YEAR-END DOUBLE ISSUE
TO THE HOLIDAYS ... AND BEYOND!
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LES VIOLONs DU ROY
with La Chapelle de Québec
bernard labadie, conductor
Karina Gauvin, soprano
Christophe Dumaux, counter-tenor
Christoph Prégardien, tenor
brett polegato, baritone
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These fabulous four recordings and artists were set aside from the rest as the best of the year in each of their categories—have you heard them yet?

Best of category (Baroque Vocal), Gramophone Award winner and best record of the Year from any category 2005

Bach Cantatas Vol. 1
Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra
Sir John Eliot Gardiner

Best of category (Choral) and Gramophone Award winner 2005

Haydn The Seasons
Marlis Petersen; Werner Gura;
Dietrich Henschel; RIAS-Kammerchor;
Freiburger Barockorchester / René Jacobs

Editor’s choice 2005
Gramophone Magazine

Rachmaninov Piano Concertos;
Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini;
Stephen Hough;
Dallas Symphony Orchestra / Andrew Litton

Artist of the Year 2005
Gramophone Magazine
Michael Tilson Thomas

We invited our readers to vote for the 2005 Artist of the Year—from the six nominations, the San Francisco Symphony’s music director, Michael Tilson Thomas, swept to victory...
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**MEREDITH HALL**

Canadian soprano Meredith Hall joins La Nef in a new recording of Celtic music for the Nativity

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Some Thing New by Jason van Eyk

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December 1 2005 - February 7 2006
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treat yourself
to a little TSO!

Hough Plays
Brahms

Wednesday, November 30 at 8pm
Thursday, December 1 at 8pm
Saturday, December 3 at 8pm

Toronto favourite, Thomas Dausgaard, conducts Strauss' Don Quixote! Pianist Stephen Hough makes his much-anticipated return to the TSO, performing Brahms' B-flat Major Piano Concerto.

Kavakos Plays
Sibelius

Wednesday, December 7 at 8pm
Thursday, December 8 at 8pm

Leonidas Kavakos performs Sibelius' Violin Concerto! Maestro Thomas Dausgaard conducts Bruckner's radiant Second Symphony.

Toronto's BEST
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December 14, 15, 17, & 19 at 8pm
Sunday, December 18 at 3pm

Christmas wouldn't be the same without Handel's glorious masterpiece! Buy your tickets early to assure yourself of fantastic seats!

December 7 sponsored by LIVINGTON

Christmas Favourites

Tuesday, December 20 at 8pm
Wednesday, December 21 at 2pm
Wednesday, December 21 at 8pm

Ring in the season with a Christmas concert of traditional favourites and timeless holiday classics from Broadway and film. Maestro Kunzel and friends present music of joy, inspiration and holiday romance sure to put you in the mistletoe mood!

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CONCERT SEASON

Toronto Symp
The Singing Voice
Wednesday, January 18 at 8pm
Thursday, January 19 at 8pm
Peter Oundjian, conductor
Viktoria Mullova, violin; Isabel Bayrakdarian, soprano
Whether for instruments of voice, Mozart’s music “sings,” and in this concert, we revel in Mozartean melody with two of his most innovative interpreters, Viktoria Mullova and Canadian Isabel Bayrakdarian.

The Symphonist
Saturday, January 21 at 7:30pm
Peter Oundjian, conductor
Yefim Bronfman, piano
Peter Oundjian conducts Mozart’s “Jupiter” symphony. World renowned pianist, Yefim Bronfman performs Piano Concerto No. 22.

Mozart: A Life in Letters
Thursday, January 26 at 8pm
Friday, January 27 at 8pm
Peter Oundjian, conductor
Colm Feore, actor; Donna Feore, stage director
Karina Gauvin, soprano; Michael Schade, tenor
Russell Braun, baritone
Join us for a celebration of Mozart the artist and man, in a very special birthday concert as portrayed in his own letters and the vocal music they inspired.

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Saturday, January 28 at 1:30 & 3:30pm

Peter Oundjian, conductor
Aaron Schwebel, violin
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GREAT CHAMBER MUSIC DOWNTOWN

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Thursday December 8 at 8 pm

MOZART CHAMBER MUSIC 2

with the TOKYO STRING QUARTET and clarinettist

SABINE MEYER

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Thursday January 19 at 8 pm

Soprano

SHANNON MERCER

sings a wonderful varied programme: Mozart, Wolf, Debussy, Villa-Lobos and new songs of Andrew Ager

Thursday January 26 at 8 pm

German pianist

MARKUS GROH

plays Kurtag, Ligeti, Prokofiev, Liszt - and introduces a work of his contemporary Charlotte Seither

Tuesday January 31 at 8 pm
It’s that time of year looked forward to with way more dread than happy anticipation by this particular slave in the WholeNote salt-mines. It’s the dreaded “Year-End Double Issue”, with two months of listings instead of one.

Sure, combining issues gives our staff and contributors a break. Sure it allows for family time and all that humbug. But none of that is worth it in the face of the trouble it makes for me.

I’m the one who’s holding up the presses, dear reader.

The press crew is waiting.

The forty or so people who’ve put their words and work into the issue so far are waiting to go home, cheering madly every time I complete a sentence.

The forty others who will meet the magazine at our printer, three days hence, to carry it to you, are raring to go.

And I’m sitting here trying to decide if what I’m writing here is the party piece, or the sober reflections bit. Or the mandatory Year-in-Review. Or (shudder) the dreaded list of resolutions.

The “party” part is easy enough. Our live music listings start page 36 and include more than 750 events. Two thirds of them happen in the first three weeks of December. One weekend day during that time has 47 concerts. (Larry Beckwith paints a great picture in Choral Scene, page 24, of the celebratory communal work that goes into putting on any of these concerts.)

And then for a couple of weeks the concert scene slumbers. Except it’s a comforting thought that during at least some of those days when no-one is putting on music formally, we’re all a bit more likely to have the time to be doing some social singing and playing of our own.

On the “sober reflections” front, writing in these pages last December, organist Chris Dawes commented wryly that “Christmas can make you sick, or well, or both … the retailer or freelance musician who must crazily earn 25-30% of an annual income in the last 10% of the year then starts all over again in the quiet cold of January.”

Chris’s solution to the crazy December/January mood swing was to suggest readers pick a pair of concerts, but not just any pair. Rather, what he called a “Janusian pair” — after two-faced Janus for whom January is named. Choose two concerts, Chris said, “one in December, one in January: one, your retreat from the old year’s tortured death-throes, and the other, your celebration of the new year’s birth.” I’m not sure about the “death-throes” bit. But I recommend the exercise. It doesn’t hurt, at a time of year where solitude can both bless and cut like a knife, to remind oneself that for every state of mind there can be music.

I’ve already chosen one of my “Janusian pair” of concerts (courtesy Karen Ages’ World View column, page 27). She writes about: “the 70-plus member Echo Women’s Chamber Choir presenting Songs of Resistance and Hope, December 11 at Church of the Holy Trinity. On the program are anti-apartheid songs from South Africa, songs of the Armenian exile, songs in Hebrew and Tamil, and two Roma songs: Oshwitsate (Auschwitz) is a musical memorial to the Roma population nearly wiped out in the second world war; and Dumene Zhe is a song that calls for inclusiveness, first sung at demonstrations against the ultra-right in 1990’s Eastern Europe.” It’s an opportunity to hear songs of the kinds that get sung when all the concert halls have fallen silent.

As to “years-in-review” and “resolution lists” I guess all I can do at this stage is to promise to put a decent year-end review on next year’s resolution list.

David Perlman, Editor

Here at WholeNote, we are always telling you, our readers, about the music world as we see it. Well, we thought that it might be nice to start something a little different. We want to start finding out, regularly, more about our readers: what you think about music in our neck of the woods, what you would want us to continue doing, commence doing, and stop.

So, take the plunge! Fill out our mini-survey (either online at www.thewholenote.com, or by mail at the address in the masthead on page 9). Be our guest!

Speaking of guests, today’s topic was inspired by a line from Pamela Margles’ conversation with composer Steve Reich on his recent visit to Toronto (page 18). Pamela writes: “At the talk, a student had asked Reich what his ideal listener would get from his music. ‘Tears of joy,’ he said, smiling.” Click here for direct link to on-line Mini-Survey.

1) How often are you moved to tears by music?
   a) always
   b) often
   c) sometimes
   d) rarely
   e) never

2) If ever, by which of the following?
   a) orchestral
   b) choral and vocal
   c) operatic
   d) anthems
   e) other

3) If ever, on what occasions (circle any)
   a) a live concert
   b) a favorite recording
   c) film or tv
   d) radio
   e) other

4) Control question: Do you eat breakfast?
   a) always
   b) often
   c) sometimes
   d) rarely
   e) never

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Or mail “Be our guest” WholeNote Media Inc. 503-720 Bathurst Street, Toronto M5S 2R4

WWW.THEWHOLENOTE.COM  DECEMBER 1 2005 - FEBRUARY 7 2006

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 17/06 - 8 P.M.  
TAKE YOUR PICK  
Jake Langley, guitar  
Rob Pitlch, guitar  
George Koller, bass  
Terry Clarke, drums  

No longer Canada's best kept jazz secret, Toronto-based Jake Langley was selected as Guitarist of the Year in the 2004 National Jazz Awards and was chosen as Music Director in 2005. He spent a year studying in New York with jazz guitarist legends Joe Pass and Pat Martino, and now he joins veteran jazzman and fellow guitarist Rob Pitlch for an evening of acoustic and electric duets. "... this is comfort jazz, warm music with light grooves and strong effervescence. Langley's polished lines have their own innate sweetness."  
Globe and Mail  

TUESDAY, MARCH 7/06 - 8 P.M.  
RUSSIANS IN EXILE  
Andrew Burashko, piano  
The Art of Time Ensemble  
Joaquin Valdepeñas, clarinet  

Moscow-born pianist Andrew Burashko leads his ensemble in works by Russians abroad. Glinka, Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Schnittke. The Grand Sextet captures the exhuberance of Glinka's youthful song in Italy. Following the Russian Revolution, Stravinsky found fame in France with his Suite from L'Histoire du Soldat. Prokofiev penned the Overture on Hebrew Themes for some Russian ex-patriots in New York City. The leading Russian composer Alfred Schnittke was ostracized at home for many years, for his "un-Soviet" music. Among his greatest chamber works is the ghostly Piano Quintet, composed in memory of his mother.  

TUESDAY, MARCH 28/06 - 8 P.M.  
RUSSIAN VIOLA  
Rivka Golani, viola  
John Lenehan, piano  
and guest Douglas Perry, viola  

Rivka Golani is recognized by BBC Music magazine as one of the great violists and musicians of modern times. She is featured in monumental Russian literature works (or transcribed) for the viola: the radiant Sonata in G minor, Op. 19 of Rachmaninov, Shostakovich's final work: the Violin Sonata Op. 147, and a virtuosic transcription of Prokofiev's ballet Romeo and Juliet, arranged for 1 or 2 violas and piano.  

OnStage is heard on  
CBC Radio Two - Sundays at 2 p.m.  
CBC Radio One - Sundays at 8 p.m.  
Hosted by Shelley Solmes  

OnStage at Glenn Gould Studio  

STUDIO JAZZ  

WORLD  

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6/05 - 8 P.M.  
EAST MEETS EAST  
Mary Jane Lamond (Cape Breton/Canada)  
Kiran Ahluwalia (India/Canada)  
Shahid Ali Khan (Pakistan/Canada)  

"The duty of Qawwals is to reduce the distance between the Creator and the created." quotes Shahid Ali Khan. Qawwals are the marriage of raucous, spiritual poetry to mesmerizing singing and music. Kiran Ahluwalia's Giddha and other many aspects of the human condition, while her Punjabi folk songs celebrate them. Mary Jane Lamond presents unique interpretations of Scottish Gaelic traditions from the North Shore of Cape Breton Island. Joined by Rez Abbasi, guitar; Ravi Naimpalvy, tabla; Ashok Baidya and Mumbaister, harmoniums; and other special guests, these extraordinary singers explore connections and collaborations between modern and ancient.  

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28/06 - 8 P.M.  
HORN OF AFRICA  
Faduma Nkrumah (Somalia)  
Eid Ismael (Sudan)  
Danny (Eritrea)  

An acoustic evening of traditional and contemporary music from North-East Africa. Instrumentation will include oud, bongos and the ancient krar. These three exceptional singers, recognized in many countries of the world, are best known in Canada within their particular communities, performing often at weddings, cultural occasions, festivals, and nightclubs. Together they wish to share their music with a wider Canadian audience, and each other.  

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18/06 - 8 P.M.  
SECOND SHOW ADDED  
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19/06 - 7 P.M.  
AFRICAN GUITAR SUMMIT II  

With guest vocalists:  
Oumou Soumare & Muna Mingole  

The winners of the 2005 Juno Award for World Music Album of the Year return with all-new material. From Guinea, the smooth guitar fire of Alpha YoYo diallo, with Nathy Camara on belon; from Ghana, the elder master of the guitar, Pa Joe, with "golden voice" Theo Boakye, and the heartbeat of drummer Kofi Ackah; from Kenya, the djele guitarist of Professor Adam Solomon; from Burundi/Rwanda, the bluesy Mighty Pope; and from Madagascar, the quicksilver guitars and harmonies of Domingu Robert and Madagascan Slim.
As the holiday season approaches we welcome back Sarah B. Hood with her “round-up” of Christmas discs in an extended “Pence and Joy” article in the DISCS OF THE SEASON section. And several of our other reviewers, in particular Bruce Surtees in his “Old Wine, New Bottles” and Tiina Kik in her look at Marie-Nicole Lemieux’s new disc, seem to have kept gift shopping in mind while writing their reviews. I would also draw your attention to Ezra Perlman’s report on a couple of CDs that will make excellent gifts for the youngsters on your list: “Seasons’ Greetings from Vivaldi” and the new Talia Kids disc “Baroque Adventure”.

This month I am very pleased to welcome renowned Gryphon Trio pianist Jamie Parker to our ranks. At a recent fundraising event that featured the Gryphons, Jamie mentioned to WholeNote editor David Perlman that music he often listens to for pleasure is the late string quartets of Beethoven, with a particular fondness for Op. 132. David inquired whether he would be interested in writing a review of the quartets if the occasion arose and the answer was yes. As you will see, a new recording by the Hagen Quartet provided that opportunity sooner than Jamie might have expected and I’m very pleased with the result.

While conceding that Beethoven’s set of “late quartets” is likely the most important contribution to the repertoire, and in fact laid the foundation for everything that has followed in the genre over the past two centuries. I must confess that my own personal favourite for sheer listening pleasure is actually the first of Beethoven’s “middle quartets”, Op. 59, No. 1. It was therefore easy for me to hold back the new Tokyo String Quartet recording of this work and its companion pieces, the three "Razumovsky" quartets, for myself this month. The Tokyo has a discography of more than 30 discs, but this is the first release on the Harmonia Mundi label [HMU 807423-24] (except for an appearance on a 2003 disc with clarinetist Joan Enric Lluna performing the Brahms Clarinet Quintet). The Tokyo Quartet are of course frequent visitors to Toronto, with several appearances on the Music Toronto series, and the Brahms and Beethoven discs also mark their first recordings with Canadian violinist Martin Beaver at their helm. Beaver joined the group as first violinist in 2002, having previously held that chair in the Toronto String Quartet, and incidentally, he still performs with Jamie Parker as the Beaver-Parker Duo, an ensemble that has the distinction of having given the inaugural concert in the Discovery series at Music Toronto. But back to the quartet... Celebrating the composer’s 250th anniversary, the Tokyo Quartet will perform three all-Mozart concerts on the Music Toronto series this season. The first has come and gone, and the second, with clarinetist Sabine Meyer on January 19th, is already sold out. So if you want to hear them at all this year I suggest you order your tickets now for the March 16 performance (with Cyprien Katsaris and Steven Dann). Now did I mention their new CDs? The Tokyo’s take on the Razumovsky quartets is every bit as exhilarating as you would expect, with excellent sound captured in the Skywalker Sound studio (yes, a George Lucas company) in California. Surprisingly, the thing that impressed me the most was not the music nor the performance, but the production that actually leaves sufficient space, elsewhere considered “dead air”, between the quartets to let you breathe and absorb the fact that one piece has come to its natural conclusion before rushing into the next.

[Quote: Breathe... Well the next disc has a Toronto connection as well, though perhaps a bit more tenuous. It is a connection that must mean a lot to the young cellist featured on the CD though, as the first line in his biographical sketch reads: “In November 2002, Jean-Guihen Queyras received from both Pierre Boulez and the Glenn Gould Foundation, the City of Toronto and the Glenn Gould Studio with the composer (himself) the winner of the Glenn Gould Prize.”]

A range of new voices continue to be heard and the Glenn Gould Foundation’s Concours 2003/2004 (ACD2 2375) features the winners of NEM’s seventh international competition for composers under 40 and the response was impressive: 129 string quartet scores from 38 countries, narrowed down to four winners by a jury that included composers José Evangelista, Alexina Louie and Michael Matthews and the members of the Molinari quartet. I doubt you will have heard the winners’ names (or music) before, but I would dare to suggest that if you are interested in the art music of the 21st century you may hear them again. They are: Tazull Izazadzad (h. 1969, Malaysia); Eun-Hwa Cho (h. 1973, South Korea); Alexios Poryftiatis (h. 1971, Greece); and Sixto Manuel Herrero Rodes (h. 1965, Spain). Pick up this CD and be “the first one on your block” to experience the future of the string quartet.

As anyone who reads this column regularly will have surmised by now, I have a personal penchant for contemporary music. And so it was as if Christmas came early for me with the arrival of three new releases on the ATMA label last month. Two of these involve international young composers competitions with a plethora of new voices, previously unheard on record, and the third celebrates a, no the, senior Spanish composer of the 20th century, Luis de Pablo.

I’ll begin with one of my favourite biennials, the Quatuor Molinari, and their “Concours 2003/2004” (ACD2 2375). This was the Molinari’s second international competition for composers under 40 and the response was impressive: 129 string quartet scores from 38 countries, narrowed down to four winners by a jury that included composers José Evangelista, Alexina Louie and Michael Matthews and the members of the Molinari quartet. I doubt you will have heard the winners’ names (or music) before, but I would dare to suggest that if you are interested in the art music of the 21st century you may hear them again. They are: Tazull Izazadzad (h. 1969, Malaysia); Eun-Hwa Cho (h. 1973, South Korea); Alexios Poryftiatis (h. 1971, Greece); and Sixto Manuel Herrero Rodes (h. 1965, Spain). Pick up this CD and be “the first one on your block” to experience the future of the string quartet. The call for scores is now open until April 1, 2006.
Post-modern is the term I would use for the music of Luis de Pablo, who was one of the guest jurors for “Forum 2004.” I guess it is not a coincidence that NEM has chosen to record an entire CD of de Pablo’s compelling music at this time (ADC2 2353). I find it interesting to note that de Pablo’s 1991-1992 Paradiso y tres danzas macabras brought Canadian composer John Rea’s music to my mind and it turns out that Rea is a permanent member of the Forum jury. I don’t mean to suggest that they were “feathering the nest” with “birds of a feather”, simply that it is interesting to find kindred spirits in the sometimes disparate world of contemporary music.

The timing of the release of these three important discs is a bit unfortunate. They risk being “lost in the shuffle” as the market focuses on the Christmas season, to which they definitely do not relate. Any one of them however would make a marvelous stocking-stuffer for the more adventurous souls on your list.

These three contemporary music discs all originate in Montreal, but of course Toronto has its fair share of new music specialists too, as witnessed each month in our Some Thing New and New Music Coalition News features. In our next issue we look forward to reviews of new releases by two active participants on the Toronto new music scene: Arraymusic and Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan. We’ll also have reviews of a number of other Toronto-based ensembles with diverse musical foils including I Furiosi (with reviewer Gabrielle McLaughlin) and Aradia, who will band together with the Caliban Quartet of Bassoonists (see Sarah B. Hood’s review) for a multi-CD launch party at the Great Hall on December 4, and Ensemble Polaris featuring DISCoveries contributors Alison Melville and Colin Savage, who launch their new disc “Not much is worse than a Troll!” at the Edward Day Gallery on December 21.

We welcome your feedback and invite submissions. Catalogues, reviews copies of CDs and comments should be sent to: The WholeNote, 720 Bathurst St., Suite 503, Toronto ON M5S 2R4. We also welcome your input via our website, www.thewholenote.com.

David Olds
Editor, DISCOVERIES
discoveries@thewholenote.com

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There are hundreds of other CD reviews available on our website: www.thewholenote.com
Jazz talk: Phil Nimmons
interviewed by Jim Galloway

Philip Rista Nimmons was born in Kamloops, BC, on June 3, 1923. He wears many hats, as composer, arranger, clarinetist, band leader, and educator. Honours have been showered on Phil Nimmons and presently there is a flurry of well-deserved activity, but the achievements have done little to change the inner man. I sat down recently with Phil Nimmons and talked about some of the things that matter to Phil, as well as his likes and dislikes. Here are highlights from the first hour of the interview, giving an insight into the man and his music. The entire conversation can be found on the WholeNote website at www.thewholenote.com and the second part of the interview will be posted in January at the same time as the January listings.

The Instrument
JG: Why clarinet?
PN: My older sister, who is still alive, I asked her as my source, and fountain of information still. She said, "you heard Benny Goodman on the air, and that was it, you were smitten."

When I think back on those days, radio... you're fooling around the dials or something, I can't remember anything specific, but according to Jane, that's my sister, she said I was smitten with Benny Goodman and I wanted to get a clarinet and so that's how that came about.

JG: I think younger people today perhaps don't realise, but radio was so important.

PN: Oh yes, and I think in a very profound way because we had to use our ears. And that started right from the beginning, and I think having a highly motivating and inspiring relationship to what you're hearing on the radio is something...eventually I found out when Benny Goodman was broadcasting on the Camel Caravan (or Artie Shaw), and those were both influences on me. I just preferred Benny Goodman's sound.

JG: Were there any other players out there you liked?

PN: Oh, well I liked all those guys, Irving Fazola, Barney Bigard, Buster Bailey, Jimmy Hamilton, Buddy DeFranco.

JG: Does the fact that the clarinet became unfashionable bother you?

PN: Oh yeah, it was The Instrument.

JG: But then it went right out the window. Nobody was playing clarinet for a long time.

PN: Things change (with a hearty chuckle).

There's a lot of things that become unfashionable (both men laugh). And it takes some adjusting to in a lot of ways.

Early Days
PN: I started to play almost immediately on the CBC in Vancouver and of course most of my activities for a great number of years were all in the studios because it was all being supported by the CBC.

In the beginning, I listened to both classical and jazz. I feel that was a blessing. I mean I didn't really know what was happening... I wasn't categorized in those terms.... I did a lot of work in casuals and dance bands out in Vancouver, and when I came to Toronto we played some great music in those days. Maybe the solos were only eight bars long or sixteen bars long but the charts were great that were being written for the bands in those days.

Recording
JG: How do you feel about playing in a studio as opposed to before an audience?

PN: Oh, I'd much rather play before an audience. I feel that they are a part of the formula with the performer and that they are a part of the whole process. God, you've got to have a conversation. It's not only with yourself.

JG: Well, it's the same for me. I would rather record before an audience and I would accept flaws in the recording, because of the other phases.

PN: I have always felt that -- right from the beginning. There are people who really dig going into studios, that's another approach. This is just my opinion: when I listen to the live recordings over the years opposed to ones from studios, for me, I could keep listening to the live recordings always always. The other ones start to pall, I think they don't have the same ambiance, but that's me, you know. I don't know whether my philosophy affects my listening as well (laughs) because life is not perfect, so why do we try and make it perfect, it would become boring, you know..... Well, the Portraits recording we did live, and I think it was a blessing in disguise because we couldn't get enough funding to go into the studio and so we wound up doing it live.

The Educator
JG: If a student comes to you, what do you think he should know? What do you expect of a student when he comes to you? And if he doesn't know, where would you guide him?

PN: Ideally, I would like a student to be open-minded, and also, if we are talking about music, if he accepts the fact that he hasn't used his ears enough (laughs). I am not trying to be facetious, but there are a lot of people I have taught that do not have the aural approach to things consistently, all the time.

I think you look for a dedication, and a commitment, you know, and it is quite important to me when I am teaching that I have to try and find a way to connect with every student. They're not the same, so you have to have a pretty open mind about some different approaches to look after different people. And it helps a big deal if you get somebody with an open mind and I don't mean to the extent that they stop having a personality, but you have to be able to receive some information and process it without losing your own identity. I try as a teacher to just open doors and not get in the way, and without them knowing, lovingly mold them in certain ways.

The Voice
JG: What about singers?
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Back to Ad Index
PN: I wrote for voices out west and I was just so fortunate in many ways with the CBC. I wrote for televised shows like Merv Griffin and Frank Willis, and you know, I wrote some songs when I was studying at the Conservatory, and I have three or four songs to Russian poets, and then Anne Marie Moss sang with Nimmons and Nine and so did Tommy Ambrose.

I have the greatest respect for the human voice because I think that it is the primary human instrument. I have always felt that, and as a matter of fact I have wished that we could put all of our jazz programme students into a choir and make all of the instrumentalists sing, because it is one of the most profound experiences that I ever had when I went to study at Juilliard. They put all the instrumentalists (we sat out in the theatre, there must have been about seven hundred of us) in a choir, and we had two choral conductors the three years I was there, one was Igor Buketoff and the other was Robert Shaw. And with Igor Buketoff, I had just arrived from Vancouver you know, and was there to study, and (laughs) here I am, singing. I never sang before in my life. To make a long story short, we gave a performance of the Bach B Minor Mass and I was one of 100 basses. It was a great happening for me because I had never been exposed to anything like that before.

Composers and Arrangers

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Food and Fellowship

PN: I like pasta, which is kind of weird. Coming from an old Anglophone home in Kamloops, BC where it was pretty well meat and potatoes. I dig that too, but I developed a taste for pasta, starting in Vancouver with Nick Flore, who was first flautist with the Vancouver Symphony; before he came to Toronto with the TSO we were close friends. My pasta heaven developed here in Toronto at the Dell Tavern on Elm Street, Willie and Joe De Laurentiis. Willie is still alive. Joe, we were close friends. He was Holly's godfather, and they actually kept me in food when my cheque didn't arrive from Vancouver (laughs). We had a lot of good times at the Dell; that's where we introduced Ray (Brown) and Oscar (Peterson) to golf. We went in there one night after the Paddock I think and we were going to have the Dell golf tournament the next morning at 7:00am, and Oscar and Ray said they would be there - and they got up and were there! Ray - that really turned him on. It was his first golf game and he just became a fanatic. Oscar, I think, bought a great set of clubs and that was the only time he ever used them!

But the Dell was a great place, we had baseball tournaments, all the musicians used to hang out there...baseball games, there was a baseball field next to Tip Top. I remember one time, the Niolo family, Bert, Joe and John, Joe was a big guy. You knew Joe? I’ll never forget Joe getting a hit and running to first base, and his tummy was going back and forth, he could hardly run straight because of the weight, you know. We were the opposing team just cracking up and he got a home run because we all fell down laughing. We had a lot of great times. They were great hangouts. I don’t know where the musicians go now, I guess the Rex, and the Bistro.

Phil-ing Time

PN: Oh yeah, I used to at one point like photography very much and as you know Oscar is a great photographer. He said, you've gotta have a camera so we went to the Drake Delta, (a camera store that was on Yonge Street) and found a Leica M3 that somebody had brought back in and Oscar said I’d better buy that, so I bought an M3 for $300 bucks, which was a lot in those days - it was 1962 - and I took a lot of pictures with that and if I got a good one of somebody I would put it on a big piece of poster board with some graphic artwork around it. And then, when I stopped drinking, therapeutically I think, I started carving with a little pen knife. The first thing I carved was a Slalom ski with all the trappings and I've done several pieces since then. I thoroughly enjoy it. I use Cedar, I did something for Oscar and Rob (McConnell) and for Ed (Bickert), Tony Thompson, the Leon family, Peter Herndorf. They could be anything from this size (demonstrates a small piece with his hands) and I dig it. And as a matter of fact I think that if anything happened to the chops (gestures to his mouth) I think I would get into carving because you know what? You can see it happening. When you write music, you sit there, and nothing happens until it’s played, but when you are painting or sculpting anything, whether it’s carving or sculpting, it happens right in front of you and you are getting a sense of satisfaction out of the effort. When you're composing music or, I guess, writing a book or a script or something there's no sense of feedback, there is always this apprehension...is this going to be OK?

The Honours

PN: (laughing) My career is really taking off right now.

JG: That's right. Not exactly overnight. (laughs) But how does it feel? Did you ever think that you would be honoured, and, I might add, rightly so?

PN: (shaking his head): No, not really for one minute. Of course I've thought about it since the first...I don't think anybody can help having some kind of a response when you receive something. I feel very lucky and blessed...all the awards: but I'm just a representation for all those wonderful people I've worked with; I strongly feel that, whatever I've achieved, I am certainly offering something by performing, but it takes several people to do that. I also have had the respect of my peers, and that was a very wonderful thing to have.
To the Holidays ...and beyond CCOC "Dickens" breaks ground

BY MJBUELL

PAST

Founded in 1968 by Ruby Mercer and Lloyd Bradshaw, the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus (CCOC) is unique in Canada as the only permanent children's opera chorus which develops and produces new operas for children. Traditionally they perform a busy season of concerts, provide for the needs of the Canadian Opera Company when children are required, and collaborate with many other organizations. The CCOC season has always culminated in a fully-staged lyric theatre production in the spring. Preparing a staged work in December and competing for audience attendance in the busiest month of the season is brave and new.

PRESENT

Artistic Director Ann Cooper Gay commented that this season she was searching for a classic story with a timeless message for all ages, providing the CCOC with an opera worthy of an annual holiday presentation. "Dickens' A Christmas Carol was an obvious choice. It begs for operatic treatment." The commission allowed for a new collaboration between two long-standing members of the community: composer Errol Gay (Orchestra Toronto, Toronto Symphony Orchestra) and librettist Michael Patrick Albano (Opera Division, University of Toronto).

"Although there are extant several musical settings of this well-known story, I think that Michael and I have been given a gift by the CCOC", commented composer Errol Gay. "They asked for an operatic treatment; the first, I believe, that features primarily a cast of children - who are, after all, the true focus of Dickens' timeless tale." He proposed that "this might add to our understanding of the real reasons behind our winter holiday traditions."

"Mr. Albano maintains much of the language of the Dickens original; and Dr. Gay has provided a score that evokes not only an early nineteenth-century "past" and late nineteenth-century "present", but also the early twentieth-century "future", by quoting stylistically (and occasionally, literally) from familiar opera composers of these eras. The ghosts of Christmas Past and Christmas Present are portrayed by treble voice semi-choruses. The CCOC's Youth Division provides SATB "Greek Chorus" introductions to the three dreams that persuade the miserly Scrooge to mend his ways.

FUTURE

Astonishingly, the funding for this commission was provided by private donors, philanthropists Doug Ludwig and Karen Rice. In this season for giving, and at a time when music education is seriously undervalued, we are reminded that the larger music-giving public must be challenged to invest in the musical future of our children.

A Dickens of a Christmas: an operatic adaption of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol". Canadian baritone Mark Pedroni (Scrooge) and tenor Ryan Harper (Bob Cratchit) perform with 200 choristers aged five to nineteen. (Harbourfront Centre Theatre, Queen's Quay West, December 10 and 11, 2 pm and 7:30 pm, with special performances for young audiences December 8 and 9 at 10:00 am and 1:00 pm.)

WholeNote writer MJBuell is a 12-year volunteer with the CCOC and the proud mother of one of two Tiny Tims, 10 year old Ezra Perlman.
American composer Steve Reich

recently in town

Steve Reich
in conversation with Pamela Marges

In late October, American composer Steve Reich came to the University of Toronto as the Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor in Composition. Instead of the customary lecture, he played from the new recording of his most recent piece, You Are (Variations), then answered questions.

It is difficult to believe that Reich is turning seventy next year; his enthusiasm and vitality are so palpable. The audience, younger members especially, were impressed by his genial candour. Any advice he gave was indirect, such as, "If you don't enjoy yourself as a composer, you are in trouble."

He remains one of the most recorded and most performed composers around the world. His music offers many levels of access, with its catchy rhythms and mesmerizing textures. But it is able to surprise, fascinate, provoke and disturb.

The highlight of Reich's visit to Toronto was a concert of his works presented by Soundstreams in the MacMillan Theatre. The concert sold out, and there were long lineups for tickets as I went in. Even more untypical for a concert of new music in this city were the standing ovations and cheers from the audience after each work.

I spoke to Reich the next morning. 'I thought it was a wonderful concert - one of the best I've been at of my music. There have only been five or six performances of You Are so far, although many more are planned. I think it's one of the best pieces I've ever done.'

You Are (Variations) is an exuberant work, rich in texture and high spirits. The Toronto performance was the first involving Nexus, the renowned Toronto percussion group. Three of its members, Russell Hartenberger, Bob Becker and Gary Kvisted are longstanding members of Reich's own ensemble, Steve Reich and Musicians.

The concert also featured one of Reich's most innovative works, Drumming, written in 1971 for large percussion ensemble and voices. 'There have been hundreds of performances of Drumming, but having Nexus made this performance absolutely superb - especially in the hongo section when it's just those guys playing, and having a good time. That's the real deal. When you're that good and that confident, you can also be funny, and take liberties, especially with accents.'

In Music for Pieces of Wood, from 1973, Reich joined the four Nexus members on stage. 'Playing with them is just great. Sometimes when I'm asked to be guest performer, especially with the earlier pieces, I feel like I am carrying this load of people who sort of know what they are doing. But with Nexus it's like being carried along.'

During the performance of Drumming, the performers walked around, exchanged positions, signalled each other, and played musical chairs with two facing rows of chairs, making it feel, at times, like a sacred ceremony. 'Drumming is just percussion, but there is a lot of switching around. That is not something I was concerned with in writing the piece but it is a natural byproduct. It does certainly make it interesting to watch.'

'It could be my music, it could be Johann Sebastian Bach's - the live performance is the music.'

The artificial wall between pop and classical has come down. Instruments from the pop world have become standard, and that's a good thing. But now when young people go to music school, they can do anything they want. I don't know whether they're better off or worse. You need resistance, something to push against. Where's the real you?'

Reich emphatically rejects all labels - but especially minimalism. 'I never liked the term minimalism. It's a term Michael Nyman took from painting and sculpture, back in the early seventies. He was disgusted with the serial music of the time. Maybe it's slightly descriptive of my music up to Drumming. But certainly by Music for 18 Musicians (1976) no-one would ever use that word for my music. It's poison. Whenever a composer uses that word I say, "Stop! Don't apply some fundamental dimension. 'The main voice of my music is melody. There's never been a generational change, reacting to how complicated music had become. Philip Glass, Terry Riley, LaMonte Young, John Adams, and in a different way, Arvo Pärt in Europe, we all said, "Enough of this - it is ugly, it's not human." We wanted to get back to basics - in a new way.'

'There are composers today who go back and sound like Mahler. I think that's a mistake. You can't just go back. Mahler did it better than they did.'

If neo-romantic music is not of interest to Reich, even less interesting is romantic music. 'It isn't what you do, it's how you do it. I don't want to hear romantic music of any sort. Brahms, Mahler, Sibelius are great composers, but I don't want to hear a note of their music, I just don't like that style.'

'Ultimately I care for Boulez, Stockhausen and Berio. If you're going to write that kind of music they do a very good job, and that's ultimately what survives in music.'

In his talk, Reich had said, 'My music's lifeblood is rhythmic vitality and clarity.' But in our interview he acknowledged another equally fundamental dimension. 'The main voice of my music is melody. There's never been a generational change, reacting to how complicated music had become. Philip Glass, Terry Riley, LaMonte Young, John Adams, and in a different way, Arvo Pärt in Europe, we all said, "Enough of this - it is ugly, it's not human." We wanted to get back to basics - in a new way.'

'I became a composer because I loved Bach, Stravinsky, be-bop and John Coltrane. When I started music school in the late fifties there was one way to write music - no pulse, no tapping your feet, no melody, no harmony. These were specifically forbidden. New music concerts were like bitter pills. Of course most audiences stayed away in droves, so you had a bunch of composers listening to other composers. I felt very out of it.'

'But now when young people go to music school, they can do anything they want. I don't know whether they're better off or worse. You need resistance, something to push against. Where's the real you?'

Many of Reich's innovations are rooted in Renaissance and Baroque music. 'There are certain universal truths in composing. If you are writing a line against another line then studies in species counterpoint are going to help you. Good voice leading is just absolutely basic to anything. The Beatles knew about that.'

'Very often I mark the beginning of a score mf. But I explain that mf doesn't just mean mezzo forte - it also means matter of fact. In my music, dynamics stay the same. When more people play, it's louder, and when less people play, it's quieter. But this comes from baroque music up to Drumming. But certainly by Music for 18 Musicians (1976) no-one would ever use that word for my music. It's poison. Whenever a composer uses that word I say, "Stop! Don't apply some label and put yourself in a box."'

'I was taken aback when Reich said, 'If someone heard You Are (Variations), and then the next day they heard Pieces of Wood, they would never assume it was the same composer.' I had just heard those two works on the same program. His passionate, endlessly creative voice was unmistakable. His materials and techniques have changed; but right from the beginning, what grabbed audiences, and sidelined critics, was how new his music sounded. He spoke to everyone who would listen, and still does. 'I became a composer because I loved Bach, Stravinsky, be-bop and John Coltrane. When I started music school in the late fifties there was one way to write music - no pulse, no tapping your feet, no melody, no harmony. These were specifically forbidden. New music concerts were like bitter pills. Of course most audiences stayed away in droves, so you had a bunch of composers listening to other composers. I felt very out of it.'

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music.

"If someone recommends a musician to me by saying they play a lot of new music, I think to myself "Do they mean Stockhausen and Boulez?" But if they tell me this guy plays a lot of Bach, I think "Oh, good, I'm sure he'll work out just fine"."

'There was a lot of discussion with the string players in You Are while I was here. I mark my scores poco vibrato. That means to warm it up, but don't be in a tizzy about nailing the pitch. On the other hand, you're not playing Mahler or Sibelius. What I want is a warm full-bodied string sound with no wobble in the pitch. And although I do have accents, I have very few crescendi and decrescendi. Basically either you suddenly get louder and suddenly get softer, or more people play and then less people play - most of it is terraced dynamics. Which is all baroque.'

'To me the greatest composer who ever lived is Johann Sebastian Bach - there's no one close. His spiritual yearnings were titanic - the depth of that man surpasses anyone whoever lived and wrote music, as far as I'm concerned. Every Sunday he had a deadline. But in his writings you don't hear anything from him except 'I need a tenor, I need more firewood, I need a new trumpet player... I need more firewood'. I love that. I can totally relate to it.'

REICH IS NOW WORKING on Daniel Variations, about Daniel Pearl, the Wall Street Journal bureau chief who was murdered by Islamic extremists in Pakistan three years ago.

'Danny Pearl's father, Judea Pearl, put together a foundation which supports mutual religious understanding. The guy's a saint. I don't know if I could be so generous. Danny Pearl was a fiddle player - he played bluegrass and jazz. So when his father asked me to write a piece for them, I said, "absolutely".'

Reich has a gift for choosing texts which are remarkably succinct, sound great when set in his distinctively personal style, and resonate with meaning. Some are directly linked to his deep Jewish faith, some have political ramifications, and some stir up social issues.

Daniel Variations uses four short texts. The first and third are from the Book of Daniel, where Nebuchadnezzar dreams about his own destruction. 'I live four blocks from the World Trade Center in New York, so that's me - and I think it's a lot of us right now. We are living in a very dark, dangerous period.'

The second text is My name is Daniel Pearl. 'Before they beheaded Pearl, they made him say, "My name is Daniel Pearl. I'm a Jewish American from Encino, California." He was beheaded as a Jew and as an American.'

'Pearl once told a friend he didn't know what happens after you die, but I sure hope Gabriel likes my music." After he was murdered, the friend found in Pearl's apartment a vinyl recording of jazz violinist Stuff Smith playing 1 Hope Gabriel Likes My Music. In Jewish mysticism angels are messengers, and Gabriel's job is to carry dreams. So the last movement says I sure hope Gabriel likes my music.'

At the talk, a student had asked Reich what his ideal listener would get from his music. 'Tears of joy," he had said, smiling. 'I just feel that I've been enormously fortunate," he told me, before he headed home to New York.
QuodLibet

by Allan Pulker

Seasonal Brass

There are probably literally hundreds of choral concerts listed in December. Voices blending in four-part harmony are probably the sound most universally associated with the music of the Christmas season. The other musical sound closely associated with the season is the brass ensemble. A close look at the listings reveals quite a number of concerts offering brass, all but one in combination with a choir or choirs. If the sound of brass raises your spirits, then check our pre-December 25 listings. There are plenty to choose from.

Christmas with Bach

As many before me have observed, Christmas is both a sacred and a secular celebration in our society. You would never guess from our current observances, for instance, that Advent, the month or so leading up to Christmas, was originally a time rather like Lent of fasting and prayer. The religious dimension of Christmas does live on, however, through music. Handel's oratorio, Messiah, which encapsulates the entire New Testament narrative, will be performed many times throughout December. The Christmas music written by J.S. Bach also lives on to remind us of the more serious side of the season. The Bach Consort has really started a new tradition in Toronto, that of performing Bach's Christmas Oratorio in its entirety a week or so before Christmas. The performers donate their services so that income generated by the event can be donated to charities such as Out of the Cold. This year's Christmas Oratorio, conducted by Yana...
The Toronto International Chamber Music Festival in January 2006 features such distinguished guests as the renowned Eastman Brass ensemble.

Russell Braun, on January 15 at the Centre in the Square in Kitchener and January 22 at Hamilton Place, in Opera Ontario’s Great Singers Recital Series).

Toronto International Chamber Music Festival

The intrepid and apparently inexhaustible team of TrypTych Productions have repositioned their Toronto International Chamber Music Festival, which was for the past few years on the Canada Day weekend, to late January.

Having observed from experience that the out of town festivals make the summer festival circuit very competitive, they came up with January, when there is a lull in concertizing after the December surge, and when tourism to Toronto is low. The fact that the Delta Chelsea Hotel has come on board as a sponsor sends a strong message from the hospitality industry.

The Toronto International Chamber Music Festival’s mandate is to present musical performances, pre-performance talks and master classes, entertaining, educating, and providing a context for artists, students and audiences to interact, and share the experience of beautiful vocal and instrumental chamber music.

The Festival’s emphasis on the art of singing makes it different from other comparable festivals, which all too frequently have a very minor vocal component. With 5 of the 6 concerts featuring voice, they are doing something about this situation. The programming is varied and diverse, including everything from Italian Renaissance madrigals to Hindemith’s quirky 12 note opera, and just about everything in between!

This inaugural January festival will also be a 250th birthday celebration for one of the greatest composers of music for the human voice, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

In fact, the opening concert falls on his birthday on January 27, 2006. It will feature several distinguished guest artists, including pianist Felicita Keil from Vienna, the Vienna Symphony Virtuosi and the celebrated Eastman Brass.

All six concerts take place in the comfortable and convenient Isabel Bader Theatre at the University of Toronto. I hope that many WholeNote readers will get out to support and be part of this splendid undertaking.
So where are the women?
Women musicians of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries are conspicuously underrepresented in today's concert programs, recording and catalogues. Yet, though they were banned from the church and theatre stage, and somewhat ignored in the general musical milieu, women of the time were highly accomplished in music, dance and other arts.

Now, in our efforts to right (at least some of) the wrongs of the past, many involved in historical performance in particular are doing their best to acknowledge the talents of musical women. You should note the music publications of ClarNan Editions, named after pianist/composer Clara Wieck Schumann and the distinguished keyboard builder Nanette Streich-Foss, the daughter of Johannes Stein Paradis, alongside new discoveries like Isabella Leonarda (composer of oratorio) and Camilla de Rossi (composer of masses and religious motets) of historic music by women - relatively familiar names like Barbara Strozzi and Maria Theresia von Paradis, along with several composers who wrote string instruments known as the viola da gamba have long been a favourite of performers of Renaissance music, both men and women. In capable hands, it draws in the listener by virtue of its musical allure.

This concert is especially interesting because it will be a chance to hear some rarely played instruments: the Hart House Viols, a chest of six violi purchased ca 1930 by the Massey Foundation and the Arts and Letters Club. The violi became the sole property of Hart House in 1935, and their use has been restricted to "experienced string musicians for rendering music appropriate to them". www.scaramella.ca

Speaking of women, as we are about to enter the season of Advent, we are reminded of the appearance of the angels unto the Virgin Mary. Sine Nomine presents a program of sacred and secular medieval music for this season which is one of expectation in many senses - the natural world braces itself for winter and, in the sacred world, everything looks forward to the Nativity (December 25).

www.pims.ca/sinenomine

Maybe I'm carrying this "women in early music" thing too far, but another thing that reminds me of women is shoes. The Musicians In Ordinary (soprano Hallie Fishel and lutenist John Edwards) are giving a concert relating to objects from the Bata collection, including the 17th century courtesan's platform shoes and the newly-acquired stockings of Charles I at the Bata Shoe Museum (January 20) - in addition to their own series at
Heliconian Hall, and their appearance in the Toronto Early Music Centre’s “Musically Speaking” series (January 8).

www.batashoemuseum.ca

More Early Music Concerts

The “Renaissance voices” of Studio Sixteen, a choir directed by Kevin Komisaruk, performs a free noon hour concert in Roy Thomson Hall’s “Choir & Organ” series (December 13). Komisaruk, a specialist in early organ repertoire, will perform works from Flanders and Amsterdam on the hall’s magnificent Gabriel Kney instrument. In their own series, Studio Sixteen performs early English Renaissance sacred polyphony such as John Taverner’s Missa Gloria Tibi Trinitas plus motets by Sheppard, Parsons and Tallis (December 10).

www.studiosixteen.ca

The recent appearances of Les Violons du Roy, led by their founder Bernard Labadie, have been a special treat for Toronto early music fans. This ensemble from Quebec City performs a program of J.S. Bach’s beloved cantatas for Christmas and the New Year (Nos. 63, 110, 151, 171) with superb soloists Karina Gauvin, Christophe Dumas, Christoph Prégardien, and Brett Polegato (December 16).

www.roythomson.com

18th-century Dresden was an influential and bustling metropolis, in fact, often compared to Florence, due to its artistic and architectural achievements. The extraordinary music of Zelenka, Fasch, and other prominent Dresden musicians reflects this cosmopolitan energy (January 15). Baroque Music Beside the Grange has invited players from various cultural centres – Montreal, Toronto and Bloomington (Indiana) – to participate in this program: Washington McClain & Kathryn Montoya (oboes), Dominic Teresi (bassoon), Joelle Morton (bass), and Avi Stein (harpsichord).

Frank T. Nakashima (franknak@interlog.com) is the President of the Toronto Early Music Centre, a non-profit charitable organization which promotes the appreciation of historically-informed performances of early music: www.interlog.com/~temc

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CHORAL SCENE

by Larry Beckwith

Whether it's Chanukah, Advent, the holiday season or humbug, the choirs in Toronto start celebrating early and continue almost all the way through December, then hibernate for the month of January, except for a few special events.

It makes me misty-eyed to consider the well-over 100 choral events planned for the last month of the year. These events are primarily for-profit, featuring amateur singers giving their time and energies, not only as singers, but as set-up-overs of chairs and risers, bakers of cookies, organizers and sellers of tickets, decorators of halls, members of the unsung clean-up crew, etc. The effort that goes into these events is Herculean and so important to the community life of our city. Whether one follows the creeds and dogma of an organized religion or not, the themes of peace, joy, mystic, fellowship and goodwill - not to mention new life and hope - have to resonate even if we are the most hard-hearted of us. And somehow, the miraculous sound of voices raised together in song is the surest way to move us out of our immediate and ordinary preoccupations into considerations of the eternal.

Each weekend in December features at least a couple of dozen choral events, with slightly fewer during the week, but I daresay every choral singer in the city is donning gay apparel at least once, and most likely many times to climb up onstage and perform a major seasonal work, or a collection of carols from around the world, or a program dedicated to the Virgin Mary, or the themes of peace, joy and hope.

What follows, then, is a handful of recommendations on the un

Director Wanted for BRAVADO

This Barrie-based "show-choir", an excellent group with wide-ranging styles, seeks a new musical director starting Sept 2006.

For job description and choir information contact Charlie Carswell (705) 727-0473. chasec@look.ca

Application deadline Jan. 15, 2006
seasonal offerings from Quodlibet (December 2nd), the Annex Singers and Voices (Dec. 3rd), Toronto Chamber Choir (Dec. 4th), Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir (Dec. 6th), Exultate Chamber Singers (Dec. 9th), Healey Willan Singers and Studio 16 (Dec. 10th), VocalPoint (Dec. 11th), Nathaniel Dett Chorale (Dec. 14th) and Victoria Scholars (Dec. 18th).

If you're more partial to larger choirs, you can take in the Etobicoke Centennial Choir on December 2nd. Tallis Choir singing a Marian program featuring their namesake's classic "Spem in Alium" on December 3rd, the Pax Christi Chorale performing lush English music from the 20th century and premiering Missa Pax Christi by Derek Holman on Dec. 3rd and 4th and the Peel Choral Society in concert in Brampton on December 4th. The Mendelssohn Choir presents its Festival of Carols on December 7th, the Oakville Choral Society, Toronto Welsh Male Choir and the Palestina Choir are all at separate venues on December 9th and the Oakham House Choir and Alexander Singers perform concerts on December 10th. The North 44' Ensemble performs with an arsenal of brass on Dec. 13th, the Amadeus Choir give their annual carol-fest on Dec. 17th and the Orpheus Choir will fill Eglinton-St. George's United Church on December 20th with music of the season, featuring Healey Willan's Mystery of Bethlehem.

Two programs that caught my eye are the Penthelia Singers' concert on December 4th and the Echo Women's Choir's show on the 11th. Mary Legge's Penthelia Singers are connected rather strongly with Rosedale Presbyterian Church, but they are moving to the larger venue of St. Paul's Basilica on Queen St. East for a concert entitled "Songs of Mary". The program will feature some spatial experimentation, lots of chant, and an eclectic mix of music that will endeavor to highlight an oft-neglected aspect of this woman's dedication and unusual life." Echo Choir Conductor Alan Gasser welcomes guest conductor Tendora Georgieva and guests Suba Sanka and Ed Hanley from autorickshaw in a concert of historical anti-apartheid songs, prisoners songs, Armenian, Roma, Hebrew and Tamil songs. They can always be counted upon to shake things up and offer great repertoire energetically sung that will challenge and inspire.

If you are in the mood for larger works, you can catch several performances of Antonio Vivaldi's Gloria, notably by the Upper Canadian Children's Choir and Alexander Singers perform Magnificat by J.S. Bach and the TrypTych Chamber Choir tackles Saint-Saens' Christmas Oratorio on December 11th.

With so much going on, there is bound to be a colossal conflict and indeed that happens on December 16th. The Bach Consort offers its annual benefit performance of the Christmas Oratorio by J.S. Bach, with wonderful soloists under the direction of Yannick Nezet-Seguin and more Bach will be heard at Roy Thomson Hall that same night with the performance of four Christmas cantatas by La Chapelle de Quebec, with equally wonderful soloists, conducted by another Quebecois phenomenon, Bernard Ladarchitecture.

All this and Messiah too! Yes, there are several performances this month, as you can see from our "choose your Messiah" coverage, next page.

Starting Dec 14th, the Toronto Symphony and Tafelmusik begin their multi-night runs of the work. The marketing departments of these organizations (and others) go into overdrive to try to attract audiences, with over-the-top claims that have nothing to do with the music. The fact is that these are two drastically different, perfectly legitimate presentations of Messiah. If you want an intimate, immediate, powerful performance with a small period instrument orchestra and choir in an 800-seat hall, go to Tafelmusik. If you want a grand, majestic, powerful performance with a larger modern instrument orchestra and choir in a 2000-seat hall, go to the Symphony. There's very little common ground on which to compare them. Either way, you'll experience great soloists, a first-rate conductor and some very moving music. (Tafelmusik has issued an invitation to G.F. Handel...
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MUSIC DIRECTOR WANTED
Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir

This 60-member choir, formed in 1995, seeks an experienced Music Director to commence duties in 2006.

The Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir is a not-for-profit corporation committed to maintaining a male choir of world class reputation. Our goal is to promote Welsh culture through music, and to delight audiences with our joy of singing.

The choir’s repertoire includes Welsh hymns, folk songs from around the world, spirituals, operatic choruses and Broadway show tunes.

We perform 10-12 concerts each season, mostly within GTA, and rehearse each Wednesday from 7.30 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. at Dewi Sant Welsh United Church, 33 Melrose Avenue (Lawrence & Yonge).

In addition to the Music Director, the Choir has 3 professional music staff.

The successful candidate must be dynamic, and be able to work in harmony with the Choir in developing music programs in keeping with Welsh choral tradition. Knowledge of Welsh music would be an advantage, but not necessarily a requirement.

Salary is to be negotiated.

Qualified applicants should submit their resume before 5 pm on 15th January 2006 to the General Secretary - David Riches, 25 Carlton Road, Unionville, Ontario, L3R 1Z4. For more information, consult our Website at www.twmwc.com or call David Riches at 905-477-3267

A Multitude of Messiahs
by Catherine Mair

Handel is reported to have said “I did think I did see all Heaven before me and the great God himself” about the 24 days in the late summer of 1741 he spent, at the suggestion of a friend, composing his most beloved piece, Messiah. Messiah was performed for the first time in Dublin, April 13, 1742, and since then has become one of the most widely-performed pieces of music of all time.

Messiah is divided into three parts representing Christ’s birth, death, and resurrection, each part comprising a series of arias and choruses based on Biblical passages. After the initial Messiah, Handel toured Great Britain and Ireland performing the piece, often changing elements of the oratorio to suit the libretto or the concert location.

In WholeNote’s region, Toronto and southwestern Ontario, there are so many versions of Messiah in so many different locations available to attend in December that even Handel would be hard-pressed to tour them all. This month there are over 35 performances, in whole or in part, by 20 organizations. In our QuickPicks section (page 63), we give a short listing of each of these, so they can be hunted down in our comprehensive concert listings, commencing page 36.

A few quotes about Messiah performances around town from audience members of years past conjure some of the magic, and devotion, the work evokes. An audience member at Arcady’s Messiah said “After three Arcady Baroque Messiahs in eight days I was still disappointed that there would be no more until next year. Each had a life and personality of its own. Each revealed something new about Arcady and about the work itself. And Arcady’s Messiah has become an essential part, possibly THE essential part of my advent experience and preparation.”

An attendee at Fanshawe Chorus London’s Messiah reported afterwards that “[Fanshawe’s] Messiah is truly a masterpiece. It has everything a concert goer would want - fabulous soloists, world-class choir, an insightful conductor, gorgeous orchestration. Londoners are very fortunate”.

A fan of Tafelmusik’s Messiah: “I knew what to expect but for me it meant something more. I heard this beautiful work in a beautiful setting and performed by the ONE group that I know that plays and sings so beautifully, and for me, it was a worship service.”

If you have never attended a Messiah concert, consider going this year. If you are a seasoned veteran, thinking of abandoning ship, you would do well to remember this quote above all others about the Messiah this season: “Despite its popularity, the Messiah is a masterpiece.”

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Before launching into my usual "what's coming up" in world music as we head into winter, a significant congratulatory mention is in order.

Dr. George Sawa

On November 18 in Cairo, our own Dr. George Sawa was presented his native country's highest lifetime achievement award in recognition of contributions to Arabic music. Past winners of this award have included the likes of the great Egyptian vocalist Oum Kalthoum (1904-1975). Many know Dr. Sawa as the inspiration behind the careers of Toronto musicians such as the members of Arabic/Greek ensemble Maza Meze, Maryem Tollar and others. In addition to having taught at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, the Arabesque Academy and privately, Dr. Sawa's scholarly work includes a book on Music Performance Practice in the Early Abbasid Era (750-932 AD), dealing with aspects of performance around mediaeval Baghdad, another on the Theory and Practice of Rhythm in Mediaeval Arabic Music (750-950 AD), and an ongoing project with his wife Suzanne, on the 10th century anthology The Grand Book of Songs. Congratulations Dr. Sawa on your achievement!

Also on a congratulatory note, Toronto's Ensemble Noir, led by South African born music director and composer Bongani Ndodana, makes its New York debut on January 20. The Ensemble, whose mandate is to perform contemporary works with an emphasis on African composers (see WholeNote Nov 04) has been invited to perform at the world-renowned Miller Theatre. The program will feature selected works of Ndodana, who, at the tender age of only 30, has numerous compositions under his belt including symphonies, operas, chamber and vocal music, with performances all over the globe.

Closer to home, the Indian fusion ensemble Tusaa, led by tabla player Ravi Naimpally, performs December 1 at Walter Hall (part of U of T's Faculty of Music noon hour concert series) and December 9 at the Red Guitar (603 Markham St.); December 1 at half-past noon. York University's Cuban and African drum ensembles perform in McLaughlin Hall, and December 2, the York University Orchestra and Chinese Orchestra perform in the same venue.

Husband and wife team Vineet Vyas (tabla) and Bageshree Vaze (Kashik dance) present Talvik. An Evening of Rhythm and Dance from North India, December 4 at Harbourfront Centre Theatre. Both have trained with some of the top artists in their fields, and Bageshree was recently named MTV India's "rising star". Also on December 4, The Great Holiday Mega Launch, so called because it features 6 different groups all of whom have new CD's to release, takes place at The Great Hall (1087 Queen St. West); of interest to readers of this column, the program includes Irish music duo Deborah Quigley (uilleann pipes) and Martin Gould (guitar), both active in Toronto's Celtic music scene.

December 5 at noon, U of T's Faculty of Music presents its annual end-of-term world music ensembles concert, in Walter Hall; this year's line-up includes tabla, Balinese gamelan, Japanese taiko drumming and the Georgian choir.

The Koffler Salon Series presents a Chanukah concert featuring the Lachan Jewish Choir and Sisters of Sheynville, December 6 at the Leah Posluns Theatre; the same evening, OnStage at Glenn Gould Studio presents "East Meets East", as Juno award winning Punjabi ghazal singer Kiran Ahluwalia shares the stage with Cape Breton musician Mary Jane Lamond and others.

The 70-plus member Echo Women's Chamber Choir presents "Songs of Resistance and Hope", December 11 at Church of the Holy Trinity. On the program are anti-apartheid songs from South Africa, songs of the Armenian exile, songs in Hebrew and Tamil, and two Roma songs: Osvitšate (Auschwitz) is a musical memorial to the Roma population nearly wiped out in the second world war; and Durene Zhe is a song that calls for inclusiveness, first sung at demonstrations against the ultra-right in 1990's Eastern Europe.

December 16, Toronto's traditional Bluegrass band, The Foggy Hogtown Boys, (see www.foggyhogtownboys.com) present "A Very Foggy Christmas" at the Silver Dollar Room; donations to the Food Bank get you reduced admission.

Described as an "Arctic fusion band", Ensemble Polaris, specializing in Nordic music, performs at the Edward Day Gallery on December 21. Well known Toronto musicians that you will recognize from other ensembles play a variety of instruments including harp, mandolin, bowed psaltery, hurdy gurdy, recorders, seljefløyte and percussion, with singer Katherine Hill.

Visit www.ensemblepolaris.com for more info.

Further ahead, on January 28, OnStage presents "Horn of Africa", with traditional and contemporary music on oud, bongos and krar (5 or 6 stringed lyre), featuring musicians from Somalia, Sudan and Eritrea. And, fun for the whole family on January 28, the RCM Community Concert Series presents children's entertainers, singer/songwriter/actor Rick Scott and Harry Wong, Hong Kong musician, magician and educator, who celebrate cultural understanding in English and Cantonese through a variety of musical styles.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season! See you in February.

Karen Ages is a freelance oboist who has also been a member of several world music ensembles. She can be reached at 416-323-2232 or by e-mail at worldmusic@thewholenote.com.
Some Thing New
by Jason van Eyk

I suppose it is not surprising that in an artistic field known as "new music" any ties to conventions and traditions are limited at best. This is why, despite the season, you will find little mention of holiday music here. Rather, what drives this community is a desire to explore beyond established boundaries for something new.

An important part of this pursuit is the thrill of discovering original voices, both in the creation and interpretation of new concert music. These voices come from many sources - from inside hidden pockets of our own community and from underrepresented international artists - but are almost always from the emerging generation, that alluring draw of youth. And I suppose it isn't surprising that this continual hunt for the New extends beyond original creation and interpretation into a search for new frames and different spaces, those things that offer interesting possibilities for the presentation of these voices. Such is the drive for some thing new.

Right off the top
This drive can be seen and heard off the top of the month, when Esprit Orchestra ventures out to explore the sound of a new space. On December 1st the Orchestra will present "Mystery and Illusion" at Metropolitan United, a church well known as a venue for choral music but rarely used by instrumental groups. Esprit is planning to employ this resonant chamber rare 64-foot stop on the church's harp andMurphy's own heritage. The work is Murphy's first commission for children, and it couldn't be in better hands. Despite the ominous title, drawn from a 16th-century Irish text, no doubt it will be an intriguing holiday treat.

For more information, visit www.torontochildrenchorus.com.

As we enter the New Year, themes of youth and voice move out into international waters to explore unknown Icelandic talents and epic tales. On January 8th at the Betty Oliphant Theatre, New Music Concerts presents Gretir, a new chamber opera by composer Thorkell Sigurbjornsson and librettist Böðvar Guðmundsson. Gretir was premiered at the venerable Bayreuth Festival in 2004 under the auspices of the Young Artists Festival. The opera is based on the medieval Icelandic Saga from 1000 AD of Gretir the Strong, a poet-warrior and fugitive outlaw. The Icelandic environment is a central feature of the musical drama, invoked visually, aurally and literally through recent sound recordings of various soundscapes. Volcanoes, glaciers, mysterious caves, lava fields, hot-springs, waterfalls and the high winds of the North-Atlantic all play their role. This Canadian premiere, featuring the cast of the Bayreuth Youth Festival itself, will receive only one performance in Toronto. So, don't forget to book your tickets well in advance. For more, visit www.newmusicconcerts.com.

On January 14th Southern Ontario's NUMUS uncovers other unknown musical voices of Europe when it presents MoEns, the premiere new music ensemble of Prague, at the Music Gallery. Established in 1995, MoEns provides a permanent platform for the professional performance of new music.
Ensemble contemporain de Montréal

by the middle of the month we
return to the resonant space of
Metropolitan United Church with
Soundstreams Canada. On January
17th, Soundstreams brings together
the BIT20 Ensemble of Norway in their first Canadian appearance with the Ensemble contemporain de Montréal. Both ensembles have enviable reputations as chamber groups devoted to new music. Soundstreams takes advantage with an ambitious slate of works for double chamber orchestra. World premieres include commissions from Paul Frehner of Montreal and Jon Oivind Ness of Norway. Artistic Director Lawrence Cherney felt these two composers were a good match - although both are early in their careers, they have had a lot of experience writing for chamber orchestra and have been adept at manipulating instrumental colour and texture. We will hear their craft and imagination at work as they seize the acoustical potential of this unique combination of space and ensemble. The programme will be rounded out with works by some of new music's international heavy hitters, including America's John Adams, Norway's Magnus Lindberg, and Scotland's James MacMillan. Altogether, it promises an incredible aural experience. For more information, visit www.musc.utoronto.ca.

Finally, the University of Toronto, which has proven itself at developing talented composers, runs its four-concert New Music Festival January 18-21 at Walter Hall. While past versions have incorporated a distinguished visiting composer, this year's festival shines the spotlight solely upon the University's student ranks. A special treat will be the presentation of the Karen Kieser Prize on January 18th. This relatively young award is given to commemorate Karen Kieser, a distinguished triple-graduate of the Faculty of Music and a former Head of Music at CBC Radio. Friends and colleagues endowed this Prize as a tribute to her life, her work and her passionate devotion to the cause of Canadian music and musicians. Past winners have included Abigail Richardson (who has won top prize at the 2004 International Rostrum of Composers), Andrew Staniland (who recently took First Prize in the 2005 Pierre Mercure Award), and Craig Galbraith (who has had numerous high-profile commissions including the combined Elmer Iseler Singers and Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, and the Gryphon Trio.) Whoever wins next will certainly be marked for a successful career launch. For more information, visit www.musc.utoronto.ca.

So make a break with tradition and explore new voices. Venture out into new spaces for something new.

Jason van Eyk is the Canadian Music Centre's Ontario Regional Director. He can be reached at 416-961-6601 x. 207 or jasonv@musiccentre.ca.

New Music Concerts 2006 Events

35th Anniversary Season • Robert Alden, Music Director

Sunday January 8, 2006 • Gretta - an Icelandic Saga
music by Thorkell Sigurðsson
Premiered by Birgir Gústafsson
Glen Gould Studio | 78 Intro • 89 Concert

Sunday February 26, 2006 • New at New Music
with Robert Alden and guests: James Avery
Premieres by Palmar, Bastian, Dzon & Woumen
Glen Gould Studio | 78 Intro • 89 Concert

Sunday April 9, 2006 • Baltic Currents
Guest composer Ranulda Serlauv is premieres a vocal work by Dargraine, Martinst. Take, Dismas & Serlauv
Glen Gould Studio | 78 Intro • 89 Concert

Friday June 9, 2006 • Music of Anna Xeraklis
One of the most important composers of the 20th century
Glen Gould Studio | 78 Intro • 89 Concert

www.musiccentre.ca
Harry Freedman tribute
The new music community in Toronto, across the country, and around the world, was saddened by the recent passing of Canadian composer Harry Freedman at the age of 83. Freedman played English horn with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra for 24 years, leaving in 1970 to devote himself fully to composing.

Freedman is one of our most frequently performed composers, having composed for solo voice, choir, orchestra, and many other ensembles. He has also composed for theatre, dance, film, television, and composed a number of jazz charts. He was a founding member of the Canadian League of Composers, and was made an officer of the Order of Canada in 1984.

The Toronto music community has stepped up and planned an evening entitled Celebrating Harry - A Tribute to Harry Freedman. The celebration will take place on January 20th at 7:30 at the Glenn Gould Studio, and involves the CMC, CBC, Elmer Iseler Singers, Toronto Children’s Chorus, New Music Concerts, Esprit Orchestra, Soundstreams, Phil Nimmons and the Dave McMurdo Jazz Orchestra, and a number of prominent soloists. A reception will follow a concert of Freedman’s classical, choral, and jazz music. A limited number of tickets are available at $10.

There is not a great deal of new music in December, as everyone seems to be making way for the annual crush of Messiah performances and other Christmas concerts. However, there are a few:

On December 1, Esprit Orchestra presents a concert entitled Mystery and Illusion at the Metropolitan United Church. This concert includes works by John Rea, Henry Brant, and Charles Ives’ seminal work The Unanswered Question. Neither/Nor is a composers collective headed up by Eldritch Priest and John Mark Sherlock. The collective is presenting an intriguing three-day “festivette” which they have titled “obscurity.” The program includes works by Priest, Sherlock, Josh Thorpe, Colin Clark, Marc Couroux, and Doug Tielli, among others. The festivette runs from December 9th through the 11th at 8:00, in suite 506 of the Darling Building, 96 Spadina Avenue.

Immediately after this, the Music Gallery presents the Madawaska String Quartet, their ensemble-in-residence. On December 12th from 10 until 5, there is an open workshop for emerging composers. Feel free to drop in and participate in group discussions about musical creation. Then there is an open rehearsal on Friday December 16th from 1 till 4, followed by their concert on December 17th at 8:00, where they will perform works by Ives, Lutoslawski and Nancarrow.

Finally, on Sunday December 18th at 7:00, the Glass Orchestra and the Singing Saw Shadow Show will perform at the Music Gallery’s Fundraiser. Please come out and give your support to the Music Gallery!

That’s about it for December, but after the requisite holiday cheer and so on, you can clear your head in January with Great! An Icelandic Saga. New Music Concerts presents this ambitious chamber opera by Icelandic composer Thor- kell Sigurbjörnsson at the Betty Oliphant Theatre on Jarvis St. The opera is presented twice on Sunday January 8th, at 2:30 and 8:00.

On January 14th, NUMUS presents a concert of contemporary Czech music at the Music Gallery. The show starts at 8:00. On Tuesday, January 17th, Soundstreams presents music for a big space, which features works for a double chamber orchestra comprising the BIT20 Ensemble and the Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal. Programmed works include premieres by Frehner and Ness. The concert takes place at the Metropolitan United Church and starts at 8:00.

I am really pleased that the University of Toronto has its annual New Music Festival. This year, the festival runs from January 18th to the 21st, and includes a number of free concerts featuring new works by undergraduates, graduate composers, new opera. Check the listings for more detailed information.
The year is drawing to a close, a year in which I have been more aware of the astonishing number of great musicians who live in this city - and just how difficult it is for them to earn a comfortable living making music; never mind a comfortable living - just getting by is a challenge. The standard of musicianship has never been higher, but more than ever income from playing has to be supplemented by other means. A goodly number turn to teaching, turning out a yearly batch of new aspirants looking for work in a saturated and diminishing market.

It is not only a localized problem. In the course of the year I have travelled widely and hear the same story everywhere I go. Except for a fortunate few, the road is indeed a rocky one. It is harder to get people off the couch and into a club or concert hall than it used to be. There is more leisure time but more ways of filling it, whether it be watching tv or surfing the net or any number of other pastimes. I would like to be optimistic, but it isn't easy.

On a more positive note, one of the things I learn from my travels in the States and abroad is just what a bargain Toronto is when it comes to hearing live jazz.

With the demise of The Top O’ The Senator, The Montreal Bistro is the only club in town at the moment which presents out of town “name” players on a fairly regular basis. There is a cover charge, but it is always reasonable and, unlike New York for example, it is not a per-set charge and no two-drink minimum. The sight lines are favourable; the atmosphere is pleasant, the food is reasonably priced and good, and the music consistently superior. Folks, it is a good value for your hard earned dollar. Last month I spent an evening there listening to music that was stimulating and uplifting, performed by Archie Alleyne on drums and Don Thompson on bass, accompanying one Julian Clifford Mance, Jr., better known as simply “Junior” Mance. He is a native of Chicago, but now living in New York, and hearing him play is an object lesson on how to play jazz piano. His early experiences included playing with Gene Ammons, (now there’s a great tenor player who is largely overlooked), and Lester Young. He toured and recorded with Dinah Washington, recorded with Aretha Franklin and he has especially fond memories of working with Dizzy Gillespie’s band.

His Windy City background steeped him in the blues tradition, elements of which permeate through everything he plays and, sitting at the Bistro bar I marvelled at how well Archie and Don merged with his music, picking up on phrases and nuances so that the three became one. An object lesson on what jazz is all about. He’ll be back next year and I’ll be there.

Another spot in town that is great value for a modest outlay is the Rex Jazz and Blues Bar. Mostly local groups - 16 bands a week! It is very much a musicians’ hang with an easygoing pub atmosphere making it a friendly, inexpensive and casual spot for listening to jazz.

The first great jazz guitarist was Eddie Lang. Before the electrical recording process was invented, in the days of acoustic recording the banjo was king because its percussive sound could cut through and be heard. In those days the musicians played in a studio with a large horn sticking out of the wall to pick up the sounds with the loudest instruments placed farthest from the horn. Electrical recording changed all of that and opened the door for the guitar. Enter Eddie Lang, creating a new role for the guitar and changing the sound of popular music. (Eddie Lang, by the way, also recorded under the pseudonym of Blind Willie Dunn). Then, in the 1930s Eddie Durham invented the amplified guitar, paving the way for everyone else who followed.

Well, getting back to that huge pool of talent in Toronto, you have the opportunity to hear four superlative guitarists at The Mod Club Theatre on January 9th when Jake Langley, Lorne Lofsky, Reg Schwager and Ted Quinlan let their fingers do the walking through a tribute to the guitar.

It is either too soon or too late, depending on when you read this column, to wish you all the compliments of the season. But it is never too early to wish you happy listening. May the coming year be full of the sounds of music and may much of it be enjoyed listening to live jazz.
Holiday season is worth it, if only for the bands...

You can count on Christmas. Yes, every year it comes, the day after Halloween and it stretches on these days until the coming of the first credit card bill in January. It’s a time of giving and receiving, a time of incessantly repeated medleys of “Holiday Favorites”.

I venture out to shop wearing earmuffs on Monday mornings in the hopes of a) not being able to hear the horrible piped-in Christmas dreck and b) not having to spend too long in the store trying to find gifts.

Don’t get me wrong – I like Christmas, it’s just that I like it to be just the Eve and the Day, without all of the lead up and wind down.

There are some Christmas music events I like to get out to if possible though. The Annual Christmas Tuba Festival at Nathan Phillips Square is one of them. This year’s is on Dec 7th starting at 12:30pm. I’ve played in it several times (yes, I can play tuba well enough to get by) and I’ve enjoyed it quite a bit. It’s an amazing sound when sixty or seventy tuba players cut loose on a carol. You really should hear something like that at least once in your life. Unlike most other heavy metal concerts, admission is free!

There are about twenty other community band Christmas concerts scheduled this month, all of them listed here in The WholeNote. Have a look at the complete listings for all of the details.

The Canadian Band Association (Ontario) Chapter will present the second Annual Festival of Concert Bands to be held on Saturday February 4th, 2006 in the auditorium of Crescent School, 2365 Bayview Avenue. The event will feature performances of some of Ontario’s finest community bands in competition. This event will run from 10am until 8pm. The focus will be to showcase the musical presentation of the bands and celebrate the great sounds of Concert Band Music.

Each band will be adjudicated by a team of two highly qualified and respected music educators. Music industry displays will be available along with food and beverage concessions. A day pass at the door or in advance will be $10.00 for adults and $5.00 for students and seniors.

The Ontario Band Association is presenting the Annual Wind Conductors’ Symposium on Saturday March 4th with guest clinician Colonel Timothy Foley of the United States Marine Band. Registration is $50 before February 3rd, so get over to the OBA site (www.onband.ca) or call 905-479-2787 ext. 549 to register.

The Hannaford Street Silver Band is presenting a concert on February 5th entitled “Bollywood Brass”. The HSSB’s guest ensemble for this unique event is the renowned world beat musical group, Autorickshaw. This promises to be one of the most interesting combinations that Hannaford has put on stage, and I for one don’t plan to miss it.

I hope that all of you manage to get some enjoyment out of the holiday season, in whatever manner you choose to. If you’re feeling bummed out by the whole thing and need a laugh, might I recommend a book? Check out “Hogfather” by the English writer Terry Pratchett. Look in the Sci-Fi/Fantasy section of your bookstore. Best wishes until next year.

Woodwind doubler Merlin Williams is an Artist/Clinician for Jupiter Music Canada. If you would like an upcoming band event to be featured in the Bandstand column, feel free to contact Merlin by e-mail, merlinwilliams@sympatico.ca or phone 416-803-0275.

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On OPERA
by Christopher Hoile

Like the shadow of Fafner, the giant-turned-dragon, one opera looms over all the rest for the next two months in Toronto. That is "Gotterdammerung", the final installment in the first-ever Canadian Ring Cycle. Yet, before that mammoth opera arrives at the end of January, there are quite a number of varied works of music theatre to entertain those especially who like to stray off the beaten track.

On Sunday, December 4, Opera in Concert presents Camille Saint-Saëns's best-known opera "Samson et Dalila" (1877). The opera includes the famous Bacchanal and the Dalila's well-known aria of seduction "Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix". The opera stars Gabrielle Prata, Keith Klassen and Luc Lalonde with Nathalie Doucet-Lalkens as music director and pianist.

Three works in December mine a vein of fantasy. The first and most seasonal is the world premiere of "A Dickens of a Christmas" presented by the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus on December 10 and 11. "Dickens" is a musical adaptation of "A Christmas Carol" by Errol Gay to a libretto by Michael Albano. Baritone Mark Pedrotti, the sole adult cast member, plays Scrooge. Next the COC Ensemble Studio celebrates its 25th anniversary with Mozart's "The Magic Flute" on December 16, 18 and 20. The work will be presented in the English translation of famed musicologist Andrew Porter, who will also direct. The bad news is that even though the opera will be presented at the 815-seat MacMillan Theatre on the U. of T. campus, it is already sold out. There is a waiting list.

As the second offering in its expanded 2005-06 season, Opera York presents the Engelbert Humperdinck favourite "Hansel and Gretel" on December 26, 28 and 30. Former COC Ensemble member Andrew Tees will both direct and sing the role of the Father. Mary Lou Fallis of "Primadonna" fame will play the Mother. Alain Trudel will conduct the Opera York Orchestra. Performances take place at the new St. Elizabeth Performing Arts Centre in Vaughan. For further information see www.operayork.com.

Finishing off the old year and ringing in the new is Toronto Operaetta Theatre's production of "Wiener Blut" by Johann Strauss, Jr., running from December 28, 2005 to January 8, 2006. Literally translated as "Viennese Blood" or figuratively as "Vienna Love" or "Vienna Life", the operetta was constructed by Adolf Muller, Jr., from some of Strauss's best-known melodies when it became apparent that Strauss himself, who died before the premiere in 1899, was too infirm to do so. The production stars Jackalyn Short, Katrinna Tchoubar, Carla Huhtanen, Alain Trudel and Sean Watson. Guillermo Silva-Marin directs and Kevin Mallon will conduct.

For more information see www.torontoperetta.com.

The new year begins appropriately enough with new work. From January 5-29, Theatre Pass Muraille presents "Yours to Break", "an erotic opera/dance crea-

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The English-language libretto, based on the 14-century “Saga of Grettir the Strong”, focuses on Thorstein Dromund, who has gone to Constantinople to avenge the death of his outlaw brother Grettir only to be placed in prison where he acts out his brother’s story.

For more information see www.newmusicconcerts.com.

On Sunday, January 29, Opera in Concert presents a baroque rarity. For more information see www.operainconcert.com.

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German lieder provide the parallel to African-American’s vocal art music. Its most characteristic form was a duet of singer and pianist. During the first decades of the twentieth century, a series of very impressive performers took their African-American lieder out of the ghetto onto concert stages and into recording studios. The principal pioneers were Roland Hayes, John Payne, Marion Anderson, and that force of nature, Paul Robeson.

Robeson’s father was an ex-slave who had courageously escaped from Southern bondage to relative freedom in the North. He was a Presbyterian minister in New Jersey, married to a school teacher, when Paul was born in 1898. The Robeson’s realized early on that Paul was a wunderkind. He grew up in a household preaching the black self-help gospel that education and working three times as hard as anyone else would bring the walls of segregation down. He also received musical training in his father’s church.

Then on from January 29 to February 12 comes the end of the world, “Gotterdammerung”, the Twilight of the Gods. Michael Levine is again the designer. The director this time is Tim Albery, who recently directed “Rodelinda” and “Peter Grimes” for the COC and the entire Ring Cycle for Scottish Opera. Frances Ginzer returns as Brunnhilde, Christian Franz as Siegfried and Richard Paul Fink as Alberich. Other singers from “Siegfried” return in different roles. Mette Ejingsen who sang Erda will play the First Norn and Laura Whalen who sang the Forest Bird will play one of the three Rhinemaidens. Richard Bradshaw conducts. The running time is approximately 5 hours and 30 minutes with two intermissions. For more information see www.coc.ca.
took the songs of his people into recording studios in New York and London, usually in the company of pianist Lawrence Brown. Their 78s were best-sellers on both sides of the Atlantic. Combined with their concert appearances, they became world emissaries of African-American art songs. And those of many other nations as well.

What explained Robeson's power to reach the ears and hearts of people on all continents and of all faiths? The singing flows with such ease that it seems like a direct gift from nature. This is both true and false. Like Robert Merrill, Robeson was indeed endowed with an exceptional instrument. But Robeson was a prodigiously hard worker and master actor. The "naturalness" was achieved by thorough control.

Hard experience and refusal to bow are other elements. There's a direct link between his Presbyterian father's eye on the prize of freedom a' coming, and Robeson's eventual emergence as a leading voice of the international left. That stage of Robeson's life reinforced his respect for black Christianity's thirst for freedom, and his pride in the psychological insights of his people's songs.

Robeson's defiance also occasioned a very proud moment in Canadian history. His career was purposefully destroyed by the U.S. government during America's most brutal witch-hunt. Robeson's passport was revoked at the same time that McCarthyism made it virtually impossible for him to perform in the U.S. In 1952, the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers invited Robeson to speak and sing at its convention in Vancouver. The U.S. government indicated that it would jail Robeson for five years if he crossed the border into Vancouver. A sound system was set up on the American side of the Peace Arch crossing. Robeson performed for 35,000 Canadians on the other side of the great divide.

Naxos has reissued 23 of the magisterial 1925-37 Robeson recordings, beautifully restored by Peter Dempsey. (Naxos 8.120638) This is some of the finest vocal music ever recorded, period.

"Mary Had a Baby" is a gem among African-American spirituals. The Robeson-Brown performance is a gem of gems.

Given the season, the Robeson "Mary" brought immediate associations with John Adams' and Peter Sellars' path-breaking contemporary opera on Mary's pregnancy and Christ's birth, El Niño. (Arthaus/Naxos 100 221) El Niño is like no opera you've seen and heard, and that is a good thing. It mingles staging and a film projected on a large screen. The film follows a modern Latino Joseph and Mary as they seek lodging and safety in the struggling immigrant neighbourhood of Los Angeles. If you think that a Mary with four pierced earrings couldn't be beatific, think again.

The shimmering music is by a minimalist who's declared himself bored with minimalism. Adams and Sellars crafted the libretto from the Bible, Latin verses, and contemporary Latin American poetry. The singing is mostly in English but can shift into Latin or Spanish. Dance is integral to Sellars staging.

Adams and Sellars tell the story of Christ's birth from the perspective of both a pregnant Mary and God's decision to create sexuality and the pain of childbirth as punishment for partaking of fruit from the tree of knowledge. There are four principals: soprano Dawn Upshaw, mezzo Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, baritone Willard White, and dancer Daniela Graca. They shift roles and switch to narration. The wise men are counter-tenors from the Hilliard Ensemble.

It's weird and truly wonderful. Adams' love for jazz is evident in the strong pulse that drives absolutely gorgeous music. The DVD, one of the most skilfully filmed operas I've viewed, captures a live 2000 performance at the Theatre Musical de Paris-Chatelet. The audience goes rightly bananas after the finale. El Niño deserves a place under the Christmas tree of all who love opera.

We are ALL Music's Children
by m. bell

December's Child ....
"By George! That's a fine motor car!"
Photo taken in Boston, Lincolnshire, England, 1925.

And for those of you who enjoy the challenge of a different kind of clue, you will find our child's first and last names at the Pilot Tavern (see jazz listings). Definitely not seated together, though.

Identify this ever-active and beloved member of our music community for a chance to win tickets, a WholeNote gift subscription, or a recording. Think you know? Send your best guess to musicschildren@thewholenote.com.
(Winners will be selected by random draw among entries received by January 15th, 2006.)

November's Child .... was Karina Gauvin

Canadian soprano Karina Gauvin, whose unique voice, remarkable technique, and accomplished musicianship, now delights audiences and colleagues worldwide, was born in Montreal and attended Étienne-Brulé high school in Toronto. She recalls her very first experience of the opera world performing in Tosca, while a member of the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus. "It was a very exciting time. It was my first time in a big 'adult' production. I was impressed with the singers ... with their 'big' personalities, the size and magic of the theatre, the sets, the costumes. I remember taking the subway all the way to Front Street station and skipping all the way to the theatre singing my part over and over again. It made me feel completely giddy inside."

Things started to get serious at McGill University. Someone told young Karina, studying art history, that she should become a professional singer. After graduating at the Montréal Conservatory of Music where she studied with Marie Davely, she continued her studies at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music (Glasgow) with Pamela Bowden. Recent CD releases include Ariodante by Georg Crozetti (singing the title role) with the Boston early music festival Orchestra on the CPO label; Hyver (French Baroque Cantatas) with les Bérotés de Montréal on the ATMA classique label; and Tito Manlio (singing the title role) by Antonio Vivaldi with Academia Byzantina, Ottavio Dantone conducting, on the naïve label.

Karina Gauvin will sing Bach Christmas Cantatas with Les Violons du Roy December 16 at 8pm, at Roy Thomson Hall; and will return for Mozart: A Life in Letters, developed by Michael Schade, January 26, again at RTH.

And our winner...
"I'm going to have to say Karina Gauvin - one of my favourites!" Caroline Bonner and a guest are invited to hear Karina perform Bach Christmas Cantatas with Les Violons Du Roy at Roy Thomson Hall on December 16th. CONGRATULATIONS Caroline!
LISTINGS
Concerts: Toronto & nearby

Thursday December 01

- 7:00: Brampton Music Theatre Youth Theatre. Dales in Taftland. Cyril Clark Library Theatre, 20 Leafield Lake Lane, Brampton. 905-872-0025. $15, $14(sr/st), $12(ch). For complete run see music theatre listings.
- 7:00: Ross Petty Productions. Snow White & The Group of Seven. Pantomime with Sean Cullen, Alan Frew, Ross Petty & others. Egin Theatre, 185 Yonge St. 416-872-8915. 449-486, $45(ch), $38(family 4-pack). For complete run see music theatre listings.
- 7:30: Peel Panta Players. Addadin. By Norman Robbins; directed by Affie Matthews. Lester B. Pearson Theatre, 150 Central Park Dr., Brampton. 905-874-2800. $7. For complete run see music theatre listings.
- 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music, 10 O'Clock Jazz Orchestra. Paul Read, director. Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park. 416-978-3744. $13, 37.
- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Strauss & Brahms. R. Strauss: Don Quixote; Brahms: Piano Concerto #2. Stephen Hough, piano; Winona Zelenka, cello; Teng Li, viola; Thomas Dausgaard, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-868-8898. $27-$64, $20-$58 (sr/st). For complete run see music theatre listings.

Friday December 02

- 7:00: Markham Choristers, Adrian Raso. Glee, Latin, jazz, pop & gypsy music. John Cusimano, drums; Jason Raso, bass; Lori Bor- tolen, guitar. Woodside Centre, 3175 Highway 7 E. 416-977-1756. Free. Col. sale proceeds to Children's Health Foundation of London.

Concerts: Toronto & nearby
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Concerts: Further Afield
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Music Theatre/Opera
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Jazz Clubs, QuickPicks
PAGE 62

Announcements/Lectures
Symposia/Etcetera
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University of Toronto
Faculty of Music | Where Great Music Meets Great Minds

December / January Highlights

12.1 - 10 O'CLOCK JAZZ ORCHESTRA, Paul Read, conductor
12.2 - THE JOY OF SINGING: A HOLIDAY CHORAL CONCERT
12.3 - SYMPHONIC BAND, Gillian MacKay, conductor
12.7 - MASTER CLASS WITH RUSSELL BRAUN, John R. Stratton Visitor
12.9 - U OF T SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, Raffi Arutyunian, conductor
1.18-21 - NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL, Dennis Patrick, coordinator
1.26 - 10 O'CLOCK JAZZ ORCHESTRA WITH RENEE ROSSNER
1.27 - MARRYING MOZART: A CELEBRATION OF MOZART'S MUSIC AND LOVES INSPIRED BY THE NOVEL BY STEPHANIE COWELL

For details on these and other events taking place at the Faculty of Music, visit our website or call the box office at 416-978-3744.

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FEBRUARY 7 2006
$10 at the door with ID

McKhool: Children’s Christmas Show.
Sounds of the Season Holiday Concert.
Raso, Guitar.
Willan, Landes, Rutter & traditional carols.
Health Foundation of London.
Marty Smith, organ; Richard Partington, conductor.

Please bring non-perishable food item.

Saturday December 03
- 2:00: Choir of All Saints’ Kingsway. Carols with the Choir. Guests: Salvation Army Band; Choirs of All Saints’ Kingsway, St. Anne’s & St. Margaret’s. 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-333-1125 ex 00. Free.
- 7:30: Anna Singers. Festival Works by Wiliam, Landes, Rutter & traditional carols. Marty Smith, organ, Richard Partington, re-
corder. St. Thomas’s Anglican Church, 383 Huron St. 416-618-7747. $15. $12(sold), free(12 & under).
- 7:30: East York Choir. Telling of Peace & Joy. Vivaldi; Gloria; seasonal music and traditional carol singing. Guests: The Tallis Players; Kimbley Briggs, soprano; Marcia Whitehead, mezzo; Jenny Crober, conductor.
- 7:30: Etobicoke Youth Choir, Christmas Music: Pascal Du Perron, accompanied; Louise Jardine, director. Westway United Church, & Templar Dr. 416-231-9120, $10, freeloader 12.
- 8:00: Mississauga Children’s Choir. The Advent of Song. Annual Christmas concert. Thomas Bell, director. Westminster United Church, 4094 Tonken Rd., Mississauga. 905-273-9565. $5.45.
- 9:00: Counterpoint Community Orchestra. In Concert. Bush; Violin Concerto in g. Rossini Violin Overture; Strauss: Tales from the Vienna Woods; Dvorak: Slavonic Dances 1, 2, 7; Mozart: Three German Dances, K605. Rebecca Vannder Post, violin; Terry Kowalczuk, conductor. St. Luke’s United Church, 355 Sherbourne St. 416-829-8072 ex 2098. $15(Electronic), $18(sold).
- 9:00: Metropolitan United Church, 56 Queen St. E. 416-862-2222. $20. Part of the proceeds will go to Urban Promise Toronto.
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December 1 2005 – February 7 2006
www.thewholenote.com

The Tallis Choir
Peter Mahon, Director
A Tallis Gala featuring
SPEM IN ALIUM - THE 40 PART MOTET
Saturday, December 3, 7:30 pm
St. Patrick’s Church
141 McCaul Street (north of Dundas)

Adults - $25, Seniors - $20
Special Student price - $10 at the door with ID
For information: www.tallischoir.com
416-286-9798

Gerald Fine:
In Terra Pax
Ralph Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on Christmas Carols
Benjamin Britten: German Carols (NATB)
Plus the premiere of a new work by Derek Holman
Saturday, December 3, 2005 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, December 4, 2005 at 3 p.m.
Grace Church on-the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Road, Toronto
Regular $25 Seniors/Students $22
Children Under 12 $5
Tickets and inquiries: 416-494-7659
paxchristiosoole@hotmail.com
www.paxchristiosoole.org

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...CONCERTS

Toronto & nearby

York Road United Church. See Dec. 2.
- 8:00: Living Arts Centre. Barrow & Blue. Music comedy duo in concert. Hammer­
son Hall, 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-368-8000 ext. 299.
- 6:00: Mississauga Festival Choir. 408-2824 ext. 321. $15, $10(sr/st).
- 8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music. 494-7890 ext. 221. $25, $22(sr/st), $5(under 12).
- 8:00: Papp Christa Chorale. A Frosty Christmas Eve. Music by Britten, Vaughan.
- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Winter Concert: Dvorak. Symphony 7: Shostakovich; festive Overture; Mussorgsky: Night on Bald Mountain; excerpts from Chausson: Concerto for Flute & Orchestra; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 24; Liszt: Piano Concerto No. 1; Ravel: Suite; Gershwin: An American in Paris.
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Sunday, December 4th

- 11:00: Liedertafel. Christmas concert. Queen's Park Community Centre. $15, $20(sr/st), $10(under 10).
- 2:00: Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra. Christmas Carol Concert. Free. Food bank donations welcome.

Sunday, December 11th

- 3:00: Pax Christi Chorale. A Frosty Christmas Eve. Music by Britten, Vaughan.
- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Winter Concert: Dvorak. Symphony 7: Shostakovich; festive Overture; Mussorgsky: Night on Bald Mountain; excerpts from Chausson: Concerto for Flute & Orchestra; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 24; Liszt: Piano Concerto No. 1; Ravel: Suite; Gershwin: An American in Paris.
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Sunday, December 18th

- 3:00: Pax Christi Chorale. A Frosty Christmas Eve. Music by Britten, Vaughan.
Monday December 05


- 8:00: Toronto Theatre Organ Society. Wurlitzer Plays at Casa Loma. Dave Wickerham, organ. 1 Austin Terrace. 416-495-6202. $17.

Tuesday December 06


- 8:00: Toronto Jazz Orchestra. Music of the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra. Gladstone Hotel Ballroom, 1214 Queen St. W. 416-889-5269. 416, 45 (sr-st).


Wednesday December 07


Thursday December 08

Music TORONTO

December 8 at 8 p.m.


CONCERTS...Toronto & nearby

WWW.THEWHOLENOTE.COM
The Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir presents its Annual Christmas Concert

Friday Dec. 9th at 7:30
Eglinton St. George’s United Church
(Lytton Blvd. & Duplex, Toronto M4R 1L2)
Tickets: $20.00 Tel: 416-410-2254
e-mail: john.hewings@sympatico.ca
Visit us @www.twmvc.com

The Toronto Consort presents

THE MONTEVERDI CHRISTMAS VESPRIS

December 9 & 10, 2005 at 8pm

With recorders, violins, cornetti, theorboes, keyboards and voices, the Toronto Consort recreates the lavish celebration of Christmas Vespers from the Church of San Marco in 17th-century Venice, with music by the incomparable Claudio Monteverdi! Featuring works from his 1641 collection of sacred music, the rafters and balconies of Trinity-St. Paul’s will resound with the glorious sounds of a Christmas celebration you won’t soon forget. Gloria in excelsis!

www.torontoconsort.org

For Tickets call 416-964-6337

Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. West
Two Christmas Plays presented by PLS.

Joseph's Trouble about Mary and Jesuskind.
Dec. 9, 10, 11
For Times, Places: See Listings.

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CONCERTS
Toronto & nearby

Ave. 416-697-5000 ex7338. $18 (advance), $22 (door).

- 8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music. Symphony Orchestra. 416-596-2266. $50, $46 (school), $10 (under 12).
- 8:30: Toronto Sister Ensemble. A Seasonal Celebration. St. John's United Church, 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7489, $50, $45, $10 (under 12).
- 8:30: Les Amis Concerts. A Seasonal Celebration. St. John's United Church, 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7489. $10 (under 12).
- 8:30: Toronto Sister Ensemble. A Seasonal Celebration. St. John's United Church, 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7489, $50, $45, $10 (under 12).

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 8:00 P.M.
ST. PAUL'S BASILICA
35 Power Street. Queen at Parliament.
Free parking.

A feast for your eyes, ears, and soul.

Tickets $20
Info 416.559.2586
2 for 1 admission with this ad
www.studiosixteen.ca
3:00: Orchestra Toronto. Afternoon at the Opera. Wagner: Prelude to Die Meister­singer; Puccini excerpts from Act II of La Bohème & others. Peter DeSotto, tenor; violin; Cyprien Stéphanes, oboe; Enrol Gay, music director. George Weston Recital Hall, 5040 Yonge St. 416-467-7142. $30, $25(st студ.), $10(ch/stуд.).

7:00: TrypTych. A Singing Celebration of Choral Music - from: Us to: You. Hosted by - Ms Christina Cherneskey of CFRB Radio 1010. Sunday, December 11, 2005 @ 3 p.m. Eglinton/St George United - 35 Lytton St. Tickets $20 & $10 www.counterpoinchorale.com

3:30: St. James' Cathedral.

3:00: Serenata Choir.

4:30: Yorkminster Park Baptist Church; Ronald S. Jordon, organ; William Maddox, director of music.

4:00: Toronto Classical Singers.


7:00: OnStage Opera Gala. Popular arias and duets by Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and others. Isabel Bayrakdarian, soprano; Marie-Alice L’Emieux, contralto; Canadian Opera Company Orchestra; Richard Bradshaw, conductor. Glenn Gould Studio, 250 Front St. W. 416-205-5555. $40. *SOLD OUT*

7:00: TrypTych. All Hayle to the Days. Haydn: Harp Concerto & other seasonal works. Rachel Haywood-Jones, soprano; Lynn Greens, mezzo; Olena Slywyska, alto; Jamie Tatchell, tenor; Tyler Kuhnert, baritone; Ensemble TrypTych Church Choir; Symphonie TrypTych. Trinity Presbyterian Church, 2737 Bayview Ave. 416-765-9986, $25, $20(stуд.), $10(ch/stуд.).

CONCERTS ... Toronto & nearby

VocalPoint
Chamber Choir
The Talisker Players
Ian Grundy, conductor
Jenni Hayman, soprano
Jillian Yeman, mezzo
Martin Houtman, tenor
Trevor Bowes, baritone

Charpentier
In Nativitatem H. #16
Messe de Minuit

Sunday, December 11, 2005 at 3 p.m.
Grace Church on-the-Hill
Russell Hill Rd. and Lonsdale Ave
Admission: $25, Students/Seniors $15
416-484-0155 FOR INFORMATION

SYRINX CONCERTS

COENRAAD BLOEMENDAL
VALERIE TRYON
cello & piano duo
performing
Gellman, Strauss, Greig

Sunday, December 11, 2005, 3:00pm
Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Avenue
Adults $20 Students $15
For more info call 416.654.0877
FESTIVAL WIND ORCHESTRA
Gennady Gefter, Conductor

Holiday Magic

Musical selections include

Suite of Old American Dances,
The Barber of Seville and Seasonal Favourites.

Tuesday, December 13 at 7:30pm

Christ Church Deer Park, 1570 Yonge Street
(2 blocks north of St. Clair, close to TTC & municipal parking)

Adults $15; Students $10

To reserve tickets, call 416-881-4255
Fax 416-491-5282
or visit www.festivalwindorchestra.com

Handicapped accessible

Back to Ad Index
Friday December 15

Friday December 16
- 6:00am: CBC Radio One 99.1 FM. Sounds of the Season. Live music throughout the day. Glenn Gould Studio, 250 Front St. W. 416-205-5555. Free with charitable donation, unwrapped toy or non-perishable food item.
The High Park Choirs of Toronto
Zmifra Poloz, Artistic Director
present

Joyful Voices
An evening of holiday music for the entire family

Create a joyful family tradition with the warm and heralding tones of The High Park Choirs at our annual holiday extravaganza! The evening will include:

Once in Royal David's City
African Noel
Something Told the Wild Geese
Seven Joys of Christmas
and an audience carol-sing-a-long

Saturday, December 17, 2005
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Humbercrest United Church
16 Baby Point Road
8 blocks north of Bloor St. W., on the west of Jane St.

Tickets: $15 adults, $10 seniors & under 12

To order tickets or for information call: 416-762-0657

Visit us at: www.highparkchoirs.org
email: info@highparkchoirs.org

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**ATMA classique**

**KARINA GAUVIN**

Les Violons du Roy


www.atmaclassique.com

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**...CONCERTS**

**Toronto & nearby**

293-812 1111 82010 84, 95, Fond drive.


8:00: Markham Theatre. The Moscow Boys Choir: Christmas Around the World Tour. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $40, $35.


8:30 & 8:00: York Symphony Orchestra. YSO Holiday Concert. Carols, audience sing-along & other musical offerings. Trinity Anglican Church, 76 Victoria St., Aurora. 416-410-0680. $22, $17(adult), $10(under 12).


8:00: York Symphony Orchestra. YSO Holiday Concert. Carols, audience sing-along & other musical offerings. Trinity Anglican Church, 76 Victoria St., Aurora. 416-410-0680. $22, $17(adult), $10(under 12).


8:30 & 8:00: York Symphony Orchestra. YSO Holiday Concert. Carols, audience sing-along & other musical offerings. Trinity Anglican Church, 76 Victoria St., Aurora. 416-410-0680. $22, $17(adult), $10(under 12).


— 8:00: Mississauga Symphony. Tis the Season: Christmas in the City. Christmas classics; Reyer: The Beloved (premiere), Mary Lou Falls & Anna Madgett, sopranos. Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. 333.50-443.50.

Living Arts Centre. Mississauga
Free Underground Parking
www.mississaugasymphony.com

December 17, 2005
Great-West Life
‘Tis the Season:
Christmas in the City
Join the talented duo for a festive family performance featuring joyful Yuletide sing-alongs and delightful selections guaranteed to chase away the ‘Bah humbugs’ and put you in the Holiday Spirit!
Missaissauga Philharmonics: John Barnum, music director
For John and George:
Lennon and Harrison Remembered
Through they’re gone, their music lives on. Guaranteed to take you on a memorable musical tour from the divine to the sublime, this performance features John’s & George’s most famous and cherished songs.
Missaissauga Philharmonics: John Barnum, music director & conductor
(905) 306-6000
Season Sponsor: SEASON SPONSOR PATHEON

January 21, 2006
8:00PM
HITACHI
Hitachi Inspire the World
For John and George:
Lennon and Harrison Remembered

Handel’s Messiah
Wed – Sat, Dec 14 – 17 at 7:30pm
Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre
472 Bloor St. West (one block west of Spadina)
Ivars Tauers, conductor
Anne Grima, soprano | Laura Pudwell, mezzo-soprano
Benjamin Butterfield, tenor | Christopher Normore, baritone
Call 416.964.6337
tafelmusik.org

Sing-Along Messiah
Sun, Dec 18 at 2pm Massey Hall
Let your voice ring out! Join 2700 enthusiastic choristers as “Maestro Handel” himself conducts his beloved Messiah. Bring your own score or purchase one at the performance. Non-singers always welcome. Great fun for the whole family!
Call 416.872.4255

All Messiah performances are sponsored by AGINCOURT AUTOHAUS.
**Christmas comes anew**

Sunday, December 18, 2005
3:00 pm

Our Lady of Sorrows Church
3055 Bloor Street West, Toronto

Adults $25 Seniors/Students $20

for tickets call
416.761.7776

**The Majesty of Christmas**

Monday, December 19, 2005, 8:00 p.m.

The Cathedral Church of St. James
Richard Bradshaw, Ann Cooper Gay, Guest Conductors
Canadian Children's Opera Chorus and Canadian Youth Opera Chorus, Ann Cooper Gay, Director

Under the inspired baton of Richard Bradshaw, General Director of the Canadian Opera Company, we once again join forces with the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus and Youth Chorus for our annual concert in the acoustically splendid Cathedral Church of St. James. The featured work will be the premiere of the brass band and children's choir version of Canadian composer John Burge's Angels' Voices, a celebrated work, inspired by the poetry of William Blake, Emily Dickinson, Richard Lovelace and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Join in heart-felt congregational singing of many cherished Christmas carols.

**Call the St. Lawrence Centre Box Office**
416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-6754

**Visit us at**
www.stlc.com
Tuesday December 20
- 10:00: Royal 360. “Music for a Winter’s Eve.”

Monday Dec. 19 at 7:30
sharlenewallace.com

Michael Bless, organ; Richard Bradshaw, conductor. St. James’ Cathedral, 65 Church St. 416-364-7723. $25, $22(sr), $20(st), $15(10+).

- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra/ Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. Toronto’s Best Messiah. Roy Thomson Hall. See Dec 14.

Tuesday December 21
- 2:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. A Very Merry Pops! Holiday classics and sing-alongs. Guests: Mississauga Choral Society; Canadian Children’s Opera Chorus; Monica Huisman, soprano; Fred Love, tenor; Daniel Narducci, baritone; Edith Kunzel, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-503-4628. 430-191.

Wednesday December 21
- 2:00 & 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. A Very Merry Pops! Roy Thomson Hall. See Dec 20. Note Matinee: $25.25-$60.


Thursday December 22
- 3:00 & 8:00: Roy Thomson Hall, John McCormick & Friends: A Family Christmas Celebration. Guests: The Mistletones, Roger McManama, Barbra Streisand & Friends.

CONCERTS...
Toronto & nearby

THE GENTLEMEN AND BOYS CHOIR
of
ROYAL ST. GEORGE’S COLLEGE

Festival of Lessons and Carols
Featuring
Traditional Music for the Christmas Season
by:
Bainton, Carter, Cleobury, Ord, Rutter, Tavener, Vaughan Williams, Willocks, and others.
with Harp, Flute, and Brass Quintet
Giles Bryant, Organ
Douglass Jamieson, Conductor

Cathedral Church of St. James
Wednesday, 21 December, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.
Wiener Blut
Dienna Love
by JOHANN STRAUSS
Kevin Mallon. Conductor
Guillermo Silva-Marín, Stage Director

Jackalyn Short
Katerina Tchoubar, Carla Huhtanen,
Marcel van Neer, Sean Watson

A truly treasured Viennese operetta garnished
with some of the most beautiful melodies of
the Waltz King -- a wonderful Holiday treat
and a perfect gift!

Dec. 27 (preview), 28, 30, 31st.
Jan. 6 & 7 at 8 pm
Jan. 4 & 8 at 2 pm

*Ask about our New Year's Eve Party

Jane Mallet Theatre
416-366-7723

www.strc.com

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Hansel & Gretel
by Englebert Humperdinck
Based on the story by
The Brothers Grimm

Under the Artistic Direction of Andrew Tees
Featuring: MARY LOU FALLIS as the nasty witch, Andrew Tees, Kathryn Knapp, Ariene Alvarado, Jillian Yenam and Andrea Rebello. With the Opera York Chorus and Orchestra under the Musical Direction of Alain Trudel.

Dec. 26 & 30 - 7:30 pm; Dec. 28 - 2:30 pm
at the NEW St. Elizabeth Performing Arts Centre,
525 New Westminster Drive, Vaughan

Tickets $30 Adults, Children under 12 $25-$20

To order tickets call 905-763-7853

www.operayork.com

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...CONCERTS
Toronto & nearby

Abbet, Lawrence Gowen, Guido Basse &
Amanda Stott. 60 Simcoe St. 416-872-4255.
3:00; $29.50-$49.50; 8:00; $34.50-$69.50.

Friday December 23
8:00: Roy Thomson Hall. Canadian Brass
Annual Christmas Concert. Guests: Elmar
Iseler Singers. EU Simcoe St. 416-872-4255.
$29.50.

Saturday December 24
10:00am: Dear Park Concerts. A Recital of
Christmas Music. O'Quein: Five Noels
Bach: Canonic Variations on Vom Himmel Hoch
BWV 769; Callahan: A Christmas Suite. Wilêllm Wright, organ. Dear Park United Church,
See ad previous page.

Monday December 26
7:30: Opera York. Hansel & Gretel. Mu-
ic by E. Humperdinck. Andrew Tees, artistic
director; Allan Fradl. conductor. St. Elizabeth
Performing Arts Centre, 525 New Westmin-
ster Dr., Vaughan. 905-763-7853. $30,
$25(under 12), 2 ($10(additional child). For
complete run see music theatre listings.

Tuesday December 27
11:00am & 2:00: Lester B. Pearson
Theatre. Frankie's Chef Concert. Musical
production with singing, dancing and audience
participation. Recommended for pre-school gr.
1. 150 Central Park Dr., Brampton. 905-974-
2800; 416-236-2641 to reserve. $15(under
12), $10(additional child). For complete run
see music theatre listings.

Wednesday December 28
8:00: Toronto Operaette Theatre. Wiener
Blut, Vienna Love. Music by Johann
Strauss. Jackalyn Short, Mark Dubois, Sean
Watson, Katerina Tchoubar & Carla Huhtanen;
Kevin Mallon, conductor. Jane Mallett
Theatre, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. Preview:
4:35-45. For complete run see music theatre
listings.

Friday December 30
8:00: Brampton Lyric Opera. Die Fleder-
maus. Music by Johann Strauss. Brampton
Heritage Theatre, 80 Main St. N., Brampton.
905-872-2262. $40-$75.

Saturday December 31
11:00am & 2:00: Markham Theatre.
Franklin's Family Christmas Concert. Recom-
mended for ages 3+. 1717 Town Centre Blvd.,
Markham. 905-305-7469. $19-42; $15-
$11(under 12).
3:00: Old Mill Inn's Salute to Big
Bands. New Year's Eve Big Band Swing Ca-
lemoration. Swing Shift Band. 21 Old Mill Rd.
416-239-2041 to reserve. $155(dinner pack-
age).

Sunday January 01
2:30: Roy Thomson Hall. Salute to Vien-
soprano; Zrinka Soko, tenor; András Dákó, con-
ductor. 80 Simcoe St. 416-872-4255.
3:00-3:15.
Free

Church St. 416-364-7865. Free.
Tuesday January 03
1:00: St. James' Cathedral. Music at
Midday. Loralee Kirkpatrick, soprano; Andrew
Ager, pianist/organ. 65 Church St. 416-364-
7865. Free.

Thursday January 05
7:30: Hummingbird Centre/Jeffrey
Finn Productions. The Music of Andrew
Lloyd Webber. Includes works from The Phan-
ton of the Opera; Cats; Evita; Jesus Christ
Superstar & others. Michael Burgess, tenor;
accompanying orchestra. 1 Front St. E. 416-
872-2262. 416-416-416.
8:00: Theatre Passe Muraille. Yeos to
Break. By Fides Kriuter. Mark Christiansen,
director. 16 Ryerson Ave. 416-504-7529.
$15-$30. For complete run see music theatre
listings.

Friday January 06
7:00: Markham Chapters. Adrian Raso,
Guitar. Latin, jazz, pop & gypsy music. John
Busnari, drums; Jason Raso, bass; Lore Bor-
talian, guitar. Woodside Centre, 3175 Highway
7 E. 905-872-1706. Free. Cd sale proceeds to
Children's Health Foundation of London.
7:30: Hummingbird Centre/Jeffrey
Finn Productions. The Music of Andrew
Lloyd Webber. 1 Front St. E. See Jan. 5.
8:00: Bonnie Journeaux. A Recital. Works
by Piazzolla, Beethoven & John Williams.
Colin Ainsworth, tenor; Amanda Johnstone,
piano. Heritage Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 905-424-2057.
$20, $15(stud).

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January 6, 8 pm
Heliconian Hall

Saturday January 07
2:00: Hummingbird Centre/Jeffrey
Finn Productions. The Music of Andrew
Lloyd Webber. 1 Front St. E. See Jan. 5.
7:00: Richmond Hill Indigo. Adrian
Raso, Guitar. Latin, jazz, pop & gypsy music.
John Busnari, drums; Jason Raso, bass; Lore
Bortolan, guitar. 8705 Yonge St. 905-751-
8771. Free. Cd sale proceeds to Children's
Health Foundation of London.
7:30: Gilbert & Sullivan Society of
Toronto. Annual Songfest. St. Andrew's Unit-
ited Church, 117 Bloor St. E. 416-221-466.4.
Free.
7:30: Hummingbird Centre/Jeffrey
Finn Productions. The Music of Andrew

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Thank you to our sponsors: The Ontario<br>Trillium Foundation, Canadian<br>Heritage, Ontario Arts Council, York<br>Region Newspaper Group, RBC<br>Financial Group, Miller Thomson, Colina<br>Barrow and Yamaha Music

WWW.WHOLENOTE.COM

December 1, 2005 - February 7, 2006
THE CAM MCCARROLL TRIO
Cam McCarroll, guitar
Bobby Sui, saxophone
Mark Cushion, bass

All That Jazz
An evening of classic jazz favourites
including the music of Cole Porter & George Gershwin

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2006
3:00: Hummingbird Centre Jeffrey Finn Productions. The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber. 1 Front St. E. See Jan. 5.
3:00: Toronto Parks & Recreation Sunday Concert Series. Harvey Seigel Band. Scarborough Civic Centre, 150 Borough Dr. 416-396-7398. Free.

Sunday January 8
2:00: Hummingbird Centre Jeffrey Finn Productions. The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber. 1 Front St. E. See Jan. 5.
2:00: Toronto Parks & Recreation Sunday Concert Series. Harvey Seigel Band. Scarborough Civic Centre, 150 Borough Dr. 416-396-7398. Free.

2006
NEW YEAR'S CONCERT
An East-Meets-West Concert of Favorite Classics
January 14, 2006 (Saturday) 8:00 p.m.
George Weston Recital Hall
Toronto Centre for the Arts
90 Yonge Street.
Presented by
Li Delun Music Foundation

Celebrate the New Year with selected western classic pieces ranging from overture by Strauss, opera by Mozart, to piano concertos by Tchaikovsky and Chopin, together with popular Chinese favorites like the magnificent piano concerto Yellow River.

with
Toronto Festival Orchestra
Brampton Lyric Opera.
Music director & Conductor: LAI Tak-Ng
Pianist: LIU Shi kun (Winner of Tchaikovsky Piano Competition)
Flute: ZHUO Wei
Violin: TENG Li (Winner of International Competitions)

Tickets: $48 (VIP), $45, $38, $32, $28, $22
Ticketmaster: 416-872-1111
numus.on.ca

NUMUS Presents
MoEns

8:00 pm
Saturday, January 14, 2006
Music Gallery, Toronto

Prague's premiere new music ensemble presents a concert of contemporary Czech composers.

numus.on.ca

THE
Aldeburgh CONNECTION
Celebrating the Art of Song

Mozart and friends
Our celebration of Mozart's quarter millennium, set within the context of his letters, and including his own songs, opera and oratorio, and music by composers he influenced.

Nathalie Paulin soprano
Colin Ainsworth tenor
Stephen Ralls & Bruce Ukubaka pianos
with the University of Toronto Opera Chorus

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 23:00 — WALTER HALL
Tickets: $45/student rush $10. Call (416) 735-7982
University of Toronto Faculty of Music Opera Division
The Art of the Primadonna

Diary readings and operatic selections from the golden age of the Primadonna.

An afternoon of opera and tea on the theatre stage.
Sunday, January 22 at 2:30 pm
MacMillan Theatre. $26.00 | Box Office: 416-978-3744

In Concert
Toronto Mass Choir & PowerUp Workshop
Mass Choir

Tickets available at the door only ($10.00 for more information visit: www.maccs.ca or call (905) 794-1139
CONCERTS
Toronto & nearby
Shannon Mercer, soprano, will present a program of music by Mozart. Details available at www.musicontario.org.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28

8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Mozart: A Life in Letters. Opera and concert arias by Mozart, developed by Michael Schade. 651 Dufferin St. 416-499-0403. $25, $15, $10 students.

8:00: Toronto International Chamber Music Festival. A Day in Prague. Music by Dvorak, Mozart, Janacek, Suk. Erika Raum, violin; Madawaska String Quartet; Lenard Whiting, tenor; Brett Kingsbury, piano & other performers. Isabel Bader Theatre, 53 Charles St. W. 416-978-8849. $40 or $105-230 (festival pass).

8:00: Sinfonia Toronto. Happy Birthday, Wolfie! Opening concert of Mozart in Jeans series. Boris Brott, conductor; Yvonne & Peter Runes, tenors. Sanderson Hall, St. Paul's United Church, 30 Main St. S., Brampton. 905-874-5015. $15, $10 seniors, $7 students.

8:00: Toronto International Chamber Music Festival. A Day in Prague. Music by Dvorak, Mozart, Janacek, Suk. Erika Raum, violin; Madawaska String Quartet; Lenard Whiting, tenor; Brett Kingsbury, piano & other performers. Isabel Bader Theatre, 53 Charles St. W. 416-978-8849. $40 or $105-230 (festival pass).


6:00: Heritage Theatre. The Friendly Rich Show. All ages show by Friendly Rich and his vaudevillian orchestra. The Lollipop People. 86 Main St. N., Brampton. 905-874-2800.


6:00: Heritage Theatre. The Friendly Rich Show. All ages show by Friendly Rich and his vaudevillian orchestra. The Lollipop People. 86 Main St. N., Brampton. 905-874-2800.


SATURDAY, JANUARY 28


5:00: Royal Conservatory of Music. Community Concert Series: Rick Scott & Harry Wong. Songs from the 5 Elements. York College. 416-408-2824 ext. 3211. $15, $10 (family).


SUNDAY, JANUARY 29


CONCERTS & EVENTS
Toronto & nearby

SHANNON MERCER
January 26 at 8 p.m.

1:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. 100 Clocks Jazz Orchestra & Renee Rosnes Trio. MacMillan Theatre, 80 Queen's Park. 416-978-3744. $13, $7.


1:30: Toronto International Chamber Music Festival. A Day in Prague. Music by Dvorak, Mozart, Janacek, Suk. Erika Raum, violin; Madawaska String Quartet; Lenard Whiting, tenor; Brett Kingsbury, piano & other performers. Isabel Bader Theatre, 53 Charles St. W. 416-978-8849. $40 or $105-230 (festival pass).


6:00: Heritage Theatre. The Friendly Rich Show. All ages show by Friendly Rich and his vaudevillian orchestra. The Lollipop People. 86 Main St. N., Brampton. 905-874-2800.


- 8:00: Academy Concert Series. Intimate Beethoven. Piano Trio in c; String Trio in G; Piano Quartet in E flat. Sharon Bullock, fortepiano; Rosa Goldenberg, violin; Anthony Rapoport, viola; Laura Jones, cello. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. 416-778-0400. $15, $10(stud).

- 8:00: Borderless Songs. Windscape. Peter Stohl, clarinet; Christopher Burton, piano. Forest Grove United Church, 43 Forest Grove Dr. 416-482-8601. $15, $10(stud).


- 8:00: Toronto International Chamber Music Festival. An Afternoon in Munich. Music by Hindemith, Schmelzer, Doppler, Golda & others. Vienna Symphony Virtuosi, Musicians in Ordinary & other performers. Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W. 416-978-8849, 840 or $105/$230(Festival Pass).

- 2:00: Toronto All Star Big Band, Big Band by the Lake. Music of Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw. Benny Goodman & others. Lakeside Terrace, Harbourfront Centre, 221 Queen's Quay W. 416-673-4000. Pay what you can.


- 3:00: Opera in Concert. La Griselda. By Vivaldi. Aradia Ensemble; Marion Newman; Carla Huhtanen; Lynne McMurtry; Colin Ainsworth; Sean Watson; Kevin Mallon, conductor; Robert Cooper, chorus director. Jane Mallett Theatre, 27 Front St. E. 416-369-7723. $38-$50.


- 6:00: Canadian Opera Company. The Barber of Seville. Janet Catherine Deacon, soprano; Andrew Ager, tenor; Sean Watson; Kevin Mallon, conductor; Doriann Forrester, flute; Rita Greer, alto. Opera in Concert. 1 Front St. East. 416-364-7865. Free.


...CONCERTS
Toronto & nearby

8:00: Toronto Wind Orchestra. Spiritual World. Music by Remer, Benson, Hana & Vincent. Royal Conservatory of Music, 90 Croatia St. 416-461-6881. $15, $10(sr/st).

Thursday, February 02

12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: David Braid and Bryan Wilson, Flutes; Roy Mamet, reeds.
7:30: The Union of Vocalists. Featuring John Avey, bass; Christine Stelmacovich, alto; Floyd Sharman, tenor; Andrew Tees, baritone. 7:15 pre-concert chat; 8:00 post-concert jam. Gladstone Hotel Ballroom, 1214 Queen St. W. 416-514-4561. $25.

Friday, February 03

7:00: Masonic Temple. Dr. John Manashoff, organ. 1585 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free.

Saturday, February 04

6:00: Canadian Opera Company. A Bite Before Twilight. 4pm dinner at Bier Markt, 58 Esplanade. 6pm Götterdämmerung, Hummingbird Centre, 1 Front St. E. 416-872-2262. $30.

Syrinx Concerts
Peter Longworth in a solo piano recital featuring Debussy, Gellman, Schumann, Beethoven

Sunday, February 5, 2006, 3:00pm Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Avenue Adults $20 Students $15 For more info call 416.654.0877

WWW.THEWHOLENOte.COM
December 1 2005 - February 7 2006

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Sunday February 05
- 1:30: CAMMAC/McMichael Art Gallery, Sunday Concert Series: Canzona, classical ensemble. Admission with gallery price: $9, $6(st), $25(family).
- 2:00: RCM Orff Ensembles. Orff Program Concert. 90 Croatia St. 416-408-2824 ext 321. Free.
- 2:00: Toronto Parks & Recreation. Sunday Concert Series. Syncona. Scarborough Civic Centre, 150 Borough Dr. 416-396-7398. Free.
- 3:00: Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra. Amadeus: Mozart in Italy. Trinity St. Paul’s Centre. See Feb. 3.
- 4:00: St. James’ Cathedral. Sunday Afternoon Twilight Recitals. Stillman Matheson, organ. 65 Church St. 416-364-7865. Free.

Monday February 06

Tuesday February 07

CONCERTS ... Toronto & nearby

The Hannaford Street Silver Band presents
Bollywood Brass
Sunday, February 5, 2006, 3 p.m., Jane Mallett Theatre
Curtis Metcalf, Resident Conductor
Autorickshaw, Guest Ensemble: Suba Sankaran, Ed Hanley, Rich Brown, Debasish Sinha

The HSSB will collaborate with the award-winning Autorickshaw in an afternoon of world-inspired music-making. A R. Raham’s Urvashi, Urikshmi and Suba Sankaran’s arrangement entitled Bollywood Brass will be performed. Autorickshaw will perform Saraswati by Sankaran and Ganamurthy by Thyagarja. Jazz will make its way into our concert when the brass of the HSSB are added to Autorickshaw’s unique arrangements of Gillespie’s A Night in Tunisia and Ellington’s Caravan.

"Silver-plated music making all the way"
William Littler, The Toronto Star

Call the St. Lawrence Centre Box Office at 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-6754 or book on-line at www.stlc.com
Visit us at www.hssb.ca

Robert Raines
Principal Conductor

'C TIS THE SEASON
with Village Voices
Joan Andrews, Artistic Director

Holiday favourites by Handel, Vivaldi, Corelli Anderson, Sibelius and Mozart
For details, see listings for December 10

The Toronto Star

Call the St. Lawrence Centre Box Office at 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-6754 or book on-line at www.stlc.com
Visit us at www.hssb.ca

'TIS THE SEASON
with Village Voices
Joan Andrews, Artistic Director

Holiday favourites by Handel, Vivaldi, Corelli Anderson, Sibelius and Mozart
For details, see listings for December 10

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Concerts: Further afield

Plans change! Always call ahead to confirm details with presenters.

Concerts: Toronto & nearby

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LISTINGS

Concerts: Further Afield


sville Rd. W. 905-304-7409. $20, $17(s/r), $9(st). For complete run see music theatre listings.

-- 8:00: Centenary Concert Series. We Will Remember Them. Feudtner. With massed choir & orchestra. Centenary United Church. 24 Main St. W., Hamilton. 905-526- 1147. $20.

-- 8:00: County Town Singers. Christmas Concert. Pickering Village United Church. 390 Church St. N., Ajax. 905-943-7421, 912, 995(st).

-- 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Shostakovitch Centenary. Marquez: Daron #2; Shostakovich: Cello Concerto #1; Symphony #1. Yegor Dyachkov, cello. Robert Moody, conductor. The Centre in the Square. 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 800-265-9977, 615-450.

-- 8:00: Symphony Hamilton. The Messiah. Choir of First-St. Andrew’s Church; Sonja Gustafson, soprano; Teresa D’Arcy, mezzo; Ross Dadson, tenor. Paul Merritt, director. First-St. Andrew’s Church. 350 Queens Ave. London. 519-526- 9860, 925, 110(st), 49(ch).

Saturday December 03


-- 7:30: La Jeunesse Youth Orchestras. Home for the Holidays. Port Hope United Church. 34 South St., Port Hope. 905-372- 2210, 912, 104(family).


Friday December 02

-- 2:00 & 8:00: Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts. The Walters Family. Old-fashioned Christmas show including fiddle playing and step dancing. Walters Family, choir and other performers. 350 Queen’s Ave., Brantford. 519-758-8090, 800-265-0710.

-- 2:00 & 8:00: Port Hope Festival Theatre. Little Red Riding Hood. Christmas pantom. Capital Theatre. 20 Queen St. W., Port Hope. 905-365- 1071. 922-124. For complete run see music theatre listings.

-- 9:00: orchestra@waterloo. First Anniversary Concert. Works by Beethoven & Tchaikovsky. Guests: Rony Shioda, Hector Vasquez, Boyd McDonald; Erna Van Daele, music director. Humanitats Theatre. Hagey Hall, Waterloo. 519-896-4008, Free.


-- 9:00: orchestra@waterloo. First Anniversary Concert. Works by Beethoven & Tchaikovsky. Guests: Rony Shioda, Hector Vasquez, Boyd McDonald; Erna Van Daele, music director. Humanitats Theatre. Hagey Hall, Waterloo. 519-896-4008, Free.


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and "The MOSCOW SOLOISTS"


Yuri Bashmet

and "The MOSCOW SOLOISTS"

Friday December 02


Yuri Bashmet

and "The MOSCOW SOLOISTS"

Friday December 02


- 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Shostakovich Centenary. The Centre in the Square, 10 Queen St. N., Kitchener. See Dec. 2.
- 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Waterford Music Society. Gloria Guest: Starfire Brass Ensemble. All Saints Anglican Church, 235 Ridgeland Dr., Waterloo. 519-454-6110. $12, $6(st). More information.
- 8:00: Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts. Musical Comic Duo Bower and Blue. 88 Dalhousie St., Brantford. 519-758-8090. 800-285-0710. $30.

Sunday December 04

Saturday December 03
- 8:00: Kitchener Waterfor Symphony. Christmas Pops. The Centre in the Square, 10 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-865-6877. $15-40. More information.
- 8:00: Kitchener Waterfor Symphony. Christmas Pops. The Centre in the Square, 10 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-865-6877. $15-40. More information.
- 7:00: Christmas Carols Yule Songs of Christmas. Christmas Carol and other works. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 4240 Anderson Rd. 905-723-9207. 910, (free). More information.
- 7:00: Amabile Choirs. Carol Sweetly Carpe. International seasonal music and traditional favourites. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 54 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-0675. $20, $15(st), $10(ad). More information.
- 7:00: Messiah. St. George's Church, 101 Queen St. N., Waterloo. 519-758-0890. 800-285-0710. $30.
CONCERTS Further afar

Jennifer Emz, alto; Eric Shade, tenor; John Avey, bass & other performers. St. Peter's Basilica, 160 Dufferin Ave., London. 519-433-8650. $25, 15%o.

- 4:00: Wellington Winds. Getting Ready for Winter. First United Church, 16 William St., Waterloo. 519-579-3037. $20, 5%o. st.


Monday December 12


Tuesday December 13

- 7:30: Arcadia, A Baroque Messiah. Alexandria Presbyterian Church, 410 Colborne St., Bradford. 519-753-1602. $20, 4%o(st).


Wednesday December 14

- 12:00noon: Northumberland Centre of the Royal Canadian College of Organists. Noonhour Advent Concert. Bring your lunch. St. Peter's Anglican Church, 240 College St., Cobourg. 905-355-3116. Free will offering.


- 8:00: Kitchener Waterloos Chamber Christmas Concert. 157 Main St. S., Georgetown. 905-869-8777. 437-641.

Thursday December 15

- 8:30: James McKenty & the Spades. In Concert. James McKenty, recitalist/Guitar; Winchester Street, drums/vocals; Chichi Reiche, bass/mandolins; The Aron Cinema, 54 Bridge St. E., Campbellford. 705-636-3346. $10.

Friday December 16

- 7:00: Waterloos Chapters. Adan Rasco, Guitar. Latin, jazz, pop & gypsy music. John Casinสไต, drums; Jason Rasco, bass; Lore Bor­ton, guitarist. 428 King St. W., Waterloo. 519-890-4015. Free. 64 sale proceeds to Children's Health Foundation of Ontario.

- 7:30: Amabile Choirs. Ye Olde Christmas Fasade. Amabile Trebles and Young Men's Ensemble. Greek Canadian Hall, Sarnia Road, London. 519-641-6765. $20.


- 7:30: Choirs of Ubridge. A Community Christmas Concert. Ubridge Chamber Choir; One Voice Community Choir; Morning Singers; Ubridge Youth Choir; Eid Biclan Choir. Trinity United Church, 201st Ave., Uxbridge. 905-852-5507. $10, free(under 12).


Saturday December 17

- 10:00am: Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts. The Fabulous Crescendos. Celebrating the centenarians of this past century including Bing Crosby, Perry Como, Pat Benatar, Bee Gees, Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra. Call for ticket prices. For complete run see music theatre listings.

- 1:00 & 3:00: Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts. Frank & the Turtles. 88 Dalhousie St., Brantford. 519-758-8090. $15.

Sunday January 3


Wednesday January 11

- 8:00: UWU Faculty of Music. Duke Trios. Von Kunster Hall, 1151 Richmond St., London. 519-681-3763. Free.

- 7:30: On Stage Ubridge. Maen. Uxbridge Music Hall, 16 Main St. W., Uxbridge. 905-852-4282. Call for ticket prices.

Tuesday January 10


- 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Lionel. The music of Cale Porter, Jimmy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman & others. Stars of the Daytime Festival; Howard Cable, guest conductor; Alan Mustakas, director. The Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-283-8857. $15-45. $10(st).

- 8:00: Milton Concert Presentations. Lehmen & McKiel. St. Paul's United Church, 123 Main St. E., Milton. 905-878-4732. $30, 4%o(st).

Saturday January 14


- 8:00: Opera Ontario. Great Singers. St. Mary's Basilica. $35.


Sunday January 15

- 2:00: Coleman LeRoux & Clif Peter. New Dance. The Kudelka-Taylor Project. It's All Right. Also with: Nick. Teens: Heterosexual Duets; Soudain, L'hiver; Soudain, L'hiver; Soudain, L'hiver; Soudain, L'hiver. 88 Dal­housie St., Brantford. 519-758-8090. 800-265-0710. $44.50, $26(st).

- 10:00pm: Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts. The Fabulous Crescendos. Celebrating the centenarians of this past century including Bing Crosby, Perry Como, Pat Benatar, Bee Gees, Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra. Call for ticket prices. For complete run see music theatre listings.

FEBRUARY 7 2006

— 12:30: UW0 Faculty of Music. 12:30
Fridays Series. Duet: Stephen Fox, clarinet; Ellen Meyer, keyboard & Laura Jones, cella. Von Kunster Hall, 1151 Richmond St., Lon-
don. 519-661-3767. Free.
— 8:00: Folk Under the Clock. Oscar Lopez, Guitar. Market Hall Theatre, 336 George St. N., Peterborough. 705-743-
— 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. L'Est. Found. & Found. Mozart: Oboe Concerto. Summer Music Society. 57 Young St. W., Water-
loo. 519-886-1773. 25, $25 (sen), $15 (st).
— 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Birthday! Mozart: Oboe Concerto; Brahms: Symphony #1. James Mason, oboe; Alastair Willis, conduc-
tor. The Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 506-265-8977. 115-950.
— 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Quartet. Mozart's Birthday! 4 Quartets K.159, K.574, K.174, K.176. Douglas Perry, viola & others. Music Room, 57 Young St. W., Water-
loo. 519-886-1773. 25, $20, $15.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 01

— 12:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Festival of the City of Kawartha Lakes. Glenn Crombie Theatre, Fleming College, 200 Albert St. S., Lind-

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 02

— 2:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Festival of the City of Kawartha Lakes. Glenn Crombie Theatre, Fleming College, 200 Albert St. S., Lind-

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 02

— 8:00: McMaster Celebrity Concert Series. Valerie Tryon, Piano. Convocation Hall, 120 Main St. W., Hamilton. 905-525-
— 8:00: Opera Without Words. Performers: Norms, translator. Dec. 1-3: 7:30. Dec. 2: 3:00; Dec. 4: 9:00 & 10:00. Man-
sstage, 1613 Central Park Dr., Brampton. 905-784-2800. 47.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 03

— 2:00: Opera Ontario. Great Singers Recital Series. Isabel Bayrakdarian, soprano; Russell Braun, baritone. Hamilton Place, 50 Main St. W., Hamilton. 905-526-5566. $25-190.
— 2:30: Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Symphonies. Beethoven: Oboe Concerto; Brahms: Symphony #1. James Mason, oboe; Alastair Willis, conduc-
tor. The Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 506-265-8977. 115-950.
— 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Lost and Found. Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in e. James Mason, oboe; Alastair Willis, conduc-
tor. The Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 506-265-8977. 115-950.
— 8:00: Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Lost and Found. Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in e. James Mason, oboe; Alastair Willis, conduc-
tor. The Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 506-265-8977. 115-950.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 04


SATURDAY FEBRUARY 05

— 2:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Opera Without Words. Music by Rossini, Berl-
— 2:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Fandango. Music by Mozart, Haydn & others. James Mason, oboe; Alastair Willis, conduc-

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 06

— 12:30: UWO Faculty of Music. 12:30

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 07

— 2:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Opera Without Words. Music by Rossini, Berl-
— 2:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Fandango. Music by Mozart, Haydn & others. James Mason, oboe; Alastair Willis, conduc-

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 08

— 2:30: McMaster Free Lunchtime Con-
— 12:30: McMaster Free Lunchtime Con-

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LISTINGS

Jazz Clubs

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*January 30 10am & 2pm: Toronto International Chamber Music Festival (Tryptych), Piano master class with Felicitas Kail, St. Andrew's United Church, 117 Bloor st. East. Please forward resume to by December 15/05 to info@tryptych.org $100 participant’s fee includes $40 ticket to Jan 29 5pm recital (see daily listings); $25 auditor’s fee.


*February 2 6pm: The Glenn Gould School. Chamber music master class with Donald Weilerstein, RCM, 80 Croatia St. 416-408-2824. Free. *Please call to confirm*.

*February 3 10am: The Glenn Gould School. Violin master class with Donald Weilerstein, RCM, 80 Croatia St. 416-408-2824. Free. *Please call to confirm*.

*February 4 2pm: The Glenn Gould School. Chamber music master class with Felicitas Kail, St. Andrew's United Church, 117 Bloor st. East. Please forward resume to by December 15/05 to info@tryptych.org $100 participant’s fee includes $40 ticket to Jan 29 5pm recital (see daily listings); $25 auditor’s fee.

*February 8-9: Weilerstein. ACM, 90 Croatia St. 416-408-2824. Free. *Please call to confirm*.


*February 8, 11, 18: Royal Conservatory of Music. Vocal jam session: one large group, coached. Secretaria de Samba. Workshops for both viols and recorders, led by Joelle Morton, 1570 Yonge St. 416-421-0779. *PLEASE VERIFY LOCATION & TIME*

*February 13, 24, 25 2:00 U of T Faculty of Music. Vocal master class with Charles Sayce, jazz trumpet/world music. Room 103, Edward Johnson Bldg, 80 Queen’s Park, 416 978-3744. Free.

*February 16 1pm-4pm: Music Gallery. Workshop on the Balkans. Players at all levels of experience can be accommodated. Location tba. RSVP by December 3 to 416-786-8610 or bm129@columbia.edu $50 (FMCA member), $60 (non-member).

*February 16 1pm-4pm: Music Gallery. State of the Art Part 2. Workshop for emerging composers with the Madawaska String Quartet, St. George the Martyr Church, 197 John. 416-204-1080. PWYC.


*February 23 8:00: 13th Annual Early Music Conference. Early music for both viols and recorders, led by Jodie Morton, viols. Lansing United Church, 49 Bogart Ave. 416 778-7777. $20, members free.

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"How I met my Teacher"
personal reflections on formative relationships
compiled and edited by mJBuell
Bassoonist, Nadina Mackie Jackson

My parents were never directly involved in finding a teacher for me. My Dad played cowboy songs on the guitar, and sang in a quiet true voice, but only rarely. We were a rather silent and bookish family, living far from the city. As writers, ranchers and log home builders, they were somewhat dubious about the whole idea of learning the bassoon, but I was a stubborn wee lass.

I heard a woodwind quintet concert and overcame my habitual shyness to ask the bassoonist about his instrument. I found it intriguing, particularly the quirky sound he produced (his principal instrument was the tuba). This man became my junior high school band teacher. I started on the flute and he requested a bassoon from the Prince George school board.

There were no bassoon teachers in the interior of B.C. There were not even any bassoons until 1973 when the school board finally purchased new instruments, including an unexpectedly fine plastic bassoon.

We lived 30 miles from Prince George, in the woods beside a lake, completely off the city service grid. My Dad drove us to and from school every day except when the snow drifts eradicated our road. When we returned home at night, I would try to practise with gloves on until the house warmed up, but my plastic bassoon would shrink with the cold and the keys wouldn't move until the fire had warmed the house. By then it was time to go to bed. In the summer, I was sent outside to serenade the mosquitoes. I began staying in town with friends, just so that I could practise late at the high school.

My incredible band teacher, Mr. Gary Hartley, inspired and motivated me, but as a trumpet player could not help with reeds.

I contacted the principal bassoonist in the Vancouver Symphony, Roland Small, and traveled 500 miles once per month to take a lesson with him. The lessons were $10, and the reeds cost another $10 each (he couldn't be bothered to teach such a raw beginner how to make reeds). There was one flight per day ($50) between Prince George and Vancouver. I'd have supper at the Hotel Vancouver, take the shuttle bus back to the airport, and sleep on a bench, waiting for the plane home in the morning.

Roland was a somewhat withdrawn teacher. But he played the first solo that I ever heard on the bassoon (Telemann f minor sonata) and I found the music thrilling. He was apologetic about his performance which I found baffling.

After high school I went to the University of British Columbia. As luck would have it, there was a new principal bassoonist in the symphony and his name was Christopher Millard. We had the same birthday, and we were not that far apart in age, with me...

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being 16 and him 22. This wonderful teacher spent hours working on my playing and showing me everything possible about reeds.

Christopher is the person that I think of when anyone asks about my first teacher. If he had time after our lessons at the University, he’d drive me home, stopping to buy me a big bowl of borcht on the way. When I tried to repay him, he’d laugh and say “Just make sure that you take your own students out to lunch when you grow up.” I admired everything about him, his gorgeous sound and inventive musicality, his energy and kindness.

After two years, I was lucky enough to be admitted to the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, where I studied with both Bernard Garfield (principal of the Philadelphia Orchestra) and with Christopher’s own teacher, Sol Schoenbach.

I am having the best time of my life teaching now. I was startled this summer at the International Reed Conference when several players told me I was their role model. I still don’t know exactly what they meant, but I can see a burning intensity about phrasing and detail, and to stop worrying about not having all the other answers.

It is now 30 years since I first met Christopher. We have stayed close and he was a member of the Caliban Quartet for seven years. He has always been a powerful bel canto voice in our bassoon world. His whole ethos of resonance and expression is a continual inspiration. I cannot think of anyone more important in my development as a bassoonist.

What advice would you give to someone who is looking for a music teacher for themselves, or for a younger person?

Bassoon students generally start much later than most other instrumentalists, and can take an independent role in finding a teacher. The student can research the performances and recordings of the potential teacher before they meet. In the company of a teacher a student will know quite quickly if they feel both safe and inspired to work. Sometimes it’s necessary to have the wrong teacher to really understand what you need. And it is even more important for students to realize that they are giving something very valuable to their teachers.

Nadina Mackie Jackson will be performing...with the Caliban Quartet & Musica Franca in the upcoming “Great Holiday Mega-Launch” (Dec. 7, 7:30 pm, The Great Hall);
She will also give a talk, “The Bassoonist and the Microphone” playing excerpts from her solo recordings (Jan. 14; Gary Armstrong Woodwinds, 2pm);
Caliban 7 performs, presented by Performing Arts York Region (Jan. 20, 8pm, Thornhill Presbyterian Church);
Nadina performs Twelve Fantasias for Solo Bassoon by G. P. Telemann; the fourth in a series of benefit concerts. (concert i talk at the Arkell Schoolhouse in Guelph — proceeds will benefit the Guelph Symphony Orchestra, Jan. 28.)

Recent recordings include:
Caliban Does Christmas, with Vasily, Mary Lou Fallis, Bonnie Brett, Heather Bunnick, Guido Basso, Gasp, Alain Trudel, Brett Barlow & Friends (Arts York Region, Jan. 14, free);
Nadina’s solo performance of Twelve Fantasias for Solo Bassoon by G. P. Telemann; the first in a series of benefit concerts. (concert talk at the Arkell Schoolhouse in Guelph — proceeds will benefit the Guelph Symphony Orchestra, Jan. 28.)

MUSICAL LIFE:
GRACE NOTES

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra:
The Uprising (Nov. 17), and the Quietude (Nov. 18), close to 2000 schoolchildren and their teachers were treated to this engaging musical adventure story, told by actor Blair Williams, and gloriously saturated with the music of Purcell, Handel, and Marais. Children from kindergarten through grade 8 were delighted by the singing, the lighting, the lively tale of kings and music orphans struggling, and the opportunity to be close to the instruments while they listened.

The concert was repeated on Saturday Nov 19, also full of energy, for families. Tafelmusik has just released this on CD in English and French, packaged with a sampler of additional baroque delights.

‘Feliz Navidad...to ENJOY!!!
Tickets $10 and under, or FREE!
In the December/January Live Concert Listings, we counted at least 157 local events which are either free of charge, by free will donation, or where tickets cost $10 or less. Some of those $10 tickets are for students and seniors. Many presenters are now offering free admission to children under twelve, or in some cases for $5.

Recognition where due
Ontario Music Educators’ Association (OMEA) is proudly affiliated with CMEA/ACEM (Canadian Music Educators’ Association). At this year’s OMEA conference, Repertoire 2005, music educators, students, and those who contribute to music education were recognized with awards.

OMEA Award of Commendation
Dr. M. Kilian Mackay, Joe DeStefano. Student Scholarships ($500 scholarships for pursuing post-secondary studies) Brittany McLeod, Melissa Pogue, Alison Wong.

2006 CMEA/ACEM Performance Awards
Leslie Bell Award for Choir: The Canterbury M.S. Concert Choir (Ottawa), dir. Laurie Hamilton
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Toronto Musicians’ Association presents “Rhythmody”
The Music Education Committee is working on continuing to present our highly successful rhythm basics program in schools, primarily to grades 6, 7 and 8. Our primary goal is to help provide increased skill levels in music when students reach the Grade 9 program. The Committee believes that skills with rhythm are a basic requirement that would benefit from more support and a specific program in this age group. Over the past year or more, under the direction of music educator Jane Fair, a group of rhythm specialists has developed three approaches to rhythm which are fun, lively, and offer ways for teachers and students to understand rhythm as an innate skill. The approaches taken by our facilitators can be used as a warm up in later classes, as a change of pace, or as a full review of rhythm skills. The group works as a team integrating one set of approaches with the next and developing an ‘immersion’ which is an excellent support to the work of the music teacher. Please contact Jane Fair, M Music Ed, at janefair@sympatico.ca for further information.

Richard Moore
Instrument bank begins to play
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MUSICAL LIFE:
GRACE NOTES
cont’d
The Wilfred Harvey Award for Small Ensembles: Lisgar Collegiate String Ensemble (Ottawa), dir. Trudy Bradley.
www.cmeo.on.ca, www.musiceducationonline.org/cmea

NYOC Eliminates Tuition for 2006 Session
The National Youth Orchestra of Canada announced the elimination of tuition fees for their 2006 session. Now entering its 46th year, the NYOC is dedicated to the discovery and training of young Canadian musicians. The elimination of tuition fees marks a significant achievement in the NYOC’s mission of providing the best possible orchestral training for youth based solely on merit rather than financial circumstances.

The NYOC is currently accepting applications for auditions for the 2006 Orchestra at www.nyoc.org. The deadline for applications is December 9, 2005.

Rolling Stones sponsor first-ever Musician “Teacher of the Year” Award
First Recipient Receives $10,000 and a Trip to the JUNO Awards!
The deserving recipient of the exciting award is Norman McIntosh, esteemed music teacher at Confederation Secondary School in Val Caron, Ontario. This new initiative of MusicCan, the CARAS Music Education Program, recognizes dedicated music teachers who work diligently to keep music alive for young Canadians.

The Award pays tribute to the accomplishments of one individual teacher who has effected students’ lives while contributing to the advancement of community music. Nominees must exemplify the MusicCan mandate to enlighten, empower and elevate. For information on the MusicCan Teacher of the Year Award: www.carasonline.ca.

GRACE NOTES welcomes brief information from individuals and organizations whose initiatives make more music more accessible to more people. Please share what you know about discounted ticketing, outreach projects, donations, scholarships, and other acts of musical philanthropy. musicallife@thewholenote.com.

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The Board, staff and members of the Toronto Musicians’ Association send musical Season’s Greetings to all WholeNote readers, and we encourage all to attend concerts, clubs, theatres, and all the many musical offerings of the season. We also encourage you to attend performances year round to help support the extraordinary quality and diversity of musical offerings in the city. We thank you, our audience, for your support in 2005, and wish all a Happy New Year full of music and happiness.

Toronto Musicians’ Association presents “Rhythmody”
The Music Education Committee is working on continuing to present our highly successful rhythm basics program in schools, primarily to grades 6, 7 and 8. Our primary goal is to help provide increased skill levels in music when students reach the Grade 9 program. The Committee believes that skills with rhythm are a basic requirement that would benefit from more support and a specific program in this age group. Over the past year or more, under the direction of music educator Jane Fair, a group of rhythm specialists has developed three approaches to rhythm which are fun, lively, and offer ways for teachers and students to understand rhythm as an innate skill. The approaches taken by our facilitators can be used as a warm up in later classes, as a change of pace, or as a full review of rhythm skills. The group works as a team integrating one set of approaches with the next and developing an ‘immersion’ which is an excellent support to the work of the music teacher. Please contact Jane Fair, M Music Ed, at janefair@sympatico.ca for further information.

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Book Shelf

by Pamela Margles

I try... but I simply can't cover every worthy book that comes out. But here are a few I don't want to miss.

I haven't had a chance to see the new edition of The Rough Guide to Classical Music (Rough Guides). But this is usually the most interesting music guide around, offering sensible recording suggestions. Visual Music: Synaesthesia in Art and Music Since 1900 (Thames & Hudson), the illustrated catalogue of an exhibition on the direct relationship between abstract art and music, especially intrigues me. And I would be very excited to receive Company of Pianos by Richard Burnett (Finchcocks Press), the new illustrated catalogue of the collection of one of the most delightfully eccentric museums in the world, Finchcocks.

I must admit I failed utterly with Blair Tindall's much-praised Mozart in the Jungle: Sex, Drugs and Classical Music (Atlantic). I just couldn't get far enough into her self-serving saga of exploits in the world of classical music to figure out why I should care.

Do let us know if there is a book you think others would enjoy. And if you have comments on anything you have read here, by all means share them with us.

With Billie
By Julia Blackburn
Pantheon
367 pages; $35.00

British writer Julia Blackburn's book is based on a series of interviews with key people in Billie Holiday's life. They were made by a woman named Linda Kuehl, who, after failing to turn them into a biography, committed suicide in 1979. After struggling to shape Kuehl's disorganized but brilliant interviews into a narrative, Blackburn, fortunately, opted for a documentary in which people are free to tell their own stories about Billie. She describes what she heard on the tapes, points out the contradictions, and skillfully supplements them with new material.

There is violence and cruelty here, but always directed towards Holiday, never from her. Throughout, she remains a magnetic, spellbinding presence, and, best of all, as the incomparable musician she was.

Calling on the Composer: A Guide to European Composer Houses and Museums
Julie Anne and Stanley Sadie
Yale University Press
449 pages, photos; $60.00 US

The title of this guidebook is slightly worded to allow buildings where a composer never even set foot, like the extraordinary Schoenberg Centre in Vienna. But the most exciting entries tend to be actual homes of composers.

It's one thing to read that Verdi slept right beside his desk and piano, another to see it. The necessary omission of Massenet's chateau in France, recently closed to visitors by the family, underlines the 'fragile legacy' of these sites. But to be able to include Handel House, a wonderful new museum which the authors helped establish in Handel's London home, shows what effort it takes to reclaim and maintain these sites.

Entries are listed by composer. There are maps, bibliographies and a fine index. The only disappointment is that the rather dark and grainy photos fail to offer much detail.

There would be no-one better in the world to do this book than the intrepid husband-and-wife team of musicologist-critics, Stanley and Julie Anne Sadie. Sadly, this turned out to be the last book Stanley Sadie worked on, since he died this past year. But, happily, this splendid book of treasures serves as a fitting tribute to a life passionately devoted to music.

London: A Musical Gazetteer
By Lewis Foreman and Susan Foreman
Yale University Press
364 pages, illustrated; paper $30.00 US

"The music lover is more generously provided for in London than in any other city in the world," write Lewis and Susan Foreman in their guide to the musical riches of London.

They describe sites first by function - theatres and halls, churches, music schools and museums, graves and memorials, recording studios and publishers - and then by musicians associated with them. They include walking tours, and a list of compositions that relate to London.

Their dispassionate, trustworthy voices are complemented by delightful interpolations like an interview with a composer who lived near the Crystal Palace before it burned down in 1936.

Mistakes and omissions are inevitable, yet by 'Jonathan Miller's gangland Il Trovatore' at the ENO, I suspect they mean Rigoletto. In discussing the new British Library, why not mention the extraordinary display of music manuscripts and books, well worth a trip in itself?

The Foreman's have amassed such an amazing amount of material, I would not dream of going to London without this book.

Though heavy, it is well-bound, and clearly laid out, with an excellent index, splendid pictures from historical prints and documents, and a useful bibliography.

Words on Music: Essays in Honour of Andrew Porter on the Occasion of his 75th Birthday
edited by David Rosen and Claire Brook
Pendragon Press
360 pages, illustrated; $60.00 US

Andrew Porter writes the most elegant and lucid music criticism around, so it is appropriate that each essay in this collection published in his honour upholds his standards.

Apart from affectionate tributes by Stanley Sadie and Joseph Kerman, these papers mainly deal with opera, since it consumes so much of Porter's attention. The most compelling relate their subjects, and even their methods, to Porter's talents as editor, translator, scholar, librettist and opera director.

Peter Branscombe surveys the literary legacy of The Magic Flute. Julian Budden discusses Don Carlos, whose librettist Porter has translated. David Drew's critical observations on Kurt Weill's early operas inspire the Porterian dictum, "The mood of the hour, the bearing of an audience from moment to moment, these are not, in the normal course of events, scientifically verifiable factors; yet they are legitimate concerns of the responsible and disinterested reviewer."

Jeremy Noble reports on Porter's protests on behalf of 'imaginative common sense and the composer's intentions' in opera productions, efforts which 'involve fighting a losing battle against directorial arrogance and infamy.' Appendices list Porter's writings and translations. There is, unfortunately, no index. But the texts are well documented, and enlivened by three brief musical works dedicated to Porter by Kerman, George Perle and Elliott Carter.

Andrew Porter is directing The Magic Flute for the Canadian Opera Company on December 16, 18 and 20 in the MacMillan Theatre.
The two highlights of the show are servicing an impressive, eccentric stage and alternately bare themselves while wearing military garb, beachwear, etc. The extended third act monologue. Tristan is not one of them. Nor is it ever likely to be, this late in his career. But on this greatly-anticipated studio recording, his first of the complete opera, Domingo is Tristan – a passionate, lyrical Wagnerian hero. Lapses in German enunciation in no way intrude upon his inexcusable ability to get the meaning across in the most dramatically intense passages, like the extended third act monologue.

It is equally unlikely that Rolando Villazón and Ian Bostridge will ever appear on an opera stage in the roles they sing here, brief as they are. Villazón’s gleaming Italianate tenor makes for a thrilling, but decidedly unweatherbeaten, sailor. Bostridge charms as the plaintive shepherd. The exciting young Swedish soprano Nina Stemme, a Domingo protégé, combines Isolde’s dark powers with luminous vulnerability. Her rapturous Liebestod (Mild und leise) provides a memorable ending to the opera.
tunately have not survived as the staples of the late baroque repertoire. Ms. Gauvin chose to sing two of the more popular examples, L’Hyèvre by Joseph Bodin de Boismortier and Orphée by Nicolas Clerambault. Her voice receives wonderful support from the period ensemble Les Boreades. Additional instrumental fragments complete the illusion of stumbling upon a Parisian salon one wintry night circa 1730. The listening instructions are as follows: Make a cup of hot cocoa, choose your most comfortable chair, dim the lights, close your eyes and allow the voice of Ms. Gauvin to transport you there. Repeat.

Robert Tomas

Concert Note: Karina Gauvin is one of the featured soloists with Les Violons du Roy in a program of Bach Christmas Cantatas on December 16 at Roy Thomson Hall.

L’Heure Exquise
Marie-Nicole Lemieux
Naïve Y 5022

“L’heure exquise” - the title says it all. I have just spent slightly over 60 minutes rejoicing in this exquisite new release featuring the remarkable Canadian contralto Marie-Nicole Lemieux singing a program of melodies or songs to a piano accompaniment thoughtfully performed by the American Daniel Blumenthal.

The four composers featured here bring clearly different approaches and stylistic elements to their settings of the words of such great French poets as Clément Marot, Paul Verlaine, Charles Baudelaire, and Victor Hugo. Francesco Sammartini’s more Wagnerian harmonic sensibilities to Reynaldo Hahn’s clear and transparent lines to the more central European colours of Georges Enescu’s music, my ear was continually intrigued. This is romantic music from Paris after all, with all its references to true love, pining and anguish.

Lemieux and Blumenthal capture the inherent moods and gestures of these well composed, though per-

haps not monumental, works.

Lemieux’s performance of Claude Debussy’s Fêtes Galanées II: Les ingénies, Le Faune and Colloque sentimental made time stand still. I so love these songs for their co-existing simplicity and depth. Debussy’s setting of Paul Verlaine’s poetry is sung here with an exact balance, a clear diction and a mature musicality. The sensitive performances create a moving musical moment that I shall long remember.

The excellent production and sound qualities, and bilingual French and English liner notes aid to create an almost perfect release. I cannot think of a finer recording to give or receive.

Tina Kilk

Opera Prohibita
Cecilia Bartoli
DECCA 475 6924

Cecilia Bartoli, the quintessential Rossini mezzo, has been pushing back her recording projects through time. Mozart, Haydn, Vivaldi and Handel all have at least one Bartoli CD featuring their repertoire.

This new release brings together arias from operas by Handel, Scarlatti and Caldara. What they have in common is the era in which they were written and performed. A decade-long Papal ban on public entertainment left Romans with only private opportunities from 1700 to 1710 to hear this magnificent music.

Bartoli brings her trademark intensity to each piece. Her conviction never falters and her execution is unerring. Every aria is remarkable for her technical and interpretive skill. She delivers mercilessly fast runs, large leaps and intensely emotional phrasing at any speed. She drives through music like a high performance Italian sports car - better actually. Were it not for the fact that many have seen and heard her sing live one might suspect this singing is almost too good to be true.

Some of these works may be new to Bartoli fans who have enjoyed her many recordings of 19th century repertoire. However, Handel’s

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Bachianas Brasileiras
Complete Edition
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Available December 13th

The Aradia Ensemble perform excerpts from their new CD of Sammartini symphonies on Dec. 4th at the Great Hall in Toronto.

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Back to Ad Index
familiar “Lascia Chi’io Pianga” does appear under a different title and from a different opera, reminding us how freely Baroque composers moved these things around.

In the mid 1990s one of Barrell’s record producers mused on where her career would take her. Perhaps we’d see her working with Handel and other earlier composers? That proved to be an accurate prediction.

Opera Prohibita is the latest evidence for the argument that vocal perfection is achievable.

Alex Buran

Winterreise
Russell Braun; Carolyn Maule
CBC Records MVCD 1171

Wilhelm Müller’s poems portray a youth, disappointed in love, who sets out on a “winter journey” down the road “from which no traveler returns.” Schubert’s 24-song cycle from Müller is morbid, romantic, and self-dramatizing, but for all that a powerful tragic expression. At 26, the composer knew he himself was dying. Hearing the songs performed is an intense experience; they form a wide gamut and a deepening succession, and there isn’t a clinker in the bunch.

This Canadian entry in a crowded Winterreise CD market was a brave undertaking, but the result is superb. Russell Braun’s voice has matured in the last few seasons and seems exactly right for the piece. He and Carolyn Maule are both products of the late Greta Kraus’s lieder courses in Toronto, and their intelligence, warm feeling and attention to detail show how well they absorbed that experience. The baritone’s applications of rubato are sparing, and all the more effective for that reason. He is especially strong when Schubert’s vocal line drives wildly over close to two octaves in a single phrase, as happens several times. When, at the end of “Auf dem Flusse”, the piano takes over the main tune because the singer/hero seems choked up, both artists convey the connection perfectly.

Maule has an extraordinary grasp of the images in the piano part. The first introduction sets the mood (slightly faster than most performers) of a determined journey; a weathervane whirls crazily; a buzzard hovers in high register; or, in the bass, dogs growl from a distant village; staccatos are teardrops in the snow; sentimental chords become a keyboard postlude to “Der Lindenbaum” and the last song, “Der Leiermann.” In Maule’s hands the music is so vividly realized, my only wish was that in a few places the piano responses to the voice were more prominent in the mix.

Altogether this release is an occasion for cheers.

John Beckwith

THEATRE OF EARLY MUSIC EXCLUSIVELY WITH BIS

JAMES BOWMAN DANIEL TAYLOR
with RALPH FIENNES

“The visionary eloquence of the brilliant countertenor Daniel Taylor as he now turns his attention to Conducting his ensemble of virtuoso musicians in performances that are honest and undeniably true…” (The TIMES, UK)

Theatre of Early Music in Concert
in a new work by Choreographer James Kudelka and the new Dance Ensemble Coleman/Lemieux
Vivaldi: Stabat Mater
January 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 2006
at the Salle Pierre-Mercure, Montreal

Theatre of Early Music in Concert
with star Soprano Emma Kirkby
Pergolesi: Stabat Mater
February 22nd, 2006, St-Leon de Westmount, Montreal
as part of the Montreal High Lights Festival
February 26th, 2006, Trinity St-Pauls, Toronto

Contact 514 982-2525
or e-mail TEMADMIN@HOTMAIL.COM

Upcoming engagements with Daniel Taylor include
Messiah with the San Francisco Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Deutsche Philharmonie and the Munich Radio Orchestra

AVAILABLE IN DECEMBER AT GREGORIAN, HMV, ARCHAMBAULT AND ALL FINE RECORD STORES
I listen to them tell me about their
day, “Leteninti” will surround us. I
will arrive home from tours, carry-
ing piles of gifts for all of my loved
ones, and streams of “Le Retour”
shall drift through the door to tell
them I am back.

The duo (Susie Napper and Mar-
garet Little) has had to complete and
reconstruct some of the pieces on this
recording in the style of Ste
Colombe, because parts of the manu-
script were incomplete. These
moments are undetectable to the
modern listener’s ear. The sound
that is created by Les Voix Hu-
maines goes directly to the core
of the music and does due tribute to
the composer’s brilliance and depth
of character. The players occasion-
ally use a technique which involves
a wide vibrato as ornamentation,
and the resonance which conse-
quently emanates from the instru-
ments is heart-stopping.

There is no way to avoid loving
these discs. As you buy them, you
will not hear parts of “Tombeau Les
Regrets”. You can tell me how you
feel about the music yourself—you’ll
hear me coming, I will be blasting
Concert XLVI “L’estoné” if you
tell me you aren’t pleased with it.

Gabrielle McLaughlin

Concert note: Soprano Gabrielle
McLaughlin and her I Furiosi Ba-
roque Ensemble join forces with the
Caliban bassoon quartet and Aradia
in a multiple CD launch party on
December 4 at the Great Hall. I
Furiosi presents “Siren Tears” with
guest soprano Katherine Hill at
Calvin Church on January 20.

Francois Couperin:  
Keyboard Music, Volume 3
Angela Hewitt  
Hyperion CDA67520

Angela Hewitt’s third and final CD
of Francois Couperin’s Keyboard
music is a full-spectrum experience.
The featured work is Book III of
the Treizième Ordre (13th order).
It is a whimsical romp through a ver-
table showcase of "characters".
In this case they are the follies of
the human condition: Virginity, Ardo,
Hope, Fidelity, Perseverance, Jeal-
ousy and Freneticism to name but
a few. The visual imagery of the ear-
ly eighteenth century masquerade
ball is so vivid that Couperin could
easily have been cast as a modern-day
film composer.

The pièce de résistance, in my
opinion, actually takes second
billing on this release. It’s a selection
of three pieces from the next set
the 14th order. The contrast in mood
is decidedly abrupt—the sobriety,
bordering on melancholy makes for
an intensity of emotion that can only
be described as sublime. This is an
unexpected thrill from Couperin.

The balance of the album is com-
prised of a series of singles from
Books I, II and III. They line up out
of sequence, yet they are skillfully
curated by the artist.

Angela Hewitt has penned exten-
sive liner notes going into great de-
scription and narrative behind
each of the cuts on the album. Al-
though it’s kind of fun to discover
her thoughts, most of her comments
seem to verge on voyeurism into her
imagination. I would urge the listener
to allow their own visual imagery to
spill onto their inner cinema.

Heidi McKenzie

Seasons’ Greetings From
Vivaldi
Ann Rachelin; Polish Chamber
Orchestra; Jerzy Maksymiuk
Fun With Music CMSCD 3004

Baroque Adventure – The
Quest for Arundo Donax
Blair Williams; Tafelmusik Baro-
que Orchestra
Tafel Kids/Analekta AN 2
9832-3

Narrated by Ann Rachelin, “Season’s
Greetings from Vivaldi” is a good
way to introduce children to clas-
sical music. To go along with Vival-
di’s Four Seasons, Rachelin has cre-
ated a series of stories about life in
the Italian countryside which will
especially appeal to younger listen-
ers of the ages 4-10. The Polish
Chamber Orchestra wonderfully
performs the concertos, making it

found only in France. In their quest
Frances and Edward Purcell must
journey through Venice, Italy and
Versailles, France traveling by car-
rage, boat and... carpet? The won-
derful Tafelmusik Baroque Orches-
tra performs the music of Vivaldi, Purcell, Marais and many other
great composers of the time to ac-

company them on their travels. (Unlike the bilingual CD, I will not repeat this in French.)

Ezra Perlman

Concert Note: Tafelmusik presents three programs over the next two months: "English Baroque: The Thames Revisited" at Trinity St. Paul’s December 1-4 and at the George Weston Recital Hall on December 6; “The Intimate Baroque” January 19-22 at Trinity St. Paul’s; and “Amadeo: Mozart in Italy” February 3-5 and February 7 at the George Weston Recital Hall.

Fireworks
Montreal Consort
Toronto Consort
ATMA ACD2 2367

This live concert recording of Handel’s Musick for the Royal Fireworks, written for King George II in 1749, for a huge number of loud instruments – trumpets, horns, oboes, bassoons, and drums – sparkles with energy.

Conductor Matthias Maute ignites the fuses of this volatile ensemble with explosive results. Although not particularly delicate or especially refined, this is a fiery performance. The majestic ceremonial movements, the Ouverture, La Réjouissance, and Menuet II, alternate with contrasting lyrical dances. This is a brilliant rendition. With thundering drums, trumpet fanfares, and an abundance of martial instruments, the musical fireworks are spectacular.

The second part of this recording is Vecchi’s Les Folles Nuits de Sienne (The Night Games of Siena), a madrigal comedy (1604).

The distantly-recorded voices of the Toronto Consort are at times overwhelmed by the numerous accompanying instruments. The onomatopoetic hunt in La Caccia d’Amore, the Spanish style in Initiatione del Spagnoletto, the drunken German in Initiatione del Tedesco treading dangerously close to actual drunkenness, and the fa-la-la playfulness of So ben mi ch’a bon tempo are highlights. I would like to have heard more of the voices in the balance however.

Minimal program notes, no texts or translations, but there is a bonus CD of highlights from the ATMA catalog.

Frank Nakashima

Concert note: The Toronto Consort presents “The Monteverdi Christmas Vespers” December 9 & 10 at Trinity St. Paul’s.

Vivaldi - 5 Violin Concertos
Viktoria Mullova; II Giardino Armonico; Giovanni Antonini
Onyx ONYX 4001

Giuseppe Valentina
Ensemble 415; Chiara Banchini
Zig-Zag Territoires ZZT 2020801

Giuseppe Valentina (1681-1753) was a Florentine composer, violinst and poet, hardly known today even to the most hard-core of Baroque music enthusiasts. Six concertos from Valentina’s opus VII are recorded here, and what a welcome discovery they are to me! Charles Burney, who said that the neglect of Valentina’s works had been “without any loss to the public, or injustice to the author,” was quite mistaken as far as I’m concerned.

The CD features five concertos, each with a different violin soloist, and a concerto for four violins which can stand proudly alongside those of better-known Baroque masters. The unusual turns of phrase and twists of harmony for which Valentina was known are evident here, but so is the influence of Corelli, with whom he may have studied.

Hat’s off to Chiara Banchini and her Ensemble 415, who play with elegance, flexibility and spontaneity, and without sacrificing those qualities for the sake of speed in the faster movements. In a world where ‘prestissimo’ often seems to be the only ‘fast’ tempo in Baroque music, I appreciate the distinctions between allegro, vivace and presto or allegro assai which are made here, both in tempo and in personality. And all the chiaroscuro necessary to this music is beautifully provided throughout, with exquisite ornamentation, extraordinary ‘pianos’, and creative yet tasteful colour changes and silences.

My only quibble is a wish for some liner notes – the booklet is mostly promo for the label. That aside, congratulations are due to Zig-Zag Territoires for this innovative and fresh offering.

Alison Melville

Concert note: Alison Melville’s Ensemble Polaris presents “Hello Winter!” at the Edward Day Gallery on December 21.

Vivaldi - Concerti con molti strumenti Vol 2
Europa Galante; Fabio Biondi
Virgin 5 45723 2

The most energetic and flamboyant of all the period instrument orchestras around today come from Italy. None are more famous or accomplished than II Giardino Armonico and Europa Galante, both of which have recently released discs of Vivaldi concertos. II Giardino Armonico is here paired with the violinist Viktoria Mullova, not an artist usually associated with Vivaldi, let alone period-performance Vivaldi.

But Mullova is no Nigel Kennedy; playing on a Strad with guts strings and a baroque bow, she sounds not only fully assimilated into contemporary baroque performance practice, but has a style and energy of her own to bring to it. Not one note here is out of place – and Mullova has many notes to reckon with, as in the earthy and almost wild Concerto in D Major. Mollova described this recording as sometimes sounding “more like gypsy music than Vivaldi” and the music “really does seem to dance. The orchestra, under Giovanni Antonini’s direction, brings the same exhilarating sense of attack and rhythm, while matching her virtuosity and beauty of tone.

On the Europa Galante disc, Fabio Biondi leads his soloists on a variety of instruments, including himself on violin, in a generous selection of eight concertos. Biondi’s sound is leaner than Mullova and
feels more like part of the ensemble than a true soloist, an effect also achieved by the recording engineering. Biondi leads and plays at exhilarating speeds and drives the music to the extent that occasionally he and his thirteen other soloists create raw, visceral sounds and stretch the rhythms in a way one rarely finds in Mullova's spotless yet equally fiery playing. Listen to the opening Concerto Grosso to hear how the whole orchestra works together as a fully integrated ensemble where each musician is also a superb soloist, or the Concerto in B major to hear how incredibly in sync the four violin soloists are in this fiendishly difficult piece. The selection of concertos on both recordings is wonderful, revealing how many works of the highest order by Vivaldi exist.

Seth Estrin

Concert Note: Viktoria Mullova plays Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 4 with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra January 18 and 19.

Bach - Brandenburg Concertos
Cerchio Italiano; Rinaldo Alessandrini
Naïve OP 30412

Once upon a time, long ago, the double LP of the Brandenburgs by Pablo Casals and the Marlboro Festival Orchestra (some 65 players strong!) ruled supreme in the record world. Then along came Karl Ristenpart and the Saar Chamber Orchestra with their lighter touch, on Nonesuch. And so through the many years, you'd either align yourself in the Ristenpart camp, or remain loyal to Casals.

How far we have come! There have been so many releases, re-releases and re-packaging of these concerti since the mid 1980's that one knows not where to turn for definitive recordings from among numerous offerings. How then, to make a logical choice?

Let us look at the new CD from Concerto Italiano under Rinaldo Alessandrini. I'm pleased to tell you (from the perspective of one in the Ristenpart camp) that this set on Naïve is among the best that is available.

In addition, the set includes a DVD. The film shows the musicians rehearsing and recording, and some sumptuous slow pans around the baroque interior of Palazzo Farnese in Rome. Much of the video is occupied by an interview with Alessandrini, wherein he speaks at length about his belief in the rightness of the baroque style and Bach's undeniable genius. Finally, towards the end, we see the ensemble in a complete take, that being worth the whole 43 minutes.

As audio, it is flawless, as good as any of the period instrument purists. The notes tell of a grueling Italian/South American tour immediately prior to the recordings. They were certainly in fine form on their return. Of interest are special bonus tracks. The Sinfonia from cantata BWV 174, predecessor of the 3rd Brandenburg, is a fascinating study. That is also the case with the alternative cadenza from the 5th, included at the end of the concerto as we know it.

Notes are copious, in four languages, no less. The type isn't illegibly tiny, and as is fashionable, the recording equipment is detailed. Photographically a rather stiff full-face view of the Palazzo Farnese, plus a close-up of Alessandrini, seems all they had room for, discounting the cover with a (contrived?) image of a deer dawdling in the interior of a car park. But above all, this disc is about the music. You can safely retire your Brandenburg LP's for this set.

John Gray

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John Gray

CLASSICAL
AND BEYOND

Debussy - La Mer; La boîte à joujoux; Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune; Three Preludes (orchestrated by Colin Matthews)
Berlin Philharmoniker; Sir Simon Rattle
EMI 5 58045 2

Dvorak – Tone Poems
Berlin Philharmoniker; Sir Simon Rattle
EMI 5 58019 2

"A vocalist strong on the rich sounds of jazz, soul, blues and gospel. Open Your Eyes showcases...Taylor's promising future." - The Toronto Star

Richard Whiteman

All or Nothing at All
A stunning combination of jazz standards and originals, with bassist Brandi Disterheft and drummer Sly Jutras.
Debussy, one of the most influential and original composers of the 20th century, broke apart traditional values and forms with a burst of light revolutionized harmony, orchestral texture and colour. La Mer, his masterpiece, has been so extensively recorded that it would be easy to form prejudices, but Rattle's new recording is now one of the best. It is spontaneous, more relaxed than Karajan, a richly detailed and multi-layered reading aided by the virtuosity of his magnificent orchestra. The suitably sultry and languorous Prelude à l'apres-midi... offers beautiful flute playing by soloist Emmanuel Pahud and the lesser known "fills" are interesting, and make the disc well worth having.

Janos Gardonyi

The Liverpool born "wunderkind" Simon Rattle is one of the great musical success stories of the present era. Starting with minor conducting work in England, later taking over the Birmingham Symphony and after many assignments in England and the U.S.A., in 1999, at the age of 44, he was chosen by the Berlin Philharmonic as its Music Director, succeeding Claudio Abbado and the legendary Herbert von Karajan. Bernard Haitink has said of him "he has such an open mind and really incredible charisma" but more to the point, he has a great interest in all kinds of music. He is equally at home in the 19th century symphonic repertoire, period instrument Baroque, adventurous modern works, open and even jazz. These two recordings, one from the Romantic era and the other from French Impressionism, will give proof of this.

It is interesting to note that later in his life Dvorak abandoned his main influence, Brahms, and much to the dismay of critic Hanslick, turned more towards the prevailing influences of German Romanticism, Liszt and Wagner. He took an interest in program music, namely the "symphonic poem" originated by Liszt, but since he had an intense desire to express the folk idiom of his homeland he drew his inspiration from Czech ballads based on rather gruesome folk tales.

These are very fine performances. The Noon Witch is wonderfully structured, highly dramatic and intense. My favourite, The Wood Dove, is very moving with the opening funeral theme beautifully played on the cellos and later the cooing of the dove has a strange and menacing orchestral effect. The well known Water Goblin written in round form with a strongly rhythmic subject capable of many transformations and variations according to the mood of the rather frightening story, shows Dvorak's superb craftsmanship pointing towards Richard Strauss' Till Eulenspiegel.

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Janos Gardonyi
Nazi workers' movements and he learned how to draw people into even his most challenging music. But cruel turns of fate interrupted Wolpe's access to larger audiences. When the Nazis seized power in 1933, Wolpe was a triple target: a Marxist, a Jew, and a composer of degenerate music. He escaped to Palestine in 1934 and later emigrated to New York where he established links between experimentalists in the visual arts and music. Tragically, he was soon sidelined by Parkinson's disease.

Mode's CD of instrumental music from Wolpe's Palestine period is a very important document. Wolpe had time to work on ideas that had been put off from 1929 to 1933, ideas which ultimately had great impact on the joyous explosion of New York modernism. There's a full orchestral version of Passacaglia, plus the Concert for 9 Instruments, a chamber orchestra suite for Molière's Maladie Imaginaire, and two important chamber pieces. The performance and sound qualities live up to Mode's usual high standards.

Phil Ehrensaft

Dave Holland:
Live in Freiburg (DVD)
Dave Holland Quintet
Euroarts DVWV-JDHQN

This live performance by bassist Dave Holland's quintet, filmed in 1986 at the Zelt-Musik-Festival in Freiburg, offers an hour of stimulating improvised music. What was arguably the best of Holland's various quintets has Kenny Wheeler on trumpet and flugelhorn, Robin Eu-
Combine that front line with the rhythm team of Dave Holland and Marvin "Smitty" Smith and you have a winning combination. Holland may be a virtuoso musician but he's also a team player who never hogs the spotlight. The same can be said for "Smitty" Smith whose rhythmic pulse is infectious.

The sound recording and camera work are both first rate. The only possible improvement might have been the inclusion of interviews with the musicians.

Don Brown

**Stride**

Doug Riley; Tyler Yarema; John Roby

Marshmallow Records MMR031

In about ten year's time, stride piano will be celebrating its 100th birthday, but whether or not any grand production will be made commemorating its emergence from early ragtime roots remains to be seen. That doesn't mean that credit isn't given where credit is due.

With piano guru Doug Riley's latest release on Marshmallow Records, aptly titled "Stride", the art form pioneered by Fats Waller is authentically represented and is mercifully devoid of any trendy neo-swing hype of recent years.

Riley brings keyboard counterparts John Roby and Thunder Bay immigrant Tyler Yarema on board for an album of solo piano, duets and trios. The ambition undertaking, drawing on music originally written by Buchbinder for several of his previous film and broadcast projects. It is a blend of many musical influences including Middle Eastern and Klezmer - he also heads up the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band - but with a strong contemporary jazz content.

From the opening overture and throughout the entire album the writing is adventurous, colourful and dynamic - not to mention formidably intense and impressive contributions from Perry White, Peter Lutek and Pol Cousee on reeds, Stephen Donald on trombone and Levon Ichkanian on guitar. The hard driving rhythm section of Greg de Denus on piano, Bob Chilson and, on a couple of numbers, Roberto Occhipinti, on bass, plus Barry Romberg on drums, propels things along with a matching impetus as well as contributing some rewarding solos. In addition a string section is effectively added to the mix on some of the tracks.

It makes for demanding listening, not for the faint of heart, but gives the listener a consistently rewarding and emotional musical adventure.

Jim Galloway

Shurum Burum Jazz Circus

David Buchbinder

Monkfish Records CD0105

David Buchbinder is no newcomer on the scene, but this is the first CD under his own name and it is a very ambitious undertaking, drawing on music originally written by Buchbinder for several of his previous film and broadcast projects. It is a blend of many musical influences including Middle Eastern and Klezmer - he also heads up the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band - but with a strong contemporary jazz content.

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Jim Galloway

Raincoat Lake

Runcible Spoon

Independent (www.runciblespoontheband.com)

Many of us first heard the word, "runcible" in Edward Lear's famous 1871 poem, "The Owl and The Pussycat", and according to Webster's dictionary, a Runcible Spoon is a "kind of curved fork, often used for eating pickles" - no doubt a piece of cutlery reserved for the most archaic of place-settings. The musical ensemble Runcible Spoon may have chosen their moniker in order to describe their timeless and whimsical nature. The group has a reputation for tight acoustic arrangements, classically infused original works (some of it bordering on 12-tone experimentation) and clever re-workings of established material from a plethora of influences, embracing the worlds of jazz and cabaret, as well as material from the so-called "Great American Songbook".

The main original compositions (including contributions from local musicians bassist Andrew Downing and guitarist Tim Postgate) are presented with an innocence that is tempered with a kind of runaway melancholia. The members of Runcible Spoon include Pamela Bettger on viola, Monica Fedrigo on cello, Tanja Gill on piano, Julia Hambleton on clarinet and jazz vocalist/lyricist Leah State. Ms. State's soft, intimate and vulnerable delivery is the very heart and soul of this beautifully produced CD, as are the arranging, technical skills and composing contributions of all the members.

Highlights of "Raincoat Lake" include an evocative rendition of Kurt Weill's 'Joukali', Leah State's sumptuous vocal (on française) captures the drama of high German Cabaret, and also brings this gem of an art song kicking and screaming into the 21st century. The title track, Raincoat Lake is a disarming and witty composition, arranged to perfection by its author, clarinettist Julia Hambleton. Another stand-out is the original, Elephant, which features both lyrics and vocal performance by State. Her essential loneliness transcends the music, and goes right to the heart of the listener, bringing the rest of the exquisite ensemble along with her.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

The Ballad Artistry of Pat Lacroix

Pat Lacroix

Independent (www.patlacroix.com)

Pat Lacroix is a Toronto singer who has had an "on again, off again" musical career, and he has recorded this CD after an extended "off" period. Frankly, it shows. His singing, from both a technical standpoint, is not strong. His pitch is wonky at times and his tone is weak. However, what he lacks in technical finesse he makes up for in delivery. Age and experience count for a lot when putting across these types of songs - all ballads, mostly of the "loved and lost" variety. The average 20-year-old just wouldn't be able to bring the same depth of understanding that Mr. Lacroix brings to these songs. He also has a very strong delivery, which allows the lyrics and the melodies to come through on their own merits. It's refreshing to hear a singer who has sufficient faith in the material he's chosen to deliver it as written. It's not in the jazz tradition, but it is musical.

The fourteen tracks on the disc have a certain sameness to them, not just because they're all ballads, but because a similar format is followed on all of them, and there's very little variation in tempo, dynamics or instrumentation. So songs like "A Cottage for Sale", I'll Be Seeing You, and When Joanna Loved Me end up blending together in a pretty melancholy wash.

Excellent local jazz musicians veer this record away from the middle of the road it's heading down however. Frink Falco and Charles Mountford on piano and Mike Downes and Pat Collins, bass, carry most of the supporting duties, while guitarist Reg Schwager and the flugelhorn of choice, Guido Bassi, guest on three tracks.

Cathy Riches

Crazy 'Bout You

Bertie's In Paris

Independent

Mr. Lacroix's unique sense of place and timing is what makes this disc a very special one. It's refreshing to hear a singer who has sufficient faith in the material he's chosen to deliver it as written. It's not in the jazz tradition, but it is musical. The fourteen tracks on the disc have a certain sameness to them, not just because they're all ballads, but because a similar format is followed on all of them, and there's very little variation in tempo, dynamics or instrumentation. So songs like "A Cottage for Sale", I'll Be Seeing You, and When Joanna Loved Me end up blending together in a pretty melancholy wash.

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The beauty of the record lies in the calypso. “Vivace” only reinforces that bond. "Vivace" is a fantastic solo exercise that works on every conceivable level.

Tom Sekowski

New Nectar - New Music for Javanese Gamelan
Gamelan Madu Sari
Songlines CD SGL 24042 (www.festival.bc.ca)

The elegantly digitized picture of a section of a Javanese gong on the cover is an appropriate visual metaphor for the music inside - a contemporary take on the centuries-old Central Javanese gamelan (orchestra) tradition. Gamelan Madu Sari (formed in the wake of Expo '86) is the name of the set of instruments and, in this gamelan tradition, also the name of the group of musicians playing it (as well as singing with it).

The first such ensemble on the west coast of Canada, Gamelan Madu Sari has for over 19 years presented its own concerts. It has also been actively hosting musicians, as well as dance and puppet masters from Indonesia; however New Nectar marks its first and welcome foray into commercial recording. The six compositions on this lush-sounding CD, while played on two different gamelan from central Java, are composed and idiomatically and stylishly performed by Vancouver-based musicians.

Given limited space, I can only mention here what for me is the most fully realized composition and performance here - the three movements "Dreams He is a Ball of Fire... Or A Hummingbird," by Kenneth Newby. Starting off like a gentle ball of fire, the majestic first movement is scored for full Javanese gamelan and clearly speaks volumes of the composer's confident mastery of writing for gamelan instruments and the gamelan's idiosyncratic musical language. At times an ethereal stream of bubbling, interlocking figuration, and in other movements featuring an evocative and skillfully realized vocalize by D.B. Boyko, there is much contrast in uttered text and musical texture in this work. This is surely a contemporary gamelan classic.

I've heard this group before but never to greater musical advantage and sonic beauty than on this CD.

Andrew Timar

Paris to Kyiv
Alexis Kochan; Fragmenti Olesia Records AKBCD 05

Paris to Kiev is the brainchild of Winnipeg singer Alexis Kochan. Combining the ancient and the modern, she draws from a rich tradition of Ukrainian music, mystic prayer and ritual, folk poetry, medieval Slavonic chant, Carpathian Fiddle music, and interweaves these traditions with elements of jazz, new music and influences of western Europe. In a recent interview she describes this fourth album by the group, as a conceptual whole made up of fragments representing the past. A psychologist by training, she uses these fragments in the same manner that memories of our life cycle rise up from the psyche on a cathartic journey reminding us of youth, sexuality, burdens of a soul bound to the human body, and of mortality.

The unique voicings in this ensemble representing the Ukrainian tradition include the sopilka (a wooden block-flute made from elder) and the bandura (a hybrid instrument combining characteristics of the lute and harp) played by Julian Kytsyn as well as overtone singing by Alan Schroeder with Michael Thompson. Added to the mix are producer Richard Moody on viola and guitar (electric & acoustic), percussionists Christian Dugas and Rodrigo Munoz and fretless bassist Paul Yee. Alexis Kochan's singing is paired with soft, evocative hues to gently draw our deepest yearnings, and invite us in the final song, to rest for the soul.

Dianne Wells

Le cercle de l'extase
La Schola Saint-Gregoire; Omar Sarmini & the Alep Oriental Orchestra
Atma ACD 2361

The concept behind this recording is superb, timely and relevant. In today's unsettled world, where we are bombarded daily with the horrors of religious intolerance, this CD stands out as a gesture of reconciliation. As the liner notes state, this is a musical and spiritual dialogue between two religions - Sufism (the mystic aspect of Islam) and Christianity. Both are based on very similar principles, including belief in the same God and the reading of sacred texts (the Qur'an and the Bible respectively). More specifically, these performers are all holy men: Christian monks from Québec and Sufi dervishes from Syria. Their encounter here is certainly something quite unusual from a musical and devotional perspective.

So, how exactly do they meld these two rather different traditions?

In general, the Sufis dominate the musical texture with their elaborately ornamented solo vocal lines, choir, instrumental interludes - including the violin, oud (lute), kanoun (zither) and ney (flute) - and distinct, mesmerizing drum beat. By contrast, the Gregorian chant displays less sonic variety, being purely vocal and delivered in that very poised and serene style which we have come to associate with Christian liturgical music. Very often the chant is interspersed with the Sufi music, seemingly in the background, while the beautiful vocal improvisations of Omar Sarmini are placed in the forefront of the mix. The modal differences between the two traditions are carefully and cleverly negotiated in order to give relatively seamless transitions back and forth. All the musicians are exemplary, and the performance feels completely comfortable and effortless.

This CD demonstrates music's special capacity to transcend religious and cultural barriers - particularly pertinent during this season of goodwill.

Annette Stanger
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OLD WINE, NEW BOTTLES: Fine Old Recordings Re-Released

The Nine Symphonies of Gustav Mahler played by the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by Leonard Bernstein will be available on DVD from Deutsche Grammophon on December 6th [440 0734088]. These are the same in-concert performances [the second is with the London Symphony from Ely Cathedral] issued on laser disc a generation ago. Documented between 1971 and 1976 these are the mature realizations of Mahler from a conductor who believed he wore Mahler’s shoes and who passionately championed the composer throughout his professional career. Included in the 9 DVD package is Das Lied von der Erde with the Israel Philharmonic, Christa Ludwig and René Kollo live from May 1973. Now in 5:1 surround sound and improved video quality, the package also includes a bonus DVD, not available separately, of the Fifth, Ninth, and Das Lied together with appreciations by Bernstein. By any criteria, these unique documents should be a cornerstone of any music-lover’s library.

Once seen, the terrifying production of Richard Strauss’s Elektra conducted by Karl Böhm and directed by Gotz Friedrich cannot be forgotten. The 1981 production has Astrid Varnay as Klytemnestra, with Leonie Rysanek, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and Catarina Ligendza. It returns on DVD from DG in surround sound plus a bonus disc featuring all concerned in an absorbing 92 minute documentary of the rehearsals and preparations for filming the production. Given its pedigree, it is unlikely that this production could ever be equaled [440 0734095].

Sony Classical has introduced 10 significant titles from the Masterworks catalogue to the Sony BMG Classic Library series. All are newly remastered to contemporary standards using Sony’s DSD technology. Returned to active duty are Gary Graffman playing the three piano concertos by Tchaikovsky, Pictures at an Exhibition, and Islamey [SK294737]; Bartók’s Concerto for Orchestra with Ormandy [SK94726]; the two Liszt concertos and the Sonata in B minor with Emanuel Ax [SK94746]; Beethoven’s Ninth from Cleveland with Maazel, Popp, Obradorszta, Vickers, and Tavleva [SK94745]; the Schubert Impromptus, etc. with Murray Perahia [SK94732]; the Shostakovich Fifth with Bernstein, live in Tokyo [SK94733]; The Firebird (1910) version, Pulcinella, and more, with Pierre Boulez [SK94736]; Ives Second Symphony, etc. with Bernstein [SK94731]; Richard Strauss’s Don Quixote with Ozawa and Yo-Yo from Boston [SK94735]; and Barber’s Adagio for Strings, Dover Beach, etc. with Schippers, Ormandy, et al. [SK94739].

Fischer-Dieskau’s admirers should look for the 11 CD Orfeo set of live Salzburg Festival recitals from 1956-1965 [339050T]. Accompanied by Gerald Moore, there are song cycles and lieder by Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Wolf, Busoni, Pfitzner, Richard Strauss, and Beethoven. Fischer-Dieskau was untouchable during those years and the master tapes from Austrian Radio were remastered for this edition.

Peak Records has produced a new recording of Vincent Guaraldi’s A Charlie Brown Christmas, one of the nicest, most enchanting little albums ever. The soundtrack of the 1965 CBS Peanuts special is as fresh as ever but this new, overblown, tasteless effort is a travesty. If you don’t have the original, go out right now and get a copy [Fantasy 8431].

Grigory Sokolov was the First Prize winner of the third Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in Moscow in 1966. Since then he has concertised selectively and remains the jealous possession of the inner circle of piano fanatics. His is a mighty talent, as those who have heard him in person know. Naive Classics has put together a package of four remarkable recordings: Bach’s Art of the Fugue; two Beethoven sonatas, numbers 4 and 28 plus three little Chopin’s 24 Preludes; and Brahms F minor sonata and the Ballades, opus 10. Such flawless artistry is very rare indeed and to bring these electrifying performances into one’s living room is even rarer. Superlatively recorded, the discs are available separately but the boxed set really is a must [OP30421].

Included in EMI’s recent batch of Great Recordings of the Century is a disc of Sibelius tone poems with von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic. Powerhouse, over-the-top performances of Finlandia, En Saga, and the Karelia Suite put a lie to the derogatory post-mortem ‘Karajan smoothed everything out’ generalization. The Swan of Tuonela and Valse Triste, however, are nobly limpid but not harsh [72434 768472]. The Fourth and Fifth Beethoven concertos by Emil Gilels with Leopold Ludwig and the Philharmonia from 1957 defines the greatness of the late Russian pianist in his prime [72434 768292]. Violinist Ginette Neveu (1919-1949) was that good, as her honoured recordings of the concertos of Brahms with Dobrowen and Sibelius with Suskind attest. Recorded in 1946 and 1945 respectively the admirable 2005 remasterings are full and graphic [72434 768312].

In 1949/50 Rosalyn Tureck (1914-2003) recorded The Six Bach Partitas BWV 825-830 for Allegro Music. I had not heard these recordings until they appeared recently on Doremi [DHR-7826/7]. That they are not played on harpsichord means nothing in this era, because Tureck’s qualities of touch and sound production are such that she produces sounds that only harpsichordists can achieve. Comparisons with modern pianists, such as Angela Hewitt, confirm that Tureck is superior in balance of the voices and precision of touch and timing. Sound is crisp and clear serving the performances well.

Chilean pianist Claudio Arrau (1903-1991) had a performing career beginning in 1908, continuing into the late 1980s. Admittedly he slowed down towards the end but in 1943, 1947 and 1951 when he played the Liszt no.2 with Mitropoulos, the Weber Konzertstuck with Erich Kleiber, and the Schumann with Victor de Sabata, his technique was dazzling. He took chances and this was, as the notes say “a time of flashing fingers and an unapologetic virtuoso fire that could ignite and engulf every page.” The sound is quite good, much better than would expect, given the dates [Music and Arts CD1174].

Good news for the Stan Kenton big band fans: Capitol has two new CDs: “Viva Kenton” recorded in New York in 1959 with six additional tracks from Los Angeles in 1963 [72435 60444] and “The Stage Door Swings”, recorded in New York in 1958 [72434 7751]. The Viva album has Kenton standards with a Latin-American flavour while Stage Door album contains 12 showtunes of the day arranged by Lennie Niehaus. I enjoyed these two discs immensely and if you are Kenton disciple such as I, don’t be bashful about it. I have a photograph on my wall of Herbert von Karajan at a Kenton concert.

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The ever popular Irish Tenor Ronan Tynan with his debut solo album on Decca, "Rogue", is the perfect addition to your classical music collection. "Rogue" features the powerful, soulful voice of Ronan Tynan as he performs a selection of classic songs, including "Man of la Mancha", "Mhursaigh of the Lord" and "Come To Me From The Rain".

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Young soprano Katherine Jenkins is the UK's best selling new Classical artist! "A DIVA" is Katherine's North American debut. Beautiful songs include "Time to Say Goodbye", "Caruso", "O Sole Mio", "Laudate Dominum" and "You Never Walk Alone".
Discs for the Season

All the Time? Modest McDermott allows himself the showpiece O Holy Night but sings it with a masterfully expressive restraint, and shares it with Toronto vocalist Dawn Langstroth. A classy enterprise, packed with understated virtuosity.

Concert note: John McDermott and Friends present "A Family Christmas Celebration" in 2 performances on December 22 at Roy Thomson Hall.

Okan ays Bethlehem Meredith Hall & Le Nef ATMA ACD2 2365

Hall has a voice like mulled wine and a seemingly effortless delivery of the grace notes of antique music. She raises a shiver between the shoulders in this collection of old Celtic and British songs that evoke darkening winter skies. However, she also conjures up ancient seasonal celebrations and the fireside meal, drink and fortitude that hel north­erners To Drive the Cold Winter Away. With the help of ancient music specialists La Nef, Hall presents 25 beautifully articulated songs, only a few of which (What Child Is This?, Coventry Carol) are well known. Some rarer standouts are Hall's haunting a capella rendering of the Irish The Darkest Midnight in December, and the Mans Ushëg Veg Tuy.

Concert note: Meredith Hall is one of the soloists featured in the Elmer Iseler Singers' performance of Handel's Messiah December 2 at Metropolitan United Church.

Caliban Does Christmas Caliban Quartet of Bassoonists ATMA ACS2 2334

When a bassoon quartet teams up with Mary Lou Fallis and guests, you expect some fun. This lighthearted disc includes the theme from Hockey Night in Canada; a Twelve Days of Christmas with comic cell phone interpolations, and Fallis' hilarious vocals on A Christmas Carol (which rhymes "kill the chickens" with "dung the Dickens"). But it's not all comedy. Some of the best pieces are sleigh ride tunes (well suited to the bassoons) and Heather Bambbrick's litty Santa Baby. A cheerful, accomplished CD that more than surmounts its occasionally fuzzy recording.

Concert notes: Caliban joins forces with L Furiosi and Aradia for a multiple CD launch December 4 at the Great Hall. Caliban and guests perform at Thornhill Presbyterian Church on January 20.

Noël Baroque/ Baroque Christmas Masques Analekta AN 2 9908

Moving from lilting Irish to spirited Spanish, and including works of Charpentier and Scarlatti, this is a delightful Baroque compilation. An exceptional track is a deeply mysterious, passionately pulsating rendering of the traditional French hymn Noël Noveaulet.

Jazz pour Noël Trio Lorraine Desmarais & Jean-Pierre Zanella Analekta AN 2 9862

A quietly upbeat selection on piano, double bass, sax and drums. The best is an expressive Sleigh Ride; the nimble piano rendering might make you reconsider this overworked department store novelty.

Noel: Carols and Chants for Christmas Anonymous 4 Harmonia Mundi HMX 2907411.14

Ultimate Christmas Cocktails Various artists Capitol P222 78505

Finally, two great gift boxes. The first of these would delight anyone interested in medieval life: a lidded box of four discs issued between 1993 and 2003 offering a wide assortment of ancient music performed in an unmann­ered style. A bonus: they've tucked in a glossy 150-page booklet with commentary and full lyrics, illustrated with medieval woodcuts and illuminations. The second is an attractively designed triple-disc box compiling more than 50 lounge-worthy numbers by Peggy Lee, Dean Martin, Wayne Newton et al. Loaded onto a multiple-disc player, these would keep your party swinging all night!

Peace and Joy
Christmas CDs to Reinvigorate the Spirit
By Sarah B. Hood

There are many reasons to play Christmas music. It can be anything from a party pleasure to a shopping incentive, but at its best it is a heartwarming, the­travagant, the cynical layers that accrue over the festival. It can remind us that the customs of Christmas are based on a simple idea: that something beyond and better than our failible humanity invites and impels us to realize the best in ourselves. A tall order, but these new releases come through.

Paix et joie de Noël
Choeur de chambre de Rimouski
Label Musik LM 001 CD

Founded in 1995 under the direction of Guy Lavigne, this ensemble is a triumph of artistic leadership in a small community. Local guest soprano Lucie Gendon has a strong, chocolate voice, and blends generously with the ensemble. Alongside staples of the French Canadian Catholic hymnal (Il est né le divin enfant, Ave Maria), this disc also surprises with robust percussion and selections like a French Canadian Catholic hymnal.

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Peace and Joy for the coming year to all WholeNote readers!

Sarah B. Hood
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