet titled *Blanc sur Blanc* begins with a dance-like mysteriousness followed by wind-swept panorama.

The confident nature of Pelz's music is propelled forward by what is clearly a process-oriented approach – yet this attribute also contains a wealth of originality and expression. The music and performances on this release are as compelling as they are refreshing. Bravo to all.

Adam Scime

Peter Gilbert – Burned into the Orange Arditti Quartet; Iridium Quartet; Various Artists New Focus Recordings FCR300 (newfocusrecordings.com)



► Composer Peter Gilbert's second full-length album – *Burned into the Orange* – is a collection of chamber works that explore rich and sensuous textures performed

by the Arditti Quartet, Camilla Hoytenga, Magdalena Meitzner, Jeremias Schwarzer, Richard White, Michael Veit, Emanuele Arciuli and the Iridium Quartet.

The seemingly ever-rising pulsation of the

voice opens wide to forget that which you are singing produces an ephemeral hypnosis. The title track, scored for saxophone quartet, evokes sonic tendrils creeping among the sinuousness of a liquid cathedral. The almost violent gestures of *Channelling the Waters* produces a musical energy that tunnels through unknown timbral pathways. A piece titled *By the Lonely Traveller's Call*, for tuba and amplified mute, transduces extreme guttural bellows into resonant sonic clouds. The lingering harmonic canopies of *Soon as the Sun Forsook the Eastern Main* evaporate monumental piano sonorities into monoliths of aural brilliance.

This album is saturated with aural enchantment – each piece seems to be on a journey from unaltered impetus to transcendent harmoniousness. *Burned into the Orange* will surely burn into memory for those who listen.

Adam Scime

Fantasy – Oppens plays Kaminsky Ursula Oppens; Jerome Lowenthal; Cassatt String Quartet; Arizona State University Orchestra; Jeffrey Meyer Cedille CDR 90000 202 (cedillerecords.org)



► Titan of the contemporary keyboard, Ursula Oppens is a rarity among artists living today. She is the stalwart bearer of a mid-century musical torch that

apparently burns eternal. How fortunate we are to have such musicians as Oppens still making music with fortitude, passion and tireless faith.

A most recent episode for Oppens has been a record made with the Cassatt Quartet and Arizona State University Orchestra showcasing music of American composer Laura Kaminsky. This disc, themed "Oppens Plays Kaminsky" seems a testament of friendship (these two impressive musicians have been longtime pals). Presently, they come together in a variety of idioms to demonstrate Kaminsky's portfolio in a traversal of *quintet*, *fantasy* and *concerto*.

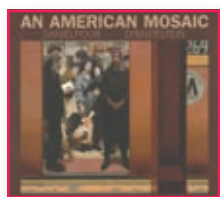
Despite evocative titles such as *Maelstrom*, and..., or *Hurling. Still*, the music isn't always convincingly first rate. Nevertheless, there are moments of tunefulness and poetry. The affinity between Oppens and Kaminsky radiates throughout, leaving a palpable sense of fellowship and mutual joy amongst colleagues.

Oppens wields her piano at the album's centre, steering a varied vessel with consistent skill and surety. Even in brief piano passages, as she peeks out from dense ensemble material, Oppens' artistry sings unmistakably. The 20-minute solo *Fantasy* (2010) should be considered a tour de force in and of itself. When it comes to a career such as Oppens',

dedication and staying power carry the day. May she always urge us to listen close and listen well, ever compelling our ears toward the future.

Adam Sherkin

Richard Danielpour – An American Mosaic
Simone Dinnerstein
Supertrain Records 025 SR
(richard-danielpour.com)



▶ The ever-engaging American pianist, Simone Dinnerstein, has been rather active during the COVID-19 pandemic. Early on, in lockdowns last

spring, she retreated into studio – inspired by nourishing walks through Brooklyn’s Green-Wood Cemetery – to lay down some favoured works by Schubert and Philip Glass. (See my review of the album *A Character of Quiet*, in the October 2020 issue of *The WholeNote*.)

She has now embarked on an attractive new project with Grammy Award-winning composer, Richard Danielpour: an album of pieces written expressly for her. This is a sequence of 15 miniatures, each offering comfort and musical solace during the difficult pandemic months of 2020 and 2021. The disc is capped by three arrangements of Bach’s music by Danielpour, as a tribute to Dinnerstein. He was first inspired by Dinnerstein’s celebrated recordings of Bach and set pen to staff paper in a generous outpouring of sound portraits of American society (usually in slow tempi!) over the past months of crisis: parents, teachers, first responders, religious leaders and even politicians. This recipe makes for a rich and varied (albeit lethargic) musical feast, contemporaneously narrating an era of suffering in which we still find ourselves. But why not take stock at such a close vantage point, reflecting on recent traumas still evolving?

As for Dinnerstein herself, how could she not record such music? This set was made especially for her quintessential artistry, quietly singing through at every corner. Here is the optimal example of performer-meeting-composer-meeting-performer-again; the results are worthy of a two-eared listen in these fraught, often one-eared times.

Adam Sherkin

À Claude
Benedetto Boccuzzi
DiG Classic DCTT111
(naxosdirect.com/search/8054726141112)



▶ Twentieth-century piano-repertoire specialist, Benedetto Boccuzzi (b. 1990), is not only a concert pianist but also a composer, improviser and teacher. He regu-

larly performs in Italy and conducts workshops on contemporary piano repertoire, extended techniques and improvisation.

À Claude, Boccuzzi’s debut album, is an eclectic keyboard feast, featuring works by Claude Debussy, George Crumb, Toru Takemitsu, Olivier Messiaen, Diana Rotaru and Boccuzzi himself. The programmatic conceit of the album pays homage to Debussy, before moving on to a selection of the French maître’s musical heirs.

Beginning with three miniatures from Debussy’s *Images: Cloches à travers les feuilles; Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut*; and *Poissons d’or* (1907); the album sets a relaxed, impressionistic atmosphere inviting the listener to let imagination roam. Boccuzzi then very effectively renders six of American composer George Crumb’s texture- and allusion-rich *Makrokosmos I* (1972–1973). This collection of aphoristic piano pieces describes the temperaments of the houses of the zodiac, famously using an encyclopedic range of colouristic effects including plucking the strings, producing massive tone clusters, coaxing overtones from depressed keys not played and directly quoting music of composers such as Chopin.

Three pieces of the *Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus* (1944) by French composer Messiaen receive a muscular performance here, though sections of *Regard de la Vierge* exude a poignant cantabile quality. Particularly admirable is Boccuzzi’s precise rendering of the demanding birdcall references throughout.

Andrew Timar

Blow – Wind Quintets by Donatoni, Salonen & Lash

The City of Tomorrow
New Focus Recordings FCR294
(newfocusrecordings.com)



▶ Part way through the sixth movement of *Leander and Hero* (2015) by Hannah Lash, a ghostly flute-like voice enters the texture. As the liner notes reveal, the

sound is one player blowing across the open mouth of another. When it comes to unusual

directions from composers, I apparently have neither seen nor heard it all. This new release, from the spectacularly capable woodwind quintet The City of Tomorrow, delights and amazes.

Put aside that in the current circumstances this would simply be an unacceptable breach of personal safety for both performers, the intimacy of the act demands trust and care, to say nothing of technical control of “embouchure” and/or “instrument.” It wouldn’t surprise me to learn the effect was overdubbed onto the track, but I’m willing to bet the players didn’t need to. Given how the rest of this disc is presented with complete assurance and musicality, a little thing like playing your colleague’s head like a jug in a jug band would hardly be beyond them.

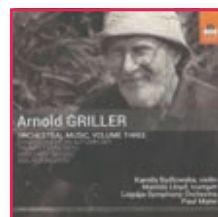
The title track, Franco Donatoni’s stutter-stepping *Blow* (2000), provides the players an opportunity to show off more conventional contemporary skills. I love his music, it’s always full of swing and fire, and this is no exception. The group’s sound is crisp, tart and sweet, like a perfect fall apple.

Esa-Pekka Salonen closes things with *Memoria* (2003), music reworked partly from unpublished material, composed over a period of 20 years, and compiled to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra, a group he co-founded. Angst-y Finnish melancholia suits the group to a tee.

Max Christie

Arnold Griller – Orchestral Music, Volume Three

Kamila Bydlowska; Matilda Lloyd; Liepaja Symphony Orchestra; Paul Mann
Toccata Classics TOCC0590
(naxosdirect.com/search/tocc0590)



▶ In 1955, while studying composition with Darius Milhaud, Arnold Griller (b.1937 in London, England) wrote his 13-minute, Coplandesque

Concerto Grosso for strings, filled with long-lined, brooding melodies. Griller’s father Sidney was first violin of the renowned Griller Quartet but, writes Douglas Finch, “Griller chose to withdraw from the musical maelstrom into which he was born and for most of his adult life has remained in relative seclusion.” Now living in a small Cornwall village, Griller even spent 25 years teaching ESL in Winnipeg!

Three recent (2017–2018) works, each over 20 minutes, variously utilize what conductor Paul Mann calls “the Griller gamelan” – harp, xylophone, marimba, celesta, glockenspiel and harpsichord.

Griller’s *Violin Concerto* memorializes Yodit Tekle, Toccata Classics founder/CEO Martin Anderson’s partner, cancer victim at 37. The dark-hued orchestra, lacking violins, grows

atonally while Kamila Budlowska's agonized violin struggles, rallies briefly with a rising tonal sequence but succumbs to snarling brass. Now alone, it sustains a long-held single note, then vanishes.

Dances under an Autumn Sky has no stated program, but its jagged rhythms, angry brass and percussion outbursts create an increasingly violent scenario, ending in tragedy. The *Trumpet Concerto* opens with soloist Matilda Lloyd busily meandering over fragmented, percussion-heavy, violin-less sonorities. A march past Dvořák's house begins in high spirits, then darkens, the muted trumpet playing a dirge marked "with great sadness." The concerto – and the CD – concludes with a motorized crescendo of celebratory fanfares and percussive fireworks. Finally, a happy ending!

Michael Schulman

Poul Ruders – Dream Catcher
Bjarke Mogensen; Odense Symphoniorkester; Sebastian Lang-Lessing; Scott Yoo
Bridge Records 9553 (bridgerecords.com/collections/catalog-all)



► Danish composer Poul Ruders is renowned for his symphonies, and his operas like *The Handmaid's Tale* based on Margaret Atwood's novel of the same

name. Here, three Ruders instrumental works showcase his intriguing compositions.

This world premiere recording of the seven-movement *Sound and Simplicity* (2018) concerto is performed by Danish accordionist Bjarke Mogensen and the Odense Symphoniorkester conducted by Sebastian Lang-Lessing. *I. Rain* opens with high staccato accordion replicating the sound of surface-landing droplets, followed by an energetic full orchestra section. Love the percussion thunder-like rumbles. Calming sustained four-note *II. Trance*, presented over three octaves, makes for relaxing "simple" sounds. Mogensen's accordion performance of *IV. Smoke* paints a smoky soundscape with steady held notes, wide pitch range, brief controlled bellow shake and contrapuntal melodies, supported by orchestral diverse floating pitches and dynamics. Rollicking *VII. Wolf Moon* bounces along with faster interchanges and dynamic swells between orchestra and accordion, to the penultimate ascending line and the final accordion chord.

Dream Catcher is Mogensen's arrangement for solo accordion of Ruders' accordion and string quartet *Serenade on the Shores of the Cosmic Ocean*. This diatonic work features musical, hypnotic held notes, a high-pitched slow tune and closing repeated soft notes, highlighting Mogensen's virtuosic bellow control.

Previously released by Bridge, *Symphony No.3 "Dream Catcher"* is a two-movement orchestral extravaganza conducted by Scott Yoo. The loud percussive start transforms into a tonal, sweet-dream string section. In the second movement, faster birdlike horn trilling leads to full-steam-ahead virtuosic orchestral multi-rhythmic chase music.

Catch this great Ruders sound release!!

Tiina Kiik

Piazzolla Cien Años (100 Years 1921-2021)
Juanjo Mosalini; Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston; Gisèle Ben-Dor
Centaur Records CRC 3844 (giseleben-dor.com)



► This is another memorable release celebrating the centenary of Argentine composer/bandoneonist Astor Piazzolla (1921–1992) as conductor

Gisèle Ben-Dor leads the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston and bandoneon soloist Juanjo Mosalini.

The recording opens with a Piazzolla original *Aconcagua, Concerto for Bandoneon* (1979) a three-movement, true-to-his-style work, featuring rhythmic symphonic grooves, lyrical bandoneon solos with fast trills and virtuosic lines, and tight soloist and orchestra interchanges creating a danceable yet concert-hall classical-flavoured rendition performed perfectly by all concerned.

Four world premiere recordings scored for bandoneon and orchestra follow. Two Mosalini single-movement original compositions incorporate Piazzolla influences with popular/classical touches in his own soundscapes. *Tomá, Tocá (Take It, Play It)* is faster with repeated notes and virtuosic flourishes. *Cien Años (One Hundred Years)* combines tango elements with nostalgic bandoneon melodies, long phrases and bright high pitches.

Two Piazzolla works arranged by Mosalini follow. Originally in four movements, *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* is presented as one long, connected work. Piazzolla purists will respect this for its true-to-style playing. Shifts in tempos, grooves and moods, the deep cello lines, florid fast bandoneon and orchestra accompaniments are amazing, ranging from danceable and fun to serious and slow. In the closer, Piazzolla's popular *Libertango*, technically challenging solos now alternate with colourful orchestra lead lines above bandoneon rhythmic accents.

Fantastic performances and great music, what more could we want?

Tiina Kiik

JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

Now Pronouncing
Caity Gyorgy
Independent (caitygyorgy.bandcamp.com)



► Full disclosure: I know Caity Gyorgy from her time in Toronto when she was a college student. That said, whether you are previously familiar with Gyorgy and her marvellous vocal

and musical abilities or you are new to her considerable talents, time listening to *Now Pronouncing* is indeed time well spent for jazz and vocal fans alike.

This short recording, five songs in length, may be a manifestation of her degree-end capstone school project, but it is anything but an academic student affair. Leading a top-shelf, large-sized professional musical ensemble through a program of original compositions and arrangements, Gyorgy states a melody and lyric with aplomb and, as on *Secret Safe*, trades improvisatory lines with the assembled and stacked roster of horn players, demonstrating her clear mastery of the bebop and jazz language. And while I have no doubt that she is capable of singing just about anything, regardless of style or genre, how refreshing it is to hear a jazz singer be a jazz singer, foregrounding scat singing, swing, ornamented bebop vocal lines and total band leadership from out front on this fine recording.

Backed capably by a great Toronto rhythm section of Felix Fox-Pappas (piano), Thomas Hainbuch (bass) and Jacob Wutzke (drums), Gyorgy, who has since relocated and is now showcasing her talents on the Montreal jazz scene, demonstrates why this Calgary-born singer is a talent worth watching regardless of the city in which she takes up residence.

Andrew Scott

Flicker Down
Waxwing
Songlines SGL1633-2 (songlines.com)



► Formed in 2007, Waxwing is a co-led trio created by three veterans of the Vancouver music scene: Tony Wilson on guitar, Peggy Lee on cello and Jon Bentley on saxo-

phones. *Flicker Down* is the third album from this energetic group: not just veterans of the busy Vancouver scene where they are based, individually these three players collaborate in dozens of other musical combinations from folk to jazz to classical around North America

and beyond. When they reunite, each brings their best in not only their playing experience, but as equal composers and co-leaders. The result of this fine balance is exquisitely produced on this album. Already a huge fan of this trio, and though their first two albums were thoroughly enjoyable, *Flicker Down* is a whole other listening experience.

As improvisers, the group keeps their freshness alive with a freedom of expression and a nuanced sense of timing that decades of experience has only heightened. With several manipulated improvisations added to some tracks, this album has a more composed feel but manages to retain the creative freedom and melodic flow that the group is revered for. As cultural travellers, there is a flavour of world music mixed with jazz, folk and contemporary composition, sublimely polished with fine chamber playing. With 18 beautiful tracks there is a plethora of favourites. *Montbretia Gates* (1'49"), featuring guest flutist Miranda Clingwall, is one of many gems. The decisiveness of *Highway of Tears* – based on lyrics that concern the murder of Indigenous women – avoids sentimentality and keeps clear the social messaging. Each player's technical execution is sheer perfection; gorgeously subtle mixing and production from Bentley only raises the bar.

Cheryl Ockrant

Sings & Plays

**Jonathan Bauer
Slammin' Media**

(jonathanbauermusic.com)



▶ Renowned Canadian-born, New Orleans-based trumpeter Jonathan Bauer is exposing a new artistic side on this newest release – a smooth tenor

voice that both rivals and adds to his talents on the horn. Featuring well-known musicians such as Mike Clement, Gerald Watkins Jr. and Ryan Hanseler, this sultry and classy album is one that any jazz lover would want in their collection. The selection of songs by classics, ranging from Henry Mancini to George Gershwin, does a great job of not only showcasing Bauer's skills as a leader, trumpeter and now as a vocalist, but also the superb talents of the all-star lineup that backs him.

Sonorous, silky horn melodies lead the listener through staples of the genre like *Days of Wine and Roses* and *Love is Here to Stay*. For those that are familiar with the musician, the unique dark and buttery tone that he conjures out of the trumpet, almost reminiscent of the flugelhorn, is back in full force throughout the record. What makes Bauer stand out even more is the way that the happiness and bliss he pours into his instrument clearly translates into his vocals, his voice having the same soaring, joyous quality that the trumpet melodies invoke. The album

is a fabulous introduction to this side of the famed artist's talents and leaves the listener excited to hear more, both instrumentally and vocally, in the future.

Kati Kiillaspea

You Don't Know What Love Is

Angela Wrigley Trio

Cellar Music CM051920 (cellarlive.com)



▶ On her impressive debut offering, Alberta chanteuse, pianist and composer Angela Wrigley has come forth with a delightful recording that incorporates

funky, horn-infused original compositions with tasty standards, reimagined for a contemporary audience. Joined by her fine trio members, Derek Stoll (bass/piano/organ) and Dave Lake on drums, Wrigley also welcomed percussionist Bob Fenske, saxophonist Cory Weeds, trumpeter Vince Mai and trombonist Rod Murray. This clever and appealing project was also produced by long-time jazz-focused record-label visionary Scott Morin and master saxophonist, producer, recording label owner and jazz impresario, Weeds.

The opening salvo, *How Did I Get Here*, is a funky original composition, in which Wrigley's warm and soulful pipes wind themselves around this siren song of compelling lyric and melody. Mai infuses the arrangement with both sexy muted trumpet and a large, mouth-pieced Latin sound. Another intriguing original track is *Crazy Fool* – a nostalgia-tinged tip of the hat to Tower of Power and other funky horn/vocal bands of the 70s and 80s. Stoll's classic Fender Rhodes sound is as refreshing as it was back in the day.

Other standouts include Hoagy Carmichael's moving *I Get Along Without You Very Well*, in which Wrigley utilizes her sweet, vulnerable upper register, while Weeds cries through his horn in delicate counterpoint; also a bluesy, B3-infused *Lover Man*; the superb title track, featuring pristine vocals and Stoll's eloquent piano work; and finally *Drive*, where composition, performance and arrangement merge in perfect symmetry. This CD is a beautifully constructed first release that clearly establishes this talented new artist's identity and sound.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Live

John MacMurchy; Dan Ionescu

Independent

(johnmacmurchy.bandcamp.com)



▶ Performing music with friends in the intimacy of a celebrated studio appears to be among the greatest joys of a practicing musician. This is certainly

demonstrated by woodwinds specialist John MacMurchy and guitarist Dan Ionescu. *Live (at the Canterbury Music Company)* allows the two musicians to probe the dark and light recesses of the art of the duo; to enter private worlds in which sadness and joy, and despair and hope, are shared in the most striking terms.

Both MacMurchy and Ionescu express their virtuosity and evoke dramatic and psychological atmospheres in a manner so alive that the musicians seem to be looking over their shoulders, pursuing – and being pursued by – one another, each with a sense of urgency and anticipation marked by rhythm and colour. The idea of interpreting standards – extended to cover the musical topography of Brazil – is central to this disc. However, it is also clear that this is an ode to songfulness. The apogee of this record may be Ionescu's and MacMurchy's exquisite composition *For the Love of Song*.

MacMurchy's smoky articulation is beautifully suited to the woody tones of the clarinet, and to *I'm Old Fashioned*, with which he opens the disc. The warmth of his playing, breathy phrasing and softly lingering vibrato, extends to the tenor saxophone as well. Meanwhile Ionescu proves to be a perfect musical partner, his tone redolent of a luminosity that marks his single-note lines and chordal playing.

Concert Note: The John MacMurchy Quintet is scheduled to perform at the Jazz Bistro on Thursday October 21.

Raul da Gama

L'Impact du silence

François Bourassa

Effendi Records FND162

(francoisbourassa.com)



▶ An entire album of solo piano music truly brings listeners into the concept that the pianist is creating. From Art Tatum to Fats Waller, to the bebop stylings of Bud Powell and

rhythmically advanced soundscapes fashioned by Lennie Tristano, through Bill Evans,

Herbie Hancock, Richie Beirach and countless others, the unifying thread throughout the history of jazz piano is creating one's own harmonic/rhythmic/melodic world.

François Bourassa brings us into his world with *L'Impact du silence*, and it is a compelling one to experience even at its most avant-garde. I had written all of the preceding text while listening to the album but having not yet read it's liner notes. The English notes are penned by master pianist Ethan Iverson, who mentions Maurice Ravel and Paul Bley in his description of the music. Two more examples of the kinds of material Bourassa's release bring to mind, and unique ones which I had not thought of.

From *Small Head*, the opening track, where we're met with a drone-type harmony in the key of C, Bourassa brings us into a space that is uniquely listenable while also being avant-garde. The phenomenon that makes this such a compelling album is one I see more often in live performance than in recorded music, which is that anything presented expertly will captivate an audience more than any attempt to "sell out." The level of expertise and heart behind each chord and arpeggio, regardless of how abstract, make this recording downright accessible, without compromising its uniqueness.

Sam Dickinson

Twisting Ways

Sarah Slean; Karly Epp; Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra

Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra WJOC0005 (winnipegjazzorchestra.com)



► This Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra recording has been an exciting assignment to review, as it features a core of local musicians alongside guests from

Montreal, Toronto, New York, and the work of Liverpool UK conductor, baritone and poet, Lee Tsang. For years I have known the work of Phillippe Côté, David Braid, Mike Murley and Stephan Bauer, the four guests from this side of the Atlantic. It is also always a pleasure to write about Winnipeg, which I described in a December review for *The WholeNote* as having "a long thriving music scene, unfairly receiving less attention than other large Canadian cities' communities". This still holds true of the aforementioned midwestern metropolis, but ideally large projects like *Twisting Ways* and its myriad out-of-town guests will help bring this vibrant arts community more of the notoriety it deserves.

Despite having spent ample time visiting friends, family and fellow jazz musicians in Winnipeg, I was aware of surprisingly few names on this project's personnel list. This is rather refreshing, given the consummate professionalism heard here. Vocalists Sarah Slean and Karly Epp breathe beautiful

life into the often-challenging melodies they are presented with and the WJO's excellent rhythm section makes even the most intricate of grooves sound accessible. The four tracks that make up the *Twisting Ways* suite are some of my favourites on the album, but *Lydian Sky* and *Fleur Variation 3*, are far from disappointing as well.

Sam Dickinson

The Bright Side

Joel Frahm; Dan Loomis; Ernesto Cervini
Anzic Records ANZ-0068 (joelfrahm.com)



► I first heard the outstanding, saxophone virtuoso Joel Frahm over ten years ago at New York's Jazz Standard (sadly, a now-shuttered COVID casualty), and have since

made a point of catching him in Toronto over the years, when he's often been featured in drummer Ernesto Cervini's band, Turboprop.

Frahm's latest project and debut trio album, *The Bright Side*, brings him and Cervini together again, along with bassist Dan Loomis (also a Turboprop member). Fun fact: the trio arose out of a U of T jazz masterclass. These three masterful musicians are longtime musical friends and colleagues, and their empathetic, polished, "well-oiled machine-ness" is evident on each of the ten original tracks; seven are penned by Frahm, two by Loomis and one by Cervini.

Frahm offers three dedications on the album: the high energy *Blow Poppa Joe* is for Joe Henderson; Benny Golson is honoured in the cool and upbeat *Thinking of Benny* (where I'm sure I heard a nod to *The Andy Griffith Show* theme song); *Omer's World* is a funky homage to the great Israeli jazz bassist Omer Avital. As for Frahm's swinging and inventive title track, its inspiration was Lou Reed's *Walk on the Wild Side*.

Loomis' *Silk Road* is a moody and sensual track, with Frahm on soprano sax. And *The Beautiful Mystery* by Cervini is a hauntingly pensive and evocative ballad, showcasing the emotion and heart these stellar musicians bring to the table.

Here's hoping we'll hear more from Frahm in the chordless trio format!

Sharna Searle

Idiom

Anna Webber
Pi Recordings PI89 (pirecordings.com/albums/idiom/)



► Anna Webber extends her creative trajectory with this two-CD set, exploring a critical issue arising between her roles as improviser and

composer: "While as an improviser I was interested in extended techniques and in the saxophone as a creator of 'sound' and not just 'pitch,' my compositional world was limited to the latter." For her *Idiom* series, each composition is based on an "extended technique" from her improvisatory practice, whether circular breathing (for continuous sound), multiphonics (compound sounds) or audibly percussive fingering.

Disc One presents her longstanding Simple Trio with pianist Matt Mitchell and percussionist John Hollenbeck. That apparent economy of means testifies to Webber's imaginative powers, demonstrating an expanding palette, from the percussive repetition of a short flute motif in *Idiom I* to the concluding *Idiom III*, a demonstration of the daunting intensity and complexity a trio might achieve as her repeating multiphonic phrase is matched to corresponding piano and drum parts, the tension ultimately breaking into free improvisation.

Disc Two presents the 62-minute *Idiom VI*, its six movements and four interludes performed by a 12-member ensemble of strings, winds, percussion and synthesizer, alive with distinguished improvisers and conducted by Eric Wubbels. Creating moods from subtle lyricism to raw expressionism, and some unnameable compounds, Webber fuses unusual timbres in fresh, sometimes unidentifiable ways, including loose-lipped trombone explosions, tamboura-like drones and similarly unlikely massed police whistle blasts. Along with Webber's own presence on flute and tenor saxophone, trumpeter Adam O'Farrill, violinist Erica Dicker and contralto clarinetist Yuma Uesaka make significant solo contributions to one of 2021's most notable releases.

Stuart Broomer

The Long Game

Jacqui Naylor
Ruby Star Records RSR-011 (jacquinaylor.com)



► World-renowned native-Californian jazz vocalist Jacqui Naylor has an interesting approach to the aforementioned genre. She loves the classics but defin-

itely brings a modern touch into her music and this interesting combination couldn't be more apparent on her newest, not to mention 11th, studio album. Featuring music by rock and pop greats such as Coldplay, David Bowie and Peter Dinklage, Naylor has lent her own unique touch to each of these songs; effectively jazzifying them in a very pleasant and listenable way. Sprinkled amongst these covers are originals penned by the diva herself, a couple of which are co-written by talented pianist Art Khu.

One piece that immediately stands out

is Coldplay's *Fix You*; Naylor's smooth alto vocals in combination with a flowing piano melody and a subtle but poignant bass line make the song take on a slightly more melancholy and softer tone than the original version. Naylor's own *I'll Be Loving You* pops out; a Latin-flavoured tune that does a great job of not only showcasing another side of her musical taste but also gets the listener grooving along in their seat. A truly outstanding track is Bowie's *Space Oddity*, where a mellow piano line and an almost counter melody played on upright bass overlaid by chords on the Fender Rhodes make for a unique flavour given to the classic song.

Kati Kiillaspea

All or Nothing

Trineice Robinson

4RM 4RM-20210806

(trineicerobinson.com)



▶ Trineice Robinson has established herself as an esteemed educator and author. Now with the release of her long-awaited debut she's finally getting the chance

to establish herself as a vocalist, telling her story and journey through music. One of Robinson's missions as an educator has been to bring back to the forefront Black music traditions that have fallen to the background within the vocal music realm and this album does a fantastic job at not only showcasing Black jazz, soul and R&B artists who have been instrumental in advancing those genres but also shining a spotlight on current famed musicians, with a renowned lineup of all Black artists in her backing band.

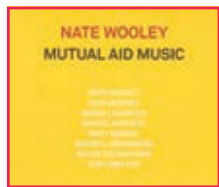
Robinson's soulful and powerful vocals take us on a journey through multi-genre staples such as *Footprints* by Wayne Shorter, *What's Going On* by Marvin Gaye and *You Know Who (I Mean You)* by Thelonious Monk, while adding a unique flavour to each piece, making them her own. Interspersed within these tributes are original compositions, of note being the gospel-inspired piece *Let It Shine*, in which her own daughters lend their voices, creating a humble and heartwarming whole. Robinson skilfully crosses genres throughout the album, creating a delicious jambalaya reflecting what she states about finding her own place within the musical realm, "when you understand how ingredients are used in a dish, you can create whatever dish you want." All in all, a strong and promising debut album.

Kati Kiillaspea

Nate Wooley – Mutual Aid Music

Nate Wooley; Joshua Modney; Ingrid Laubrock; Mariel Roberts; Matt Moran; Russell Greenberg; Sylvie Courvoisier; Cory Smythe

Pleasure of the Text Records POTTR1309 (pleasureofthetext.com)



▶ Trumpeter, composer, conceptualist, Nate Wooley is a major figure in current free jazz and improvised music, consistently focused on issues of

meaning. This latest work is an outgrowth of Battle Pieces, a quartet project begun in 2014 in which one member acts as improvising soloist while the other members choose from Wooley's supplied materials to develop the work. *Mutual Aid Music* extends this method for surmounting the usual alternatives of composition/improvisation, doubling the quartet with four more musicians chosen from the New York contemporary music community.

The eight musicians play eight "concertos": in each, one musician has a primary score; one improvises throughout, based on the other seven's input; others freely adapt secondary materials that have been individually assigned. Surmounting Wooley's complex methodology is a singular purpose: "It asks the musicians... to ask themselves, in each moment, how that gift will affect the community (ensemble) of which they are currently a member." Wooley the conceptualist has effectively made each musician responsible for a work's outcome in how they choose to make each transaction collectively meaningful.

Clearly the work depends on its community of stellar musicians – saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock, pianists Sylvie Courvoisier and Cory Smythe, percussionists Matt Moran and Russell Greenberg, violinist Joshua Modney and cellist Mariel Roberts – but the results are always remarkable, sometimes astonishing, everyone engaged in making the richest, most expressive, *organized* and *communitative* music possible. Beyond category in its structure and immediacy, this feels as much like a success for listeners as the composer and ensemble.

Stuart Broomer

In Harmony

**Roy Hargrove; Mulgrew Miller
Resonance Records HCD-2060
(resonancerecords.org)**



▶ *In Harmony* is a gorgeous time capsule displaying two performers at the top of their game and providing a sublime reading of jazz standards in two intimate

live sessions. This album is made even more poignant by the deaths of both musicians at relatively young ages: Mulgrew Miller was 57 when he died of a stroke in 2013 and Roy Hargrove was only 49 when he passed away in 2018. Fortunately for jazz history and for us, these two concerts (Kaufman Music Center, New York, January 15, 2006 and Lafayette College, Easton PA, November 9, 2007) were recorded by Hargrove's manager, Larry Clothier. The recordings have now been released by Resonance Records in a limited edition LP format and as a two-CD set. The package includes a thick booklet containing an essay on the musicians and these two concerts, several colour photos and interviews and statements by several prominent jazz musicians.

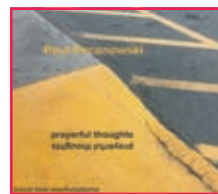
Hargrove can be bright and crisp with a Miles Davis feel, but also soulful and he plays bop and post-bop lines which makes him the complete jazz trumpet player. Miller has a more subtle style which has many influences (including Oscar Peterson who inspired him to learn jazz). He can play a solid yet sophisticated accompaniment, perform an elegant solo with complex lines that seem effortless, and add some angular blues licks on *Monk's Tune*. These two concerts are even more impressive because although Hargrove and Miller had played together in the past, this was their first (and second) time performing as a duet and the concerts were put together very quickly (but of course, that's the jazz thing to do). They sound sophisticated and completely at ease with each other, exchanging ideas, joking around in tunes like *Fungii Mama*, and generally paying an inspired homage to the tradition.

Ted Parkinson

Prayerful Thoughts (covid time improvisations)

Paul Pacanowski

Independent (paulpacanowski.com)



▶ Polish born Toronto-based multi-instrumentalist jazz/classical performer/composer Paul Pacanowski is inspirational in his

57-minute solo "covid-time improvisations." Home recording has become more popular for musicians during COVID. As he writes on the CD cover, he would play improvises in his basement studio late at night to lift his COVID-time spirits until it "dawned" on him to record his work at home. He plays all the instruments in eight tracks/sections, each introduced by a short musical wave-like *undulation*, all joined together as one long work.

Pacanowski's piano expertise drives the improvisations. Calming, repetitive 1. *undulation* leads to reflective jazz-flavoured slow 2. *piano* with long phrases, shifting tonalities, conversational high and low pitch runs and

detached notes. From calm to faster intense moments, a shift to major tonality closer to the end creates a happier hopeful feel of COVID ending. Two other piano-only tracks are included.

Pacanowski takes a memorable musical leap to improvise with himself playing on other instruments. In *8. flute/piano*, he breathes life into dramatic high, held-flute notes, detached sections and energetic, almost new-music sounds, as his piano mimics and supports in modern jazz at its very best. More jazz with a brief atonal section in alto saxophone and piano stylings in *14. alto sax/piano*. He plays clarinet, keys and piano harp elsewhere.

Pacanowski's well-thought-out "home-made" jazzy compositions and improvisations make for a great release to listen to, both upfront and as background music.

Tiina Kiik

Koki Solo

Natsuki Tamura

Libra Records 101-066 (librarecords.com)



► Executive produced by the incomparable Satoko Fujii and recorded in Natsuki Tamura's own home, *Koki Solo* is a collection of improvisations that

equally showcase Tamura's decades of playing experience and his boundless curiosity. He breaks with conventions of instrumentation and form with admirable enthusiasm and assurance. Beyond his typical innovations on the trumpet, he also experiments with piano, voice and even cookware from his kitchen.

While he admittedly doesn't have anywhere near the same mastery on instruments other than trumpet, it doesn't stop him from doing amazing work. For example, during his piano improvising on *Bora*, Tamura's patient drone in his left hand engages in compelling dialogues with both the open melodicism of his right hand and his arresting vocal exclamations. Similarly, on *Karugamo*, the detailed, textural tour through the contents of his kitchen gradually evolves into a rhythmical call-and-response with his forcefully enunciated syllables.

Regardless of the various unfamiliar waters Tamura dips his toes into, he is the definition of a master improviser, and that translates to everything he does. Not a single phrase he plays or utters is an afterthought, or a throw-away. Every note is imbued with feeling and meaning and he expertly uses space to punctuate and emphasize. Fujii's spotless production complements Tamura's style perfectly, ensuring there is nary a detail in the music that sounds insignificant. An abundance of tangible passion can be felt in the performance of *Koki Solo*, and it's infectious.

Yoshi Maclear Wall

POT POURRI

Armenian Songs for Children

Isabel Bayrakdarian

Avie AV2449 (naxosdirect.com/search/av2449)



► A tribute to Isabel Bayrakdarian's personal heritage, this collection of songs plays like a musical kaleidoscope – ever-changing reflective

melodies are connected to beautiful and simple forms, creating a magical sonic space. The 29 tracks are comprised of compositions by Armenian composer and musicologist Gomidas Vartabed (aka Komitas) and his students Parsegh Ganatchian and Mihran Toumajan, as well as some traditional songs.

One should not be deceived by the fairly slow tempos, there is plenty of movement here – swinging, rocking, bouncing, clapping. A wooden horse and a monkey hang around, and a scarecrow and a nightingale make friends. On the deeper level, there is much longing and sorrow connected to dreams and memories of the Armenian nation and their history. The melodies of these songs are beautiful, sometimes playful, often poignant. The arrangements are sparse, creating an abundance of space for breath and colour. Some of these songs have been sung through five generations of Bayrakdarian's family and one cannot help but feel the sense of intimacy and immediacy that comes from the weight of life experiences.

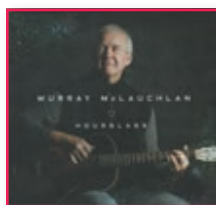
Bayrakdarian is phenomenal in conveying the emotional context of these songs. Her voice is willowy and soothing at the same time and she is quite successful in combining the embellishments of folk idioms with the clarity of classical expression. The accompanying ensemble – Ellie Choate (harp), Ray Furuta (flute) and Ruben Harutyunyan (duduk) – has an understated elegance to it, allowing the intensity of Bayrakdarian's voice to come through.

Ivana Popovic

Hourglass

Murray McLauchlan

True North Records TND777 (truenorthrecords.com)



► Murray McLauchlan, celebrated singer-songwriter and recipient of the Order of Canada, has turned to such issues as privilege and racism on his 20th album,

Hourglass. Its pointed songs speak sincerely

and directly to issues of greed and prejudice that make so many lives unliveable.

These are folk-style, gentle and homey songs, sometimes nearly whispered, although I think McLauchlan's vocal mid- and upper-ranges are just fine! His acoustic guitar work, Burke Carroll's steel guitar and other instruments are always reliable. Indeed, nothing on this album is overcomplicated and some of the songs would attract the interest of both children and parents.

I particularly like the title track, which emphasizes the urgency of current problems: "But I see the sand run out through the hourglass, I swear I don't remember it ever ran so fast." Here lyrics and melody, guitar accompaniment and the steel overlay come together especially well. *Lying By the Sea* I find the most moving song. It is based on the tragic media image of a refugee boy fleeing the Middle East who drowned and washed up on shore. *America*, with a beautiful steel guitar introduction, is a plea to the USA that could also apply in Canada: "Now you're in your separate rooms, And all the doors are locked." Finally, *I Live on a White Cloud* and *Shining City on a Hill* are songs reminding us of our obliviousness – to racism and to reality itself.

Roger Knox

Dressed in Borrowed Light

Clara Engel

Independent (claraengel.bandcamp.com)



► Songwriter Clara Engel has been busy during the pandemic, completing two collections of songs entirely self-produced while at home, based on lyrics that read like

extended poetry and dressed in an album cover featuring Engel's original artwork.

In *Dressed In Borrowed Light*, dark, evocative themes of cycles of life, loss and nature float atop rhythmic drone-like melodies that leave plenty of room for the poetry to come through. This is a performance much like one might find at a poetry reading or meditative retreat, and a collection of guests adds an assortment of instrumental sounds that provide some additional ethereal qualities, bringing to the album a meditative, folk-like feel.

Musical arrangements include Engel on vocals and a collection of instruments such as shruti box, gusli, lap steel and morin khuur (Mongolian horse-head fiddle), which delicately add colour to the songs.

A shorter album than some, it's six tracks flow gently as a collection of spoken word set to music. From one poem to the next it makes a soft landing, belying some of the darker themes of the lyrics.

Cheryl Ockrant

Continuous
Miguel de Armas Quartet
Three Pines Records TPR-003-02
(migueldearmas.com)



► Miguel de Armas – the inspired Cuban pianist/keyboardist/composer/producer and co-founder of the noted Cuban timba-band N.G. La Banda – has

just released a glorious musical manifesto of genre-blending, unifying tunes, tunes that are also firmly rooted in the sacred and ancient feel of Cuban “songo,” a magical fusion of Afro-Cuban musics with elements of pop, Latin jazz, calypso and other esoteric influences. Joining de Armas on this invigorating CD are Marc Decho on bass, Michel Medrano Brindis on drums and Diomer González on congas, as well as an array of luminary guests

that include bassist Roberto Riverón, saxophonist Petr Cancura, percussionist Samuel Formell, congero (and member of Los Van Van) Joel Cuesta and noted congero Eliel Lazo.

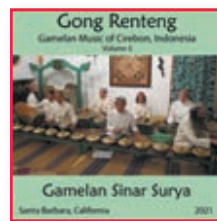
All of the compositions here were penned by de Armas (with the exception of *Song For Bebo* by Decho). De Armas has an almost cinematic way of telling his musical stories, stories that unite us all in the human experience: love in all of its colours, immigration, culture shock and the seemingly un-ending northeastern winters. Things kick off with the title track – a piquant, bass-infused burner with a dash of supple vocals, as well as a thoroughly delicious and complex chord progression and melody line. Next up is the contemporary *Couscous*, with its morphing time signatures, pianistic excellence and stirring bass solo by Decho.

Another stunner is *Angelique*, with its haunting arrangement and phenomenal guitar work of Elmer Ferrer, as well as the incendiary performance by Lazo. Other delights include the romantic, neo-classical

string-laden *Eva Luna* and the thoroughly satisfying *Gone Too Soon*. Without question, this is one of the most enjoyable, globally unifying and instrumentally thrilling CDs of the year.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Gong Renteng – Gamelan Music of Cirebon, Indonesia: Volume 5
Denggung – Gamelan Music of Cirebon, Indonesia: Volume 6
Gamelan Sinar Surya
(gamelan.bandcamp.com)



► The ancient region of Cirebon, located in Northwest Java, Indonesia is home to a large number of performing arts including several types of gamelan,

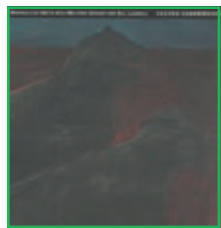
the orchestral music indigenous to Java.

Something in the Air

Box Sets mark musical Milestones

KEN WAXMAN

Like other out-of-the-ordinary keepsakes, boxed sets of recorded music are issued to celebrate a special occasion, to honour an unrepeatable situation or to assemble all parts of a unique situation. Each of these sets fit one of those criteria.



To celebrate his 80th birthday, trumpeter **Wadada Leo Smith**, a founding member of Chicago's Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) who has created sounds ranging from hushed atonality to free-form funk, organized special projects for his transition to his ninth decade. The most noteworthy was the three-CD **Sacred Ceremonies (TUM Records Box 03 tumrecords.com)**,

which matched the trumpeter with two of his longtime associates, electric bassist **Bill Laswell** and percussionist **Milford Graves** (1941–2021), on one CD each plus a final disc trio session. The material combined new Smith compositions with free improvisations.

An expert in novel pulses, Graves' intersection with the trumpeter shows how differing concepts of musical freedom can fuse. Especially during the three-part *Nyoto* suite, Smith's fluttering grace notes create the horizontal expression that's propelled to tenacious connections by Graves' relaxed but vigorous metrical expression. Shaded, with sometimes unexpected mariachi-like flourishes, brass tones move from upturned squeaks to restrained shakes as drum accents project suggestions of jazz kit, congas, djembe and log drums. The third track climax matches powerful rhythms and grainy brass notes. The subsequent *Baby Dodds in Congo Square* is a nod to jazz history even through Graves' postmodern non-timekeeping and Latin American and African influences are far removed from the cited New Orleans drummer's straight-ahead beats. However, as Graves moves through rhythm permutations, Smith follows the narrative from adagio to allegro as he speeds up his playing from simple flutters to

staccato squeals and shattering timbres at an elevated pitch. Laswell has produced the likes of Motörhead and Laurie Anderson, though as an instrumentalist he promotes the intersection between funk and free jazz. Smith, whose many projects include a recasting of Miles Davis' electric period in the Yo Miles! group, is unfazed. Confirming this duality, one Smith-Laswell track is titled *Donald Ayler's Rainbow Summit*, citing the free jazz trumpeter; and another – the longest – *Minnie Riperton - The Chicago Bronzeville Master Blaster* pays tribute to the Chicago-raised Rock/R&B singer. A more accomplished trumpeter than primitivist Ayler, Smith's exposition mixes hardened slurs with accented shakes, and while playing motifs in the horn's lowest register, retains an achingly clear brightness. Meanwhile, Laswell uses bass textures and programming to create not only a bumpy rhythmic bottom, but also a wash of electrified tones that mixes melancholy with atmosphere. Meanwhile on *Minnie Riperton*, a synthesized string section backs the trumpeter's grace-note theme expansion. Moving from mellow to motion during the second half of the track, heavier beats are emphasized with sliding bass guitar pops among the shimmering interface. Later, brass triplets curve the narrative into distanced string vibrations as the final sequence widens and rolls the sounds upwards. The third and longest disc has the three musicians in trio formation, but without falling into conventional solo/accompaniment roles. Despite tracks moving in unexpected sequences, detoured motifs and shifting textures, Smith confirms his singularity with a distinctive brass sound. As in the Laswell duo, synthesized flanges and arrangements often push forward and suggest textures from additional ghost players. The only concession to convention is the introduction to *The Healer's Direct Energy* which becomes a showcase for the expression of Graves' rhythmic subtlety where his pounding ruffs and paced paradiddles set up an undulating narrative of guitar-like echoes and brassy triplet bugling from the others. *Waves of Elevated Horizontal Forces* is a more limited bass guitar elaboration, but brass bites and conga drum-like pops eventually predominate. Other than that, tracks evolve with three-part cohesion. Graves' beats range from tom-tom-like pressure to near silent raps, which lock in to bass lines that include watery whammy-bar twists besides fluid improvisation. Additionally, Smith's tongue tricks encompassing dissected runs, stratospheric trills and grainy ruggedness, fit appropriately among the other two players' expressions.

Another trio which worked with near-extrasensory perception was the UK's **IST** consisting of cellist Mark Wastell, harpist Rhodri Davies and double bassist Simon H. Fell. **A More Attractive Way (Confront Core**

California group Gamelan Sinar Surya (GSS), directed by Richard North – the gamelan director and lecturer at UC Santa Barbara – specializes in the performance of all types of Cirebonese gamelan. North, who has been studying, teaching and performing this music since 1972, is a passionate international authority on Cirebonese music.

Cirebon gamelan music has been under-represented on records. GSS has however been assiduously addressing that lacuna. Impressed with the comprehensive scope of its growing recorded catalogue, I've reviewed its previous albums in *The WholeNote*, most recently in the November 2019 issue. The latest GSS releases cover two attractive antique pre-Islamic Cirebon gamelans: gong renteng (*Gamelan Music of Cirebon, Indonesia: Vol.5*) and denggung (*Vol.6*). Significantly, both distinct genres appear to predate the better-known five-tone prawa/slendro and seven-tone pelog gamelan types which appear to have emerged later in the 16th century. With its crashing cymbals,

lively drumming and energetic tempos, gong renteng is a lively village gong ensemble type believed to date back to the 1400s – making it the oldest gamelan music in West Java. Denggung on the other hand is dramatically different in performance aesthetic. Its softer volume and spare, peaceful, sometimes ritual mood better suit an aristocratic milieu.

Vol.5 – Gong Renteng: Gong renteng came to the brink of extinction a generation ago. Thanks however to the dedication and enthusiasm of young musicians in the Cirebon area – plus the concerted efforts of Richard North for over 40 years – this ancient music has recently experienced a revival resulting in several gong renteng festivals in the region. Over 18 instrumental tracks the album's repertoire is split between pelog and slendro tunings, each evoking a different affect. The music is also enlivened by idiomatic vocalizations made by the Californian musicians. This delightful sonic touch captures the inner spirit of Cirebonese village-style gamelan performance.

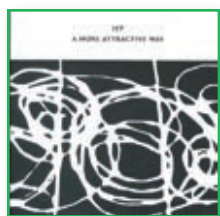


Vol.6 – Denggung: With roots in the Hindu Pajajaran kingdom of West Java some 500 years ago, denggung is considered a rare, sacred gamelan.

The atmospheric music on this album makes it clear that GSS has taken great care to honour that heritage. Out of the three Cirebonese palaces, only the denggung at the Kacirebonan Palace is still being played today. GSS is however giving back to the home culture by working closely with the palace ensemble to foster a healthy future for this beautiful and moving music.

These two albums are a testament to how gracefully a Western group can, with respect, embody the music of another culture – and spread it around the world.

Andrew Timar



Series/Core 21 (confrontrecordings.com) is a five-CD compendium of concerts from the turn of the century which proves that a string ensemble can create improvisations as intense as one with horns and percussion. Celebrating the trio's 25-year existence it's also a memorial to Fell, who died of cancer in 2020 at the age of 62. Avoiding for the most part charming harmonies associated with

traditional chamber instruments, the 25 selections are reductionist with the frequent use of preparations to create staccato and percussive definitions. Predominately an improvised ensemble, IST devotes most of Disc V from 1998 to interpreting compositions, including Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Intensität*. Understandingly, that version, which judders between string buzzing and harmonic clusters as well as proving how IST plays notated scores, isn't far removed from the group's pure improvisations. Ironically though, the swelling mid-section of Davies' *Wstrws*, from the same concert, is the most the trio sounds like a conventional string trio. Still the harpist's sped-up plucks and the trio's sprinkle of squeaks and buzzes at the finale, confirms its individuality. Overall the three work within lower case parameters, but with frequent col legno bow strokes, below-the-bridge squeals, spiccato thumps and pressurized glissandi, so the tracks are never enervating. A particular instance of this is on Disc II's *Restrictive Parallels I*. Climaxing with an explosion of jumps and sul tasto echoes plus door-stopper-like twangs, it follows a gradual deconstruction of the exposition. Cogwheel-like ratcheting portends later near-metal squeals after concentrated textures are augmented by modulated cello sweeps and double bass drones. IST hosts guests on two discs. Four tracks with violinist Phill Durrant add more dynamic timbral excitement but don't resemble conventional string quartet fare either. But when the quartet's affiliated string rubs reach a crescendo, the interface is even more kinetic. On *Aesthetic Triage II-IV* the expositions augment to include wood raps, screw twisting and wound-string bending as all four alternate between harsh arco squeals and plinking pizzicato fraills until the already elongated theme is stretched thinner and thinner. More low-key, tenor/soprano saxophonist John Butcher's contribution to three other tracks moves the group within a mercurial suite illuminated by how well reed flattement and bubbling multiphonics are situated among IST's vibrating string pressure encompassing sul ponticello splatters, crammed whines and plinks. The concluding *Trenchant Observations II and III* first torque the narrative to its highest-pitched confluence with whistling string

tones and tongue slaps until thumping double bass stopping combines with cello string stretches and downwards harp glissando to widen the connection until the improvisation's parameters are pulled down to reflective silence.



A unique box variant is **Embrace of the Souls**: (SMP 2020 smprecords.bandcamp.com/album/special-edition-box), which packages three examples of the almost-25-year musical partnership of Brazilian tenor saxophonist **Ivo Perelman** and American pianist **Matthew Shipp**. Included is an audio CD of a 2019 New York concert, a DVD of a São Paulo concert later that year, and a 49-page booklet discussing the musicians and 14 of their recordings by Belgian writer Jean-Michel Van Schouwburg. Building on the time he produced a Brussels concert

with the duo, Van Schouwburg defines what he calls their sense of aesthetic familiarity, which allows them to create first-class music. Designed for both free jazz insiders and those exploring the sounds, Van Schouwburg describes the duo's individual histories and situates their references and influences to swing era and bop stylists as well as more recent exploratory players. He insists on the unique qualities of every improvisation, live and recorded, and offers a succinct description of each disc. Meanwhile Perelman and Shipp's art can be experienced audibly and/or visually. Filmed on a darkened stage and occasionally cutting away to show Perelman's paintings, the DVD is one hour of uninterrupted improvisation that shows interwoven creativity. Consisting of a dozen tracks that take from between slightly over two to slightly over seven minutes to be resolved, the majority of the CD's untitled tunes are pensive and romantic. Demonstrating again that free improvisation doesn't have to be loud to be profound, logical shifts and slides are heard. Despite the saxophonist's frequently climbing to altissimo or soprano pitches with fragmented peeps, squeaks and screams, the two press on resolutely. Sometimes accelerating to a gallop to counter Perelman's discursive reed lines or violent keyboard squalls before subsiding to double counterpoint, Shipp's measured pattering and percussive asides indicate how he too subtly contributes to the tracks' floating coordination.

No vanity projects, each of these collections has something to offer and celebrate. 🐼

Old Wine, New Bottles

Fine Old Recordings Re-Released

BRUCE SURTEES



For those who may not recall his name, **Peter Schreier** was regarded as one of the finest lyric tenors of the 20th century. He was renowned for his Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mahler and Wagner in addition to incomparable lied recitals and recordings. Schreier was also a respected conductor. He was born in Meissen, Saxony in 1935 and died in 2019 in Dresden. He

toured the world including recitals in Toronto. Berlin Classics has selected 19 familiar melodies issued in 1976, for re-issue as **Schöne, Strahlende Welt** (Beautiful Radiant World). Although sung in German, a language that I do not speak, I had been totally absorbed by the beauty of Schreier's voice and his delivery of the lyrics since about the 1970s. Included here are Schreier's famous versions of *Granada*, *La Danza* and *O Sole Mio*, along with Toscelli's *Serenade*, Grieg's *Last Spring* and *Ich Liebe Dich*, also Leoncavallo's *Mattinata*. Despite the language barrier, easily recognized are *So deep is the night*, *Love's last word is spoken*, *Speak to me of love* and many more familiar melodies. Here is the embodiment of a perfect lyric tenor in interesting repertoire. (Berlin Classics 0301746BC naxosdirect.com/search/0301746bc).



Continuing in the lighter vein, there is a new boxed set of operettas by **Franz Lehár** produced by the Seefestspiele Mörbisch in Austria. The box contains *Das Land des Lächelns* from 2001, *Guiditta* from 2003, *Die lustige Witwe* from 2005, *Der Graf von Luxemburg* from 2006 and *Der Zarewitsch* from 2010. At the helm of the **Mörbisch Festival Orchestra** is Austrian conductor

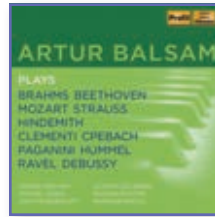
and pianist **Rudolf Bibl** (1929-2017), except for *Der Zarewitsch* under Wolf Dieter Maurer. The cast of artists in each of these delightful operettas is far too extensive to identify individually but be assured, each production is *echt* Lehár and, of course, unmistakably Viennese. As in the Schreier disc above, the librettos are sung in German. (Franz Lehár – The Operetta Edition OEHMS Classics OC1902, 5 CDs naxosdirect.com/search/oc1902).



The Smithsonian has reissued their 1980 recording of **Victor Herbert's** perennial operetta, *Naughty Marietta*. This performance was produced, directed and conducted by the late **James A. Morris**, then director of the Smithsonian Institution's Division of Performing Arts. The **Millennium Chamber Orchestra** is in the pit, and also the Catholic University of America A Cappella Choir.

The leads are sung by **Judith Blazer** (Marietta) and **Leslie Harrington** (Captain Richard Warrington), with more than 60 voices in the choruses. This bright version will please the audience of live theatregoers. (Harbinger Records, HCD3702 naxosdirect.com/search/hcd3702).

For the past little while I have been listening and re-listening to an album named simply **Artur Balsam Plays**. Balsam the pianist was born in Warsaw in 1906 and died in New York in 1994. He was and is remembered primarily as the elegant accompanist of many of the prime soloists of the era. Balsam's name would appear second whether it be in concert programs or record labels. In this set are the most exquisite and rewarding performances of piano solos and



sonatas, violin sonatas and concertos, dances and a miscellany of named pieces. Composers from Balsam's enormous repertoire represented in these recordings are Brahms, Beethoven, Mozart, Richard Strauss, Hindemith, Muzio Clementi, C.P.E. Bach, Paganini, Hummel, Ravel, Debussy, Franck, Fauré, Milhaud, Dvořák, Wieniawski, Glazunov, Stravinsky, Vitali,

Rimsky-Korsakov, Sarasate, Bizet, Carl Engel, William Kroll and Fritz Kreisler. Phew! The artists who join Balsam are Yehudi Menuhin, Michael Rabin, Zino Francescatti, Szymon Goldberg, Nathan Milstein, Joseph Fuchs, Raya Garbousova (the Russian-American cellist), Louis Kaufman, Erica Morini, Zara Nelsova and the Pascal Quartet. This is an unusually agreeable collection and thanks to the host of artists and composers, there is never a dull moment. (Profil PH 21004 10 CDs naxosdirect.com/search/+ph21004)



As some readers may have previously discerned, I especially dote on the omnipresent sonorities in the sound of Isaac Stern's playing of any score before him. In addition to his commercial recordings many of his admirers have been enjoying Doremi's Isaac Stern Live series derived from live performances around the globe, unavailable elsewhere. **Isaac Stern Live Volume 9**

contains an impressive performance of the Sibelius from Paris (1980, Andrew Davis) together with the George Rochberg concerto of 1974 from Paris (1977, Torkanowsky). A second CD contains the Samuel Barber of 1939 from Paris (1980, Kondrashin), together with the Prokofiev second from Strasbourg (1958, Munch). Finally in this collection of distinctive performances is the Max Bruch *Violin Concerto No.1* from Paris conducted by Leonard Slatkin in 1980. Stern's playing is innately compelling throughout both CDs. (Doremi DHR-8147/8 naxosdirect.com/search/dhr-8147-8).



In another new release from Doremi, **Isaac Stern** shares the stage with **Pinchas Zukerman** playing works written for two violins for a joint recital in Massey Hall, Toronto from February 9, 1976. Judging from the enthusiastic applause after each work the audience was more than enthralled. Here is what they heard: Leclair *Sonata Op.3 No.5*; Spohr *Sonata Op.67 No.2*; Mozart

Duo for Violin and Viola K423; Wieniawski *Étude-Caprices Op.18*, climaxing with the Prokofiev *Sonata in C Major, Op.56*. There were two encores, by Leclair and Mozart. (Isaac Stern/Pinchas Zukerman Joint Recital Doremi DHR-8099 naxosdirect.com/search/dhr-8099)



Many of our readers will remember Paul Robinson, classical music director of radio station CJRT-FM (91.1) and the program *Records in Review*, where for years on Sunday afternoon and Monday evening he and I discussed new releases and basic repertoire. On a recent visit we listened to a performance of the **Schubert Symphony No.9** conducted by **Gerard Schwarz** recorded

in 1987 but unreleased until now (Master Performers MP 21 03

masterperformers.com). Our opinions matched and upon request Paul wrote the following:

“The American conductor Gerard Schwarz is probably best known for his 26-year tenure (1985–2011) as music director of the Seattle Symphony. They made dozens of recordings together including standard repertoire as well as works by American composers. But earlier in his career Schwarz conducted the **New York Chamber Symphony** and made some fine recordings with that ensemble back in the 1980s. One of them was only recently released, a very stylish and energetic performance of the Schubert *Ninth Symphony*. The orchestra

included some of New York’s foremost freelance musicians and it sounds like it. Great playing and first-class recording quality. Incidentally, before turning to conducting, Schwarz was a child-prodigy trumpet player, becoming principal trumpet in the New York Philharmonic at the age of 25. And what is he doing now? He is music director of the All-Star Orchestra (www.allstarorchestra.org), an elite ensemble (e.g. the concertmaster is David Kim, concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra) which specializes in making DVDs, largely for an educational market. He is also a professor of music at the University of Miami.” **●**

OTHER FINE VINTAGES

Cornelius Cardew – The Great Learning
Montréal Scratch Orchestra; Dean Rosenthal
Tone Glow Records (toneglowrecords.bandcamp.com)



► English composer-pianist, teacher and political activist Cornelius Cardew (1936–1981) was in the vanguard of the thriving 1960s UK experimental music scene. He co-founded the Scratch Orchestra which performed his monumental *The Great Learning* (1969) on the influential 1971 Deutsche Grammophon LP.

Cardew’s text score consists of seven *Paragraphs* (large sections) for a large number of both trained and untrained musicians, the libretto drawn from Confucian texts. *The Great Learning*’s musical idiom and democratic social message was in tune with the times and as such deeply challenged many musicians’ views on the possibilities of ensemble music-making.

To perform *The Great Learning* in Montreal in 1996 was also American composer Dean Rosenthal’s motivation to organize the Montréal Scratch Orchestra with 14 student experimental music enthusiasts at McGill University. Their 1996 live concert performance of two *Paragraphs* was recorded, and has now been released on Tone Glow Records.

The all-vocal *Paragraph 7* features a constantly shifting sound cloud of male and female voices humming or singing the text. Each chorus member initially chooses their own note and proceeds according to the written instructions. Individual voices emerge, join others in unison, then recede, in a process which sounds organic: waves cresting and falling perhaps. *Paragraph 1*, on the other hand, is anchored by skilled organist Philip Clarke’s slowly shifting single tones which build into massive chord clusters. It’s joined by massed whistles interrupted by spoken choral recitations of the Confucian script. The track ends elegantly, a mirror of the way it began, with the acoustic organ’s voice gradually dying, literally running out of air.

Andrew Timar

SEONG-JIN CHO

Chopin:
Piano Concerto No. 2 • Scherzi

THE NEW ALBUM - OUT NOW

Joe Coughlin – Debut: 40th Anniversary Edition

Joe Coughlin

Indie Pool (joecoughlin.ca)



► Originally released in 1981, jazz vocalist Joe Coughlin's eponymous forgotten gem of a debut features a group teeming with top-shelf Canadian talent. The lineup is highlighted by the likes of Ed Bickert on guitar, Bernie Senensky on keys, Terry Clarke on drums and Don Thompson on bass. The music itself covers quite a bit of ground, taking elements from straight-ahead

swing, vintage synth-pop typical of the era, soul, gospel and even yacht rock (multiple tracks sound like they could belong on Steely Dan's *Gauche*).

Quite a few of the flavours on this album can be attributed to the great Rick Wilkins, who was responsible for conducting and arranging all the tunes. His flair is particularly evident on *500 Miles High*, which takes a Chick Corea classic and chooses to go the full distance with a Latin groove that was merely implied in the original. The result is a thrilling showcase for the band that hits a pinnacle during Senensky's dynamic solo.

Coughlin himself more than manages to keep up with the ensemble. It is his personality, effortlessness and elegance that give this album its identity. Coughlin's astounding range is also on full display, whether it's the fullness of his tone on *What a Difference a Day Makes* or his softer, borderline whisper on *Here's That Rainy Day*. To complete the equation, *Joe Coughlin by Joe Coughlin* could not have been sequenced better. The moods blend together seamlessly, and the set list is positively spotless.

Yoshi Maclear Wall

Fixing the Fluctuating Ideas

Evan Parker Electro Acoustic Ensemble with Sainkho Namtchylak

Victo cd 133 (victo.qc.ca)



► This almost perfect division between vocal and instrumental affiliation with electronics, recorded at FIMAV 1996 in Quebec, comprises two 30+ minute tracks. The first, *Fixing*, centres around the vocal gymnastics of Tuvan singer Sainkho Namtchylak propelling her retches, yodels and gurgles, accompanied, synthesized and live-

processed by Marco Vecchi and Walter Prati's electronics, with obtuse, balanced and stretched interjections from violinist Philipp Wachsmann, bassist Barry Guy, percussionist Paul Lytton and saxophonist Evan Parker.

Namtchylak sits out *Fluctuating*, the second track, which is only slightly shorter than the opener. This allows the electronic wizards to add to and highlight the studied, in-the-moment improvising by the fiddler, bassist, drummer and saxophonist. Accomplished veterans of free expression, Wachsmann, Lytton, Parker and Guy shatter and stretch the program as the electronics subtly project mirrored and scrambled variants of their outputs. This includes col legno slaps and swabbing strokes from the bassist, faux-formalist sweeps and pizzicato rasps from the violinist, crunching crinkles and reverberation from the percussionist and a penultimate sequence where Parker's circular breathed doits, multiphonics and fluttering trills vibrate towards and then amongst a persuasive finale of staccato stopping from the strings.

Earlier Namtchylak's inimitable shaking cries, onomatopoeic asides and cracked warbling is multiplied by processing and backed by Guy's bass string thumps and Wachsmann's augmented string spic-cato. When Parker enters at the halfway point, his reed trills and Namtchylak's vocalizing sound nearly identical. No matter which player's timbres are emphasized, a perfect mix is attained throughout.

Ken Waxman

Volume 26 no. 8

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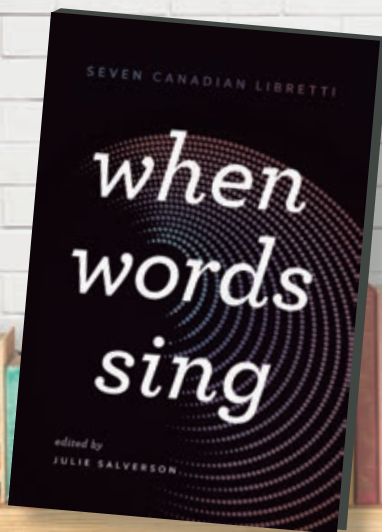
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Read the reviews here, then visit
thewholenote.com/listening

Delving into the librettist's art



Salverson, Julie. Ed.
**When Words Sing:
 Seven Canadian Libretti.**
 Playwrights Canada Press

SOPHIE BISSON



Julie Salverson

When *Words Sing: Seven Canadian Libretti*, edited by Canadian author Julie Salverson, is the first publication to feature in-depth overviews of Canadian operas via their libretti. Each opera is given a section in which Salverson features the libretto first and foremost

while also providing unprecedented access to the artistic craft and creative processes of those most involved with the opera. Interviews with, and essays by, librettists, composers, directors, set, lighting and costume designers, provide the reader with a rich portrait of individual operas as well as a larger view of the Canadian operatic creation process.

The librettists of *When Words Sing*, published in the same volume for the first time, are Robert Chafe (*Ours* / John Estacio), Anna Chatterton (*Rocking Horse Winner* / Gareth Williams), George Elliott Clarke (*Beatrice Chancy* / James Rolfe), Marie Clements, (*Missing* / Brian Current), Ann-Marie MacDonald (*Nigredo Hotel* / Nic Gotham), Julie Salverson (*Shelter* / Juliet Palmer), and Royce Vavrek (*Dog Days* / David T. Little).

The title of the anthology is a nod to the late R. Murray Schafer's 1970 book of the same name, and the contributors listed in the table of contents read as a who's who of contemporary Canadian opera: a foreword by Canadian soprano and conductor Barbara Hannigan, and an introduction by opera scholars Michael and Linda Hutcheon. With contributions from notable librettists, composers and creative team artists, the opening page of *When Words Sing* creates high expectations that Salverson and her collaborators thankfully meet.

When Words Sing is exceptionally well crafted and generous in all aspects, with highlights that include a brief but solid history of the Canadian libretto (Michael and Linda Hutcheon); introspective essays on *Dog Days* by Royce Vavrek ("Writing *Dog Days*") and David T. Little ("On the Origins of *Dog Days* and Little & Vavrek"); lighting designer Paul Mathiesen's fascinating window into the mechanics of

lighting that ultimately set the tone for a production ("Remembering Light and Shadow for *Nigredo Hotel: Snapshots*"); a most compelling read by director Banuta Rubess ("The Alchemy of *Nigredo Hotel*"); and everything *Beatrice Chancy*.

Equally significant is the section on *Shelter* with essays from Keith Turnbull (director), Wayne Strongman (director and conductor), Julie Salverson (the editor is the librettist of this opera), Juliet Palmer (composer) and Sue LePage (set and costume design). Beyond the opera itself, this section provides significant insight into the Canadian opera creation process: the somewhat artificial initial process that often precedes Canadian operatic collaborations (composer librettist laboratories are fairly common); the subsequent workshops; the hiring of actors that sound out the text; the tentative gathering of a creative team should the funding application for a commission be granted; and finally the casting, staging and premiere – all aspects are laid bare. Strongman's words on this process are especially valuable: as the founding artistic director of Tapestry Opera and a trailblazer in the commissioning of new works, he was intimately familiar with the inner workings of Canadian operatic creation for over 30 years.

For my part, I found myself particularly invested in the microcosm offered by *When Words Sing*: to a significant extent, the book's elucidation of the themes and stories that matter to librettists, composers and opera producers also reflect Canadian preoccupations. The samples offered in *When Words Sing* reveal socially conscious individuals who write about historically based, spiritually charged and intellectually provocative subjects. Although the musical context of course always needs to be considered, it would be an exciting research avenue to study the libretti of Canadian operas for the stories they tell us about us in a repertoire which, from 1867 to today, already comprises more than 500 works.

Dedicated to Wayne Strongman, *When Words Sing* is both a captivating journey into the world of contemporary Canadian opera creation and a welcome addition to the Canadian operatic literature. **O**

Sophie Bisson is an opera singer and a doctoral candidate in musicology at York University. She is the editor of the forthcoming online Encyclopedia of Canadian Opera.



Wayne Strongman



REAR VIEW MIRROR

The Desire to Move Forward On Full Display

ROBERT HARRIS

I'm not sure I'm entirely surprised that it was a Canadian who wrote "Don't it always seem to go/That you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone." Joni Mitchell's 1970 lament for the loss of a bit of Hawaiian landscape has taken on new meaning in our pandemic-roiled lives some 50 years later. Today, lamenting what has gone, temporarily or not, has become a worldwide emotionally traumatic phenomenon.

But so has its reverse – being aglow in anticipation of what might return. That's certainly how I've felt as I've eagerly devoured the announcements of what's planned for the upcoming season for many of the major musical institutions in the city. It's true – the bogey of the variants has taught us that our expectation of a clear, straight-line recovery from our own black plague is not to be. The future is considerably less than clear for performing arts organizations. Nonetheless, the desire to move forward, to plan, to anticipate the future, such a uniquely human characteristic, is on full display in our musical institutions.

The pandemic has been something of a litmus test for many organizations and institutions in society, testing their durability and persistence, and our musical institutions are no different. Some have struggled to keep the faith, and maintain their identity. Others have refused to let the incredible circumstances of the past 18 months dim their normal creativity. And for a very few, the pandemic has actually made them more creative than ever – among them two organizations in our community one might not have expected to do so: Tafelmusik and The Royal Conservatory of Music.

I have long been a great fan of Tafelmusik, so their ability to remain current and contemporary and relevant is not such a surprise, even though their chosen repertoire would seem inclined to trap them in a musical culture long past. Not in the slightest. Under their late, deeply lamented music director, Jeanne Lamon, Tafelmusik always pushed every kind of boundary. That's even more the case under their current leader, the deeply talented and immensely creative Elisa Citterio. One of the great tragedies of COVID for me has been its robbing of Citterio of the creative momentum she had just started to establish with Tafelmusik when the virus hit last year.

No matter. Tafelmusik is surging ahead this season: finally presenting Citterio's new orchestral arrangements of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*,

which has been planned, and delayed, for two years, and continuing to boldly go where few Baroque orchestras have gone before, deep into the repertoire of the 19th century. Following their immensely successful Tchaikovsky concert of two years ago, they are back with another, this one devoted to Antonin Dvořák. Also, while bassist Alison Mackay has retired from the orchestra, the torch of her genius in creating Tafelmusik's famed multimedia events is still alive, taken up in the season ahead by oboist Marco Cera and magician Nick Wallace in a show exploring the connection between these two famously dark arts.

Then there's the Tafelmusik Chamber Choir, one of the great gems of the country, celebrating its 40th anniversary this season with, among other things, a presentation of the Everest of Baroque choral works, Bach's *B-Minor Mass*, conducted not by the Choir's own Ivars Taurins, but by one of the great Bach interpreters of our generation, Masaaki Suzuki. It is a function of Taurins' grace, I think, that he has relinquished the podium on this special occasion. (Full disclosure: Ivars and I are friends; we have happily collaborated on three fine programs for CBC Radio's *Ideas*). But make no mistake about it – and it's not just friendly bias speaking – Taurins is one of the finest, and unfairly underrated, conductors in all of North America. (Check out the virtual *Jesus bleibet meine Freude* the Choir just posted if you need more proof – light and energetic, a revelation). The Choir's 40th anniversary season is well worth celebrating.

But the real surprise for me in the spate of new programming announcements made recently was the season just unveiled by The Royal Conservatory of Music. Mervon Mehta has been running the Conservatory's Koerner Hall programming admirably for many years now, but recently he has added considerably more original events to his mix. That began with the highly successful 21C New Music Festival he began seven years ago, so much more important now since the TSO dropped their New Creations Festival. But this season, the Conservatory has a wealth of exciting concerts, beginning with their star-studded gala performance of Stephen Sondheim's *Follies in Concert*, certain to be an unforgettable evening in the concert hall (as was the original in the 80s). Then, there's *Gould's Wall*, a new Brian Current multimedia opera project co-presented with Tapestry Opera, bringing the spirit of Glenn Gould into the 21st century. There are concerts from pianists Seong-Jin Cho and the amazing Vikingur Ólafsson. There's a performance of Ana Sokolović's wonderful a cappella mini-opera, *Svadba*, the music of Miles Davis interpreted by Indian musicians, and many, many other wonderful concerts, topped off by the first visit of Swedish mezzo Anne Sofie von Otter to Toronto in half a dozen years. A truly exciting schedule.

Not everything musical is rosy in our post-pandemic world, however. The uncertainty engendered by the pandemic has dangers as well as opportunities, and the institution I fear for most in this regard is the Toronto Symphony. OK, fear is maybe too strong a word. But for 12 years, from 2001 to 2013, the TSO had one president and CEO, Andrew Shaw. Since then, it has had four more. The disgraced Jeff Melanson from 2014 to mid-2016. Then six months of board member Sonia Baxendale. Then two years or so of Gary Hanson. Then what was supposed to be a long-term solution, Matthew Loden. Except that Loden abruptly announced his resignation from the position in July after only three years in the job. The TSO is now looking for his replacement.

That's like a baseball team having five different club presidents in seven years: it's not healthy, it's not good for an institution trying to meet new and unprecedented artistic challenges. However, the TSO has proven remarkably resilient in the past, and will likely do so again. Because of an amazingly generous and saintly gift from the Beck family (Thomas Beck was a longtime TSO chair of the board; his daughter occupies that position today), the TSO's finances are in much better shape than you might expect. They have a "new" musical director, Gustavo Gimeno, or should have, although the pandemic has delayed his true arrival here for over a year.

That being said, the TSO is refusing to be undone by the many issues it faces. While the TSO's 2021/22 season lacks enormous blockbusters, there are some very encouraging signs within their concert programs. Virtually every concert of the season includes some contemporary music, and not just the inevitable seven-minute opening piece, programmed to score some Canada Council grant. Instead, significant works, from talented composers like Joan Tower, Vivian Fung, Caroline Shaw and Missy Mazzoli and several Canadian commissions and premieres are on TSO programs, including a new work commissioned from Zosha Di Castri for soprano Barbara Hannigan, and a slew of works throughout the season by Canadian composer Samy Moussa, the orchestra's artist-in-residence.

On the more conventional side, the TSO is presenting a concert of Bach and Mozart featuring and conducted by Angela Hewitt; James Ehnes is playing the Beethoven concerto with Andrew Davis leading



Gould's Wall premieres January 12-16, 2022 at The Royal Conservatory of Music: singers perform suspended from the Atrium wall in this gravity-defying new opera.

the band, and an all-Bach concert led by Jonathan Crow looks especially interesting. Despite everything, or perhaps because of everything, the desire to create and connect remains active within the TSO as it commences the celebration of its 100th anniversary season.

I haven't noted everything that's planned for the fall, including ambitious projects by Opera Atelier and the COC (especially their presentation of a Mozart *Requiem* conceived by Against the Grain's Joel Ivany and the COC's Johannes Debus). But I can feel a sense of anticipation that follows such a long period of intense deprivation as keenly as I've ever looked forward to any musical experience. Maybe in the end, despite all the dislocation and pain, Joni Mitchell will have written the last word on our love of music – that only when we lost it did we realize how profoundly important it is. Except, if we're lucky, we're getting it back. **●**

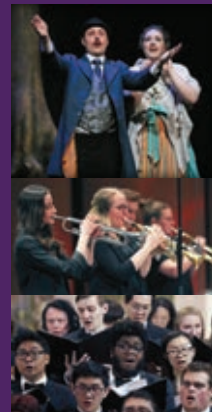
Robert Harris is a writer and broadcaster on music in all its forms. He is the former classical music critic of The Globe and Mail and the author of the Stratford Lectures and Song of a Nation: The Untold Story of O Canada. Story of O Canada.

WELCOME TO THE 2021-22 CONCERT SEASON!



We can't wait to share this year's season with you!

Continue to enjoy select livestreams and recordings throughout the year, and stay tuned for information about in-person audiences.



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BACK IN FOCUS

Previously covered in
The WholeNote,
and topical again

Alanis Obomsawin, Glenn Gould Prize thirteenth laureate



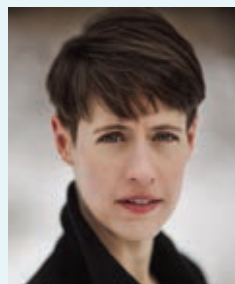
"No matter how difficult times are, try to remember that everywhere in the world there are a lot of good people and somehow, in the worst times, you meet someone who will help take you away from the danger. Do not forget that, because if you only think of the bad part, you do not have much hope for the future. But I think it is the contrary. All these years, many times I was in danger and there was always someone who would appear and help me and get me out of that danger. I want to thank all the people who helped me in my lifetime when it was difficult."

Alanis Obomsawin CC, GOQ, CALQ, member of the Abenaki Nation, legendary documentary filmmaker, singer-songwriter, visual artist, and activist, quoted by *WholeNote* columnist Paul Ennis on the occasion of being announced as the laureate of the thirteenth Glenn Gould Prize in [October 2020](#) "in an emotionally compelling virtual press conference that stretched across the planet, from Chennai, India, to Hollywood."

Presentation of the \$100,000 award takes place Monday, October 4, 2021 at 7:15pm at the Royal Ontario Museum, at which time Obomsawin's choice for recipient of the \$15,000 Glenn Gould Protégé Prize, award-winning Ojibwe filmmaker **Victoria Anderson-Gardner** will also receive her award.

Following the prize ceremony, at 8pm, the Glenn Gould Foundation presents the premiere of ***Seeds: The Art of Alanis Obomsawin***, a spectacular sound and light show – 170 feet wide by 70 feet high – by Métis filmmaker Terril Calder, projected onto the east façade of the Royal Ontario Museum. The show will continue nightly to October 17, from 8pm to 10 pm (four shows per hour), with the soundtrack, featuring the vocals of Obomsawin, accessible by attendees over local Wi-Fi. *Seeds* will then embark on a cross-Canada and international tour, with dates and details to be announced.

Cecilia Livingston's Vocal Pleasures



"I'm really quite struck by the mesh of our two voices. It's really interesting to experience your own work being seen by someone else in a different way than how you had understood it."

Composer Cecilia Livingston, quoted from a wide-ranging conversation with *WholeNote* columnist Wende Bartley, [December 2020](#), discussing working with English composer Donna McEvitt on Soundstreams' *Garden of Vanished Pleasures*, originally scheduled as part of the Royal Conservatory's 21C Festival in January 2021, and now a fully staged production for digital broadcast, devised and directed by Tim Albery, kicking off Soundstreams' 2021/22 season, September 23 to October 10, as part of the company's 2021 Digital Residency at Crow's Theatre.

The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir at 127



"An interim conductor doesn't get to make the same kind of imprint on an orchestra or choir as a permanent hiring would. One inherits a 'sound' and does not seek to change it using blunt instruments like the annual re-audition process to filter for one's preferences. That being said, every conductor is in some sense, a stylist. You work with your material, and you focus on things you care most about achieving."

David Fallis, then interim artistic director of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, quoted from an interview in [October 2019](#) at the start of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir's search for only the ninth conductor in the choir's 127-year history – a search that culminated earlier this year in the hiring of Jean-Sébastien Vallée to fill that role. Rehearsals under Vallée are now under way (more about that – and about him – later). His first appearance at the choir's helm since his appointment is scheduled for November 2, 2021 in a concert with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, titled "Coming to Carry Me Home."

Back in Focus is compiled by the WholeNote editorial team

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