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Cover Photography Suzanne Johnson (top), Mali Blues Courtesy of TIFF (bottom left) and Pascal Victor (bottom right).
Ten Years Straight

“I’ve lasted. I guess I’m sort of successful now, but I worked for nothing for years, and I cried for ten years straight! (laughs). Nobody helped me. They’d say, too bad, so sorry! I used to want to quit every day, then it was every week, then monthly and now it’s maybe once a year.”

To know who’s being quoted in the lines above, you’re going to have to turn to Ori Dagan’s “Free Times Thirty Five” (on page 46 in the September print edition). Safe to say, though, if we had ten bucks for every musician, idealistic publisher or arts dreamer in town who can relate to the quote, we’d have had way less trouble raising the dollars to pay this month’s print bill!

The title “Ten Years Straight,” coincidentally, would also work just fine as a reference to now-nonagenarian columnist Jack MacQuarrie’s remarkable ten year tenure as our Bandstand columnist (page 36). In this month’s column, MacQuarrie points out the fact that composer/arranger Howard Cable was featured in the very first column he wrote for us, and is featured again in this one, albeit for poignantly different reasons.

Composer/arranger Howard Cable, a towering figure on the Canadian musical landscape, is also affectionately and entertainingly remembered in this issue by guest writer Michele Jacot (“The Unforgettable Howard Cable,” page 52). Although their professional association was relatively brief, it was also, as you will read, unforgettable.

Interestingly, another Cable collaborator, Martin Loomer (who worked with Cable as his copyist for decades, literally until the day before Cable died) also features, if somewhat indirectly, in this issue. Loomer, you see, is now music director of the Jim Galloway Wee Big Band. For Toronto jazz lovers, Galloway’s name is synonymous with the Toronto Downtown Jazz Festival, of which he was the longtime artistic director. WholeNote readers in particular will also remember Galloway as our 14-year “Jazz Notes” columnist, and a tireless advocate for live musical performance.

All this to say, on September 15, the Wee Big Band, under Loomer’s direction, will reconvene, for the second time in the Garage - the performance space at 720 Bathurst Street, home-base of The WholeNote. Presented by the Ken Page Memorial Trust in support of the Trust’s educational scholarship fund, it promises to be a rousing musical evening in celebration of Galloway’s life. (Details can be found in a little ad on page 37 of this magazine.)

I’ll hope to see you there! In fact, if you tell me you found out about the event by reading this column, I’ll even let you buy me a drink!

Fools rush in: For those in the know, September 15 (date of the aforementioned Galloway gig) is a pretty brave time to be scheduling a live musical event in Toronto. In fact any day between September 8 and 18 this year runs the risk of falling into the media shadow of TIFF (Toronto International Film Festival), one of the largest festivals of any description on the Canadian landscape.

As WholeNote managing editor Paul Ennis can attest, TIFF precipitates an annual loyalty crisis for any WholeNote reader with a passion for film. Fortunately, Ennis comes to the rescue with “Music Lovers’ TIFF” (page 12), his fifth annual guide to films of musical significance at the festival.
Kensington Jazz: Also daring to tiptoe into the TIFF lion’s den this year is a brash festival upstairs, the first annual Kensington Market Jazz Festival (KMJF), scheduled to run September 16 to 18, TIFF’s final weekend. Far from being daunted, Molly Johnson, the KMJF’s artistic director actually relishes the challenge. She has somehow roped in nearly 100 musicians who read like a Who’s Who of Canadian jazz. (See Bob Ben’s “A Kensington Jazz Story” on page 15.)

The WholeNote traces our earliest roots, in the early 1990s, to a column called “Pulse” in a little independent community newspaper called The Kensington Market DRUM. This new arrival on the festival scene brings our own history full circle, in a rather fine and dandy way.

So, I’ll hope to see you there too. In fact, if you tell me you found out about the event in this column, I’ll even let you buy me a drink!

Not ready for fall: Blame it on climate change, if you will, but this September issue it’s been even harder than usual to let go of writing about what we all did with our summer vacations, and to settle into the serious business of the musical seasons ahead.

A case in point is guest writer Peter Goddard’s “Aix Marks the Spot” on page 8, which deals with an important summer opera festival in the south of France. It’s not all hindsight, though: as Goddard explains, there’s an interesting explanation for how and why what shows up at Aix in the summer may well show up at the Canadian Opera Company in the fall (and a serious object lesson, based on Brexit as a case study, as to what can happen to the cultural community as a whole, when individual entities within that community decide to go it alone.)

And if all this isn’t enough on the festival front, Wende Bartley (“In with the New,” page 26) and Andrew Timar (“World View,” page 35) both zero in (albeit for refreshingly different reasons), on yet another festival that is a new kid on the block – “in/future” at Ontario Place from September 15 to 25.

Reading between the lines, “in/future” looks to me like a profoundly important attempt to establish artistic squatters’ rights to a profoundly important social and cultural public space otherwise ripe for the wreckers’ ball. So check it out!

(If I see you there, I’ll buy you a drink.)

The inside view: One of the things that make this magazine a bit different from many is that a number of our regular writers are players (literally) in the music scene they write about here. Bartley, for example, is an active participant in in/future; the festival her column revolves around this issue. And harpsichordist David Podgorski, whose “Early Music” column (page 34) is, in the main, an entertaining discourse on the renaissance of the fortepiano, wraps up by referencing a concert by his own period ensemble, Rezonance, that like the aforementioned Wee Big Band gig takes place here in the Garage at 720 Bathurst Street, on September 25. (Mention to him that you found out about the concert in this column, and I’m sure he will let you buy him a drink.)

Speaking of the inside view, this issue also includes the 12th installment of former CBC Radio Producer David Jaeger’s ongoing series on the Golden Years of CBC Radio (page 78), over the course of which he has taken us from the early years of Glenn Gould’s association with CBC Radio through to the apparent end, in 2008, of the CBC’s commitment to the nurturing of the music that fills these pages.

Now that the overall terrain of the story has been surveyed, it will be interesting to discover, in this next round, where he chooses to drill down!

Welcome (and welcome back): With the upcoming October issue, “the season” gets off and running in earnest. Both on stage and behind the scenes, we’ll hope to be your companion through its twists and turns, highs and lows.

Start your engines.

publisher@thewholenote.com

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Aix Marks the Spot

PETER GODDARD

The end-of-June late-morning sun promises to fry the brains of the assembled Who’s Who of international opera critics. No one dares though to leave the press conference in the cloisters of the Théâtre de l’archevêché until we deal with what we are here to discuss, and that is not just the Festival d’Aix-en-Provence. So we wait, as a trio of officials fills the shiny air with bright promises of newly re-imaged old work – Mozart meets Mussolini in Così fan tutte to open the festival’s 68th iteration – and as company director Bernard Focroulle, frazzled-looking most times yet now cool as a glaçon – extols outreach programs, “school support,” administrative breakthroughs… We wait, plastic water bottles draining as steadily as the temperature mounts. Then: “Brexit.”

The word, spoken not shouted, came from out of nowhere – maybe from Focroulle himself? Or who knows? It didn’t matter. It was as if a code had just been cracked; a world of information started spilling out.

The “British exit” was inevitably the talk of this European summer, its implications growing thornier with every new detail. For this assembled music crowd, the very thought of the United Kingdom’s decision to sever all ties from the European Union (EU) was a stark reminder that unfettered border crossing has been to opera’s advantage, long before Handel took his act from Halle to London.

Bottom line: if there’s a Brexit-induced clawback of arts funding in Europe or a redistribution of funds, the shrinking effect will be felt soon enough worldwide most particularly when it comes to operatic co-production.

For opera and theatre in England, minus the 16 percent of its budget originally from the EU, it will mean a “great sadness,” Katie Mitchell, Aix’s genius-in-residence, chimed in from somewhere behind Focroulle at the festival-starter press conference. (Note: the formidably stern Mitchell, frequently called Britain’s “greatest living director,” has worked mostly away from England the past few years. Her introspective take on Debussy’s Pelléas et Mélisande is likely to be one of this festival’s two legacies.)

Brexit pushes the EU-needy English National Opera even closer to the brink of collapse, if that were indeed possible (although some fightback came this summer by way of the company’s Tristan und Isolde, with sculptor Anish Kapoor’s sets drawing much of the attention).

The more the talk continued, the more the sense of worry grew. What, for example, would Brexit auger for the broader reaches of the co-production ideal of the sort that has the Canadian Opera Company bringing Richard Jones’ Aix debut production of Handel’s Ariodante to the Four Seasons Centre, October 16 to November 4 this year, a co-production with the COC, Dutch National Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago? (As a matter of interest, the record, going back to the 2006/07 season, shows that the COC has presented 19 co-productions including this year’s October 6 to November 5 Norma, directed by Kevin Newbury, a co-production with San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Barcelona’s Gran Teatre del Liceu.)

And what will Brexit mean for an Aix festival that’s arguably the world’s centre for international musical wheeeling and dealing? Focroulle looks less than happy at the thought. “Artists need to travel,” he tells me after the press conference. “And for opera it is crucial to work with other cultures, other languages, other ways of producing art – also to be in contact with other disciplines. How much is dictated by the European Union? Well, a lot is facilitated by it, supported and subsidized.”

If any torpid Mediterranean city can be described as go-go, it’s Aix. The city downtown has its share of timeless moments. Cours Mirabeau, the coolest summer-strolling corridor this side of Barcelona’s La Rambla, is lined by a row of former grande bourgeoisie homes on the south. Some are now banks. Here and there are any number of nearby ornate fountains – “Aix” comes from the word for water – such the Baroque Fontaine de Quatre-Dauphins where dolphin-like gargoyles spew water (not a quartet of future French kings, as the fountain’s name might suggest). This is not to forget painter Paul Cézanne’s airy studio that’s an obligatory visit for every bus tour heading north of town.

Aix’s cultural clout has been on the rise pretty much since the festival’s founding in 1948 as home for Mozart aficionados. It’s a photography and arts research centre. The festival itself can now brag about 97.9 percent full houses for opera and slightly over 94 percent for the many concerts. Otherwise Aix is France’s version of Silicon Valley with high-end university research facilities and credit card microchip processing plants edging their way out into some of the best olive-growing hectares in all the South of France. (“There are a great many wise people there” was written into the founding act for the Royal University in Aix, 1413.)

Translated: this means money. Elsewhere, to describe anyone in the arts as a “money person” might be an insult. But not in Aix and not...
STRINGS
Oct. 13  Juilliard Quartet
Nov. 10  Quatuor Arthur-LeBlanc
Dec. 1  Suzie LeBlanc,
       Robert Kortgaard,
       Blue Engine String Quartet
Dec. 15  Gryphon Trio
Jan. 26  St. Lawrence Quartet
Feb. 16  Eybler Quartet
Mar. 2  Prazak Quartet
Mar. 16  Philharmonia Quartet Berlin

PIANO
Oct. 25  Janina Fialkowska
Nov. 15  Danny Driver
Jan. 10  Sean Chen
Feb. 7  Ilya Poletaev

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Katie Mitchell’s mysterioso production of Debussy’s Pelléas et Mélisande will probably emerge as the mainstream signature work from this season’s Festival d’Aix-en-Provence. But the production mostly likely to have reverberations far into the future is Kalîla wa Dimna by Palestinian composer Moneim Adwan.

As a bilingual chamber opera in French and Arabic based on an eighth century translation of fables by Persian poet/scholar Ibn al-Muqaffa, everything about it is a world-first, we’re told. Yet there’s nothing new, or never-before, about its accessibility. Told in flashback by Kalîla (the Hawaii Pacific University-trained contralto, Ranine Chaar, at Aix), the story of a manipulated despot driven to violent extremes has a contemporary feel by way of the libretto by Fady Jomar and Catherine Verlaguet. Dimna (sung by Adwan himself) is a young hotshot on the make, a human jackal – toy animals are used in fetish fashion as narrative illustrations – waiting for the low-hanging spoils of the back-stabbing intrigue he creates.

A sense of nondescript modernity was conveyed by the sets by Eric Charbeau and Philippe Casaband; Nathalie Prats’ lumpen costumes were equally unimaginative. So visually, this Kalîla won’t change the world. No matter. Adwan’s score elevates everything to another level. Accompanied by an onstage quintet led by conductor/ fiddler Zied Zouari – an electro/ groove player on his own time – Kalîla wa Dimna offers one of the most impressive melds of Middle Eastern melismas and straight-up western tonality I’ve come across.

So if a category needs to be found for Kalîla it might be filed under “folk opera” – closer to Béla Bartók’s Bluebeard’s Castle than to George Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess, please – or as important “regional theatre,” as OOC director Alexandre Neef characterized it to me shortly after he’d seen it at Aix.

The festival has gone in this direction before only last year with Serbian-Canadian composer Ana Sokolović’s Svobda (Wedding) which like Kalîla was offered at the festival’s Théâtre du Jeu de Paume. Opened only a few years back, this jewel-box space is found tucked away around the corner from the Musée Granet, an exceptional mid-size gallery that can trot out A-list Cézanne or Picassos whenever pressed to do so, which is never enough. William Christie’s Il ritorno d’Ulisse in patria was an earlier success at the Jeu de Paume.

Kalîla wa Dimna wasn’t meant to stand alone this season. The world premiere of another cross-cultural Aix commission, Czech composer Ondřej Adámek’s Seven Stones was on the festival’s early schedule only to be “postponed” at relatively the last moment according to a festival spokesperson, “mainly for budget reasons to avoid taking financial risks.” This should allow the festival to also find additional co- producers. “(As it is, Seven Stones has enormous cross-cultural possibilities as the story of a mineralogist who goes on a worldwide search from Europe to South America for the single stone about to be hurled at the woman saved by Christ after being accused of adultery.”

Only days after the Kalîla wa Dimna premiere, Lyon Opera, only a few hours up the autoroute, produced its new Abduction from the Seraglio, by Mozart, with new dialogue by Wajdi Mouawad, the French-Lebanese writer/director intended to rethink the work’s burlesques of Muslim Turks.

“You have to constantly redefine what you are, especially as a large organization,” Neef went on. “You don’t give up your core. You do what you do best. And there’s always a temptation to run after large organization,” Neef went on. “You don’t give up your core. You do what you do best. And there’s always a temptation to run after big projects.”

In keeping with this southern strategy, for his Cost fan tutte French film director Christophe Honoré has re-imagined Lorenzo Da Ponte’s 18th century Neapolitan comedy as a grim Fascist parable set in the Italian-run Eritrea of the late 30s. Remarkably, the grumbling after the opening was that Honoré didn’t push the malevolent comedy as savagely far as it could go. The Trump effect?

Back to Katie Mitchell’s Pelléas, the opening of which saw a less-than-full house (which did, however, include Christine Lagarde, head of the International Monetary Fund). The work is already being described as her masterpiece – the true successor to her 2012 international hit, Written on Skin, by George Benjamin and Martin Crimp. But for this to play out, in my view, future co-productions of Mitchell’s Freudian dreamworld where its secrets are about more secrets, will require considerably more orchestral oomph than was provided by Esa-Pekka Salonen leading the Philharmonia Orchestra. They will also have to find a Mélisande with some of the daring physicality, aggressive sexuality and exhilarating singing Canadian soprano Barbara Hannigan brought to the role in this production. Aix’s reputation at being good at money may be facing some challenges. Its reputation for great casting remains intact.

Please see Ariodante auf Orkney, page 76

when it comes to Foccroulle who also happens to have led Brussels’ La Monnaie for the past decade and a half. Foccroulle, leaving the festival after the 2017 season, is the king of co-production, with Aix connecting opera academics from Ghent’s LOD muziktheater to the Polish National Opera in Warsaw, and with a good half-dozen co-productions on the bubble at any given time. Pierre Audi, of the Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam, will have a lot on his plate when he takes over Aix in 2018.

Foccroulle’s most lasting accomplishment – and his most audacious manoeuvre – may well lie in resetting Aix’s compass from North to South, a reset requiring a lot of creative thinking. (Cairo was a significant Aix connection/collaborator this year.) Foccroulle may be further emboldened in this decision by the recognition accorded to Aix’s long-time nearby bigger coastal rival, Marseille, as European capital of culture. It seems the European south is now more than boule-playing by old guys. (Picking Marseille evidently preceded the debut airings of Marseille, the French-made big city corruption yarn – on Netflix in Canada – barely kept alive by the bulky genius of Gérard Depardieu.)

How do we integrate opera into a world where globalization is changing everything? Foccroulle asks himself. “We have to open the doors to other cultures,” he answers. “That’s the reason for [Moneim Adwan’s] Kalîla wa Dimna and for our Mediterranean program.”

Like Aix, other major European arts festival such as the Edinburgh Festival and the Holland Festival, both starting in 1947, were post-war efforts to better unite Europe. Foccroulle sees beyond that.

When I arrived here ten years ago, I was often asked what was the identity of the festival,” he tells me. “They were expecting me to answer in terms of programming of directors and so on and so forth. I think our role however is the big mutation of the role of opera in a global world. That means doing many things to open doors for living artists. In Italy, for example, young artists, young composers and directors have nothing to do because the Italian opera houses don’t offer them anything. The older generation does almost everything. We also have to open the doors to other cultures and to regenerate opera through new forms.”

But for this to play out, in my view, future co-productions of Mitchell’s Freudian dreamworld where its secrets are about more secrets, will require considerably more orchestral oomph than was provided by Esa-Pekka Salonen leading the Philharmonia Orchestra. They will also have to find a Mélisande with some of the daring physicality, aggressive sexuality and exhilarating singing Canadian soprano Barbara Hannigan brought to the role in this production. Aix’s reputation at being good at money may be facing some challenges. Its reputation for great casting remains intact.

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2016 PREVIEW

Music Lovers’ TIFF

PAUL ENNIS

The WholeNote’s fifth annual guide to the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), 41st edition, aims to once again alert you to films in which music plays a significant role. After poring over the list of 296 films from 71 countries, the following 26 titles represent a loose guide for music lovers with a taste for cinema. Highlights include a handful of music docs, Damien Chazelle’s original musical La La Land, films with scores by the likes of Robi Botos, Jesse Zubot, Son Lux, Lesley Barber and Gabriel Yared, as well as movies with characters connected to music.

For its subject matter alone, Chasing Trane: The John Coltrane Documentary caught my eye. Early word has it that John Scheinfeld’s new film is the definitive portrait of one of jazz’s seminal figures. Made with the cooperation of the Coltrane family and the owners of his recordings, the doc is said to contextualize Coltrane’s life within the rolling social and cultural landscape of which he was a key component while vividly bringing his story to the screen.

Jazz iconoclasts have two films in the festival. Gimme Danger, is a scrupulous two-pronged documentary look at the Iggy and the Stooges phenomenon. Iggy (aka Jim Osterberg) provides a detailed historical chronology, paying particular attention to the band’s musical origins and influences. From the 1950s TV show Lunch With Soupy Sales to the idiosyncratic American composer Harry Partch, from Iggy’s brief, meaningful relationship with Nico (on the rebound from Lou Reed) to Miles Davis’ Bitches Brew, James Brown and Maceo Parker, the film drops one memorable nugget after another. At his press conference in Cannes (where the film premiered) Iggy also mentioned his indebtedness to Bo Diddley, Link Ray, Frank Zappa and Karl-Heinz Stockhausen. Fascinating.

Paterson, Jarmusch’s clever neo-minimalist film, chronicles seven days in the life of a Paterson, New Jersey, bus driver (named Paterson), his happy marriage and daily routine. In this city of the poet William Carlos Williams, Paterson (Adam Driver, bringing sensitivity to the role) is also a poet. So is Jarmusch in his own refreshingly natural and observant way. It’s two hours of serenity, a musique concrète of city sounds and overheard conversation, the music of daily life. The sparse, ambient score is by SQURL and Drew Kunin.

Part jazz history, part true-crime tale, Kasper Collin’s I Called Him Morgan uses extensive archival footage and new interviews to tell the tragic story of the talented hard bop trumpeter Lee Morgan and his common-law wife Helen, who murdered him in a New York bar in 1972. Possessed of enormous technique with a warm, vibrant sound reminiscent of Clifford Brown, Morgan was only 33 when he died. In his last interview (some of which will undoubtedly be in the film) he eloquently described the place of black American art in American culture. This is one doc I’m particularly looking forward to.

Damien Chazelle has followed his critically acclaimed and popular success, Whiplash, with an original musical comedy, La La Land, about an ambitious jazz pianist (Ryan Gosling) and an aspiring actress (Emma Stone) who fall in love while pursuing their dreams of stardom, in what TIFF calls a “dazzlingly stylized homage to the classic Hollywood musical.” Justin Hurwitz composed the score, just as he’s done for each of Chazelle’s other feature films.

Agnès Varda’s One Sings, The Other Doesn’t, which originally showed at TIFF in 1977, contagiously popular in its day, now newly restored, puts on a shiny face as part of the Cinematheque section of this year’s festival. A feminist musical about a pop singer dedicated to women’s liberation and her ongoing relationship with her old friend, a single mother of two who has moved to the country, it’s a tender reminder of another time.

In Kleber Mendonça Filho’s Aquarius, legendary Brazilian actress Sonia Braga (Kiss of the Spider Woman) memorably plays a retired music critic (Clara) fighting to keep her Recife apartment building from the hands of developers in this spirited portrait of a strong-willed 65-year-old. Needless to say, music plays a major part in this sun-dappled film whose storyline cannot be divorced from its social context. From Villa-Lobos to Maria Bethânia, Jobim and Tropicalia to Recife, Minha Cidade, Aquarius will leave you in love with the best music in the film. “I like the fact that Clara has LPs at home—those she bought over a period of 40 years, or those sent to her while she was working as a critic. I also like the idea that, even though she has...
a vinyl collection, she doesn’t refuse to listen to tracks on her phone. It was only natural, since she listens to music, for music to occupy scenes. Music also gives an indication of her tastes and moods.”

Master jazz pianist Robi Botos was approached by Jean of the Joneses’ music supervisor Michael Perlmutter who put him in touch with writer/director Stella Meghie and producer Amos Adetuyi. “After a meeting with Stella we really connected,” Botos said in an email. “So she gave me the green light for the score. I just tried to give the movie the right vibe. It’s bittersweet so the music has that role too.” The film got rave reviews when it premiered at SXSW earlier this year. Sean L. Malin wrote in the Austin Chronicle that “Meghie’s feature debut suggests an exciting new voice. Highly visually controlled, snappily edited, and beautifully acted, Jean of the Joneses is a clever New York comedy about the Caribbean diaspora.”

Bruce McDonald has always had a good ear for musical found objects to buttress his films which are often sparked by road trips. In Weirdos, he teams with veteran playwright and screenwriter Daniel MacIvor for this offbeat coming-of-age dramedy, about two Nova Scotian teens who hit the road in the summer of 1976 accompanied by the laconic ghost of (the still-living) Andy Warhol. The ‘70s’ pop soundtrack includes some real oddities (Which Way You Goin’ Billy, the title song from the Peter Lynch movie The Hard Part Begins) and performers of the day like The Poppy Family. Nathan Morlando, whose cinematic intelligence permeated every frame of his film debut, Edwin Boyd: Citizen Gangster (which won Best Canadian First Feature at TIFF 2011), had the cinematic good sense to hire Max Richter to compose the music for his debut film. When Richter was unavailable for Morlando’s follow-up, Mean Dreams, he turned to Son Lux. The enterprising composer made the soundtrack a mirror of this parable of two teenagers escaping their intolerable Northern Ontario lives. Evoking memories of Malick’s Badlands, it’s finely calibrated filmmaking that nicely integrates the landscape while the luxuriant soundtrack occasionally acts as a kind of Greek chorus.

“In composing the score, I turned to acoustic sounds and colours that are beautiful on their surface, but hide a certain dystopian quality,” Son Lux said. “I chose my tools mostly from acoustic sources. With the help of a small team, I extensively recorded a variety of things, including lots of rare and one-of-a-kind instruments. One sound at a time, we created a huge, unique library of complex sound material – Through extensive editing and programming of these isolated sounds, as well as fragments of improvisation, we created playable ‘virtual instruments.’ This gave me an enormous amount of flexibility and control in order to compose the score.”

Kim Nguyen’s Two Lovers and a Bear features music by Jesse Zubot (who performs it on violin, viola, synth, sub bass, drums and programming), vocals by Tanya Tagaq; also recorded samples taken from Genetic Memory and Rabbit from Animism by Tagaq and Sun Up from The Element Choir at Rosedale United. A Tribe Called Red’s Sisters, two tracks by Gil Scott-Heron and an excerpt from Tchakovskv’s The Sleeping Beauty ballet are among other sounds energizing this unusual Arctic romance, filmed close to the North Pole in all of its magnificent splendour.

Montreal native Xavier Dolan won this year’s Grand Prix (second place) at Cannes for It’s Only The End Of The World, an emotionally riven chamber piece about a writer who returns to his family after an absence of 12 years to announce that he has a terminal illness. In a series of confrontations, tensions driven by resentment and lack of understanding are revealed. Working in France for the first time with an all-star French cast, Dolan’s camera lingers on his characters in close-up, accentuating pauses, building to the affective climax.

Gabriel Yared’s warm, empathetic symphonic score and pop music outbursts like Camille’s Home Is Where It Hurts, Grimes’ Oblivion and the Moldovan pop group O-Zone’s Dragostea Din Tei are essential ingredients.

With J: Beyond Flamenco, Carlos Saura has come full circle. After decades of memorable films devoted to music (Blood Wedding,
Carmen, Sevillanas, Tango, among many) he has returned to his birthplace, Aragon, where jota had its origins. “La Jota is folk music and dancing so powerful that it has been able to attract renowned musical composers such as Liszt, Saint-Saëns, Massenet, Falla, Granados and Albéniz,” Saura said in the press notes. “Its influence is evident in the Spanish geography. Its unique rhythm, cheerful and contagious, has kept improving over the years.” Musicians in this music and dance celebration include batteante guitar virtuoso Francesco Locccisano, composer and cello virtuoso Giovanni Sollima, flamenco pianist Miguel Angel Remiro and his quartet, world music star and Galician bagpipe Carlos Núñez, guitarist Enrike Solinis and jota singer Nacho del Río.

Terrence Malick, who touched on the origins of the universe in Tree of Life, puts his singular cinematic vision to work in Voyage of Time: Life's Journey, a documentary look at the same subject that promises to be a celestial experience. Malick has always leaned heavily on classical music as a foundation for his films and this new sound and image poem features a playlist that could serve as a Who’s Who of the music of the spheres. The soundtrack includes excerpts from Giya Kanchel’s Evening Prayers, Bright Sorrow and Morning Prayers, Beethoven's Symphony No.9, Poulenc’s Gloria, Penderecki’s St. Luke Passion, David Hykes’ Hearing Solar Winds (part 8), Arvo Part’s Da pacem Domine, In Principio and Litany, Mahler’s Symphony No.2 in C Minor (“Resurrection”), Haydn’s The Creation and Bach's Mass in B Minor (IV). Malick also makes use of Eleni Karainidrou’s evocative Hecuba’s Theme I, Exodus and Terra Deserta, Keith Jarrett’s Spheres, pieces by Paul Horn, Michael Baird, Francesco Lupica, Simon Franglen, Hanan Townshend and even sounds from the Voyager’s mission to Jupiter’s smallest moon lo.

In Past Life, two Israeli sisters, one of whom is an aspiring classical musician, delve into the dark mystery of their father’s former life in Poland during World War II in this new film by Avi Nesher, best known for his highly praised The Wonders. One of the two performers recreating the amorous correspondence (1948-1967) between poets Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan in Ruth Beckermann’s The Dreamed Ones is experimental Austrian musician Anja Plaschig (Soap&Skin). Kevan Funk, who made the genre-defying Vancouver sextet Brassmonaut’s Mean Sun music video, hired its leader, Edo Van Breemen, to score his small-town hockey drama, Hello Destroyer. After making a key contribution to Kenneth Lonergan’s unforgettable You Can Count on Me, stalwart Canadian film composer Lesley Barber is back with the master observer’s latest, Manchester by the Sea, critically acclaimed at Sundance earlier this year.

Actor/rapper Nick Cannon wrote, directed, financed and stars in King of the Dancehall about a Brooklynite who visits family in Jamaica and falls in love with the island’s music and culture. Jamaican dancehall luminaries T.O.K. and Beenie Man appear, along with Jamaican-Canadian singer Kreesha Turner, Ky-Mani Marley and Busta Rhymes. Also in the cast is Carl Bradshaw, part of Jamaican film history since 1972’s The Harder They Come. In The Sixth Beatle, co-directors Tony Guma and John Rose profile Liverpool concert promoter Sam Leach who offers a spirited account of his two-year roller-coaster ride with The Beatles in the pre-Brian Epstein era.

In Andrea Arnold’s naturalistic road movie, American Honey, newcomer Sasha Lane plays a teenager who joins a group of magazine subscription salespeople who criss-cross the American Midwest in vans; Riley Keough is her hard-nosed boss and Shia LaBeouf (in a return to early form) a super salesman. The energy of the young cast is reminiscent of Larry Clark’s Kids and the extensive soundtrack, from Springsteen, Steve Earle and Rihanna to country singers Sam Hunt and Lee Brice. Juicy J, Quigley, Mazzy Star and so much more, is the engine that drives it all.

Music plays small but key roles in two Japanese films. Hirokazu Kore-eda’s finely observed family drama, After the Storm, took its Japanese title from a lyric by Teresa Teng, the “diva of Asia.” It was a link to the popular music that played in Kore-eda’s home growing up. “Teng’s songs are about dramatic love, which connects with the concept of not everyone being able to become the adult they wanted to be,” he explained. But the movie’s score and theme song were composed by Hanaregumi, a more contemporary pop figure. In Koji Fukada’s chilling Harmonium, a charming ex-con ingratiates himself into the life of family by helping the young daughter learn to play her harpsichord.

Edoardo De Angelis’ Indivisible is “about Neapolitan Siamese twin sisters who are exploited as a novelty singing act by their father,” reports Screen Daily’s Melanie Goodfellow. “Kept in isolation, outside of their paid performances at social occasions, the girls start to rebel against their reality when one of them falls in love and they discover they can be separated.”

The New Yorker’s Richard Brody called Terence Davies’ A Quiet Passion – in which Cynthia Nixon portrays Emily Dickinson – “an absolute drop-dead masterwork.” He continued: “Davies films his literary script with a directorial daring that’s both precise and free, blending delicately composed close-ups and group portraits with audaciously confrontational and uninhibited visual imagination ... He also makes exemplary use of Dickinson’s poetry, recited by Nixon, on the soundtrack, playing like a sort of music that meshes with the actual music track, which is dominated by well-chosen touches of further New England audacity, such as Charles Ives’ The Unanswered Question.”

Davies’ musical ear is evident in a soundtrack that ranges from Bellini’s “Ah non credea” and Schubert’s Nacht und Träume to the haunting 17th-century songs by Thomas Ford and Thomas Ravenscroft arranged by British saxophonist/composer John Harle and sung by British soprano Sarah Leonard, supplemented with snippets of 19th-century piano pieces and Ives’ Decoration Day.

I’ve seen ten of the 26 films previewed here and am looking forward to viewing many of the others (and more) during TIFF 2016. Watch for reports on these and other discoveries in my Music and the Movies blog on thewholenote.com over the months to come. The Toronto International Film Festival runs from September 8 to 18. Check tiff.net for further information.

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.
For further back than I can remember, Kensington Market has been a hub for multiculturalism, activism, tourism and other assorted -isms. The unique culture of Kensington is one which is, perhaps more than that of any other neighbourhood in Toronto, bursting with a collective love of art that is eclectic and loudly expressed. Buskers flock to Augusta Avenue. Drum circles echo through the Market from Bellevue Square. Paintings, murals, works by highly skilled graffiti artists, cover much of the landscape, including the walls outside of Poetry Jazz Café – one of the nine venues which will be showcasing almost non-stop jazz for the duration of the first-ever Kensington Market Jazz Festival (henceforth referred to as KMJF 2016).

KMJF 2016, originally the brainchild of Toronto-bred vocalist Molly Johnson, will reflect the values of the community in which it takes place; rather than featuring large, ethically dubious, multinational corporations – which have been emphatically rejected by the Kensington community in the past – as sponsors, the KMJF 2016 website lists as its friends small, local businesses, well-known individuals in the music scene, arts studios, as well as multiple charities and non-profits which will benefit from the festival.

Among these is the Archie Alleyne Scholarship Fund (AASF), which has, since its establishment in honour of Alleyne’s 70th birthday in 2003, given financial assistance to particularly talented music students who have been primarily, but not exclusively, black. In this way, the AASF honours the late Alleyne (who himself grew up in the neighbourhood), not only musically, but politically, as he was outspoken on the subject of black representation in jazz. After all, despite the sea of white faces you might see in any given university jazz program, jazz has historically been a music of black creative innovation and black political resistance.

KMJF 2016, though it only lasts three days in only nine venues, will feature over 100 artists. (Three with particularly close ties to The Market are featured in their own words alongside this short article.) Unfortunately, it is both physically impossible and financially impractical to attend over 100 concerts in three days (the best you can probably do is nine, or maybe 12 - and yes, you may take that as a challenge), but if you have enjoyed my recommendations before, I may be able to gently help push you in some of the right directions (not that there are really any wrong ones).

Two pianists. Neither of the pianists described below is one whose music I’ve experienced in person; they’re players I’ve checked out only through their live and recorded material available online. I will be discovering them alongside all of you on that third weekend of September.

Andrew Craig, the pianist, multi-instrumentalist, singer, composer,
WHAT MOLLY WANTS, MOLLY GETS

Half an hour with award-winning jazz vocalist, singer-songwriter, artist and philanthropist Molly Johnson in the ad hoc KMJF office above Kind Spirit Cannabis Clinic on Augusta Avenue is enough to convince me. She’s going after this new project with the same gusto and determination as she poured into her Kumbaya Foundation and Festival in 1992, raising awareness and funds for people living with HIV/AIDS, and the kinds of causes since then that led in part to her becoming an Officer of the Order Of Canada in 2008.

The idea of this has been going on for about ten years, in my head. I’ve been thinking about it.

I was born at Bathurst and Dundas, and I’ve lived here three times. We have reached out to artists who have really put time and love and care into their own careers. They don’t just come with their hand up, they come knowing they are going to help us build this. People who have a responsibility to their own craft. You show up with your CDs, you show up at the end of the day to pick things up.

Same with the venues. For the most part, we’re in existing venues with soundmen and sound systems. I’m not reinventing the wheel. That’s why it works. Because everybody’s already here.

There will be shows throughout the day (Friday to Sunday), with only a handful of shows after 11pm. Right from the early stages I worked with the BIA, police and firefighters.

If it lasts it will be because it’s something the community does, not something that gets done to it. In the long run it’s as much about collecting stories, the history of this neighbourhood – heritage – as about the music itself. Right from the start we’ll be collecting stories as we go. Just watch people with old roots (and new money) rediscovering this place over the course of the three days.

This is not something that starts by raising corporate or arts money for an idea, then doing whatever is possible based on a budget. It starts with doing it right. I paid for the office myself, just to make it go. It’s been a lot of fun. In fact, we will have three merch tables outside. Artists will bring in CDs; the festival isn’t taking in any money on CD sales. Artists get the door. T-shirt sales will go to charity – this year, the Archie Alleyne Scholarship Fund. The festival will be affiliated with an annex of the Boys and Girls Club. Yamaha, who are supplying the piano for Tom’s Place, will be donating instruments to the Boys and Girls Club.

My own experience with Jazz festivals hasn’t always been positive. I wanted to do something more considerate of local performers. I love that it overlaps with TIFF and has been noticed by them. We will be mentioned in their magazine.

I want to show there’s already an appetite for this. I want every show sold out. I want you to not be able to get in. That’s my goal – sorry.

David Perlman

Bob Ben is The WholeNote’s jazz listings editor. He can be reached at jazz@thewholenote.com.
RICHARD UNDERHILL - SHUFFLE DEMON

Kensington is the perfect spot. It’s wonderful to have a concentration of great music and events in an area that is pedestrian friendly and has a real geographic focus for a festival. The Market has always been a hotbed of musical creativity and some of our most interesting artists from Bill Grove to Jane Siberry to Perry White have lived here. Why is it happening now? A few reasons, I think. First, Molly Johnson’s desire to host an event that highlights local jazz talent and her connection to the Market make it a perfect fit. Second, the Market has evolved to a point where there are enough venues to make hosting a festival here an exciting prospect. Of course, how the increase in venues may contribute to unsustainable gentrification is the tightrope wire that the Market walks every day. But Kensington has always been a creative heart of the city and this festival should only enhance that notion. Having it concentrated on one weekend is a good idea. Have the Market come alive with music for a September weekend – a perfect festival concept.

I’m really happy that the Shuffle Demons are participating from the get-go. We have a long history with the Market. We hooked up with Ida Carnevali for a costumed spring parade in 1985, Perry White lived for many years in the Market and of course, bits of the market and market characters are part of the 1985 “Spadina Bus” YouTube video. I was lucky enough to become a resident with my wife Suzie 17 years ago and have found great inspiration from my fellow marketeers and from events like PSK (Pedestrian Sundays Kensington) and the Festival of Lights. In short, Kensington is a real community and as such a genuine magnet for culture and creativity.

Founding member of Toronto’s outrageous Sun Ra-influenced Shuffle Demons and a Market resident for 17 years, Richard Underhill’s in-the-outside soloing, warm alto sound and great writing skills make him one of Canada’s most distinctive jazz performers. His acclaimed latest album, Kensington Suite, was nominated for a 2008 Juno Award, as his second album, Moment in Time, was in 2007. He has performed and recorded with a Who’s Who of musicians, Canadian and beyond, but still finds time to lead the Kensington Horns Community Band, the improvising electronic groove ensemble Astrogroove, and, since 2003, to be musical director for the winter solstice Kensington Festival of Lights.
Growing up in the market often felt like living in the middle of a sort of permanent festival, with different music tumbling out of every doorway and a parade of every imaginable person going past your window. And it was especially exciting when someone in the community decided it was time to throw a party on purpose. People who couldn’t agree on anything else seemed to be able to come together if it meant a parade, or music in the park or rolling out their awnings on a Sunday so the celebration could go on come freak rainstorm or unseasonable sun.

They were community events in the truest sense, and it was that community spirit that let us build traditions that were our own, without the input of big corporate sponsors. It’s part of what built KMJF is a festival in that tradition. I’m struck, looking at the lineup, by how many of the musicians have deep connections to the neighbourhood – as past and present residents or as artists who found a creative home here at various stages of their careers.

As a child, the market used to largely shut down at sunset, when the stores mostly closed and the shoppers all went home. Now there is no shortage of places to go and things to do and see after dark. I love the way the ticket model and concert schedule seem designed to encourage people to walk through the neighbourhood. Even if they don’t love the way the ticket model and concert schedule seem designed to encourage people to walk through the neighbourhood. Even if they couldn’t agree on anything else seemed to be able to come together if it meant a parade, or music in the park or rolling out their awnings on a Sunday so the celebration could go on come freak rainstorm or unseasonable sun.

That, to me, seems very much in the spirit of this wonderful, crazy, of. Or something old and wonderful that is completely new to them. Go home with something new and exciting that they had never heard of. Or something old and wonderful that is completely new to them. That, to me, seems very much in the spirit of this wonderful, crazy, resilient community.

**Beat by Beat | On Opera**

**Six Seasons at a Glance**

**CHRISTOPHER HOILE**

Based on the schedules that have already been announced, the 2016/17 opera season in Toronto will feature an intriguing mix of old favourites, revivals of major rarities and world premieres.

The Canadian Opera Company opens the season with a new production of Vincenzo Bellini’s *Norma* (1831), an opera not heard at the COC since 2006. Alternating in the title role of the Druid priestess will be Sondra Radvanovsky and Elza van den Heever. Pollione, her fickle Roman lover, is Russell Thomas, while Pollione’s new love, Adalgisa will be Isabel Leonard. Dimitry Ivashchenko will sing Norma’s father Oroveso. Stephen Lord conducts the eight performances running from October 6 to November 5.

Alternating with *Norma*, the COC continues its exploration of Handel with the company premiere of the composer’s 1734 opera *Ariodante* based on an episode from Ariosto’s epic poem *Orlando Furioso* (1532). Alice Coote sings the trouser role of Ariodante, Jane Archibald is his beloved Ginevra and Vanduhi Abrahamyan sings the second trouser role of the jealous Polinesso. Johannes Debus conducts his first ever Handel opera for seven performances running from October 16 to November 4.

The winter season sees the revival of two COC productions, Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* running for 12 performances from January 19 to February 24 and Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung* running for seven performances from February 2 to 25. Andrew Haji and Owen McCausland share the role of Tamino, while Elena Tsallagova and Kirsten MacKinnon sing the role of Pamina. Joshua Hopkins and...
Phillip Addis alternate in the role of the bird catcher, Papageno. The Queen of the Night is Ambur Braid. Sarastro is sung by Goran Juric in his Canadian debut and by Matt Boehler. Ashile Corcoran directs the revival of the 2005 production and Bernard Labadie makes his COC debut at the podium.

The COC’s production of Götterdämmerung, last seen in 2006, stars the acclaimed Christine Goerke, who continues Brünnhilde’s journey that she began in Die Walküre in 2015 and continued in Siegfried in 2016. Her Siegfried this time will be Andreas Schager. Martin Gantner is Gunther, Siegfried’s rival, Ileana Montalbetti is Gunther’s sister Gutrune, Ain Anger is Gunther’s dangerous half-brother, Hagen, and Robert Pomakov is the dwarf Alberich. Johannes Debus conducts his first-ever Götterdämmerung and Tim Albery returns to direct.

The highlight of the Toronto opera calendar occurs in the COC’s spring season. From April 20 to May 13, the COC presents a new production of Louis Riel by Harry Somers, written for Canada’s centennial in 1967, remounted in 1975 and now revived for Canada’s sesquicentennial in 2017 in a co-production with the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Generally regarded as Canada’s greatest opera, Louis Riel runs for seven performances from April 20 to May 13 in Toronto and from June 15 to 17 at the NAC.

Sondra Radvanovsky as Norma

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In the all-Canadian cast, Russell Braun sings the title role of the controversial Métis leader; James Westman is Sir John A. MacDonald; Simone Osborne is Riel’s wife Marguerite; Allyson McHardy is Riel’s mother Julie; Michael Colvin is Thomas Scott, an Orangeman executed on orders by Riel; and John Relyea is Bishop Taché, who is duped into helping betray Riel. Peter Hinton directs and Johannes Debus conducts this momentous production.

Alternating with Louis Riel is the Puccini warhorse Tosca, in the now-familiar production directed by Paul Curran last seen here in 2012. The 12 performances run from April 30 to May 20 and will use a double cast. Adrienne Pieczonka and Keri Alkema will sing the title role, Marcelo Puente and Kamen Chanev sing Tosca’s lover Cavaradossi and Markus Marquardt and Craig Colclough sing the villainous Scarpia. Canadian maestra Keri-Lynn Wilson, making her COC debut, conducts.

Opera Atelier’s season features two revivals of late 17th-century operas – Purcell’s Dido and Aeneas (1689) and Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s Medea, (1693). Dido and Aeneas, running from October 20 to 29, will feature Wallis Giunta as Dido, Christopher Enns as Aeneas, Meghan Lindsay as Didò’s confidante Belinda and Laura Pudwell as the Sorceress. Medea, running from April 22 to 29, will see Peggy Kriha Dye as Medea, Colin Ainsworth as Jason, Mireille Asselin as Jason’s wife Créuse and Stephen Hegedus as Crémon. Both productions will be directed as usual by Marshall Pynkoski with David Fallis conducting the Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.

Tapestry Opera has an especially exciting season. The season begins with the Toronto premiere of Naomi’s Road (2005), composer Ramona Luengen and librettist and director Ann Hodges, based on the novel by Joy Kogawa. Set in Vancouver during World War II, the opera follows nine-year-old Japanese-Canadian Naomi and her brother who are sent to internment camps in the B.C. interior and Alberta. The opera runs from November 16 to 20, 2016, at St. David’s Anglican Church, the home of St. Andrew’s, the last Japanese-Canadian Anglican parish in Toronto.

Running from May 24 to 30, Tapestry presents The Enslavement and Liberation of Oksana G., its largest-scale production since Iron Road in 2001. Oksana G. by composer Aaron Gervais and playwright Colleen Murphy is the story of a young Ukrainian girl lured into the world of sex trafficking by a Georgian recruiter who unexpectedly falls in love with her. When Oksana escapes to a refugee shelter, she finds herself entangled in a complex triangle between the recruiter and the Canadian priest who runs the shelter. With its fierce, contemporary heroine, Oksana G. sets out to challenge the operatic convention of the tragic victim. The premiere is led by acclaimed director Tom Diamond and conductor Jordan de Souza.

Toronto Operetta Theatre also has two fully staged revivals on offer. Running from December 27, 2016, to January 8, 2017, is Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Pirates of Penzance (1879) with Colin Ainsworth as Frederick, Curtis Sullivan as the Pirate King, Elizabeth Beeler as Ruth and Vania Chan as Mabel. COC resident conductor Derek Bate wields the baton. Running from April 26 to 30 is The Chocolate Soldier (1908) by Oscar Strauss, based on Arms and the Man (1894) by George Bernard Shaw. The popular operetta features Jennifer Taverner, Anna Caroline Macdonald, Stefan Fehr and Michael Nyby. Peter Tiefenbach conducts. Guillermo Silva-Marín directs both productions.

Toronto Masque Theatre has a fascinating lineup. Its first production running from November 17 to 19 is Handel’s cantata Apollo e Dafne (Apollo and Daphne, 1710) starring Jaqueline Woodley and Geoffrey Sirett and staged by Marie-Nathalie Lacoursière. This is paired with Richard Strauss’ unusual melodrama for piano and spoken word, Enoch Arden (1897) based on the 1864 poem by Tennyson. TMT’s second production is a world premiere, The Man Who Married Himself, composed by Juliet Palmer to a libretto by Anna Chatterton based on a Karnataka folk tale. The singers include Scott Belluz, Subiksha Rangarajan and Alex Samaras and the dance will combine Eastern and Western traditions just as will the makeup of the orchestra. Hari Krishnan will direct and choreograph the piece and Larry Beckwith conducts both productions.

VOICEBOX: Opera in Concert again helps to fill in the void in repertoire left by the larger companies. This season will begin with the second Bellini of the season in the form of I Capuleti e i Montecchi (1830), Bellini’s version of Romeo and Juliet, on November 20, with Caitlin Wood, Anita Krause and Tonattù Abrego. On February 5 is Franz Joseph Haydn’s delightful L’Isola disabitata (1779) accompanied by the Aradi Ensemble with Kevin Mallon conducting. And on March 26 is Modest Mussorgsky’s Khovanshchina (1886). Although not all of Toronto’s opera companies have announced their offerings, the season already presents an embarras de choix.

Christopher Holle is a Toronto-based writer on opera and theatre. He can be contacted at opera@thewholenote.com.
My musical life in Toronto this summer was bound up in Toronto Summer Music’s “London Calling” season, 25 days of activities spurred by the idea of musical life in London throughout the centuries. That clever conceit enabled the program to broaden its content beyond English works to encompass music heard in London, particularly in the popular 19th-century concert-giving associations. TSM’s 11th edition, the sixth and final under its personable artistic director Douglas McNabney, was its most extensive to date, unfurling a huge amount of repertoire between July 14 and August 7. I was able to take in ten concerts, three masterclasses and a rehearsal, making for many memorable moments, much of which I have already written about on thewholenote.com. Here are some highlights:

McNabney’s farewell season got off to an impressive start with a concert of English music for strings conducted by Joseph Swensen. He introduced the evening and noted that Britten’s Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, which we were about to hear, was the first piece he wanted to program in the festival. The remarkable performance which followed—by American tenor Nicholas Phan, TSO principal horn Neil Deland and the TSM Festival Strings—was breathtaking in its execution. Deland’s horn playing was unforgettable for its purity of tone, a wondrous support for the mercurial tenor and the assorted poetic anthology, the text taken from some of Britten’s favourite verse by the likes of Tennyson, Blake and Keats; the powerful Blow;

In a refreshing concert July 19, pianist Pedja Muzijevic’s presented “Haydn Dialogues,” a 75-minute performance of four Haydn sonatas separated by pieces by Oliver Knussen, John Cage and Jonathan Berger. Passionate about mixing old and new music, Muzijevic is also a genial talker, combining a delicious wit and the occasional catty comment with a streamlined historical sensibility that made it easy to relate to Haydn and his relationship with his patrons, the Esterházy family, and to the timely invitation by the British impresario, Salomon, to live and work in London. (“Talk about London Calling,” Muzijevic added in a clever aside.)

The Coronation of King George II took place in October of 1727; Handel was commissioned to write four anthems for the ceremony. On July 26 in Walter Hall, Daniel Taylor led his Theatre of Early Music in a delightful hour-long re-imaging of the event that literally and figuratively was the grand centrepiece of TSM’s season. In addition to using music of the day, Taylor had the wisdom to include three anachronistic elements: Hubert Parry’s I Was Glad and Jerusalem, as well as John Tavener’s Hymn to the Mother of God, which broadened the evening and extended the ceremonial maelstrom into the 20th century. The effervescent Taylor and his company had the musical smarts to carry it off.

A week of exceptional musicality (which also included TSO concert-master and TSM artistic director designate, Jonathan Crow, headlining an enjoyable evening of mostly British chamber music, July 28) concluded July 29, with an outstanding recital by the talented Dover Quartet. It was TSM’s nod to the Beethoven Quartet Society of 1845, the first public cycle of the composer’s complete string quartets, a series of London concerts each of which included an early, middle and late quartet. So, in that spirit, the capacity Walter Hall audience was treated to Op.18 No.4, Op.59 No.3 and Op.132.

The Dovers’ playing of the early quartet was empathetic, subtle,
impeccably phrased, marked by forward motion, drive and energy. They played up the inherent contrasts in the middle quartet’s first movement, the innocence and aspiration, warmth and solidity of the third and the controlled freneticism of the finale. But the heart of the evening was the third movement of Op.132, a work of naked supplication and beauty transformed into optimistic assertiveness. The feeling of divine well-being has rarely been better expressed. Musically mature, vibrant and uncannily unified in purpose and execution, the youthful players brought passion and grace to the first two movements, took a decisive approach to the fourth and emphasized the rhapsodic character of the finale.

TSM’s celebration of chamber music became a showcase for artists like TSO principal oboe Sarah Jeffrey, who showed off her rich tonal palette in Arthur Bliss’ Oboe Quintet Op.44, beaming like a beacon and blending in well with her string collaborators, always with grace. And pianist David Jalbert, who put his string collaborators on his back in Vaughan Williams’ Piano Quintet in C Minor, supporting and coming to the fore as needed in this vigorous, dramatic, sweetly melodic work. Two days later, Jalbert again proved a most conducive collaborator in Salomon’s arrangement of Haydn’s Symphony No.102 in B-Flat Major for keyboard, flute, two violins, viola, cello and double bass. After a rehearsal in which he felt the piano to be overpowering and excessively percussive, Jalbert had a fortepiano brought in for the concert. It made for a terrific sense of ensemble and Jalbert’s passion was contagious. The evening ended with a spirited whirl through Beethoven’s Septet in E-Flat Major Op.20 with Crow in charge, in yet another outlet for his artistry, while Nadina Mackie Jackson’s soulful bassoon provided invaluable support.

Jeffrey, Jalbert and Crow were among the more than 20 mentors to the 29 emerging artists who were members of TSM’s Academy. It’s one of the key components of the festival, one which undoubtedly has a lasting effect on all involved. Unable to attend any of the “reGeneration” concerts in which one mentor sat in with academy members for eight chamber music concerts, nor the art of song or chamber concerts by the academy members themselves, I nevertheless did get a sense of the coaching side of the festival in the masterclasses and rehearsal I witnessed.

Jason Starr’s Mahler DVDs. Crow returns to his main gig on September 21 when he and the TSO under Peter Oundjian, with guest soprano Renée Fleming, open their new season with Ravel’s lush song cycle Shéhérazade, Italian arias by Puccini and Leoncavallo and songs from Rodgers and Hammerstein’s The King and I. Two days later, Henning Kraggerud is the violin soloist in Sibelius’ majestic Violin Concerto, one of the cornerstones of the repertoire. Rachmaninoff’s Symphony No.2, which drips Romanticism, completes the program. Then, on September 28 and 29, Oundjian conducts what promises to be one of the must-see concerts of the year, Mahler’s Symphony No.3; Jamie Barton, fresh from her
2016-2017 Concert Series begins October 2
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OLAGJEILO
LUMINOUS NIGHT Festival
SUNDAY OCTOBER 15, 2016 - 7:30 pm
Yorkminster Park Baptist Church | LuminousNightFestival.com
well-received TSM recital at Koerner Hall, is the mezzo soloist along- side Women of the Amadeus Choir, Women of the Elmer Iseler Singers and Toronto Children’s Chorus.

Coincidentally, I was recently given a package of Mahler DVDs produced and directed by Jason Starr, a prolific maker of dozens of video and films from classical music and modern dance performances to documentary profiles of artists and cultural issues. He began his Mahler odyssey in 2002 with a splendid deconstruction of what Mahler himself called “a musical poem that travels through all the stages of evolution.” What the Universe Tells Me: Unravelling the Mysteries of Mahler’s Third Symphony, Starr’s impressive 60-minute film, intercuts a performance by the Manhattan School of Music conducted by Glen Cortese, with analysis by baritone Thomas Hampson, scholarly talking heads like Henry-Loïs de La Grange, Donald Mitchell, Peter Franklin and Morten Solvik and timely shots of the natural landscape, all in the service of furthering our understanding of Mahler’s vision. “Imagine a work so large that it mirrors the entire world,” he said.

How Schopenhauer and Nietzsche figure into Mahler’s mindset, the beginning of the cosmos, the oboe as the guide to the beauty of nature and the entire world,” he said. From the medina of Marrakech to a convent in Corsica, tired of exploring,” says Mahler biographer de La Grange. From the symphonies of Mahler have become a world for me which I’ve never heard Bruno Walter conduct Mahler’s Ninth Symphony in 1945, “the symphonies of Mahler have become a world for me which I’ve never heard before,” he said. Anecdotes by Mahler’s granddaughter Marina, Boulez (“Transformation of Henry-Loïs’ personality by Mahler gives him authority on Mahler.”), Challly, Eschenbach and Hampson add to the pleasure of this essential document.

**QUICK PICKS**

**Sept 12:** Trailblazing cellist Matt Haimovitz brings his new Overtures to Bach to the intimate space of The Sound Post for a recital featuring commissioned works by Philip Glass, Du Yun, Vijay Iyer, Roberto Sierra, Mohammed Fairouz and Luna Pearl Woolf, each of which precedes a different first movement Prelude from each of Bach’s six cello suites.

**Sept 14:** Haimovitz brings the same program to the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society (KWCMS). Among other performers in the Music Room of the indefatigable Narvanesos this month are French cellist Alain Pierlot and pianist Jason Cutmore on Sept 25 in works by French composers (including sonatas by Debussy and Saint-Saëns). **Sept 28:** French pianist Alain Jacquou makes his KWCMS debut in a program of Sibelius, Ravel and Nazareth. **Oct 1:** Jethro Marks, principal violist of the National Arts Centre Orchestra, offers Schubert, Mendelssohn and a Beethoven violin sonata (transcribed for viola), with pianist Mauro Bertoli, currently artist-in-residence at Carlton University.

**Sept 17:** Stewart Goodyear takes a trip down the QE2 to open the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra’s new season with Brahms’ first major symphonic work, the formidable Concerto No.1 in D Minor Op.15. Conductor Gemma New completes the evening with Brahms’ friend and patron, Schumann, and his visionary Symphony No.4.

**Sept 17:** Owen Sound’s Sweetwater Music Festival “Virtuosity” concert features clarinetist James Campbell, violinist Steven Dann, percussionist Aiyun Huang, violinist (and artistic director) Mark Fewer and the Gryphon Trio in a varied program that spotlights a new commissioned work by David Braid. **Sept 18:** The same performers wrap up the weekend festivities with “A Classy Finish” which includes Prokofiev’s Overture on Hebrew Themes Op.34 and Beethoven’s Piano Trio in D Major (“Ghost”) Op.70 No.1.

**Sept 18:** For any WholeNote readers who may be in P.E.I. on the third weekend of the month, don’t miss Ensemble Made in Canada’s performance of piano quartets by Mahler, Bridge, Daniel and Brahms (No.1 in G Minor Op.23), part of the Indian River Festival.

**Sept 25:** Bassoon marvel Nadina Mackie Jackson is joined by string players Biljan Sepanj, Steve Koh, Rory McLeod, Bryan Lu and Joe Phillips for her “Bassoon Out Loud” season opener; works include Vivaldi’s Concerti Nos.14 & 27, Lussier’s Le Dernier Chant d’Ophélie Op.2 and works for solo strings.

**Sept 30:** TSO concertmaster Jonathan Crow shows his versatility as he joins with fellow TSO members, principal violin Teng Li, associate principal cellist Winona Zelenka and OSC Orchestra concertmaster Marie Bérard (who comprise the Trio Arkell) to play Ligeti’s early String Quartet No.1 “Métamorphoses nocturnes.” Mozart’s masterful Divertimento in E-Flat Major K.563 completes the program.

**Sept 30 Oct 1:** Conductor Edwin Outwater leads the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony in two bulwarks of Romantic music: Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto No.3 (with Natasha Paremski, whose temperament and technique have been compared to Argerich) and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No.4.

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.
U of T Faculty of Music quartet-in-residence, the celebrated Cecilia String Quartet, opens Mooredale’s 2016/17 season September 25 with works by Haydn, Mendelssohn and Emilie LeBel. Second violinist Sarah Nematalah and cellist Rachel Desoer graciously and eloquently answered a few questions about the repertoire they will be playing in their concert at Walter Hall. I hope you enjoy their insights and that the answers will enhance your experience of hearing them play.

WN: Please tell me about the qualities of Haydn’s Op.33 No.1 that appeal to you.
Sarah Nematalah: I love the elusive nature of this work. There are so many moments where Haydn begins to lead you down one path and then immediately steers you in another direction - we feel momentary comfort that is quickly shaken, sweetness that suddenly turns sour, aggression that bursts into joy. I feel that this quality makes for an edge-of-your-seat experience!

WN: How does recording a work, for example the Mendelssohn Op.44 No.1, affect your subsequent performance of it?
SN: The amount and type of detail one must consider in preparing the piece and working in the recording sessions is immense. It’s intense work, but rewarding in its own way. After you’ve been through that experience, performing the piece feels very freeing - it allows you to live through the work along with the audience again, as opposed to solidifying something concrete. The experience of performing the work has a new dynamism to it that is really exhilarating.

WN: How did you come to program Taxonomy of Paper Wings by Emilie LeBel?
Rachel Desoer: This piece by Emilie is part of our large project this season of Celebrating Canadian Women Composers. Over the past two years we have commissioned four outstanding women composers to write string quartets for us and this season it is all culminating. We will be presenting all four pieces at the 21C Festival in May and looking towards recording all the works. We chose Taxonomy of Paper Wings for this concert for two reasons. First, it’s a great opportunity to present Emilie’s work in her hometown. Second, her work has a calmness and subtlety we thought would contrast greatly and provide an oasis in the middle of this busy program!

SNAPSHOT

Cecilia String Quartet at Mooredale

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Next up for the Cecilias

- Next up for the Cecilia String Quartet, apart from their duties at UofT, are concerts in Thunder Bay, Troy, N.Y., Hamilton and Washington, D.C.

Next Up at Mooredale

- Mooredale Concerts’ season continues November 4 with “Noel Coward: A Talent to Amuse,” featuring singers Monica Whitcher, Norine Burgess, Ben Butterfield and Alexander Dobson.

Romantica

Saturday, April 15 - 6:00 PM
Jean-Michel Malouf, conductor
Holly Chapin, soprano
Arthur Tang, piano
Beethoven – Coriolan, Overture
Mendelssohn – A Midsummer Night’s Dream
Grieg – Piano Concerto No. 1
Arias by Delibes & Verdi

A Night at the Movies

Saturday, May 20 - 8:00 PM
Jean-Michel Malouf conductor
H. Shore - Lord of the Rings
M. Knopfler - Princess Bride
J. Williams - Schindler’s List
N. Rota - The Godfather
Calvin Presbyterian Church (concerts 1,2,3,4,5)
Colombo Centre (concert 2) - Tickets $20/25

The whole note.com
A Future World Revisited in Sound

WENDALYN BARTLEY

Something unique and original is happening this September in the world of music and art – the in/future Festival at Ontario Place running from September 15 to 25. The festival is the vision of Art Spin, a project founded in 2009 to create experiences in alternative venues that create a dialogue between the Toronto art community and the public. With in/future, they are transforming one of the most beloved places in Ontario into a series of site-specific projects by visual, sound and media artists, as well as programming several world music concerts and film/video screenings.

Ontario Place opened in 1971 fuelled by optimistic and utopian notions of the future strongly reflected in the design of the buildings as well as in the content of the exhibits. In the words of the original Ontario Place theme song, it was a “once-in-a lifetime, never-before-place.” One thing that is sure to occur for many during the festival is the triggering of memories of what the future once looked like. And that is the point really. The art installations will offer opportunities to look back at a particularly 1970s vision of things. In the words of New Adventures in Sound Art’s artistic director Darren Copeland, “We who are now in that future are looking at the past’s view of us.” Copeland was approached by Rui Pimenta, one of Art Spin’s directors, to curate sound installations in one of the old exhibit silos. There are close to ten of these structures, that once housed exhibits on the natural notions of the future strongly reflected in the design of the buildings and the public. With in/future, they are transforming one of the most beloved places in Ontario into a series of site-specific projects by visual, sound and media artists, as well as programming several world music concerts and film/video screenings.

Central to NAISA’s aesthetic vision is the spatialization of sound, so the opportunity to put sound into a round, acoustically reverberant space was a perfect match. During our interview, Copeland stressed the importance of describing the works that NAISA is curating for their installation as “site-responsive” rather than “site-specific.” For the NAISA installation (running from September 19-25), Copeland provided a production framework with his spatialization software and eight-speaker setup for three composer/performers (Anne Bourne, Lisa Conway and myself) to create pieces that are personal responses to not only the acoustics of the silo, but the entire entity and vision of what Ontario Place was.

When I asked Copeland to describe the process for him as curator and producer, he stated that “each piece had different ways of using the space, with different configurations and processes, none of which I knew before we started recording in the silo.” And although the composers could bring materials with them for the recording, it was “a process of discovery for them as well, once present in the environment. A combination of the artist’s ideas, the ideas I brought, and the architecture of the space conspired in the moment to provide the direction and substance of what was made. That wouldn’t have happened if we had been in a neutral space – the third ingredient would be missing. It would have been a planned project that happens in spite of the location,” he said.

Anne Bourne chose to record and layer multiple tracks of cello and voice improvisations in the silo space. During the process though, a curious thing happened – memories of her experiences performing on the circular revolving stage at Ontario Place’s popular Forum venue surfaced. As Bourne described it to me, the significance of the round stage meant that everyone had an equal and inclusive experience of connection with the performers, and every voice was equidistant from the centre. This is in contrast to the more hierarchical nature of the prosenium stage. It was being in the round architecture of the silo that triggered her performance memories and led her into taking on the role of transmitter of those inclusive values while improvising. It’s not hard to see here the connection between the architecture and the futuristic visions of the early 1970s.

Lisa Conway was also influenced by the structure of the silos, but took her piece in a very different direction. She chose to work with recordings of the materials generally associated with silos – sand, grain and salt sounds – and played with the concept of these sound textures within large resonant spaces as the focus for her piece. For my own work, I created a prerecorded electroacoustic soundtrack made up of Ontario Place soundscapes, a variety of pre-composed vocal drones, and processed excerpts from the original Ontario Place theme song. In the silo, I improvised a vocal track while listening to the prerecorded track, playing with the words of the theme song and the acoustics of the silo. The final format for the entire installation will present all three pieces mixed and spatialized amongst the eight-speaker array and played sequentially in the reverberant silo environment.

I also spoke to two other artists working with sound in their installations for in/future.

Simone Jones, a multidisciplinary artist who works with film, video and electronics, is working on two pieces for the festival. The first is a collaboration with visual artist Laura Millard that will be installed in the former Ice Silo and is a dialogue between sound and lightbox images. The images are created from aerial drone shots of circular and intersecting snowmobile patterns on a frozen lake, and the two artists have chosen to keep the original icebergs from the silo exhibit as part of their installation to emphasize the wintery environment. For the sound, Jones improvised on Philip Glass’ Etude No.1 and edited her piano recordings to highlight the repetitive pattern. The soundsfiles will also be treated spatially with panning movements between two stereo speakers.

Jones’ second work will be located at the observation decks at the southwest tip of Ontario Place. Video footage of a body in water, as well as images of water itself will be projected onto a large scrim placed between the two decks and high enough that it will appear to float. The soundscape will include recordings of water as well as an introduction created and performed by 14-year-old cellist Will Smyth. For Jones, what is exciting about this project is the opportunity to create work with a deliberate connection to place. “I like to be nostalgic about Ontario Place and the idea of recapturing some of that optimism that was so evident in the visual motif of the silos and the dome of the Cinesphere. The creation of public space is one of the most important things that we can do as a society.”

The theme of urban space also surfaced during my conversation with sound artist and producer Michael Trommer. Trommer’s piece will be located just to the east of the observation deck along a stretch of beach, also facing the open water. Using field recordings made during the night at various lakes up north and at Georgian Bay, Trommer’s intention is to transpose a very different time and place onto an urban beach through his amplified soundscape. This will create an ambiguous environment in which people will be hearing
sounds that belong and yet don’t quite belong. Ideally, the ambiguity will be further emphasized by hiding the speakers from view and also using a subwoofer speaker to accentuate the low frequencies. Because the recordings were made at night when sound can travel far more easily, he ended up capturing soundscapes that were five to ten kilometres away: loon calls, Wasaga Beach clubs, and people speaking at a cottage for example. Trommer is drawn to liminal locations such as waterfronts that transition from urban to natural and where you have a shift in materials, going from dense concrete to open space. Having grown up in Montreal, and in close proximity to La Ronde, the site of Expo 67 (a similarly utopian vision), “there is something that resonates for me about these places which are replicating natural shapes like the dome rather than the rectangular and stacked slab-like shapes of our urban environment.”

Personally, the opportunities to return to Ontario Place this summer, as well as speaking to the other artists I’ve written about for this column, have reaffirmed for me the importance of creating pieces in response to place. Connecting with memories and revisiting a space that holds collective values worth reconsidering makes the in/future project a crucial event for all to experience. It will no doubt generate an ongoing conversation about this iconic urban oasis. Ontario Place is scheduled to reopen in 2017 with a new mandate.

**The Opening Concert Season.** Although most of our new music presenters wait until October to get their seasons rolling, there are some events coming up in September that are important to look at. In keeping with the theme of sound in resonant environments, the **Music Gallery** will present a concert on September 17 of three artists united by their fascination with drones and reverberant spaces. Bassist and composer Ricardo Dias Gomes will perform his intimate yet aggressive sounds in big spaces, while emerging multidisciplinary artist Kat Estacio will play with notions of nostalgia and decolonization in her drones, surrounded by a visual design of his own making. Montreal composer Ricardo Dias Gomes will perform his intimate yet aggressive sounds in big spaces, while emerging multidisciplinary artist Kat Estacio will play with notions of nostalgia and decolonization in her performance.

On September 30, **New Music Concerts** presents “Beijing Memories,” a concert of highlights from their China tour. This past July, eight musicians from NMC were invited to be the ensemble-in-residence at the Beijing International Composition Workshop. The evening will feature highlights from the three concerts performed as part of that residency in Beijing, with compositions by Brian Current, Omar Daniel, Wen Deqing, Lei Liang and competition winner Zhao Yi from China.

The **Thin Edge New Music Collective** is busy this month with three different events. First, on September 2, they will be performing in Contact Contemporary Music’s annual INTERsection event on Labour Day weekend at the Music Gallery along with guest guitarist Elliott Sharp. INTERsection continues on September 3 all day at Yonge-Dundas Square with an impressive lineup of performers. Then on September 15 and 16, Thin Edge is hosting the Feldman Festival at Array Space, performing works by composers Morton Feldman, Linda Catlin Smith and Barbara Monk Feldman. And finally on September 23, their fundraising event will present works by Nick Storring, Scott Rubin, Xenakis, Cage and others.

**QUICK PICKS**

**Sept 2:** National Ballet of Canada/Art Gallery of Ontario present “The Dreamers Ever Leave You,” with live music composed by Lubomyr Melnyk.

**Sept 18:** Niagara Symphony Orchestra’s concert premieres Toward Light, a new commissioned work by Canadian composer Roydon Tse.

**Sept 2a:** University of Waterloo Department of Music presents Earth Piece by Canadian composer Carol Weaver.

Wendalyn Bartley is a Toronto-based composer and electro-vocal sound artist. sounddreaming@gmail.com.

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**Friday Sept. 30, 2016 | **beijing memories**  
New Music Concerts Ensemble @ The Music Gallery

**Sunday Oct. 30, 2016 | Generation 2016**  
Ensemble contemporain de Montréal @ The Music Gallery

**Friday Dec. 2, 2016 | SLOWIND**  
Slovenian Woodwind Quintet @ The Music Gallery

**Saturday Jan. 7, 2017 | Conducting the Ether**  
Carolina Eyck theremin, Penderecki Quartet @ The Music Gallery

**Sunday Feb. 5, 2017 | Salvatore Sciarrino**  
In collaboration with the University of Toronto New Music Festival  
Branko Džinović accordion, NMC Ensemble @ Walter Hall

**Sunday March 26, 2017 (non-subscription event)**  
Kurtág’s “Kafka Fragments”  
Tony Arnold soprano | Movses Pogossian violin  
345 Sorauren Ave. | RSVP 416.961.9594

**Friday April 28, 2017**  
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www.NewMusicConcerts.com
Satisfying Summer, Promising Fall

HANS DE GROOT

September is always a lean month. Many musical organizations do not start their seasons until October. There are, however, a number of early events.

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra begins its season with a concert at Roy Thomson Hall featuring Renée Fleming on September 21, her first visit since an October 2015 RTH recital, accompanied by Gerald Martin Moore. The program features Ravel’s *Shéhérazade* as well as works by Puccini and Leoncavallo and selections from *The King and I* by Rodgers and Hammerstein.

Mahler’s *Third Symphony*, which the TSO will perform September 28 and 29, was not a favourite of Otto Klemperer, an early admirer and interpreter of Mahler’s music. In fact, he refused to conduct it. Times have changed and I think that there is now fairly general agreement that the *Third* is one of Mahler’s finest works. Peter Oundjian conducts and the mezzo solo will be sung by Jamie Barton, the young American singer who gave such an impressive recital for Toronto Summer Music last July. The choral parts will be taken by the women of the Amadeus Choir and the Elmer Iseler Singers and by the Toronto Children’s Chorus.

The Women’s Musical Club of Toronto’s directors have over the years demonstrated a superb sense for finding the finest artists. It looks as if they have again found an exciting performer for their opening concert on October 6. The tenor Issachah Savage will be familiar to some Toronto audiences as he was the cover for the role of Siegmund in Wagner’s *Die Walküre* at the Canadian Opera Company last spring and performed the role on February 7. He also won the 2014 Seattle International Wagner Competition and has sung at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. His Toronto recital at Walter Hall on October 6 will include Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*, songs by Strauss and Quilter as well as a selection of spirituals.

The Toronto Masque Theatre’s 2016/17 season will start off with a salon concert on September 19 at The Atrium, 21 Shaftesbury Avenue. The program consists of poetry and songs inspired by trees. The singers are members of the Elizabeth McDonald Voice Studio. TMT’s first regular concert will be on November 17 and consists of a

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Giles Tomkins | Kathryn Tremills
William Webster | Boris Zarankin

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Boris Zarankin | Ilana Zarankin

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A MUSICAL INVASION OF PARIS: THE MIGHTY 4
featuring

Michèle Bogdanowicz | Lucia Cesaroni
Lara Dodds-Eden | Adrian Kramer
Peter McGillivray | Inna Perkis
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particularly interesting coupling: Handel’s cantata Apollo and Daphne for soprano and baritone and Richard Strauss’ Enoch Arden, a monodrama for speaker and piano. More on this intriguing pairing as the season unfolds.

And looking back: When it comes to finding the very best performers available, the track record of Toronto Summer Music is unsurpassed. But the festival has always done more than find performers. Their program has always included an academy in which young professional and pre-professional performers are mentored by senior musicians. In 2016 a new branch of the academy, the TSM Community Academy, was inaugurated. It was a program aimed at amateurs. I seriously thought of applying to the program but in the end was too intimidated to do so.

I did go last summer, however, and realized that, while the program was extremely demanding, there was no need to feel intimidated. The Community Academy consisted of three parts: instrumentalists were coached by professionals, mainly front desk players of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra or the Canadian Opera Company; pianists studied with David Jalbert; singers with Matthias Maute and Peter McGillivray. The work we singers focused on was Bach’s B Minor Mass. This was not the first time that I have attempted to sing the work but on other occasions we only had a day or an afternoon. These occasions always left me with the feeling that someday, in another life, I would get things right. I would not wish to claim that our performance last summer was everything it should be but we certainly got a lot closer than had been possible on earlier occasions. While we rehearsed all the choral parts, we performed only five movements. I think the decision to restrict us was entirely sensible. We were much helped by having four professional section leads. Separate from the rehearsals for the mass were the vocal lessons and the vocal masterclass conducted by Peter McGillivray. Kathryn Tremills was the very able pianist throughout.

2016 marked the final year of Douglas McNabney’s leadership of TSM. He will be missed. I am, however, looking forward with confidence to the new leadership which will be provided by his successor, Jonathan Crow.

GTA Quick Picks
Aug 26 to Sept 3: Soulpepper presents “Taking the A Train Uptown Manhattan – Harlem”: the music, words and ideas that have made Harlem great.

Sept 9 and 21: A tribute to the folk songs of the 60s with Sue and Dwight Peters and Michelle Rumball at the Free Times Café.


Sept 16: Kristine Dandavino, mezzo, and Michael Robert-Broder, baritone, will give a joint recital of music by Wagner, Schumann, Brahms, Well and Sharman at the Women’s Art Association of Toronto.

Sept 22: A free lunchtime recital at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music will feature the soprano Elizabeth McDonald in works by Beethoven, Spohr and Schumann, at Walter Hall.

Sept 25: Vania Chan is the soprano soloist in Bach’s Coffee Cantata in the Rezonance Ensemble’s concert at 2pm at CSI Annex that also includes Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto No.5.

Sept 27: The first of this season’s free vocal recitals at the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre features artists of the 2016/17 COC Ensemble Studio.

And Beyond the GTA
Sept 12: A celebration of the Beatles hosted by Lucy Peacock is a fundraiser for PAL Stratford, an organization that offers support and affordable housing to retired artists in need; Avon Theatre, Stratford.

Sept 16: The soprano Meredith Hall will sing Hasse and Handel with the Ensemble Caprice at the SweetWater Music Festival, Leith Church.

Sept 17: Hall will also sing at another SweetWater Music Festival concert which includes Schubert’s The Shepherd on the Rock (with the clarinetist James Campbell), as well as a new work for soprano and community singers by David Braid.

Hans de Groot is a concertgoer and active listener who also sings and plays the recorder. He can be contacted at artofsong@thewholenote.com.
Forward Into Fall!

BRIAN CHANG

Much as I’d like to be enjoying more of summer sitting on a Muskoka chair in my backyard with the sun beaming down on me, the pull of the new arts season is beckoning us all forward into fall.

Exciting things are ahead over the next few months: a 20th anniversary celebration of Noel Edison at the helm of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir with Mendelssohn’s Elijah; composer Ola Gjeilo (whom I wrote about at some length in last April’s issue) is being featured as part of the third edition of Choral Encounters – “Luminous Festival”; The Lord of the Rings – The Fellowship of the Ring is being done by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir at the beginning of December; and this is just a taste of the big events coming up this fall for our choirs (and of the intensity of the rehearsal and preparation about to get under way).

If you’re like me and want to hold on to summer a bit longer, our summer festival greats, the Stratford Shakespeare Festival and the Shaw Festival, continue to offer some tantalizing musical theatre munchies: A Chorus Line and A Little Night Music at Stratford and Sweeney Todd and Alice in Wonderland at Shaw. Closer to home, the Lower Ossington Theatre productions of Mamma Mia! or West Side Story may entice. Mirvish Entertainment’s Matilda continues to be the hottest ticket out there right now. Dates and locations vary. Check our listings.

If you’re looking for choral concerts, most won’t be forthcoming until October or later, as ensembles return from summer and spend September adjusting and rehearsing. An exception: MOSAIC Canadian Vocal Ensemble presents a concert featuring Karl Jenkins’s Te Deum, and his well-known work The Armed Man: Mass for Peace. September 24 at 7:30pm in St George’s Cathedral, Kingston.

Check into your subscription series for choral music and other artistic endeavours across the region. Subscriptions are important stabilizers in our artistic communities. From Buddies in Bad Times Theatre to the Orpheus Choir to the Aga Khan Museum, subscribers are a key component for the financial viability of our arts organizations. Subscriptions also ensure that you have access to some of the world’s best art across the region including access to the best seats, sightlines and acoustics. Make sure your subscriptions for the upcoming year are set!

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A Luminous Choral Experience
As mentioned, Ola Gjeilo comes to Toronto as part of Choral Encounters 2016 – “Luminous Festival.” Gjeilo is sponsored by Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, in collaboration with the University of Toronto Faculty of Music and the Orpheus Choir of Toronto. His work is increasingly becoming part of standard choral repertoire; the GTA region routinely features many of his dozens of compositions.

The majority of the festival is private masterclasses and sessions with Gjeilo and other choral teachers from the region. But the festival culminates with “Luminous Night” a gala concert on October 15 at 7:30pm in Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, Toronto. This grand celebration of his work will include a full presentation of Sunrise Mass with the Talisker Players and also includes Ubi Caritas, Northern Lights, Eternal Sky, and (one of my top choral songs) Serenity.

Voices will be provided by the massing of Exultate Chamber Singers, Orpheus Choir, Resonance, the University of Toronto MacMillan Singers and Women’s Chamber Choir and Yorkminster Park Baptist Church Choir. See more at luminousnightfestival.com.

I have written on the Sunrise Mass before, a remarkable collection of Latin text set to lush beautiful melodies. Using the cycle of a day, from morning to evening to mirror that of life, Gjeilo’s work is an evocative invitation to contemplation and intimacy. It is indeed his art and skill as a composer that the music is both grand and thick in sound, yet intimate and personal in execution. He writes in the notes to his piece Contrition: “I feel that my music should be bigger than me, bigger than my everyday concerns as a human being – concerns that may seem incredibly important in the moment but, in the grand scheme of things, really don’t amount to much when compared to the great mystery of life and the universe.”

Gjeilo is especially good at combining quicker, energized vocal lines (or string lines) with slower, poignant melodies. These undulating lines, such as those in Tundra, Contrition or Movement 2 of Sunrise Mass, give an insistence and texture to his music. In setting up...
listener’s ears to hear these lines, he is most successful in reaching the thick, large chords that texturize his music later on. Appropriately, the word “lush” is most often used to describe his work.

A perceptive listener will notice that incremental semi-tone movement both up and down amongst his lines will create a sparkling essence to the music. Invariably, the sparkle resolves towards the end of the piece, leaving a consonant sound. Most often, it is that Gjeilo introduces the start of a chord with its dominant note before providing the full chord one or two bars later. It’s an accessible, pleasing way that music hits the ear.

**Craving Nostalgia:** As a child in the early 90s, I grew up listening to the Motown records my father played frequently. Doo-Wop and golden age pop have influenced my musical tastes since then. Remarkably, many of these groups that began in the 50s and 60s continue to perform. ARB Productions, a Toronto based company, specializes in nostalgia performers.

ARB presents the Four Lads and the Four Aces at the Palais Royale on September 26 at noon and 7pm for a full meal and dinner. The Four Lads are homegrown talent having gone to St. Michael’s Choir School and most found fame with their hit *Moments to Remember* and *No, Not Much*. The Four Aces hail from the U.S.A. and have had their share of hits including *Love is a Many-Splendored Thing* and *Stranger in Paradise*.

**Westeros:** Finally, later this year, on March 4, 2017 for one night only, Westeros will descend on the Air Canada Centre. I’m mentioning this early as this event already has incredible buzz and will completely sell out, so you will thank me later! Featuring a full orchestra and a full, mixed-voices choir set to a multimedia show including pyrotechnics, this isn’t an event to miss. Tickets available on Ticketmaster.

Follow Brian on Twitter @bfchang Send info/media/tips to choralscene@thewholenote.com

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**Elora Singers**

NOEL EDISON, CONDUCTOR

![Image of the Four Lads](image)

**2016/2017 Choral Concert Series**

- **Elora Festival Singers in Concert:** presented by Toronto Mendelssohn Choir
  - October 16th | 3:00 pm
  - Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto
  - Tickets available at www.tmchoir.org

- **Valiant Hearts**
  - Oct. 30th | 3:30 pm
  - $40 | St. John’s Church, Elora

- **Messiah**
  - Dec. 11th | 3:00 pm
  - $45 | St. Joseph’s Church, Fergus

- **Festival of Carols**
  - Dec. 20th | 5 & 7:30 pm
  - $40 | St. John’s Church, Elora

- **Festival of Carols**
  - Dec. 21st | 5 & 7:30 pm
  - $40 | St. Joseph’s Church, Fergus

- **Bach Motets**
  - April 2nd | 3:00 pm
  - $40 | St. Joseph’s Church, Fergus

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**The Elora Singers**

NOEL EDISON, CONDUCTOR

Elora Singers in Concert: presented by Toronto Mendelssohn Choir
October 16th | 3:00 pm
Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto
tickets available at www.tmchoir.org

Valiant Hearts
Oct. 30th | 3:30 pm
$40 | St. John’s Church, Elora

Messiah
Dec. 11th | 3:00 pm
$45 | St. Joseph’s Church, Fergus

Festival of Carols
Dec. 20th | 5 & 7:30 pm
$40 | St. John’s Church, Elora

Festival of Carols
Dec. 21st | 5 & 7:30 pm
$40 | St. John’s Church, Elora

Bach Motets
April 2nd | 3:00 pm
$40 | St. Joseph’s Church, Fergus

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with American bass-baritone David Pittsinger
Nov 5 at Koerner Hall

Festival of Carols
with the Canadian Staff Band
Dec 7 at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church

Messiah with the TSO
Dec 21 at Roy Thomson Hall

Sing Joyfully!
Hymn sing and anthems
Mar 4 at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church

Sacred Music for a Sacred Space
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NORTHERN SKETCHES
Sunday, October 16, 2016 at 4:00 pm
Eglinton St. George’s United Church
35 Lytton Blvd., Toronto

The concert will include music of Bach and Mozart, as well as Northern Sketches by Srul Irving Glick, the mystical Shaman Songs of Gary Kulesha and the stunning Salutation to the Dawn of Eleanor Daley.

HANDEL’S MESSIAH
Friday, December 2, 2016 at 8:00 pm
Metropolitan United Church
56 Queen Street East, Toronto

Special Guest Artists:
The Amadeus Choir
Allison Angelo, Soprano; Andrea Ludwig, Mezzo Soprano; Zach Finkelstein, Tenor; Peter McGillivray, Baritone
Robert Venables and Robert DeVito, Trumpets
Patricia Wright, Organ, and Orchestra

THE JOURNEY TO CANADA FROM ARMENIA
Saturday, March 25, 2017 at 7:30 pm
St. Anne’s Anglican Church
651 Dufferin St., Toronto

Armenian selections with Isabel Bayrakdarian and Serouj Kradjian

O CANADA! 150TH CELEBRATION!
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Beat by Beat | Early Music

Bilson to Botticelli
Fortepiano Renaissance

DAVID PODGORSKI

But for a few instances of momentary curiosity of a few brave, or possibly foolhardy, musicians, modern concert audiences might have never heard the sound of historical instruments at all. A great case in point is the pianist Malcolm Bilson’s discovery of historical keyboards back in 1969.

When Bilson decided to give a concert on “Mozart’s piano” the result was very nearly a disaster. “I have to admit now that I really couldn’t handle the thing at all,” Bilson said in a lecture. “I must be the least gifted person for the job; my hands are too big, and I don’t have the necessary technique such an instrument required. In trying to operate this light, precise mechanism, I really felt like an elephant in a china closet. But I kept at it all week and practised hard and after several days began to notice that I was actually playing what was on the page. Suddenly I found that I really didn’t need much pedal and that the articulative pauses actually made the music more expressive.”

Concert audiences and audiophiles should certainly be grateful that Bilson persevered – he was one of the first 20th-century fortепианистs, and without him it’s doubtful we’d even hear a fortепиано today.

We’re also kind of fortunate Bilson opted to try using a fortепиано in the first place – the instrument itself is something of an oddity. Even to its inventor, it couldn’t have been considered to have much potential – it was initially a research and development project for the wealthy Florentine Medici family by the Italian instrument maker Bartolomeo Cristofori way back in 1700.

Cristofori fit the stereotype of the eccentric inventor quite well indeed. As if inventing a new keyboard instrument wasn’t ambitious enough by itself, Cristofori also tried making harpsichords out of ebony as well as building his own upright harpsichords from designs by other inventors. It’s not known what Cristofori’s patrons thought of the instrument, but it was likely positive, as he continued to develop his invention over the next 20 years and the technology and building of pianos spread across Europe. By the 1750s, J.S.Bach had a chance to play one and recommended the builder make changes (which out of respect for the composer’s expertise, he duly did, much to Bach’s satisfaction). Still, the harpsichord was generally regarded as the superior, or at least, the more affordable, of the two keyboard instruments until the century’s end.

In the classical era, Haydn composed for the harpsichord for most of his early career, and wouldn’t buy a fortепиано until he was in his 50s, but Mozart, being 20 years younger, would come to favour the fortепиано exclusively. Just 50 years after Haydn’s death, pianos were becoming louder, more uniform in sound and more durable – and with the coming of the Industrial Revolution, mass-produced in the first place – the instrument itself is something of an oddity. Even to its inventor, it couldn’t have been considered to have much potential – it was initially a research and development project for the wealthy Florentine Medici family by the Italian instrument maker Bartolomeo Cristofori way back in 1700.

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Andrea Botticelli: The fortепиано revival owes much to that first adventurous concert Malcolm Bilson gave in 1969, and there’s been a steady increase in fortепиано players since, but there hasn’t been a professional fortепианист who’s called Toronto home until now. Andrea Botticelli is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto’s doctoral music program in piano performance who has decided to specialize in fortепиано and Classical repertoire. Like Bilson, Botticelli found playing a different instrument to have an almost immediate effect on her interpretation. “Playing a fortепиано was such an eye-opening experience,” Botticelli says. “All the performance issues that are such a struggle on the modern piano – texture, clarity, balance between the hands – become so much easier on the fortепиано.” According to Botticelli, all the exacting details that composers like Mozart and Schubert took such care in writing, all those little slurs, phrase markings and articulations that pianists struggle with, were actually written for the old 18th- and 19th-century instruments, and a modern Steinway can’t really negotiate the difficult terrain as easily.

“So much of what I was trying to add in terms of expression is really inherent on this instrument,” she says. “Once I really started playing the fortепиано, I wondered how I could have gone through a whole undergraduate degree without ever having heard one.” Botticelli will be making her solo debut later this month at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts on September 24 at 6:15 pm, playing fantasias by Mozart, Haydn and Hummel, as well as a Mozart piano sonata.

It’s really about time there was a resident fortепианист in the GTA, and the fact that Botticelli is willing to base herself in Toronto is yet another sign that the local arts scene has grown to world-class size. There’s been a steady creep of historically inspired practice around the world since the 1970s from medieval/renaissance repertoire through the Baroque period and well into the 19th century, and professional fortепианистs have been starting to pop up in major cities around the world in recent years. It’s as if an extinct species has been found again in the wild and is starting to propagate. Like audiences in London, Amsterdam and Vienna, Torontonians will now be able to hear period performances of classical and romantic keyboard music on this compelling period instrument.

Christophe Coin: There are few musicians worldwide as accomplished as Christophe Coin. A gambist, cellist and protégé of Jordi Savall since the mid-70s, Coin has gone on to record over 50 albums ranging from Gibbons’ consort music to Schumann’s cello concerto. Coin also directs the Ensemble Baroque de L’Innoxe and is the cellist for Quatuor Mosaïques, so he’s quite adept in conventional baroque and classical repertoire. It will be exciting to see him as both musical director and soloist for Tafelmusik in their upcoming concerts October 5 to 9 at Trinity-Saint Paul’s Centre. It’s clear from this program that Coin is no slouch as a soloist – he’ll be playing both a Boccherini and a Haydn concerto – and he’ll also be leading the orchestra in symphonies by C.P.E. Bach and Dittersdorf – repertoire that both Tafelmusik and Coin excel at. If you’re at all interested in classical music, this is a concert well worth attending.

Rezonance: Finally, if you’d like to hear a chamber music concert this month, or just want to get out of the concert hall for a change, consider making it out to hear my group Rezonance Baroque play the music of J.S. Bach at the CSI coffee pub at 720 Bathurst St. (home base of The WholeNote), on September 25 at 2 pm.

After Bach settled in Leipzig as the resident music director of St. Thomas’s Church, he was left without a venue to perform any of his secular compositions or chamber works. Fortunately for the master, Gottfried Zimmermann, the owner of the local café in Leipzig, was already one of the hottest music venues in town. Rezonance will perform an all-Bach program that could have easily been heard at Zimmermann’s, including a cantata he composed for the café in honour of coffee. While it’s easy to imagine Bach as overwrought, overworked, and dependent on a caffeine fix to get through the day, this concert features exciting and whimsical repertoire that shows that the brilliant composer may have had a sense of humour after all.

David Podgorski is a Toronto-based harpsichordist, music teacher and a founding member of Rezonance. He can be contacted at earlymusic@thewholenote.com.
Nostalgia Sure Ain’t What It Used To Be

ANDREW TIMAR

In my summer 2016 WholeNote column I mused on Luminato’s repurposing of the cavernous decommissioned Hearn Generating Station. Would it work as a venue for symphony orchestra, for community cultural engagement, visual art, for Shakespeare? In the end, the capacious, though out-of-the-way, venue turned out to be a gamble that paid off handsomely for Festival organisers as well as for concertgoers. It appears to be part of the continuing recognition in our collective urban zeitgeist of the importance of reclaiming, revitalizing and honouring Toronto’s industrial-commercial past.

In September it’s the turn of another large scale 20th-century man-made structure to be repurposed as an artistic venue. Originally opened on May 22, 1971, Ontario Place, the government of Ontario-owned amusement park, was imposed into Lake Ontario, sited on three artificially constructed and landscaped islands. The futuristic buildings and entertaining amenities along Toronto’s shoreline included the world’s first IMAX theatre, the geodesic-domed Cinesphere, and the province’s first waterpark.

Some of us old enough to have attended concerts there fondly recall the spacious, leisurely rotating stage of the Forum. It’s where I took my young kids for free summer concerts, including the memorable time we saw jazz great Miles Davis and his band. We bonded over cool jazz with attitude that sunny afternoon. Then early in 2012 most of the public sections of the park were closed for redevelopment – its 2017 projected completion date aimed to celebrate Canada’s sesquicentennial.

in/future: After the venue has been shuttered for four years, Art Spin in partnership with Small World Music is re-animating Ontario Place’s scenic 14-acre West Island. They’ve cooked up an ambitious menu consisting of 11 days and nights of arts programming from September 15 to 25, dubbing the festival in/future. Wishing to dig deeper, I spoke to Small World’s executive director and in/future co-founder Alan Davis one hot sunny summer day.

“It’s the 15th anniversary of Small World’s fall festival,” Davis began, “and we’re delighted that Art Spin invited us to showcase part of our current season at in/future.” Art Spin – Layne Hinton and Rui Pimenta’s brainchild – has been active as a presenter for over seven years, re-activating decommissioned venues and public spaces to produce group exhibitions along with curated bicycle-led art tours.

“The festival will host site-specific projects by over 60 visual and sound artists,” Davis continued, “with close to 50 music acts on the line included the world’s first IMAX theatre, the geodesic-domed Cinesphere, and the province’s first waterpark.

various sites.

“We’re excited by this opportunity to connect with the larger community. Nostalgia for Ontario Place’s illustrious musical past is one part of the draw, but so is engaging with young audiences. For example, site DJ activations will encourage a party vibe.”

“We have also tried to squeeze the envelope with regard to genres, to mix things up, to embrace the entirety of the global musical spectrum. Cross-fertilization is one of the things we’re aiming for. Though it’s easy to say, it’s hard to do,” he added with a knowing smile.

I asked Davis to pick a few highlights. “We are leaning toward high-energy, festive acts suitable for an outdoor stage. An example would be BaBa ZuLa, Istanbul’s legendary psychedelic dub band, which takes the stage Friday September 16 with a wide variety of influences and a truckload of instruments. They are followed by Mariachi Flor, a feminist Mexican mariachi group based in New York” he explained.

Saturday September 24, at the other end of the festival, is a day so chock full that space here permits only a partial mention. Headlining is the Dhol Foundation, a leading bhangra band making its Canadian debut. It’s led by the U.K.-born master-dhol drummer and artistic director of the group, the ‘bhangra king’ Johnny Kalsis. His London-based 12-piece band, which he first established about 17 years ago, places the musical focus tightly on the massive sound of closely miked multiple dhol drums, those icons of Punjabi bhangra music. Kalsis has since waded into transnational waters by fusing bhangra with a mixed bag of popular global genres including Afrobeat, reggae, hip-hop, EDM, and Bollywood with a Celtic fiddling twist. The resulting thumping beats are designed to lift audiences’ spirits, moving everyone to dance.

Also performing on September 24 is the Shanbehzadeh Ensemble. It was formed in 1990 by Saeid Shanbehzadeh, a virtuoso of the neyānban (Persian Gulf bagpipe) and the ney-e jofti (Persian Gulf double reed pipe). He is well known as a forceful performer of the traditional song, music and dance of the southern Iranian province of Bushehr, on the Persian Gulf. It’s a region of Iran strongly influenced by African as well as Arabic culture, and its music and dance amply demonstrate those influences. Shanbehzadeh is no stranger to Toronto. In 1996 he taught a world music studio course at the University of Toronto and at the time I was impressed with his brilliant and charismatic solo performances, full of the feeling of his

BaBa ZuLa

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A Jazz Samba Tribute to Rio
featuring Brazilian singer/songwriter & guitarist Lua da Jones

Sun. September 25, 4:00 pm
The Italian-American Songbook
featuring Michael Occhipinti & Laura Campisi

Sun. October 2, 4:00 pm
Bernie Senensky’s Tribute to Moe Koffman featuring the Bernie Senensky Quintet

Sun. October 16, 4:00 pm
The Music of Oscar Peterson

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culture of origin. Now a resident of France, in recent videos he’s increasingly playing alto sax, and including an electric guitarist and a DJ in his sets, in addition to the regional acoustic instruments he made his reputation with. It looks like in future audiences can expect a mix of trance-y traditional dance music of the Persian Gulf merged with contemporary beats from Shanbehzadeh.

Much of the rest of the ambitious festival music program likewise appears to echo Alan Davis’ dictum of high-energy, populist leaning, multiple genre-inclusive and at the same time genre-smearing music performances. While there is a place for nostalgia, this is perhaps the sort of non-nostalgic au courant musical cross-fertilization needed to re-activate the 45-year-old old Ontario Place and make it fun and relevant again – at least for 11 days this September.

**Follow Your Heart:**

My second story is about a single production, but one which is no less ambitious in the size of its cast and the scope of national cultural elements and themes portrayed.

Four years in the making and workshoped at the Fleck Theatre in 2014, Toronto’s Evolution Dance Theatre presents the premiere of Follow Your Heart, a “Broadway-style Middle Eastern multimedia extravaganza.” The multimedia and multidisciplinary production runs September 22 to 25 at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Follow Your Heart was conceived, written and directed by EDT founder and artistic director Armineh Keshishian. Rooted in the rich traditions of Middle Eastern dance and culture, the production tells its story with sound design, lighting, actors, dancers and three sets of musicians, 45 performers in all.

The production has both pre-recorded sound design cues, as well as live music, the latter provided by three culturally distinct groups of three musicians each. The Middle Eastern section is led by Persian percussionist Naghme Farahmand, the African section by master drummer Amadou Kienou and the Indigenous Canadian section by singer Sue Croweagle. In the show’s finale, the three groups perform together, directed by Kienou accompanying dancers who likewise represent ethnic, cultural and gender mutual respect and harmony.

I spoke with Keshishian in between rehearsals about her show. “Follow Your Heart is a tale of love and struggle, with a special emphasis on the empowerment of women,” she told me. “Our story centres around Almaza, a modern Middle Eastern woman, who falls in love with Jivan, a traditional Middle Eastern man – in contemporary Toronto. It’s the journey of a woman who fights for love against all odds, a love story marked by both taboo and tradition.” She concluded, “the story in the end explores unity and mutual understanding between peoples, a relevant theme in these troubled times,” particularly in the Middle East.

Whether or not a “Broadway-style multimedia extravaganza” is your cup of tea, Follow Your Heart’s inclusive and optimistic vision of a world where people born three continents apart can share their indigenous music and dance – even if it’s only modelled for us briefly on stage – is cause for celebration. ☺

Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer. He can be contacted at worldmusic@thewholenote.com.
are no longer primarily students on their summer break. Now, members range from teenagers to a good many retirees.

Each year, after their final concert, band members vote on one selection from the season’s repertoire to be included in the next year’s programming. That, in turn, leads to the choice of the next season’s theme. The number chosen from last year was the music from the Disney movie **Pirates of the Caribbean**. Hence, the theme for this season was to be music associated in one way or another with the sea. With a bit of a play on words the band then went “Sailing the High C’s” this summer. From Handel’s *Water Music*, Vaughan Williams’ *Sea Songs*, *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *Pirates of Penzance* to the *Petty Harbour Bait Skiff*, it was all about sailing musically. To bring the audiences into the present, the concerts featured a fine new work, *By the River*, composed by band member Kristie Hunter.

To celebrate their conductor’s 25 years of dedication, the band had a great BBQ and pool party after their concert in Palmer Park in Port Perry. Some band members even dressed as pirates with colourful artificial tattoos and even a parrot on the shoulder. Now that Brunette is retiring from the band at least for one season, members of the band are forming a “What do we do now?” committee.

**New Horizons:** Over the past six years there have been numerous mentions in this column of the growth of the New Horizons Band movement in our area. A few months ago we mentioned the airing on TVO of a documentary on the development and growth of the Toronto New Horizons Bands. Dan Kapp, director of the Toronto NH bands has just informed me that, as a direct result of that program, there are already 36 confirmed registrations for the next new band to start in September. There were also dozens of phone and email inquiries which will certainly lead to more new members joining. For anyone interested, the New Horizons Bands will have their annual “Instrument Exploration Workshop” at the Long & McQuade Bloor St. store Friday, September 9 at 7pm.

**To the museum:** On a number of occasions in the past I have also written about the great collection of vintage brass instruments amassed by Professor Henry Meredith at the Western University and the hope for the establishment of a proper museum to house and display this collection. On looking over my own collection of instruments which have’t been played in years, I have decided that some of these deserve to be in that collection. As soon as we can arrange it, two trombones will be moving to their new home. The first is a Toronto-made Whaley Royce instrument dating back to the early 1900s. The other is my very first trombone. This Manhattan model by Selmer is the one which I played in a boys’ band all through university and six nights a week at a dance pavilion. There hasn’t been a sound from it in over 60 years. It deserves a decent retirement.

**Community Bands:** Periodically, in this column we ask that our community bands let us know what they are doing. In the past few months, since the last issue of *The WholeNote*, we have not heard a word from any band about their activities. Community bands should do more to promote themselves. Otherwise, how do we know what you are doing? Please keep us informed.

**Anthem Butchery Cup:** A few months ago we established the Anthem Butchery Cup (ABC) (a handsome Spode Thundermug) to award those people who choose to display their talents (or lack thereof) by modifying our national anthem to suit their particular level of musical talent. In the past it has always been a solo performer who has distorted the melody. A few weeks ago at the Major League Baseball All-Star Game a new benchmark was established. One member of a quartet of tenors, without telling the others, decided to substantially change the lyrics of Canada’s national anthem. Remigio Pereira stunned his three cohorts and his audience with his new words. The last we heard, the four Tenors had morphed into the three Tenors. Mr. Pereira succeeds Nellie Furtado as ABC title holder.

**Roland Hill:** We were sad to learn of the passing of Roland Hill just shy of his 74th birthday, on July 2, 2016. He had served for 32 years as music director of the Whitby Brass Band until 2012. He will be missed.

Jack MacQuarrie plays several brass instruments and has performed in many community ensembles. He can be contacted at bandstand@thewholenote.com.

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**JIM GALLOWAY’S WEE BIG BAND**

**UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF MARTIN LOOMER**

in The Garage, that spacious, acoustically friendly venue on the ground floor of the CSI Building at 720 Bathurst Street (two blocks south of Bloor)

If you missed the spring launch be sure to join this fabulous swing band for another evening of musical nostalgia, toe-tapping, dancing and more

**Thursday 15th September 2016**

Doors 7:00 pm for Open Seating
Tickets $20 each, cash only please
Questions: phone Anne Page at: 416 515 0200 or email: moraig@huntingstewart.com

Licensed Premises
New quick service menu
Street parking

This concert is supported by Jim’s Friends and is dedicated to his memory and to band members passed.
The WholeNote listings are arranged in four sections:

**A.** **Concerts in the GTA** covers all of Toronto plus Halton, Peel, York and Durham regions.

**B.** **BEYOND THE GTA** covers many areas of Southern Ontario outside Toronto and the GTA. Starts on page 44.

**C.** **MUSIC THEATRE** covers a wide range of music types: from opera, operetta and musicals, to non-traditional performance types where words and music are in some fashion equal partners in the drama. Starts on page 45.

**D.** **IN THE CLUBS (MOSTLY JAZZ)** is organized alphabetically by club. Starts on page 46.

**E.** **THE ETCETERAS** is for galas, fundraisers, competitions, screenings, lectures, symposia, masterclasses, workshops, singalongs and other music-related events (except performances) which may be of interest to our readers. Starts on page 49.

A GENERAL WORD OF CAUTION. A phone number is provided with every listing in The WholeNote— in fact, we won’t publish a listing without one. Concerts are sometimes cancelled or postponed; artists or venues may change after listings are published. Please check before you go out to a concert.

HOW TO LIST. Listings in The WholeNote in the four sections above are a free service available, at our discretion, to eligible presenters. If you have an event, send us your information no later than the 8th of the month prior to the issue or issues in which your listing is eligible to appear.

LISTINGS DEADLINE. The next issue covers the period from October 1 to November 7, 2016. All listings must be received by Monday, September 5.

LISTINGS can be sent by email to listings@thewholenote.com or by fax to 416-603-4791 or by regular mail to the address on page 6. We do not receive listings by phone, but you can call 416-323-2232 x27 for further information.

LISTINGS ZONE MAP. Visit our website to see a detailed version of this map: thewholenote.com.

**Thursday September 1**


**Friday September 2**

- 7:30: Soulepper Concert Series. Taking the A Train Uptown Manhattan – Harlem. Albert Schultz, writer and host. Mike Ross, music director. This concert is a tour of the music, words and ideas that have made Harlem great. Young Centre for the Performing Arts, Distillery District, 50 Tank House Ln. 416-866-8666. $25-$60. Also Sep 3 (1:30 and 7:30).
- 8:30: The Music Gallery/Intersection. Intersection Day 1: Elliott Sharp, Thin Edge New Music Collective and Soupcans. Light in Fog; Flexagons; Hommage James Tenney; chaired by Robert Pejacevic. Elliott Sharp, guitar; Thin Edge New Music Collective (Ilana Waniuk and Susahini Arulanandam, violins; Rachael Bailey, electric guitar; C-Rayz, rapper; and others). Harbourfront Centre, Centre Theatre, 235 Queens Quay W. 416-973-4000 x1. Free.

**Saturday September 3**

- 12:00 noon: Philippine Independence Day Council. Mabuhay Festival. Flamenco blend of jazz and rock standards. Hotel California, Bad Lelo Brown, Tico Tico, I Will Survive, Fools Rush In and other works. Maylou Malicdem, vocals; Juan Tomas, guitar; Steve Farrugia, drums; Frank Sant, electric stand-up bass; Lorne Hendel, guitar; Nathan Phillips Square, 100 Queen St. W. 416-897-6097. Free.
- 1:30: Soulepper Concert Series. Taking the A Train Uptown Manhattan – Harlem.

**Sunday September 4**

- 7:00: Ashkenaz Festival. Semer Ensemble.

**MUSICAL THEATRE**

- Daily listings for long run productions of musicals are not included in Daily Concert Listings. For details on these, and on other events of interest to a Music Theatre audience please see Listings Section C on page 45.
Sasha Lurje, Daniel Kahn and Fabian Schnedler; vocalists; Paul Brody, Mark Kwomsky and Martin Lillich, instrumentalists; Alan Birn, director, Harbourfront Centre Theatre, 235 Queens Quay W. 416-973-4000 x1. $24/$20(adv).

**8:00:** Ashkenaz Festival. Baladino. Authentic interpretations of Sephardic and Ladino melodies. Thomas Moked, Yonnie Dror, Yael Badash, Daniel Sapir and Yishai Afterman. Harbourfront Centre, Concert Stage, 235 Queens Quay W. 416-973-4000 x1. Free.


**10:30:** Ashkenaz Festival. Cuban Cabanet. Harbourfront Centre, Lakeside Terrace, 235 Queens Quay W. 416-973-4000 x1. Free.

**11:00:** Ashkenaz Festival/Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP)/Kennington Torah Circle. Zuzia, Hasidic nigun. Shlomo Gaisin, vocalists; Elisha Friedlander, percussion; Zachariah Goldschmedt, guitar. Guests: Andrew Marsh and Max Jacob, Harbourfront Centre, Brigantine Room, 235 Queens Quay W. 416-973-4000 x1. Free.

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**Monday September 5**

**11:00am:** Toronto International Buskerfest for Epilepsy. Buskerfest. Woodbine Park, 1681 Lake Shore Blvd. E. 416-964-9095. Donation to Epilepsy Toronto. Also Sep 2, 3, 4.


**7:00:** Ashkenaz Festival. Festival Finale. Performances by this year’s headlining artists, followed by a massive jam session with all Festival musicians. Harbourfront Centre, Concert Stage, 235 Queens Quay W. 416-973-4000 x1. Free.

**7:00:** University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Labour Day Carillon Recital. Roy Lee. Soldiers’ Tower; University of Toronto, 7 Hart House Circle. 416-978-3455. Free.

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**Tuesday September 6**

**1:00:** Cathedral of St. James. Organ Recital. Thomas Gonder, organ. 65 Church St. 416-364-7865. Free. Donations welcomed.

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**Wednesday September 7**

**7:00:** Civic Light Opera Company. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.

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**Thursday September 8**


**8:00:** Civic Light Opera Company. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.

**8:30:** Heather Morgan/CUIT FM. The 11th Annual Patsy Cline Birthday Show. Works by Patsy Cline. Alex Panganam; Russell deCarle (Prarie Oyster); Danny Marks; Andree Rambold/Scarlett Jane; Terro Hazleton (Orgahn Black, Fubar 2); and others. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307.

**$20.** In support of ArtsCan Circle.

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**Friday September 9**


**8:00:** Fin de Fiesta Flamenco. Audacia. Winchester Theatre, 80 Winchester St. 778-898-0688. $25; $22 (sr/st); $15(under 16). Limited seating. Reception to follow.

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**Saturday September 10**

**11:30am:** University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Mysterious Barricades. In honour of World Suicide Prevention Day, live streamed on the internet, featuring a mixture of classical, jazz and aboriginal content with a unique regional Canadian flair to encourage public discussion about the prevalence of suicide and measures for suicide prevention, and to raise funds for education and support of those at risk and those impacted by suicide. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-403-0208. Free.

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**Sunday September 11**

**12:00 noon:** Toronto Flute Circle. Fall Tune-Up Tone and Technique Class and Flute Ensemble masterclass. For flute players of all ages. Intermediate/advanced levels. Margot Rydall, director. Places are limited. Margot Rydall, 46 Empire Ave. 416-463-1011. $45. Refreshments served.


**2:00:** Civic Light Opera Company. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.

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**Monday September 12**

**7:30:** The Sound Post. Overtures to Bach. Recital CD release. Works by Bach, Glass, Du Yun, Vijay Iyer, Roberto Sierra and others. Matt Haimowitz, cello. 50 Grenville St. 416-371-6990 x244. $20 (includes CD). (Free under 16). Limited seating. Reception to follow.

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**Tuesday September 13**


**1:00:** Cathedral of St. James. Organ Recitals: David Briggs. 65 Church St. 416-364-7865. Free. Donations welcomed.

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**Wednesday September 14**

**12:10:** Organics Concerts/All Saints Kingway. Kingway Organ Concert Series. Sarah Swendsen, organ. All Saints Kingway Anglican Church, 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-769-5224. Freewill offering.


**7:00:** Civic Light Opera Company. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.

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**Thursday September 15**

**12:00:** University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon. Stenham-Woermert and Barton Woermert, trumpets; Rachael Kerr, piano. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.


**7:00:** Peggy Baker Dance Projects. The Perfect World. Original soundscapes by composer Debashis Sinha with audience members’ voices added to the audio. Ontario Place, West Island, 055 Lake Shore Blvd.

**W. 416-538-4436. $30(day pass); $50(festival pass). Part of in/future festival. Runs Sep 15-18 - Th-Sat(Tue); Su2pm.**

**8:00:** Civic Light Opera Company. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.

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**Friday September 16**


**8:00:** Civic Light Opera Company. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.

**8:00:** Thin Edge New Music Collective. Feldman Festival Concert 1. Works by Morton Feldman. Array Space, 155 Walnut Ave. 647-456-7597. $20; $15(sr/artists).

**8:30:** Music Gallery. The O'Pears: CD release. Tracks from the new CD. Guest: Ozere. 197 John St. 416-204-1080. $20/$15(adv); $12(members/pt).

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**Saturday September 17**

**2:00:** Civic Light Opera Company. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.

**7:00:** University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Râmeshgari. Tasnif (Persian baladi) composition and performance. Iman Vaziri, composer; Sahar Sakhaei, lyrics; Sadiqeh Raisadat, vocals. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.


**7:00:** Peggy Baker Dance Projects. The Perfect World. Original soundscapes by composer Debashis Sinha with audience members’ voices added to the audio. Ontario Place, West Island, 055 Lake Shore Blvd.

**W. 416-538-4436. $30(day pass); $50(festival pass). Part of in/future festival. Runs Sep 15-18 - Th-Sat(Tue); Su2pm.**

**8:00:** Acoustic Harvest. Garnet Rogers. St.
A. Concerts in the GTA

Nicholas Anglican Church, 1512 Kingston Rd. 416-697-3445. $25/$22(adv).


8:00: *Civic Light Opera Company*. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.


8:00: *Gala Concert for the House of Compassion*. Dave Bidini, curator, host. Harbourfront Centre Theatre, 235 Queens Quay W. 416-872-4255. $29.50-$39.50.

8:00: *Tafelmusik*. Handel Water Music. Handel: Water Music; Bach: Orchestral Suite No.4 in D; Rameau: Les Indes galantes (excerpts); and other works. Guest: Elisa Cit- terio, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $49 and up; $40 and up(ad); $26-$39(under 36). Also Sep 22, 24, 25(mat), 27(Weston Recital Hall).

Sunday September 18

2:00: *Civic Light Opera Company*. Dames At Sea. Runs to September 18. See section C. Music Theatre for details.


Tuesday September 20


Wednesday September 21


10:00: *Toronto Symphony Orchestra*. Past: Imagining Mozart’s Piano. Mozart: Fantasy in c K475; Sonata in c K457; Fantasia in C Hob.XV:4; Hummel: Fantasy for Piano in E-flat Op.10. Andrea Boccittelli, forte-piano. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 905-787-8811. $27; $21(21 and under) and under/Toronto Early Music Centre members.


12:00: *Brampton Chamber Music Concert Series*. Chamber Music Concert. Keichi Inoue, piano; with young artists selected by audition. St. Paul’s United Church (Brampton), 30 Main St. S., Brampton. 905-450-9220. PWYC.


8:00: *Risto Markham Theatre*. The Nylons: Farewell Tour. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $59-$64.

8:00: *Tafelmusik*. Handel Water Music. Handel: Water Music; Bach: Orchestral Suite No.4 in D; Rameau: Les Indes galantes (excerpts) and other works. Guest: Elisa Citterio, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $49 and up; $40 and up(ad); $26-$39(under 36). Also Sep 22, 24, 25(mat), 27(Weston Recital Hall).

Friday September 23


February 2016/2017

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 2016 - 3PM

22nd ANNUAL SCHUBERTIAD: 4 MEMORIES

featuring

Maeve Palmer  Inna Perkis
Giles Tomkis  Kathryn Tremills
William Webster  Boris Zarankin

offcentremusic.com


9:00: *Tafelmusik*. Handel Water Music. Handel: Water Music; Bach: Orchestral Suite No.4 in D; Rameau: Les Indes galantes (excerpts); and other works. Guest: Elisa Citterio, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $49 and up; $40 and up(ad); $26-$39(under 36). Also Sep 22, 24, 25(mat), 27(Weston Recital Hall).

McDonald Voice Studio; Larry Beckwith, host. Atrium, 21 Shaftesbury Ave. 416-410-4561. $25.

Please note: This issue of the Wholenote contains the dates for the first date of the performances listed. Additional dates are available on our website, thewholenote.com.
Atis Bankas
“Paris Connection”
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2PM
MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
TICKETS ON SALE NOW! 416.408.0208
WWW.PERFORMANCE.ROSMUSIC.CA

- 2:00: Royal Conservatory, Mazzoleni Masters: Atis Bankas - Paris Connection. Bolling: Jazz Suite; works by Gershwin/Frolow and Ravel. Atis Bankas, violin; Michael Berkovsky, piano; Bob Mills, double bass; Lorne Grossman, drums. Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $25.
- 3:00: Nadina Mackie Jackson. Bassoon Out Loud: Ophelia Speaks. Vivaldi: Bassoon Concertos Nos. 14 and 27; Lussier: Le dernier chant d’Ophélie; McIntire: Premise; for solo viola; Downing: Kontrabas Semiastoi; and other works. Nadina Mackie Jackson, bassoon; Bijan Sepanji, violin; Steve Koh, violin; Rory McLeod, viola; Bryan Lu, cello; Joe Phillips, bass. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 416-453-7607. $30; $20(st).

mooredalecons.com

Sun, 25th Sept at 4 p.m.
Choral Evensong
with St. Peter’s Choir, Erindale
followed by Peach Tea and
THE MUSIC OF WINDSOR CHAPEL
Clem Carelse directs the choir for Evensong and then discusses the music of famous composers associated with St. George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle: John Merbecke, Henry Purell and William Harris.
St. Olave’s Church
Bloor and Windermere
416-769-5686

SEPTEMBER 25, 3PM
OPHELIA SPEAKS
Nadina Mackie Jackson, solo bassoon, with Bijan Sepanji, Steve Koh, Rory McLeod, Bryan Lu and Joe Phillips, Vivaldi Concerti no 14 & 27, Lussier: Le Derrier Chant d’Ophélie with works for solo strings.

Bassoon Out Loud at HELICONIAN HALL
35 Hazelton Avenue, Toronto $30 / $20
nadinamackiejackson.com

SEPTEMBER 25

- 2:00: Rezonance Baroque Ensemble. Music for Public Consumption. Bach: “Coffee Cantata” BWV211; Brandenburg Concerto No.5 BWV1050. Rezan Onen-Lapointe, baroque oboe; Vania Chan, soprano; Joanna Marsden, baroque flute; David Podgorski, baroque violin; Jimin Shin, baroque viola; Andreas Tucci Clarke, baroque cello. CSI Annex, 720 Bathurst St. 416-979-4300. PWYC.
- 4:00: St. Philip’s Anglican Church. Vespers. The Italian-American Songbook. Arvo Liibur, violin; Aare Tammesalu, cello; Norman Reintamm, piano. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 35 Hazelton Avenue, Toronto $30 / $20

Monday September 26

Tuesday September 27
12:00 noon: Canadian Opera Company. Vocal Series: Meet the Young Artists. Favourite arias. Young artists of the 2016/17 COC Ensemble Studio. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 140 Queen St. W. 416-363-8231. Free. Late seating is not available.
- 11:12: Nine Sparrows Arts Foundation/ Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Lunchtime Chamber Music: Trio Estonia. Arvo Liibur, violin; Aare Tammesalu, cello; Norman Reintamm, piano. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 35 Hazelton Avenue, Toronto $30 / $20
nadinamackiejackson.com
A. Concerts in the GTA

Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-241-1298. Free. Donations welcomed.
- 6:00: Gallery 345. In Recital. Saint-Saëns: Cello Sonata No.1 and other works. Antoine Pierlot, cello; Jason Cutmore, piano. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $25; $10 (student).
- 8:00: Tafelmusik. Handel Water Music. Handel: Water Music; Bach: Orchestral Suite No.4 in D; Rameau: Les Indes galantes (excerpts); and other works. Guest: Elisa Citroni, conductor. 540 Yonge St. 1-855-968-2787. $33 and up; $15-$70 (under 36). Also Sep 29.

Thursday September 29

Friday September 30

Saturday October 1
- 12:00 noon: Royal Conservatory. Koerner Hall Free for All. Come and go as you please. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. Free. Also at 5 pm.
- 4:30: Beach United Jazz. Jazz and Reflection: Love. Michael Lalonde Trio; Dylan Bell, piano; Bill McBirnie, flute. 140 Winoza Ave. 416-691-8082. Freewill offering.
- 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. U of T Symphony Orchestra. Mahler Symphony No.2; Wen Deqing: Divination. Brian Current: Shout, Sisyphus, Rock; Lei Lin: Aural Hypothesis; Omar Daniel: Chamber Concerto No.2; Wen Deqing: Divination. New Music Concerts/All Saints King. Part of the Bloor St. Culture Corridor HUB OF CULTURE DAYS FREE TICKETS! 416.408.0208.

Tuesday, September 27, 2016

Metamorphosis
Ligeti Quartet No.1 / Mozart Divertimento
Guest Artist Jonathan Crow, violin
Friday, September 30th, 2016
NEW TIME 7:30 PM
Trinity St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St W
Tickets $30/$15 for Students
At door or brownpapertickets.com under Metamorphosis
Season 4 tickets at discount also available under Trio Arkel Presents Section 4
Charitable Registration Number: 8017313/RR0001

Musician In Ordinary for the Lutes and Voices

Part of the Bloor St. Culture Corridor Hub of Culture Days
Free Tickets! 416.408.0208

Gabor Takacs-Nagy conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra with Rossina Grieco, piano
FRI., SEPT. 30, 8PM KOERNER HALL
GENTLY SUPPORTED BY LESLIE AND ANNA DAN

PART OF THE BLOOR ST. CULTURE CORRIDOR
HUB OF CULTURE DAYS
FREE TICKETS! 416.408.0208

• 8:00: Royal Conservatory. Culture Days Concert. Rachmaninoff: Vocalise from Fourteen Songs; Piano Concerto No.2; Schumann: Symphony No.4. Rossina Grieco, piano; Royal Conservatory Orchestra; Gabor Takacs-Nagy, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. Free (ticket required).

Free admission, donations welcome
Monday October 3

5:00: Gallery 345. Workshop: Theremin Workshop with Pamela Stuckey. Animating with the theremin to bring sound to life. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $15. Open to all ages. If you have your own instrument, please bring it with you.

7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Enrico Elisi, Piano. Works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Berg, Debussy and Liszt. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-978-3750. $40, $25(sr); $10(st).


Tuesday October 4


8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The Music of ABBA. Rajaton, vocal ensemble; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $33.75. Also Oct 5 (8:00) & 6 (8:00).

Wednesday October 5


2:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The Music of ABBA. Rajaton, vocal ensemble; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $29.50. Also Oct 4 & 5 (8:00).

Thursday October 6


8:00: Tafelmusik. The Eloquent Cello. Dittersdorf: Symphony No.64 in F; C.P.E. Bach: Symphony for Strings in b Wq/82/5; Haydn: Cello Concerto in D G483; C.P.E. Bach: Symphony for Strings in b Wq/82/5; Haydn: Cello Concerto in D G483/5. Adam Sherkin, piano. Dittersdorf: Symphony No.4 in F. Boccherini: Cello Concerto in D G483/5; C.P.E. Bach: Symphony for Strings in b Wq/82/5; Haydn: Cello Concerto in C HobVIII/1. Christopher Coin, cello/guest director. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 1-866-780-1064. $39-$93. Also Oct 6 (8:00), 7 (8:00), 8 (8:00), 9 (3:30).


8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The Music of ABBA. Rajaton, vocal ensemble; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $33.75. Also Oct 4 (8:00) & 5 (8:00).

Friday October 7

12:10: Music at St. Andrew’s. Noon-time Recital. Woodwind students, University of Toronto, Faculty of Music. St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. 416-593-5600 x231. Free.

Thursday September 1
- 7:00: Summer Concerts at the Castle. Shanangans. Castle Killbride, 60 Snyder’s Rd. W., Baden. 519-634-8444. By donation. Bring your lawn chair; weather permitting.

Friday September 2

Saturday September 3

Wednesday September 7
- 12:00 noon: Midday Music with Shigero. Pamela Circoro. Piano. Works by Bach, Beethoven and Chopin. Hi-Way Pentecostal Church, 50 Annette St., N. Barrie. 705-726-1181. $5; free(st).
- 6:30: Razzamajazz. Conn Smythe. One man show on the river. Sinatra, show tunes and old time favourites. Avon River, Lakeside Drive, Stratford. 519-271-5140. Free. Also Sep 8 and 10. All sailings are subject to skipper availability and weather.

Thursday September 8
- 6:30: Razzamajazz. Conn Smythe. One man show on the river. Sinatra, show tunes and old time favourites. Avon River, Lakeside Drive, Stratford. 519-271-5140. Free. Also Sep 7 and 10. All sailings are subject to skipper availability and weather.

Monday September 12

Wednesday September 14
- 8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Matt Haimovitz. Cello. KWCMS Music Marathon, 516 Young St. W., Waterloo. 519-886-1673. $40; $25(st).

Thursday September 15

Friday September 16
- 7:30: Cuckoo’s Nest Folk Club. 2 Worlds United Trio. Pierre Schrerrer, fiddle; Dermo Byrne, accordion; Adam Dobres, guitar. Chaufer’s Pub, 122 Carling St., London. 519-473-2099. $25($20/ad).

Saturday September 17
- 4:00: SweetWater Music Festival. Brave New World. Griffin; Eagle Claw Wu Taiho Chen Wins; Braid: Prelude; Chauver; Joya; Senni; Spirit Dance. Roman Borys, David Braid, Steven Dann, Mark Fewer, Aiyun Huang and others. Roxy Theatre, 2519 St. E., Owen Sound. 519-371-2833. $30; $10(st). Festival runs Sep 16-18.

Sunday September 18
- 2:30: Niagara Symphony Orchestra. Light Transcendent. Tse: Toward Light (world premiere); Mozart: Clarinet Concerto in A; Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.6 “Pathetique”. Anthony McCullin, clarinet; Bradley Chuchak, conductor. Nicholas A. Payton Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722 or 1-855-515-0722. $69; $64($art); $34($30 and under); $14($st); $12($child); $5($eye00).

Wednesday September 21
- 12:00 noon: Music at St. Andrews. Simon Walker, O.N. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (Barrie), 47 Owen St., Barrie. 705-726-1181. $5; free(st).
- 12:30: University of Waterloo Department of Music. Noon Hour Concerts: Earth Peace. Stories of conflict, pain, resolution and joy, rooted in African themes and idioms. Works by Carol Ann Weaver; Renaissance Singers; Fantasy Arts String Quartet; and others. Conrad Grenel University Building, 140 Westmount Rd. N., Waterloo. 519-885-0220 x24226. Free.
- 7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. Ensemble Series: Trio Jean Paul. Works by Haydn, Beethoven and Brahms. 200 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424, $25-$32, 924-8148(faculty/staff); $26($st).

Thursday September 22

Friday September 23
- 8:00: Folk Under the Clock. 30th Anniversary Concert: Breatb. Calum Macrimmon, pipes, whistles, bouzouki, vocals; Megan Henderson, fiddle, vocals, stepdance; James Mackenzie, pipes, flute, whistles; Ewan Robertson, guitar, vocals; James Lindsay, double bass. Market Hall Performing Arts Centre in the Square, 400 King St. W., Peterborough. 705-749-1146. $37.50.

Saturday September 24
Sunday, October 2


Tuesday, October 5

12:00 noon: Midday Music with Shirguer. In Concert. Mozart: Trios from The Marriage of Figaro and Cosi fan tutte. Andrea Carusello, Sharon Tikiryan and Gene Wu, vocalists; William Shookhoff, piano. Hi-Way Pentecostal Church, 50 Anne St. N., Barrie. 705-726-1181. $5; free(st).

12:30: University of Waterloo Department of Music. Noon Hour Concert: Seven Tableaux. Elizabeth Rogalsky Lepock, soprano; Ben Bolt-Martin, cello; Erica de la Cruz, piano; Linnea Thacker, violin. Conrad Grebel University College, 140 Westmount Rd. N., Waterloo. 519-885-0220 x24226. Free.

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Haydn and Ravel. Farina: Capriccio Stravaganza; Ravel: Tombeau de Couperin; Haydn: Symphony No.102. Christopher Routnree, curator/conductor First United Church (Wat erlo), 16 William St. W., Waterloo. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $36. Also Oct 7 (Guelph), 8 (Cambridge). Free.

Thursday, October 6


October 15

4:00: National Ballet of Canada and Art Gal

October 22

5:00: Drayton Entertainment.

October 29


November 5


November 12


November 19


November 26


December 3

Soulpepper Concert Series. Taking the A Train to uptown Manhattan – Harlem. Albert Schultz, writer and host. Mike Ross, music director. This concert is a tour of the music, words and ideas that have made Harlem great. Young Centre for the Performing Arts, 50 Tank House Lane. 416-866-8666. $25-$60. Runs to Sep 3. Days and times vary. Visit soulpepper.ca for details.


Theatre Ancaster. I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change. Music by Jimmy Roberts, lyrics and book by Joe DiPietro. Old Firehall Arts Centre, 334 Wilson St. E, Ancaster. 905-304-7469. $27/$24(sr); $10(st). Opens Sep 9, 8:00pm. Runs to Sep 16. Fr/Sat(8:00pm), Sun(2:00pm).

Well Seasoned Productions. That’s Life. A musical revue exploring the joys and challenges of ageing. Aki Studio Theatre, Daniele Spectrum, 585 Dundas St E. 416-531-1402. $35; $30(sr). Opens Sep 30, 8:00pm. Also Oct 1/6(8:00pm), 2/1(2:00pm).

Music Theatre of Bryn Mawr. Follies. Music by Sammy Cahn, lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Book by James Kirkwood and Nicholas Van Doren. Music Theatre, 55 Queen St, Toronto. 416-924-4039. $35; $30(sr). Runs to Sep 18. Fri/Sat(8:00pm), Sun(2:00pm).

Leslie Huyler
Of Life and Love.
September 25
Lisa Particelli’s Girls’ Night Out Jazz Jam
Genevieve Marentette & Robert Scott
September 26
Leslie Huyler
September 27

D. In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

120 Diner
120 Church St. 416-792-7725
120diner.com (full schedule)
September 1 6pm Julie Michaels & David Res-tivo.
September 2 6pm Howard Willett’s Blue Smoke Trio. September 3 8pm Aimée Butcher; 5pm Tiffany Hans. September 4 6pm Dave Mascal Trio; 9pm Jacky Bouchard. September 6 6pm Leslie Huyler; 8pm Annie Bonsignore; 10pm Chris Burckett with guests. September 7 6pm Genevieve Marentette & Robert Scott; 8pm Lisa Particelli’s Girls’ Night Out Jazz Jam. September 8 6pm Ryley Murray Trio; 8pm Perthouse. September 9 6pm Joanne Monrra. September 10 6pm Sistah Lois; Sistah’s Telling. September 11 6pm L J Folk; 8:30pm Julia Pal Sings Songs From Films. September 12 6pm Leslie Huyler; 8pm Annie Bonsignore; 10pm Chris Burckett with guests. September 14 6pm Genevieve Marentette & Robert Scott; 8pm Lisa Particelli’s Girls’ Night Out Jazz Jam. September 15 6pm Joel Sheridan. September 16 6pm Double Bill: Raine & Mack Davis. September 17 6pm Double Bill: Dan Taylor & The Command Sisters. September 18 6pm Double Bill: Mel Dube & Charmmie. September 18 8:30pm Donna Greenberg. September 20 6pm Leslie Huyler; 8pm Annie Bonsignore; 10pm Chris Burckett with guests. September 21 6pm Genevieve Marentette & Robert Scott; 8pm Lisa Particelli’s Girls’ Night Out Jazz Jam. September 22 6pm Laura Marks. September 23 6pm Denise Leslie sings Ray Charles. September 24 6pm Distillery Blues. September 25 8pm Christine Guida: A Celebration of Life and Love. September 27 6pm Leslie Huyler; 8pm Annie Bonsignore; 10pm Chris Burckett with guests. September 28 6pm Genevieve Marentette & Robert Scott; 8pm Lisa Particelli’s Girls’ Night Out Jazz Jam. September 29 6pm Alma Soul. September 30 6pm Jmownd.

Alleycatz
2409 Yonge St. 416-481-6865
alleycatz.ca

Beat by Beat | Mainly Clubs, Mostly Jazz!

Orin Dagan

Toronto musicians have been cutting their teeth at Free Times Cafe for 35 years. That’s how long owner Judy Perly, a local hero to Toronto musicians and audiences alike, has been booking since the early 1980s, over 12,000 evenings of music, more than 400 poetry readings, 500 nights of comedy and improv, 100 original art shows and nearly 1000 concerts of klezmer and Yiddish music.

Located just seconds from Kensington Market at 320 College Street, Free Times is a casual, inviting, warm restaurant and music venue. The live music is presented in the cozy back room, seating approximately 50. According to Perly, the much buzzed-about “Bella, Did Ya Eat?” Sunday brunch literally keeps her business alive. “It’s not unusual that we will do in sales more at the brunch than in the back room the entire week. The brunch averages 100 to 200 people a week. The reason it works is because there is nothing else like it – in the world!” Indeed this might be the only place on earth that has weekly klezmer and Yiddish music accompanied by an all-you-can-eat buffet, serving 50 items from smoked salmon and potato latkes to gefilte fish and blintzes. Bella’s Bistro, the front room where the Brunch is served, is sentimentally decorated with a variety of art including a large portrait of Perly’s mother, painted by Judy herself.

“I wanted to do something for my mother after she passed away. And the more connected I got with my mother, the better things got. My mother would always get the right ingredients – she worked very hard all the time. People say I work hard, but I say she worked harder. She had a husband and three children.”

Growing up, the Perly family’s record collection contained everything from the blues and reggae to folk icons like Ian and Sylvia, Joan Baez and Buffy Sainte-Marie, as well as classic jazz from Holiday to Sinatra.

“The other connection I have to jazz is that late in their lives, my parents started following Dixieland jazz. My mother even made up this crazy dance! (laughs). In fact Jim Galloway played for free at my parents’ 32nd anniversary because he loved them so much ...”

C. Music Theatre

All shows: 9pm unless otherwise indicated. Call for cover charge info.

September 1, 8, 25 Wendy Robbins & The Quiet Storm. September 2, 16, 17, 24, 30 Lady Kane.
September 3, 10 Soulful: September 9 The Funk Frequency Prince Tribute. September 15 In the City Band. September 22 Uptown Soul Concert Series. September 23 Universal Boogie Band.

Artword Arbar
15 Colbourne St., Hamilton. 905-543-8512
artword.net (full schedule)
September 11 2pm Chris Maskell Quartet $10.

Bloom
2315 Bloor St. W. 416-767-1315
bloomrestaurant.com
All shows: 19+. Call for reservations.

Burdock
1184 Bloor St. W. 416-546-4033
burdockto.com (full schedule)
All shows: 9pm

Castro’s Lounge
2161 Queen St. E. 416-699-8272
castroslounge.com (full schedule)
All shows: No cover/PWYC

C’est What
67 Front St. E. (416) 867-9499
cestwhat.com (full schedule)
September 10, 24 3pm The Boxcar Boys. September 17 3pm The Hot Five Jazzmakers.

De Sotos
1079 Stl Clair Ave. W. 416-651-2109
desotos.ca (full schedule)
Every Sun 11am Sunday Live Jazz Brunch No cover.

Emmet Ray, The
924 College St. 416-792-4497
theemmetray.com (full schedule)
All shows: No cover/PWYC

September 1 5pm John-Wayne Swingtet:

John Farrell (guitar), Aubrey Sholzberg (bass), Wayne Nakamura (guitar), Alexander Tikhonov (clarinet). September 8 5pm Bossa Tres: Victor Monisvais (guitar), Aubrey Sholzberg (bass).

Gate 403
403 Roncesvalles Ave. 416-588-2930
gate403.com
All shows: PWYC.

September 1 5pm Bruce Chapman Blues Duo with feature guests; 5pm Darvy Windover Band. September 2 5pm Daryl Jahnke Jazz Trio. September 3 5pm Glen Horn blast with friends; 5pm Melissa Boyce Jazz & Blues Band. September 4 5pm Grateful Sunday feat. Trevor Cape and The Field; 9pm The Ault Sisters. September 5 5pm Mike and Jill Daley Jazz Duo; 3pm Drew Austin Jazz Band. September 6 5pm Howard Willett Blues Duo. September 7 7pm Julian Fauth Blues Night.

September 8 5pm Michael Bell Solo; 5pm Kevin Laliberti Jazz & Flamenco Trio. September 9 5pm Evan Desaulnier Jazz Trio;

9pm Sean Bellaviti Latin Jazz Trio. September 10 5pm Bill Heffernan and His Friends; 9pm Julian Fauth Blues Quartet. September 11 5pm The Lesters. September 12 5pm Chris Reid and Nina Richmond, vocals and guitar; 5pm Chris Staig Trio. September 13 5pm Grand Lyle Blues Music; 8pm Kurt Nielsen and Richard Whitman Jazz Band. September 14 5pm Michelle Rumball with friend; 9pm Julian Fauth Blues Night. September 15 5pm Concord Jazz Quintet; 8pm Chelsea McBride Jazz Trio. September 16 5pm Josh Lane: Toronto Jazz Collective; 5pm Jerry Quintyne Jazz Band. September 17 5pm Bill Heffernan and His Friends; 9pm Sweet Derrick Blues Band. September 18 5pm Rob Thaller & Joanna Reynolds Jazz Duo; 9pm L.A. Turcotte: Sultans of Soul. September 19 5pm Linda Carone: Vintage Jazz & Blues. September 20 5pm Sarah Kennedy & Matt Fournier Jazz Duo. September 21 5pm Rick Maltese: Rick’s Three in One. September 22 5pm Emma Cava Jazz Trio. September 23 5pm Nathan Hiltz
I pause to tell Judy about Galloway’s work for The WholeNote and his support for the Toronto jazz community, and she reminisces about the great jazz musicians that walked through her doors, especially in the early days.

“I would say the music started on a regular basis in 1982. The very first time was a year earlier, at an art opening. I was going out with a man who was a part-time bass player [in] the Sam Miya Trio – Sam and Roy Myers who were Japanese Canadians – and I was going with Sam. He played bass and Roy played piano. Then Sam’s nephew was studying at York University and he asked me, ‘Can we play on Saturday night?’ We had a very small room in the back in those days. So he started on Saturdays, and we gave him some food, and then other people asked. So many great musicians.

“If you scrape the surface of the Toronto music scene you will find a lot of people who started out at Free Times. We didn’t even have a stage. It was a lot of folk singers at that time. Tex Konig, Mose Scarlet. Ian Tamlbyn, who is coming back here in September, he’s from Ottawa. Sneezy Waters is another icon. David Rea who played guitar with Ian and Sylvia. And then I hired a gentleman by the name of Michael Katz who used to bring all these musicians from the great folk festivals. Soon we were packed every night. We were one of the only places as there weren’t a lot of clubs like ours. George Koller was here all the time. Micah Barnes, Fern Lindzon, Brian Katz, Rob Pitch. We had a poetry series with major poets …

“But I have to tell you, the economics of jazz are hard. This is a small room and audience don’t spend a lot of money. They sit on a drink, it’s not a party night, it’s a bit more serious, right? So I never really sought it out, but of course I always welcomed it, and the first time we had music it was jazz.”

“But it wasn’t always easy, to say the least:

“It was a real struggle. And the downside to all of this where the music was concerned was that for quite a few years – five years I would say – I didn’t even enjoy the music. I just wished that it would go away! I was mean, I was nasty. I never was here at night. After I started the brunch I realized I could do $2000 to $3000 in five hours and the whole night of live music was $300. From a business point of view sometimes it feels like banging your head against the wall. But I didn’t have a choice – I tried to kill it and it wouldn’t die! (laughs) Isn’t that interesting that it just wouldn’t die. And of course, it’s because of the music that I’ve been able to go on, because as you know music is a healer. It makes you feel so good about everything, and you have those moments. Like any relationship there are the ups and the downs … and I realized that I had to change my attitude. I had to go through a spiritual evolution in order to do this because things weren’t going to go my way, and I had to deal with it. I’m happy that I was able to get out of that.”

Speaking of healing music, one of the series that Perly is most excited about presenting these days happens on the third Wednesday of every month called “Where Have All the Folk Songs Gone” hosted by folk duo Sue and Dwight. Covering classics by Dylan, Seeger, Peter Paul and Mary and many more, this is a popular series in its fourth year that often sells out.

“People are practically in tears and they keep coming back! A lot of my brunch customers heard about it on the newsletter and once they come once, they are hooked!”

After all these years of hard work and determination, does she consider herself a success?

“I’ve lasted. I guess I’m sort of successful now, but I worked for nothing for years, and I cried for ten years straight! (laughs). Nobody helped me. They’d say, too bad, so sorry! I used to want to quit every day, then it was every week, then monthly and now it’s maybe once a year.

The thing is with me that I’m not coming at this with an agenda. That’s why the club has lasted. I’m a conduit – I allow other people to do things. My agenda is keeping my business going.”

Meet Judy Perly in person at the Ashkenaz Festival where she will be a featured guest, speaking on Saturday September 3 at 6pm on the Fressers Summit and a not-to-be-missed special demonstration of her potato latke-making on Monday September 5 at 2pm, including latkes! Eat!

Judy Perly and a latke you can’t refuse.

Ori Dagan is a Toronto-based jazz musician, writer and educator who can be reached at oridagan.com.

In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

**Jazz Ensemble;** 9pm Blia Sterryannis Jazz Trio. **September 24** 5pm Bill Hefferman and His Friends; 9pm Donné Roberts Band. **September 25** 25pm Anything Goes Jazz Band; 9pm Dennis Kwok Jazz Band. **September 26** 9pm Toby Hughes: The Big Three. **September 27** 27pm Rob Davis Blues Duo; 9pm Kalaya Ramu Jazz Band. **September 28** 9pm Julian Faith Blues Night. **September 29** 9pm Zynabar Wilson: “Mozayic Afro-Soul”; 9pm Kristen Lindell Jazz Band. **September 30** 9pm Fraser Melvin Blues Band.

**Grossman’s Tavern**
379 Spadina Ave. 416-977-7000 grossmanstavern.com (full schedule) All shows: No cover (unless otherwise noted).

**Every Sat** The Happy Pais Dixieland jazz jam.

**Every Sun** 10pm The National Blues Jam with Brian Cohen. **Every Wed** 10pm Bruce Donomay. **September 1** 10pm Tom Robertson Band. **September 2** 9pm Hold the Bus; 10pm Combo Royal. **September 3** 10pm Mike McDonald Band. **September 4** 4:30pm New Orleans Connection All Star Jazz Band.

**Harlem Restaurant**
67 Richmond St. E. 416-368-1920 harlemrestaurant.com (full schedule) All shows: 7:30-11pm (unless otherwise noted). Call for cover charge info.

**September 2** Madette. **September 3** Simone Morris Trio. **September 9** 9, 10 The Sean Stanley Trio and Sokina-Dior. **September 10** Liz Loughrey & Adrian X. **September 11** Fibralou. **September 12** Gyles. **September 13** Hugh’s Room.

**Hugh’s Room**
2261 Dundas St. W. 416-531-6604 hughsrroom.com All shows: 8:30pm (unless otherwise noted).

**September 2** Labour Day Celebration and Fall Preview Show $20(adv)/$22.50(door). **September 3** Selcuk Suna $20(adv)/$22.50(door). **September 9** A Man Called Brycraft presents Rebel Rebel – The Music of David Bowie $25(adv)/$30(door). **September 10** Friends

**Jazz Vespers**
Welcome back – we look forward to seeing you!

**Sunday September 18 at 4:30 pm**
Bob DeAngelis

**Sunday October 2 at 4:30 pm**
TRIBUTE TO BILL EVANS with David Restivo, Neil Swainson & Brian Barlow.

**Christ Church Deer Park,** 1570 Yonge St. 416-920-5211 (north of St. Clair at Heath St.)

www.thereselifehere.org Admission is free; donations are welcome.

Jazz Bistro, The

251 Victoria St. 416-363-5299 jazzbistro.ca

September 13pm Dan Dvoskin $12. September 2, 3 3pm Paul Marinaro (voice) with Ben Patterson (piano), Dave Young (bass), Morgan Childs (drums) $20. September 8, 9, 10 9pm Thurs, Fri/9:30pm(Sat) The Cookers Quintet CD Release $15(Thurs)/$20(Fri, Sat). September 11 7pm Ros Kindler (voice) & Friends with Mark Kiesewetter (piano), Ross MacIntyre (bass); Songs of Love, Lust and Longing $15. September 13pm Phil Dixera – CD Release Detour $15. September 14 8pm Yanni Kapoulas $20. September 15 8:30pm Anthony Terpstra Seventet with special guest Colin Hunter $15. September 16, 17 10:30pm(Fri/8:30pm(Sat) Colin Hunter (voice) with the Joe Sealy (piano) Quintet; Paul Novotny (bass), Alison Young (sax), Daniel Barnes (tenor), Colin Hunter (drums) $15. September 18 7pm Tia Bradoz $15. September 20 8pm Cara Matthew $15. September 21, 22, 23, 24 9pm Broadwayway. July Michels, Heather Sambrick, Diane Leah $20(Thurs, Fri)/$25(Sat). September 23 7pm Jay Clayton & The Don Thompson Trio $20. September 27, 28 7pm Piano Chameleon $20. September 29, 30 9pm Renee Lee & The Richard Ring Quartet $20.

Jazz Room, The


Joe Mama’s

317 King St. W 416-340-6469 joemamas.ca

Every Tue 7pm Jeff Eger; Every Wed 7pm Thomas Reynolds. Every Thu 7pm Blackburn. Every Fri 10pm The Grind. Every Sat 10pm Shuggal.

KAMA

214 King St. W. 416-599-5282 kamandia.com (full schedule)

Every Wed 5:30pm Jazz with the Kama House Band.

La Revolution

2848 Dundas St. W 416-766-0746 laraw.webs.com

Every Tue 9pm Duets with Peter Hill and featured guests.

Local GST, The

424 Parliament St. 416-961-9425

Kama

1585 Dundas St. W 416-586-0307 kama.ca (full schedule)

All shows: PWYC.

Manchester’s Pizza Bistro & Music Club

591 Gordon Street, Guelph 519-767-2440 manhattans.ca (full schedule)


Mezzetta Restaurant

681 St. Clair Ave. W. 416-658-5687 mezzettaarestaurant.com (full schedule) All shows: 5pm, $5 (unless otherwise noted).

Monarch Tavern

12 Clinton St. 416-531-5832 themonarchtavern.com (full schedule) September 12 7:30pm Martin Loomer & His Orange Devils Orchestra $10.

Morgans on the Danforth

1282 Danforth Ave. 416-461-3020 morgansontheDanforth.com (full schedule) All shows: 8pm-9pm. No cover. September 25 7pm Lisa Particelli’s Girls Night Out Jazz Jam.

N’awlins Jazz Bar & Dining

299 King St. W 416-595-1958 nawlins.ca

All shows: No cover/PWYC. Every Tue 8:30pm Stacie McGregor. Every Thu 8pm Jim Heineman Trio. Every Thu 8pm ‘Nothin’ But the Blues’ w/ Joe Bowden (drums) and featured vocalists. Every Fri, Sat 9-3am Nawlins All Star Band. Every Sun 7pm Brooke Blackburn.

Nice Bistro, The

117 Brock St. N., Whitby. 905-668-8839 nicobistro.com (full schedule)


Old Mill, The

21 Old Mill Rd. 416-236-2641 oldmilltoronto.com

The Home Smith Bar: No reservations. No cover. $20 food/drink minimum. All shows: 3:30pm. No cover. $20 food/drink minimum. All shows: 9:30pm.

Reservoir Lounge, The

52 Wellington St. E. 416-955-0887 res versiolounge.com (full schedule) All shows: 9:45pm Every Tue, Sat Tyler Yarema and his Rhythm. Every Wed The Digs. Every Thu Stacey Kanan. Every Fri Dee and the Dirty Martins.

Rex Hotel Jazz & Blues Bar, The

194 Queen St. W. 416-598-2475 therex.ca (full schedule)

Call for cover charge info.

September 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30 7pm Kevin Quinn; $30 Modus Factor Album Pre-Release Show. September 2 4pm Hogtown Synagogas; 6:30pm Bugalo Squad; 9:45pm Jake Chisolm. September 3 12pm The Sinners Choir; 3:30pm The Cookers; 7:30pm Justin Bacchus; 9:45pm Nick Teahan Group. September 4 12pm Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band; 3:30pm Paul Redick; 7:30pm Tani Perkon; 9:30pm Steve Hall Sextet. September 5 6:30pm Peter Hill Quintet; 9:30pm Pete Schmidt Blues. September 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30 7pm Chris Wallace’s MANY NAMES; 9:30pm Classic Rex Jazz Jam hosted by Chris Gale. September 7 7:30pm Mark Godfrey Quartet; 3:30pm Laughin’ Misha. September 8 6:30pm Kevin Quinn; 9:30pm Walter Kemp III Trio (Buffalo, NY). September 9 4pm Hogtown Synagogas; 6:30pm David Lee Presents: Toronto Undergraduate Jazz Festival Showcase; 9:45pm Alexio Baro Sextet. September 10 12pm The Sinners Choir; 3:30pm Paul Redick; 7:30pm Justin Bacchus; 9:30pm SophiaPerlman Quintet. September 11 12pm Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band; 3:30pm Red Hot Ramble; 7pm Amanda Tosso; 9:30pm The Out of Towners. September 12 6:30pm U of T Jazz Ensembles; 9:30pm E.M.S.: Emergency Musical Services Big Band. September 13 8pm Chris Wallace’s MANY NAMES; 9:30pm Metalwood (NYC/Vancouver/Toronto) Album Release Tour. September 14 6:30pm Mark Godfrey Quartet; 9:30pm Metalwood (NYC/Vancouver/Toronto) Album Release Tour. September 15 6:30pm Kevin Quinn; 9:30pm Lorne Lefsky Quartet. September 16 4pm Hogtown Synagogas; 6:30pm Bugalo Squad; 9:45pm A Love Electric (Mexico). September 17 12pm The Sinners Choir; 3:30pm Chris Hunt
Tentet • 7:30pm Justin Bacchus; 9:30pm Roy Assaf Trio (WYC). September 18 12pm Excelixor Dixieland Jazz Band; 3:30pm Club Django; 7pm Amanda Hogtown Trio; 9:30pm Eric St. Laurent’s Rough Cocktail. September 19 6:30pm of U of T Jazz Ensembles; September 20 6:30pm Chris Wallace’s MANY NAMES; 9:30pm Classic Rex Jazz Jam hosted by Hum- ber College Faculty Ensemble. September 21 6:30pm Mark Godfrey Quartet; 9:30pm But- ton Factory Band (Winnipeg). September 22 6:30pm Kevin Quinn; 9:45pm The Rex’s Annual Birthday Tribute to John Coltrane: Pat LaBarbera & Kirk Macdonald Quintet. September 23 4pm Hogtown Syncopators; 6:30pm Bugalo Squad; 9:45pm The Rex’s Annual Birthday Tribute to John Coltrane: Pat LaBarbera & Kirk Macdonald Quintet. September 24 12pm The Sinners Choir; 3:30pm Jerome Goddoo Autumn Blues Solstice; 7:30pm Justin Bacchus; 9:45pm The Rex’s Annual Birthday Tribute to John Coltrane: Pat LaBarbera & Kirk Macdonald Quintet. September 25 12pm Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band; 3:30pm Freeway Dixieland Band; 7pm Amanda Tosoff Trio; 9:30pm Barry Romberg. September 26 6:30pm U of T Jazz Ensem- bles; 9:30pm Ghost Note (Brooklyn/Dallas) feat. Snarky Puppy’s Nate Weh & Robert ‘Spud’ Seagriff. September 27 6:30pm Chris Wallace’s MANY NAMES; 9:30pm Ghost Note (Brooklyn/Dallas) feat. Snarky Puppy’s Nate Weh & Robert ‘Spud’ Seagriff. September 28 6:30pm Mark Godfrey Quartet; 9:30pm Hendrik Meurkens (NYC/Vancouver) w/ Jer- emy Price Sextet. September 29 6:30pm Kevin Quinn; 9:30pm Hendrik Meurkens (NYC/Vancouver) w/ Jeremy Price Sextet. September 30 3pm Hogtown Syncopators; 6:30pm Bugalo Squad; 9:45pm Chuck Jack- son Big Bad Blues Band.

Saltty Dog Bar & Grill, The
1800 Queen St. E. 416-848-5064 thesaltdog.ca (full schedule)

Sauce on the Danforth
1376 Danforth Ave. 647-748-1376 sauceontheDanforth.com

All shows: No cover.

Every Mon 9pm The Out Of Towners: Dirty Organ Jazz. Every Tue 6pm Julian Fauth. September 3 Catfish Blues. September 10 Ike Cedar and the Daydrinkers. September 17 Tommy Hawk. September 24 The Snowblowers.

Seven44
(Formerly Chick n’ Del/The People’s Chicken) 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-489-7931 seven44.com (full schedule)

All shows: 7:30pm

Tranzac
292 Brunswick Ave. 416-923-8137 tranzac.org

3-4 shows daily, various styles. Mostly PWYC. Every Mon 10pm Open Mic Mondays. Every Fri 5pm The Friends of Hugh Oliver (folk). This month’s shows include: September 6 7:30pm Ali Berkok; 10pm Peripheral Vision. September 11 10pm The Lola Allamano Four. September 13 7:30pm Aurochs; 10pm Michael Davidson. September 14 7pm Brodie West. September 18 7:30pm Diane Robin. September 20 10pm The Ken McDonald Quartet. September 30 10pm The Ryan Driver Sextet.

Whitlock’s
961 Queen St. E. 416 691-8784 whitlockrestaurant.ca

Every Fri 6pm Gerry Mackay solo guitar.

Free. Please call to pre-register. Also Sep 19.

Sep 13 7:30: Etobicoke Centennial Choir Open Rehearsal. Interested singers are invited to sing with the choir during the rehearsal, meet the conductor and choristers and explore what the choir has to offer. Hum- ber Valley United Church, 76 Anglesley Blvd., Etobicoke. 416-433-5495.

Sep 13 7:30: Toronto Chapter of the Duke Ellington Society. Salon: First monthly meet- ing of 2016/17. Dedicated to the study and promotion of the music of Duke Ellington. Meetings on the second Tuesday of every month except December, June, July and August. Montgomery’s Inn, 4709 Dundas St. W. 416-258-2683. $35(single); $50(couple) with one free seat.


Sep 19 7:30: North Toronto Com- munity Band Workshop: Open Rehearsal. Adult musicians (winds, brass and percussion) are invited to join in with the band as it begins its fall season of rehearsals. Lawrence Park Collegiate, 125 Chatsworth Dr. 416-223-7658. $15. Cash at the door. Call for dinner reservation. Also Sep 9, Oct 15, Nov 16.


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Sep 22 4:00: Victoria University, Univer- sity of Toronto. Book Sale. Music in every genre: vinyl, CDs, sheet music, books. Old Vic,

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● Sep 25 10:00am: RCCO Toronto Centre. Book Sale. Organ, piano and choral music from the libraries of Toronto’s finest musicians and churches. St. Andrew’s United Church (Bloor St.), 117 Bloor St E. 416-829-6400. Free. Also Sep 2510am.

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The Unstoppable Howard Cable

MICHELE JACOT

It was my incredible fortune to be introduced to Howard Cable through a member of the Wychwood Clarinet Choir (that I conduct), who had been at a gathering with Howard and had asked him, as a lark, if he had ever written anything for clarinet choir.

Sure enough, he had, and for none other than the particularly talented clarinet section of the 184-piece North American Aerospace Defense Command ("NORAD") Band, based in Colorado Springs. Howard guest-conducted, composed and arranged for the NORAD Band from 1960 to 1966. He wrote several selections for their clarinetists, most of which were never published. Luckily for us, two were.

One, an arrangement of Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered from Pal Joey (Rodgers & Hart). Howard hadn't heard played since 1962, and the other, Wind Song, an original composition, he had in fact never heard performed (though we're not exactly sure why).

Howard quickly located the two published pieces and passed the music along to us. We invited him to conduct both pieces at our next concert and, to our delight, he accepted. I took the group through the songs for most of the rehearsal process and we arranged for Howard to be there the week of the show to take the reins.

There for the night! The night arrived. An intricate plan was in place for Howard to start out the rehearsal and to be driven home as soon as his pieces were done so that he didn’t have to sit there for two and a half hours on a hard church pew. I introduced myself and shook Howard’s hand. Of course, I had revered this legendary Canadian for years, but had not yet had the chance to meet him. I was a little nervous (slight understatement). Here I was, a strange new face, with 17 clarinetists in tow, about to play Howard Cable’s music for none other than the man himself. Even now, that night seems surreal. I took the group through our usual warm-up and invited Howard to the podium. Howard was on form (which I would later learn was how he always was). In no time, he had the notes weaving and whirling about with the group watching his every move, even from the low chair he sat in to conduct. He rehearsed for a while, but not too long, and then went back to the pew. “We’re ready to take you home now, Howard,” I said. “Oh no,” he replied. “I’m here for the night!”

After the colour returned to my face, I managed to muster up a faint smile and scurry off to put my own clarinet together. Next up were the soloists, most of which were never published. Luckily for us, two were.

I was a separate piece, was in fact a movement to follow the first one dedicated to the Wychwood Clarinet Choir, with a solo part for me. We were overjoyed. We didn’t realize at the time that we were going to end up with a three-movement work titled the Wychwood Suite for solo clarinet and clarinet choir.

The following season, even more music came. Howard wrote for and conducted at several subsequent concerts, one of the highlights being a show featuring Howard’s young discovery, crooner Michael Vanhevel. The concert was a huge success, and included the likes of Terry Clark and Kieran Overs as our rhythm section.

Since then, the WCC has been so fortunate to befriend not only Howard, but also Howard’s wonderful friends and family. Virtuoso trumpeter, conductor and arranger Bobby Herring, and Fen Watkin, fantastic pianist and arranger, were colleagues and dear friends of Howard’s for decades. Due I’m sure to Howard’s initial convincing, the two have come to several of our concerts and have since been writing for our group. Bobby and Fen are now a special part of our WCC family. In fact, huge thanks to Bobby for helping with setting some facts straight for the historical accuracy of this article, and for regaling me with lots of funny, fascinating stories (some not suitable for print) of the antics, poignant moments and memories that Howard and Bobby shared.

On the road: Howard also helped behind the scenes to plan and imagine, with ideas for themed shows and other exciting projects both for the choir and for myself. He proudly became the WCC’s composer and conductor laureate, but mostly, he was our friend.

He would phone me after concerts to debrief. “It’s the maestro calling,” he would say. He would get frustrated if I didn’t answer right away and would call back incessantly until I did. One day, he told me how impressed he was with the work I was doing for the group and how far we had come in even the short time he had been with us. He explained that travelling and conducting were getting a bit more challenging for him, and that he wanted me to tag along ... to learn from him, to get some orchestral conducting experience, and also to be there “in case”, “Sure!” I said (after pretending to think about it for a second or two), and thus began my new adventure as Howard’s associate conductor. He insisted on the word “associate” as opposed to the word “assistant,” with a long explanation having to do with the association (pardon the pun) it conjured up. He was a bit of a semantic guy, and, when I knew him at least, quite firmly opinionated. He also saw through egos and was one of the most unpretentious people I have ever met. He couldn’t stand narcissists. I loved this about him, as we shared these strong sentiments. I asked him once why he didn’t use his “Doctor” title. “Too snobby,” he said, without missing a beat.

In February of 2015, 94-year-old Howard and I flew to Halifax to conduct his “Music of the Oscars” show with Symphony Nova Scotia. After a lovely visit on the plane where we discussed music, of course, and many other fascinating topics, we checked into the hotel. Later, we met up for dinner. Howard had his preferred Lord Nelson specialty, chicken pot pie. As we chatted over coffee and dessert (banoffee cake, another of Howard’s favourites), Jim Eager, the symphony’s music librarian and trombonist, dropped by to bring Howard his scores for the show. Since they were all his own arrangements, he apparently

Usually it’s a half pint all-round with one side order of fries (we’re wild kids). We’re in and out in an hour. That night, I later discovered, was not an isolated incident of Howard closing down a bar. That night was also my introduction to a wonderful human being and a true kindred spirit.

One-trick pony: He didn’t say too much about the rehearsal that evening, and I was worried the entire time that he thought we were just a silly bunch of clarinet geeks. The next morning (a bit early, I might add, after our late night partying) the phone rang. It was Howard, calling with praises for the work I had done with the group the night before and also about my playing. “That piece is a one-trick pony,” he said. “You need another trick!” The following week at our Christie Gardens retirement home pre-show show, he arrived with a manila envelope. In six days, he had whipped up a brand new piece, dedicated to the Wychwood Clarinet Choir, with a solo part for me. We were all floored — and honoured. Figuring this was my “other trick,” we immediately programmed the piece for our next concert, but the music kept coming. A second number, which at first we assumed was a separate piece, was in fact a movement to follow the first one he had given us. We were overjoyed. We didn’t realize at the time that we were going to end up with a three-movement work titled the Wychwood Suite for solo clarinet and clarinet choir.

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didn’t need them too far in advance!

**Made of horseshoes:** After our meal, I took Howard back to his room and went to unpack my suitcase. He asked me to check in on him before he went to sleep, so at about 11pm I knocked on his door, as requested. “Come in,” was the very faint reply. To my utter horror, I opened the door to find Howard lying crumpled on the floor. He had fallen on his way out of the bathroom and had been there for over two hours, unable to get up, let alone get to a phone. I tried to lift him off the floor on my own, but no luck, so I called the front desk for help. After we propped him up in a chair, I asked him what was hurting, and thankfully in many ways, he said he thought that only his left hand had been affected. (I later told him he was made entirely of horseshoes!) The hand was pretty swollen, though, so we got him some ice. I asked if he wanted to go to the hospital and he quickly replied, very definitively, “Not a chance!” He sat for a few minutes in silence, visibly thinking things through. (It felt like forever!) Then, looking at me with an intense stare (and somehow a twinkle in his eye at the same time), he proclaimed, “I think you’d better conduct the whole show.”

For previous concerts, I had been given a full set of scores in advance, “just in case,” but for this particular occasion, the scores were in Halifax, so I only had the three numbers I was originally scheduled to conduct. After I picked my jaw up off the floor, he quickly sent me away with the rest of the pile (there were nine other pieces) and I stayed up all night trying to absorb as much as humanly possible before the 10am rehearsal downbeat. (I also silently checked on him again at 3:30am to make sure he was okay (as if he had casually been lounging around all day) and he told me how proud of me he was for agreeing to take on this challenge. He added that he had already heard positive reports about the day from several people. I was relieved … and exhausted.

**Unstoppable!** By the end of the dress rehearsal the next day, things were sounding pretty decent. It was a blessing, of course, that the musicians of Symphony Nova Scotia are absolutely incredible. Howard ended up emceeing the show from his wheelchair beside me, which meant that the audience was still able to hear his wonderful tales and anecdotes – a huge part of why many have flocked to Howard’s shows over the years. And good news for me, I got two cracks at it, with a second show two days later – so after the complete out-of-body experience of the first one, I was able to be a lot more relaxed and present the second time around. Luckily, both shows ended up going off without a hitch, and the memory of turning around to bow after the Over the Rainbow encore, seeing Howard with tears streaming down his face, is one that will be deeply etched in my mind for the rest of my days. Of course, I lost it too, at that point, and we hugged each other for a long time as we bowed. I have never had a more stressful or a more exhilarating musical experience. What a ride.

And what a thrilling trip it was to be able to know Howard in his last years. He had a youthful spirit and a sparkle in his eye that kept him young at heart until the day he died (I was so fortunate to be able to have dinner with him two days before he passed away). Howard Cable touched a lot of souls. His cheeky and contagious smile was usually enough to win you over, and when music was thrown into the equation, Howard Cable was absolutely unstoppable.
If you’re new to *The WholeNote*, welcome aboard “We Are All Music’s Children,” our monthly photo contest, now 12 years old. Here’s how it works.

A member of the music community provides their childhood photo which we publish with some fun clues, and our readers guess who it is for a chance to win prizes – usually concert tickets or recordings featuring the artist in the photo.

In the following issue we publish their adult photo with an interview-based profile about them and the music that shaped their early years. We announce our contest winners for the month and their prizes, and we launch a new contest.

If you’re a regular reader of this column, welcome back! ☺

Previous artist profiles and interviews can be read at [thewholenote.com/musicschildren](http://thewholenote.com/musicschildren)

**September’s Children ~ since 2004 ~**

- Robert Aitken
- Curtis Metcalf
- Guido Basso
- Ray Tizzard
- Susie Napper
- Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg
- Jane Bunnett
- Rufus Wainwright
- James Parker
- Angela Hewitt
- Christopher Verrette
- Mary McGeer

![Oakville, 1992](image)

Still playing the same instrument.

**NEW CONTEST!**

Who is October’s CHILD?

What do these have in common?

- Kid Koala’s *Nufonia Must Fall*;
- Afiara Quartet’s *Spincycle* with Scratch Bastid;
- Moordale Concerts’ whole new season – especially their November 6 concert “Noël Coward: A Talent to Amuse”;
- excellent musical fun and innovation in general and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in particular

Know our Mystery Child’s name? WIN PRIZES! Send your best guess by September 25, to musicschildren@thewholenote.com

**for MORE CONTESTS … sign up to receive HalfTones**

*The WholeNote’s* mid-month email newsletter offers updated listings, news and many additional opportunities to win great concert tickets.

*HalfTones* readers this year won tickets for Toronto Summer Music’s *The Rape of Lucretia*, the Canadian Opera Company’s *Carmen* and *Maometto II*, Tafelmusik’s *Tales of Two Cities: The Leipzig-Damascus Coffee House*, several concerts at the TD Toronto Jazz Festival, Kathleen Battle’s Roy Thomson Hall concert, Opera Atelier’s *Lucio Silla*, and the Talisker Players’ *Cross’d By The Stars*, just to name a few.

Once you’re registered for *HalfTones* you’ll also get a little email notification from us (once per issue only) to let you know when the digital version of *The WholeNote* is available. It’s released ahead of the print magazine – you can find out even sooner if your “Music’s Children” guess was a winner!

It’s easy to register – right on our home page at [thewholenote.com](http://thewholenote.com)
Editor’s Corner

have mentioned before that one of my great joys is when my two passions, music and literature, come together. The most recent example of this was occasioned by an email from someone I consider an old friend even though I only met him in person a year and a half ago. I’m speaking of music critic, librettist and novelist Paul Griffiths, who dropped me a modest note mentioning that the latest edition of the journal *Music & Literature* (No.7, ISBN 978-0-9888799-6-6) had devoted more than a 100 pages to his creative writings. I began reading Griffiths on contemporary music some 40 years ago when I was first getting interested in “the music of our time” and found in him a welcome guiding hand through the oft-times murky waters of modern and post-modern fare. Some years later I encountered his novels *Myself and Marco Polo* and *The Lay of Sir Tristan* and was intrigued by how well he captured the voice and the spirit of distant times in a contemporary way. I was aware of his collaboration with Elliott Carter as the librettist of that American icon’s one-act comic opera *What Next?* in 1999 and most recently that his novel *let me tell you* had been the source of the text for Hans Abrahamsen’s orchestral song cycle of the same name. It was this latter work which brought about our meeting.

In March 2015 the Toronto Symphony Orchestra brought Abrahamsen, Griffiths and soprano Barbara Hannigan, who had been instrumental in commissioning the work, to participate in the New Creations Festival. During his time here, Griffiths gave a lecture at the University of Toronto and graciously agreed to participate in “An Evening with Paul Griffiths,” a fundraising event at Gallery 345 to benefit New Music Concerts, at which portions of Carter’s opera were screened. It was through my position as general manager of New Music Concerts that I had the privilege of meeting and getting to know Paul and his wife Anne West Griffiths. Anne is one of the contributors to *Music & Literature* No.7 in the form of a series of email exchanges with Hannigan documenting the gestation of the *let me tell you* project. It grew from the idea of a set of songs with piano accompaniment to commemorate Griffiths’ 64th birthday, to ultimately become a half-hour-long orchestral cycle commissioned jointly by the Berlin Philharmonic Foundation and the Danish Arts Fund. The journal also includes a number of articles about that work and the texts for the three movements which Griffiths extracted from his novel.

The premise of the book, and the songs, is the telling of Ophelia’s backstory in her own words, using only the 483-word vocabulary which Shakespeare gives her in *Hamlet*. It is a sparkling achievement, but more to the point, it is moving, poetic and compelling, as I was reminded when I re-read *let me tell you* (ISBN: 978-1-874400-43-1) upon finishing the journal. Having been at the Toronto performance I can vouch for the haunting beauty of Abrahamsen’s lush scoring and I was pleased to find that there is a recording with Hannigan and the Bavarian RSO under Andris Nelsons which I have ordered from Amazon (I could not find a local source). I had hoped it would have been delivered by the time of writing this article but for now I must content myself with a YouTube excerpt from the Berlin Philharmonic. (The whole concert is available on their Digital Concert Hall.)

The scope of *Music & Literature* No.7 is much broader than this one work however, with several of Griffiths’ unpublished fictions and writings about such musical subjects as Bach’s solo violin pieces, *In memoriam György Ligeti*, *Hearing György Kurtág* reading Samuel Beckett and a (thus far) unproduced opera based on *Gulliver’s Travels* utilizing invented languages, with composer James Wood. As is the usual format of the *Music & Literature* series, there are three subjects included in this volume, with extensive treatments of British avant-garde novelist Ann Quin (1936–1973) and Russian composer/pianist/ poet/artist Lera Auerbach (b.1973). Well worth exploring!

Other old friends I re-visited this summer were more in the folksy vein. Allan Fraser and Daisy DeBolt were a duo of adventurous singer-songwriters who performed together from 1969 until 1974 and produced two albums which were very influential in my formative years. Evidently I was far from the only one impacted by their quirky style and Fraser’s *Them Dance Hall Girls* has become something of a cult classic still frequently heard from myriad performers on folk festival stages around the continent.

DeBolt died in 2011 and over the past five years Fraser has been compiling and cleaning up all the available archival material from their time together. The result is the double LP set *Fraser & DeBolt – This Song Was Borne (Roaratorio roaratorio roaratorio)* which includes 19 previously unreleased original songs and a cover of Bob Dylan’s *I Throw It All Away*. The collection is a mix of studio recordings, live performances and radio broadcasts and the audio quality is varied but generally quite presentable. Although perhaps of most interest to existing fans of the duo, this new release paints an intriguing picture of a seminal time in the development of the Canadian folk scene. Their music included strange transitions and surprising chord progressions, atonal interludes – especially those featuring violinist Ian Guenther – and striking harmonies combined with sweet melodies and country rhythms. Highlights for me, and recently added to my own repertoire, are *The Snowdrift Song* and *Dandellion Wine* – with Calypso Joe and Doors *Will Appear (...And Swing Open)* soon to be added.

The final old friend who “stopped by” this summer was singer/actor/storyteller Theodore Bikel (1924–2015). He feels like family because Bikel is one of my mom’s favourites and I grew up listening to his albums. It nearly broke her heart when she was unable to get tickets to a tribute show in conjunction with the Jewish Film Festival earlier this year. *While I’m Here* (Red House Records RHR CD 270 redserecords.com) is a marvellous 2-CD set which is being released in conjunction with the Ashkenaz Festival at Harbourfront where there will be two events honouring Bikel on September 4 (ashkenaz.ca). Disc One features a surprisingly strong-voiced 90-year-old Bikel telling stories of his life’s journey from pre-war Austria to Palestine, England and ultimately the U.S.A.; warm and funny and serious and inspiring all at the same time. Disc Two is a compilation of live performances in several languages, often with witty introductions, and studio recordings spanning four decades. The highlight for me is *Come Away, Melinda (Before the War)*, the song for which my youngest sister was named. Also worthy of note is *Phil Ochs’s poignant anthem When I’m Gone* and Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Edelweiss* which they penned especially for Bikel and the original Broadway production of *The Sound of Music* with Mary Martin. This is a set my mother (and I) will treasure.

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David Olds, DISCoveries Editor

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If you’re a fan of violinist Nikolaj Znaider – and it’s really difficult not to be – then the DVD of his live performances of the Beethoven and Mendelssohn Violin Concertos with Riccardo Chailly and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchester is something you really should see (Accentus Music ACC 20345).

Although Chailly chose to leave the orchestra this past June (with no acrimony) it’s clear from these performances that he had a close relationship with the players; his warmth and sensitivity, and the ease with which he communicates, are there for all to see. He also clearly enjoys a similar relationship with Znaider, a big man with a big tone and big technique to match.

The Mendelssohn was recorded in September 2012 and the Beethoven in October 2014, but there is no discernable difference in the quality of the recordings. There is perhaps a slightly different feel to the earlier performance, with some different camera angles and slightly fewer cuts to individual orchestra players at appropriate moments, but the direction for both concerts is unobtrusive and never distracting, with excellent coverage of both Znaider and Chailly.

The performances are quite outstanding, with Znaider in great form and drawing a wonderful sound from the Stradivarius violin once played by Fritz Kreisler; it’s a magnificent instrument, and perfectly suited to Znaider’s playing.

Each performance is followed by a Bach encore, the Beethoven by the Sarabande from the Partita No.1 in B Minor and the Mendelssohn by the Sarabande from the Partita No.2 in D Minor.

There’s more superb violin playing on Sibelius Glazunov Violin Concertos, the debut Deutsche Grammophon CD by the young American-Korean violinist Esther Yoo with Vladimir Ashkenazy conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra (DG40130).

Still only 22, Yoo was 16 when she became the youngest-ever prize winner at the International Sibelius Competition in 2010, and two years later was one of the youngest-ever prize winners at the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels. In 2014 she was a soloist on the Philharmonia Orchestra’s tour of South America under Ashkenazy; the recordings here, however, predate that tour, having been made in October 2013 and May 2014.

Like Znaider, Yoo plays on a magnificent Stradivarius instrument, this time the 1704 “Prince Obolensky” violin, and, also like Znaider, has outstanding technique and a wonderful tone. The Glazunov Concerto in A Minor Op.82 gets a ravishingly beautiful performance here, as does the Sibelius Concerto in D Minor Op.47, with Ashkenazy finding some subtle and often unheard nuances in an exceptional orchestral accompaniment.

Two smaller works for violin and orchestra complete the CD. Sibelius’ Suite for Violin and Strings JS185/Op.117 from 1929 was the last concertante work he completed, although it lay undiscovered until the 1980s and was not published until 1995. The titles of the three short movements (in English in the manuscript) reflect the composer’s popularity in Great Britain: Country Scenery; Serenade – Evening in Spring; and In the Summer.

Glazunov’s Grand Adagio is taken from his Op.57 ballet Raymonda from 1898, and depicts the rapturous dance of the two lovers at the centre of the story. It’s a lovely end to a simply stunning debut.

Concert Note: Esther Yoo makes her Toronto debut with the TSO on October 8 and 9 playing Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto at Roy Thomson Hall.

The Russian duo of violinist Roman Mints and pianist Katya Apekisheva are the performers on an outstanding 2CD set of Works for Violin and Piano by the Russian composer Alfred Schnittke (quartz QTZ2116).

Mints grew up with Schnittke’s music, and feels that it frequently illustrates “even too accurately the life we lived back then” in the former Soviet Union. He performed all of Schnittke’s music for violin and piano in a concert at the Moscow Conservatory several years ago, and this new recording is essentially a reconstruction of that concert program.

Mints plays the three sonatas in reverse order – going “from death to life rather than the other way round” – because of the cheerless and oppressive nature of the Sonata No.3. It was written in 1994 after Schnittke had suffered several severe strokes, and the score is consequently extremely bare. The Sonata No.1 was written during the composer’s 12-tone serialism period and has more than an echo of Berg and Shostakovich.

The Sonata No.2 “Quasi una Sonata” is a technically challenging work with a striking opening and equally striking ending. There are percussive piano hammer chords, huge silences, tonal and atonal passages, structured and aleatoric sections, some stunning piano textures and extended violin techniques; and an ending where 46 consecutive identical piano chords crash into dissonance, leaving the unaccompanied violin to take the sonata to its close. It’s a simply astonishing piece that feels like the emotional centre of the recital.

The Suite in Old Style, five short pieces drawn from Schnittke’s numerous film scores and presented here in an arrangement for viola d’amore, harpsichord and percussion, could hardly be more different, the central Minuet having a distinct Harry Potter flavour.

Three short pieces round out the recital: the Congratulatory Rondo written for the first violinist of the Borodin Quartet; the brief but somewhat grotesque Polka from the incidental music for a stage play; and Stille Nacht, a startlingly eerie arrangement of Franz Gruber’s carol Silent Night. The latter, written as a Christmas greeting for Gidon Kremer, has a growing dissonance in the violin and an increasingly ominous low off-key bass pedal note in the piano, the piece ending with a low Shostakovitch-like violin figure that sounds like a distant air raid warning. This night may well be silent, but it’s filled with an air of apprehension and unease.

The English composer and violist Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979) may well be little known to the general music public – let alone the public in general – but viola players have long known her qualities and her contributions to their repertoire and will no doubt welcome the new CD Rebecca Clarke Works for Viola, featuring the Duo Rùnya of violinist Diana Bonatesta and pianist Arianna Bonatesta (EVA.E16008).

Clarke settled in the United States in the early 1940s and stopped composing after marrying the pianist James Friskin in 1944. Her music was largely forgotten until 1976, when a radio broadcast celebrating her 90th birthday revived interest in it; even so, much of her music remains unpublished.

As a professional viola player, a large amount of Clarke’s music was written for her own use. The CD opens with the substantial Viola Sonata from 1919, a beautiful work with hints of Debussy and other
contemporaries that has remained part of the standard viola repertoire since its publication in 1921. Morpheus, her first major work for the instrument, was written in 1918.

Six shorter individual works for viola and piano are mostly from the 1909 to 1925 period, and violinist Gabriele Campagna joins the Duo for the final track, the Dumka for violin, viola and piano from 1941.

Diana Bonatesta has a big, warm tone and plays beautifully throughout a really lovely CD.

The contemporary English composer Colin Matthews, who turned 70 earlier this year, is celebrated with the CD Violin Concerto on the label he founded, although the CD also features his Cello Concerto No.2 and the orchestral work Cortège (NMC D227).

Matthews is a prominent figure on the English scene, having worked with Benjamin Britten, Imogen Holst and Deryck Cooke in the 1970s and having been associate composer with the London Symphony Orchestra in the 1990s and the Halle Orchestra in the 2000s. He is currently professor of composition at the Royal College of Music.

There are no new recordings here. The Violin Concerto is a two-movement work written for Leila Josefowicz between 2007 and 2009, with this performance a live recording of a BBC Proms concert at Royal Albert Hall on July 28, 2010; Josefowicz is the soloist with the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Oliver Knussen. It’s a fine work with some beautiful solo writing and constantly changing speeds and textures, and an orchestral accompaniment in the opening section that is highly reminiscent of Alban Berg.

The Cello Concerto No.2 is heard here in another BBC recording, this time made in April 2002 and featuring cellist Anssi Karttunen, with Rumon Gamba leading the BBC Symphony Orchestra. It was written between 1994 and 1996 for Mstislav Rostropovich, and consists of five short movements played without a break.

Cortège is a decidedly dark single-movement work for large orchestra dating from 1988, played here by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra under Riccardo Chailly in a recording made at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, in December 1998.

Performances throughout are top-notch in a CD that is a fine birthday tribute to a significant musical personality.

Beethoven: The Early String Quartets (AVIE AV2348) is a 2CD set of the Opus 18 quartets by the Cypress String Quartet that not only completes their recording of the complete cycle but also marks their final season; after 20 years together the quartet disbanded after a

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concert in San Francisco on June 26. Their 2012 self-released recordings of the late quartets have also been reissued as a 3CD set alongside this new issue; their recording of the middle quartets was released on AVIE Records in 2014.

This is the only volume of the series that I have heard, and it really made me want to listen to the others, especially to see what the ensemble does with the late quartets. The playing here never lacks bite and intensity when it’s needed, but there’s an overall sensitivity and thoughtfulness which is very appealing; this is refined playing, but never superficial. It’s also very strong rhythmically, particularly in the tricky start to the Presto final movement of the Op.18 No.3 D Major quartet, which can so easily be quite ambiguous without a clearly defined pulse.

I’ve had the occasional cello ensemble CD over the past year or so, but nothing that approaches the sheer size of the Chicago area Northwestern University Cello Ensemble under their director Hans Jørgen Jensen on their new CD Shadow, Echo, Memory (Sono Luminus SLE-70004).

In May 2013 Jensen, Northwestern’s cello professor, brought together an ensemble of Northwestern students, Chicago-area high school cellists and Northwestern alumni (several of whom are now active in major U.S. symphony orchestras and music schools) to record the Adagietto from Mahler’s Fifth Symphony. This memorable event, with over 50 cellists participating, led to the continuation of the project and the decision to record this debut album, although the remaining tracks here feature ensembles comprising from eight to 23 cellos.

The works range from Fauré’s Après un rêve (1878) and Rachmaninov’s Vocalise (1915) through Ligeti’s 1966 Lux Aeterna to four 21st-century works: Zachary Wadsworth’s Three Lacquer Prints (2012/14); Hans Thomalla’s Intermezzo (2011); Aaron Jay Kernis’ Ballad (2004); and the 2014 title track by the Canadian composer and Northwestern ensemble member Michael van der Sloot.

Finally, the full ensemble is joined by six basses and a harp in the original 2013 recording of the Mahler Adagietto, providing a lovely ending to a CD full of sonic depth and richness.

Two cellos may not have much chance of sounding like 50, but in the hands of Jacques Offenbach, himself a virtuoso cellist, they can still sound like a small ensemble. Paul Christopher and Milovan Paz are the cellists in Offenbach Cello Duets Op.54, #1-3, The Gift – Wrapping! (Human Metronome HMP 106 – 2016), the fifth and final CD in their complete recording of the six books of duets of increasing difficulty that comprise the Cours méthodique de duos pour deux violoncelles Opp.49-54.

The Op.54 duets rank as Très Difficiles (or “formidably difficult” in Christopher’s words) with extensive double and triple stops over the entire range of positions and challenges that include rapid scale work, large jumps in pitch, arpeggios, octaves and extremely high tessitura. Christopher and Paz surmount them all with ease and are clearly having a great time in doing so.

Don’t be fooled by the apparent pedagogical nature of the Method’s title; Offenbach is best known for his operettas, and his gift for melody is evident throughout these delightful duets. In Christopher’s opinion they transcend their original purpose and are the high water mark for the cello duets genre, and given the evidence here it’s difficult to disagree with him.

The young Venezuelan-American cellist Carmine Miranda is the soloist on a terrific CD of the Schumann and Dvořák Concerti for Cello & Orchestra with the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra under Petr Vronský (Navona Records NV6034).

Composed in October 1850, the Schumann Cello Concerto in A Minor Op.129 has been given a rough ride by many critics over the years, with criticisms ranging from a lack of virtuosity in the solo part to its being evidence of the composer’s mental decay – with one of completing the proofreading for the published version in February 1854, Schumann attempted suicide by throwing himself into the Rhine.

The review copy of this CD came with Miranda’s fascinating and extremely detailed article Decoding the Schumann Cello Concerto, reprinted in full from the Spring 2016 edition of The Musical Times, in which he argues convincingly that the work has long been misunderstood, and that Schumann’s decisions in the concerto, far from being a product of any mental deterioration, are in fact calculated, and clear proof of his knowledge of, and use of, cryptography – or cyphers – in his music. The concerto is apparently dominated by references to the initial letters of the full names of Schumann’s wife Clara and the composer himself, and these references determine the structure of the melodies and the choice of keys.

Given this level of insight it should come as no surprise that the performance here is outstanding – sensitive, passionate and rhapsodic – and makes the strongest possible case for elevating the concerto to the same class as the Elgar and the Dvořák. Miranda brings the same rich, full-toned playing and the same depth of historical research to the Dvořák Concerto in B Minor Op.104, resulting in another glorious performance of this wonderful piece.

And finally, to a single cello. Transitions is the first solo CD from the Canadian-born New York cellist Michael Nicolas, a performer with an impressive reputation on the contemporary scene (Sono Luminus DSL-92202).

Nicolas describes the CD as an attempt to show that humans and computers can co-exist musically and explores the relationship from as many angles as possible. The works here were written by composers from three continents and span over 50 years and include duos for cello and electronics, cello solos with electronic backing tracks, pieces with multi-layered cello tracks and a piece for solo cello.

The composers include the Argentinian-American Mario Davidovsky (b.1964), the Americans Steve Reich, David Fulmer and Annie Gosfield, Iceland’s Anna Thorvaldsdottir (b.1977) and the Peruvian Jaime E. Oliver La Rosa (b.1979). Davidovsky’s Synchronisms No.3 for Cello and Electronic Sounds was written in 1964; Thorvaldsdottir’s solo cello title track dates from 2014.

Nicolas hopes that the listener “will be exposed to many new sounds and ways to organize them, and be able to connect them to more traditional ideas of musical expression.” Certainly this CD will go a long way towards helping them do just that. His playing and extended techniques are outstanding, and the works are beautifully recorded.
I can never resist an opportunity to experience the Bach Goldberg Variations. This 2016 recording, Bach: Goldberg Variations – The New Recording (Accentus Music ACC30372) by Zhu Xiao Mei, is a treasure that every Goldberg fan should own. Zhu made her first recording of the Variations 20 years ago and has performed them hundreds of times in public. This is her second recording of the work.

The disc is unique. The liner contains no critique, no history or musicological analysis. Instead there is an interview with Zhu, responding to superb and probing questions whose answers are arresting. One, born in the year of the Chinese revolution and serving five years in a work camp of Mao’s Cultural Revolution, Zhu has something to say.

While she has an obvious grasp of the structure and pattern of the work, she speaks passionately about her unconventional approach to the variations and where they take the listener. Zhu makes two emphatic points about this journey. First, that the Variations ascend gradually from the opening Aria to their pinnacle in the 25th Variation. Here the languorous meditation in a minor key lasts two, even three times the duration of any of the other variations. Whatever Bach means to say, he says it at this point. Second, that the work is cyclical, beginning and ending with the Aria. On hearing it a second and final time we sense that we have understood something. The cycle is life and death. She quotes Laozi: “The Return is the Movement of Tao.”

Prokofiev’s first two piano concertos date from his early twenties while he was a student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Written just a year apart, they are strikingly dissimilar. On Prokofiev – Piano Concertos 1 & 2 Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra; Niels Muus (Sorel Classics SC CD 006) pianist Anna Shelest profoundly convincingly in her approach to these works. She understands the conventional forms used in the Concerto No.1 and delivers Prokofiev’s memorable themes beautifully, especially the bold opening idea that returns at the close of the work. Concerto No.1 is very brief and is more of a single continuous work. The performance is satisfying and energetic, with the soloist and orchestra flawlessly together throughout.

The real surprise, however, comes with the Piano Concerto No.2 which is far more demanding in every respect. Shelest never shrinks from the challenges the composer sets out. The opening movement’s massive cadenza is almost a work within a work, taking up most of the movement’s time. It’s brilliantly played with skillfully metered intensity. The Scherzo’s wild, relentless unison playing is a brief but definite show stopper. Shelest’s performance, especially in the Finale, reminds us how modern Prokofiev’s language must have sounded to audiences a century ago, and how fresh it remains today.

Based in New York, Shelest continues to perform and add to her diverse discography making herself an artist whose career is very much worth following.

Elizabeth and Marcel Bergmann have performed as duo pianists for more than 20 years. Marcel’s additional role as composer and arranger has given the pair an unusually large performance repertoire. All the material on American Stories for Two Pianos – Bergmann Duo (Ars Produktion ARS 38 188) is a tribute to American composers, both classical and jazz. The arrangements faithfully bring the essence of the works to the combined voices of two pianos. The Bergmanns possess all the skills we expect from a seasoned pair of duo pianists. They’re perfectly together at the deepest musical level.

It’s difficult to refer to any highlights on this disc because each track is superb. The arrangements are brilliant. Chick Corea’s La Fiesta and Spain open the CD with high energy and a Latin pulse that flows naturally into Bernstein’s Selections from West Side Story. America will positively launch you from your seat. One Hand, One Heart is movingly simple. Each selection is a gem.

The Bergmanns include two works by Pat Metheny, Eighteen and Hermitage. Here the challenge is to bring the electroacoustic and percussion components convincingly to the keyboards as well as to pianistically portray Metheny’s music from a solo album.

Following the Latin American thread leads Marcel Bergmann to arrangements of Astor Piazzolla’s Oblivion and Libertango, the latter being one of Piazzolla’s best known works. The final track is an irresistibly syncopated romp titled Infancia by Egberto Gismonti. These performances are exciting and electrifying.

There’s a good deal of serious stuff in the body of works for piano four hands. There’s also a more light-hearted tradition that is written with children in mind. It’s here that we find the popular works by Ravel, Saint-Saëns and Fauré that appear on French Fantasy – Saint-Saëns, Fauré, Ravel (Sheridan Music Studio 16129 9). Pianists Steven Greene and Susan Merdinger clearly enjoy playing this material. While set against a background of childlike simplicity, there are plenty of moments where the composers speak profoundly.

Carnival of the Animals is replete with colourful imagery. Merdinger and Greene have a great deal of fun with this, romping through Saint-Saëns’ pages with energy and style. Their performance of Aquarium is noteworthy for its mystical fluidity while the Finale delivers the entertaining pulse of a high-stepping chorus line. Tortoises, Kangaroos and The Elephant also offer a generous dose of good keyboard humour – a reminder of why this set is so enduringly popular.

Fauré’s Dolly Suite is a more introspective and tender work and the pianists explore this change of character effectively in Berceuse and Tendresse. Pas Espagnol and Kitty-Valse balance the suite with optimism and sparkle.

The disc concludes with Ravel’s Mother Goose Suite. Ravel’s harmonic language sets the suite apart from the other two works. It gives Merdinger and Greene the opportunity to approach the music with more attention to its subtleties. They are more seriously engaged in this music but never at the expense of its youthful focus.

Susan Merdinger presents a broad and well-rounded solo program on Soirée – Schubert, Brahms, Debussy, Liszt (Sheridan Music Studio 13454 7). Beginning with the Schubert Sonata in B Major D.575, K.147, she quickly confirms the composer’s predilection for song. She phrases the two principal ideas of the opening movement beautifully as if they had lyrics ready to be sung. The second movement offers a beautiful opening that first appears in vertical hymn-like form but subsequently melts into a series of fluid variations that Merdinger plays with great affection. The final two movements are very dance-like, each offering a brief middle section where Merdinger finds lied-like material that she emphasizes before reverting to the rhythmic drive that concludes them both.

Having both Brahms Rhapsodies on the same disc makes for interesting comparisons. Here too, Merdinger finds the two principal ideas in each work and carefully follows their course through Brahms’ dense harmonies. The Rhapsody in B Minor Op.79 No.1’s middle section is significantly shorter than the G Minor Op.79 No.2’s and offers less time to linger with the material. But Merdinger counters
Lee masters the extreme contrasts of the final movement, lingering in the reposes before moving out into the larger, wilder passages we associate with Rachmaninov’s style. She understands this work as a whole, a complete unit, and holds it together as such.

The Variations on a Theme of Corelli again demonstrate how well Lee understands Rachmaninov.

Here is the deep Romanticism we associate with the concertos, and in its place a studied intellect moving creatively from one variation idea to the next. At Variation 15 Lee uses the nocturne-like interlude to regroup before launching into the last five and concluding with the Coda, ending on a few soft simple chords. She’s a powerful and thoughtful player with an excellent debut recording.

Pianist, scholar and critic Philip Evans is an acknowledged authority on the piano music of Bartók. His series of Bartók CDs received high praise from the New York Times. On Philip Evans plays Bartók (ARTEK 00642) he revisits the Sonata (1926), a work of Bartók’s middle period. He describes it as a “new kind of piano virtuosity: huge chords, often rapidly repeated, large leaps and intricate embellishments.”

Evans, even in the slower second movement, uses Bartók’s strong rhythms to propel the music. There’s a relentlessness about this music and Evans never wavers in applying it.

The Six Romanian Folk Dances are smaller scale works. Evans plays them with sensitivity and imagination. The Stamping Dance is especially beautiful for the haunting way he manages to suspend the melody above the accompaniment. Improvisation on Hungarian Peasant Songs Op.20 is more adventurous in its treatment of the material. Evans plays the now familiar rhythmic chord clusters with requisite consistency but is always ready to yield to a melody, even if only a fragment.

Six Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm is, according to Evans, more than just a set of dances. Using various combinations of four, two and three, Bartók builds a series of increasingly intricate and engaging “dances” that offer unique rhythms to start but add intriguing melodic fragments and even some Gershwin-esque harmonies as well.

In Piano Renaissance (jean-baptiste-mueller.com) Swiss pianist Jean-Baptiste Müller presents a program of his own compositions written in Baroque, Classical and Romantic styles. Müller is undeniably an excellent performer who has, nevertheless, chosen a less travelled path to advance his work. His record of festival and competition awards and public performances all point to his comprehensive grasp of the standard piano repertoire. His ability to present original ideas in such accurate historical modes is curiously impressive.

_Fuge in d_ is a four-voice fugue in the style of Bach as is the Chorale “Trockne meine Tränen mir in Deinem Lichte,” whose harmonic and voice part embellishments advance with each iteration of the chorale. Müller’s concert history shows numerous performances of works by Antonio Soler. This explains his familiarity with the style of the period and the remarkable kinship with his three _Hommages à Soler_ that he performs on this disc.

_Valse de la Confrérie du Sabre d’Or_ is Chopin throughout and his ability to write so convincingly in that voice is amazing.

_Vika Variationen_ is, however, a fusion of the baroque and romantic and less tidy in its identification of style. But then, that’s perhaps where we face our contemporary dilemma. We are predisposed to keep our historical musical styles separate, wince a bit at mixing them and wonder profoundly why anyone would want to write something original using them. It seems somehow inauthentic.

There’s no denying the quality of these compositions or the beauty of their performance. This disc is sure to get your attention and evoke a lingering curiosity.

We often think of Rachmaninov as a big scale composer, recalling his piano concertos and their vast sweep of musical ideas. **Rachmaninov – Piano Sonata No.1, Variations on a theme of Corelli (Blue Griffin Recording BGR327)** reminds us that this is also true of his piano sonatas. Pianist Jin Hwa Lee begins the Piano Sonata No.1 with control and clarity while bracing for the enormous physical demands of the opening movement’s second half. Her command of the music is impressive and her musicality eloquent. It shows in the slow second movement where her touch changes the opening colours most effectively.

## Boris Giltburg is a pianist who thinks pictorially.

His recent disc **Rachmaninov – Études-tableaux Op.39; Moments musicaux** (Naxos 8.573469) contains his own liner notes in which he describes the images and scenes evoked by each of Rachmaninov’s Études-tableaux. Giltburg creates the tableaux before us, the mists, the forests, everything he imagines. And he does it masterfully. He whimsically describes No.6 in A Minor Op.39 as Rachmaninov’s dark retelling of Red Riding Hood and the Wolf. Despite being études, the technical challenges pose no difficulty and Giltburg seems eager to get to the heart of each piece.

He formed this group in 1999. They play and breathe with remarkable unity. The experience of this recording can only be surpassed by seeing them live – and what a privilege that would be. Until then keep the DVD player close at hand.

**Lee understands Rachmaninov.**
Pianist, musicologist and educator, Luisa Guembes-Buchanan has added a new recording to her discography that currently includes Beethoven sonatas and works by Schumann and E.T.A. Hoffmann. On Schubert (Del Aguilía DA 55312) Guembes-Buchanan performs the Sonata in C Minor D.958 and the Impromptu in A-Flat Major Op.90 No.4.

The Sonata is Schubert’s third last to perform. It’s a substantial work that takes a half hour to perform. Guembes-Buchanan launches into the opening C minor chord then commits to a steady and aggressive pace until the second theme emerges in a more tender and relaxed mood. She opens the second movement with a profoundly respectful statement of the opening idea, then navigates Schubert’s numerous key changes through to the final, somewhat hesitant reference to the opening bars.

The fourth movement is busy and demands clear articulation for which Guembes-Buchanan pedals sparingly.

The Impromptu in A-Flat Major Op.90 No.4 is a favourite and gratifying to hear played this well. The tempo is fast, making the many descending arpeggios very impressive. Guembes-Buchanan is an inspired Schubert interpreter.

VOCAL

Monteverdi – Messa a quattro voci et salmi of 1650 Volume 1
The Sixteen; Harry Christophers
Coro COR16142

▶ Seven years after Claudio Monteverdi’s death, the publisher Vincenti, with help from Monteverdi’s pupil Francesco Cavalli, put together a volume of the composer’s unpublished works, consisting of Mass and Psalm settings, to which they added a work of Cavalli’s own. In this first volume of two devoted to this 1650 publication, Harry Christophers focuses on the salmi (psalms), his Beatus vir and Cavalli’s Magnificat, saving the Messa a quattro voci for the second volume. The psalm settings are characteristic of the gorgeous, rich harmonies, with just a smattering of highly affective dissonance; innovations resulting from the transition from renaissance to baroque that Monteverdi pioneered through his long compositional career.

Harry Christophers and The Sixteen understand the repertoire well and perform the many affectations and embellishments with great beauty and exceptionally polished skill. For example, the polyphonic five-voice setting of Psalm 121, Laetatus sum (I was glad when they said unto me) is highly virtuosic and contrasts nicely with the six-voice, more declamatory Laetantiae della Beata Vergine (Litany of the Blessed Virgin) in which Mary’s many virtues are presented as somewhat of a list, but so meditative that one never feels even a hint of monotony in the repetition. With beauty such as this, Volume II is keenly anticipated.

Dianne Wells

Handel – Saul
Purves; Davies; Crowe; Bevan; Appleby;
Hulett; Graham-Hall; Glyndebourne Chorus; Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; Ivor Bolton
Opus Arte OA 1216 D

Handel – Hercules
DiDonato; Shimell; Bohlin; Spence; Ernman;
Kirkbride; Les Arts Florissants; William Christie
BelAir Classics BAC213

▶ Until the 1960s the operas of Handel and his contemporaries, including Giulio Cesare, were generally viewed as unstageable. There was, however, a remarkable breakthrough with the production by the New York City Opera in 1966. It was a production that would not pass today’s standards of authenticity. Most seriously, the part of Caesar was transposed an octave down and given to a baritone. But the production, which I saw and remember well, certainly put the opera on the map. Other productions followed as did recordings. I, myself, am very fond of the recording conducted by René Jacobs with Jennifer Larmore and Barbara Schlick.

Operagoers of a certain age will remember the time when the main function of a director seems to have been to make sure that the members of the chorus did not get in the way of the soloists. The role of the director is now taken more seriously. In many ways that is a good thing as it has led to thoughtfully conceived work (I am thinking of the COC’s recent La Traviata and of Joel Ivany’s revised Carmen). On the other hand, the now important role of the director may lead to productions which are self-indulgent and self-promoting. I fear that has been the case with the Giulio Cesare under review. It was first staged at the Salzburg Whitsun Festival in 2012. It accents heavily the contemporary relevance: when the overture is played, there is a battle taking place on the stage (the booklet that comes with the DVD makes clear that this is meant to evoke the American invasion of Iraq). The treacherous Ptolemy, Cleopatra’s brother and consort, is likened to the late Colonel Gaddafi. On the other hand, there is also a contemporary reference of a very different kind: Cleopatra’s wig, when she visits Caesar in his camp, is clearly meant to invoke Elizabeth Taylor when she played the role. Elsewhere Cleopatra enters in combat uniform with a Tina Turner wig. Much of the singing is excellent. I particularly liked Anne Sofie von Otter as Pompey’s widow Cornelia and Philippe Jaroussky as his son Sesto. It is too bad that the directorial quirks overshadow the musical qualities of the performance.

Both Saul and Hercules are oratorios and were not meant to be staged. But the reasons for that are largely historical and, in the case of sacred subjects, ideological. Many of them are suitable for theatrical realization as a number of recent productions have shown. This Saul, which has the superb Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, concentrates on madness. It was first performed at Glyndebourne in 2015. The production shows how madness is a destructive force, towards others but also towards the self. In the second part Saul goes to consult the Witch of Endor and asks her to conjure up the ghost of Samuel. Samuel is sung by Saul himself: this convincingly suggests that we are dealing here with an inner debate. Of the singers, I was especially impressed by the counterenon Lestyn Davies, who sings David. Christopher Purves (Saul and Samuel), Lucy Crowe (Merab), Sophie Bevan (Michal) and Paul Appleby (Jonathan) are also very good.

Hercules is a triumph, both because of the subtle conducting by William Christie and because of the imaginative staging by the late Luc Bondy. It is based on a staging at the Aix-en-Provence Festival and the Opéra National de Paris shortly afterwards. Les Arts Florissants is the excellent orchestra. A distinguishing aspect of the staging is the
In the DVD of Leonardo Vinci’s Artaserse (Erato 2564632323), countertenor Franco Fagioli’s extraordinary vocal pyrotechnics as Arbace stole the show from his better-known colleague, Philippe Jaroussky, in the title role. J.A. Hasse’s setting of the same libretto by Pietro Metastasio premiered exactly one week after the debut of Vinci’s version, in February 1730. Metastasio’s highly effective libretto was subsequently used by many other composers, including Gluck, Cimarosa and Paisiello.

Arbace’s father, Artabano, has annihilated Persia’s king Serse (Xerxes). Arbace is accused of the murder, creating painful rifts within each pair of lovers: Arbace and Serse’s daughter Mandane, and Semira, Arbace’s sister, and Artaserse, Serse’s son. Artabano plots to murder Artaserse, the new king, but his villainy is exposed, the lovers are reunited and all ends happily.

In this 2-DVD set from the 2012 Valle d’Itria festival, Fagioli again thrills as Arbace, with breathtaking coloratura runs. Also excelling in vocal expressiveness and agility are mezzo-soprano Sonia Prina (Artabano) and rich-voiced contralto Rosa Bove (Semira). Hasse’s emotion-laden ABA arias are augmented by a virtuoso aria from Vivaldi’s Motetzeuma, added to give Prina as Artaban an extra showpiece. There’s no resemblance to ancient Persia; the male characters wear gaudily bejewelled modern military uniforms. One annoyance: endlessly repeated cutaway views of Corrado Rovaris conducting from the harpsichord.

Hasse’s Artaserse will please lovers of Baroque opera, superb singing and, especially, the growing contingent of fans of the amazing Franco Fagioli.

Michael Schulman

Beethoven – Missa Solemnis
Arnold Schoenberg Choir; Concentus Musicus Wien; Nikolaus Harnoncourt
Sony Classical 88985313592

► The passing of Austrian conductor Nikolaus Harnoncourt earlier this year has left a tremendous void in the music world. An aristocrat, not only by birth (he was a direct descendant of the Habsburgs), but in his mind and soul, he was not only an original musical mind, a scholar and a great conductor, but a teacher and inspiration to the young. He had the uncanny ability to treat any piece of music like he had never heard it before, breathe new life into it and make his players and audiences feel enthusiastic and rejuvenated. Rehearsing Beethoven, which I saw him do, he became a giant and literally roared like a lion at some of the great outbursts, but he also had a wonderful sense of humour that made his young orchestra chuckle with laughter.

He himself had problems with Missa Solemnis and came late to conducting this disputed masterpiece: “a religious work that combines war and redemption, horror and hope – a bizarre enough combination in the extremes to which Beethoven takes it” (Robert Levine). There haven’t been many recordings and very few successful ones. Most recently (2012) Harnoncourt conducted it at the Concertgebouw with modern instruments and a superb quartet of soloists (including our wonderful Gerald Finley), but here he is rejoined with Concentus Musicus Wien, a period instrument group he founded, for what he intended to be his last recording. Never happy with earlier accomplishments, this version is full of question marks, looking for new answers, new sonorities and it’s just another example of what he was all his life, constantly searching and never wanting to give up. So the quest continues...

Janos Gardonyi

Brahms; Bruckner – Motets
Tenebrae; Nigel Short
Signum Classics SIGCD430 (signumrecords.com)

► Anton Bruckner and Johannes Brahms were very different in their Weltanschauung. Bruckner was a devout Roman Catholic; Brahms could be described as an agnostic. Their musical language too is very different but they clearly have one thing in common. They were both committed to the revival of religious music and both of them looked back to earlier traditions from Gregorian chant to J.S. Bach by way of Renaissance and early Baroque composers like Isaac and Schütz.

Tenebrae is an English chamber choir founded in 2001 by Nigel Short and the late Barbara Pollock. Short is now the choir’s conductor: he was previously a member of the King’s Singers. The sound worlds of Brahms and Bruckner contrast in interesting ways and the two composers complement each other very well. The two halves are fairly evenly divided: there are eight motets by Bruckner here, mainly unaccompanied. The works by Brahms are more varied and many are given with organ accompaniment. They include the movement How lovely are thy dwellings from his German Requiem. I was initially surprised to find that it was sung in English but when I read that this was the translation in which the work was sung in London in 1873, I could see how the translation emphasizes the centrality of Brahms to 19th-century English musical life. The performances are bookended by two Aequale for three trombones by Bruckner, beautifully played.

The choir’s discography suggests that much of its attention is given to contemporary music. But they have also recorded music by Berlioz and Faure. This beautiful record confirms that they are equally at home with 19th-century repertoire.

Hans de Groot

Walter Braunfels – Lieder/Songs
Marlis Petersen; Konrad Jarnot; Eric Schneider
Capriccio C5251

► Walter Braunfels was a highly esteemed composer of operas between the two world wars and was later renowned for his religious choral music. Yet owing to his ancestry (his grandfather had been born Jewish) Braunfels ultimately had the misfortune of having his professional career terminated and his music marked as “degenerate” by the Nazis. Adding insult to injury, his late Romantic style fell into disfavour after World War II, a time when modernism was gaining a much stronger foothold.

Hence, this disc of his complete lieder featuring baritone Konrad Jarnot and...
mezzo-soprano Marlis Petersen with pianist Eric Schneider on the Capriccio label is a worthy means of righting past injustices. Braunfels had little interest in solo vocal music during his later years, so the works on this recording are all from the early part of his career, spanning a 30-year period from 1902 onwards.

Staring off with the set of Sechs Gesänge Op.1, Jarnot offers a compelling and sensitive performance of these dark and brooding miniatures. Indeed, the term “miniature” seems to apply to most of the songs on this CD; only one reaches the four-minute mark while several are under a minute in length. Despite their brevity, these works are a wonderful study in contrasts. Petersen’s lyrical performance of the two versions of the Federspiel suites, each song a musical depiction of a bird, from the common nightingale to the more exotic wagtail – is all lightness and charm. Not surprisingly, certain songs exhibit influences of other composers, most noticeably Richard Strauss in the lushly romantic Herbstgefühl – and that is a bit of Brahms in Abbitte from the Lieder Op.4.

Throughout the disc, Schneider handles the elegant piano writing with much finesse. While this CD may not feature the best of Braunfels’ music nor be the most ideal introduction, it does provide a degree of exposure to a composer whose music most decidedly warrants greater recognition.

Richard Haskell

Stephen Chatman; Tara Wohlberg – Choir Practice
University of British Columbia Opera Ensemble; Nancy Hermiston; UBCSO; Jonathan Girard
Centrediscs CMCCD 22616 (musiccentre.ca)

Anyone involved in community choirs will appreciate this lighthearted parody of the personalities we both encounter and display during rehearsals; from establishing a pecking order amongst ourselves to our complicated relationships with music directors, for better or worse. Stephen Chatman, well familiar with the milieu, and his writing partner Tara Wohlberg exaggerate the dynamic hysterically in this one-act opera, premiered and recorded at the University of British Columbia.

Under the direction of faculty members Nancy Hermiston and Jonathan Girard, the opera ensemble and instrumentalists clearly enjoy quite a lark with the performance, producing dissonant chaos, artless arpeggios and pursuing their own agendas with opinions on repertoire, with a liberal sprinkling of famous musical snippets from favourite pieces that serve as insider jokes for the audience as they recognize quotes from Mozart, Wagner and Philip Glass. Sexual innuendo and double entendre abound as well, in ridiculous manifestations with appearances from characters such as the clown, the diva, the belly dancer and the stammerer. Of course, eventually, out of the cacophony and bad behaviour, conductor “Willy Stroker” patiently coaxes out a harmonious and unified performance with the help of one of his more “visionary” choristers. Simple, unabashed fun and slapstick entertainment.

Dianne Wells

Carlisle Floyd – Wuthering Heights, An Opera in Three Acts
Jarman; Markgraf; Mentzer; Rideout; Buck; Shelton; Florentine Opera Company; Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra; Joseph Machavich
Reference Recordings FR-721SACD (referencerecordings.com)

► In 1955, soprano Phyllis Curtin was the first Susannah in what would become Carlisle Floyd’s most performed opera. Floyd then composed an aria for Curtin’s New York recital, setting words of Cathy Earnshaw from Emily Brontë’s classic novel. The fervent aria, I’ve dreamt in my life, inspired the Santa Fe Opera to commission this full-length work, the aria appearing in the second of the opera’s three acts. In 1958, Curtin created the role of Cathy in Santa Fe and New York, yet this two-CD set is the opera’s first commercial release, recorded in concert in January 2015, with Floyd, in his 89th year, acting as artistic advisor.

Wuthering Heights surely merits many more productions than it’s received in the past, with listener-friendly melodies leading to rhapsodic or powerful cinematic-style climaxes, supporting intensely dramatic characters and confrontations. Floyd’s self-written libretto omits the novel’s many chapters about Heathcliff’s childhood and later life, the opera ending with Heathcliff’s lament over Cathy’s death. Among the cast, only the bronze baritone of Kelly Markgraf as Heathcliff stands out, though to be fair, the poorly balanced “hybrid surround-sound” reduces the clarity and presence of all the voices, the orchestra often submerging the distant-sounding singers. The accompanying libretto is therefore essential for following the action. Nevertheless, this premiere recording should help realize Floyd’s hope, expressed in his booklet notes, that it “will result in new audiences here and abroad.”

Michael Schulman

Zachary Wadsworth – The Far West
Lawrence Wiliford; Luminous Voices; Timothy Shantz
Bridge Records 9466 (bridgerecords.com)

The Far West opens with music evocative of Macmillan and Brickendens’s Celtic Mass for the Sea; in fact, not since that album have I heard a choral work that captures its subject with such well-curated and gut-punching text. This Choral Canada winner is an homage to victims of AIDS, and it’s both achingly beautiful and horrifyingly vivid in its imagery as it paints portraits of Tim Dlugos, its post-humous librettist, and stricken friends.

Dlugos’ divinity training interweaves references from Bergman to AZT, so textual allusions to liturgical music and the Divine Office still match the different musical styles, such as the funerally resolved first movement, October, the expansive choral chords of Note to Michael, and the baroque-ish Heaven, latterly with lyrics from the Renaissance by George Herbert. Several times, the work evokes English staples, such as Parry’s I Was Glad or Fenton’s Veni Sancte Spiritus, and made me want to run back to my days of church choir with Tom Fitches.

Themes of reconciliation, despair and resignation are conveyed alongside word play with homophones and synecdoche. The first two tracks, settings of poetry by Paul Laurence Dunbar and Christina Rossetti, are complementary introductions to the cantata. If this review is more about the texts than the music, it’s because the poetry absolutely slays the listener but, while the words are the stars in this piece, Zachary Wadsworth has composed a votide in The Far West, and Lawrence Wiliford and Luminous Voices shimmer throughout.

Vanessa Wells

Beethoven – Symphonies 1-9
Berliner Philharmoniker; Sir Simon Rattle
Berlin Philharmoniker Recordings BPHR 160091

► When setting out to listen to these new performances from Berlin one would reasonably expect to hear, yet again, the familiar, well-known sonorities of the Philharmonic in this basic repertoire. After all, with five complete cycles available with this orchestra directed by Herbert von Karajan and versions by Claudio Abbado and André Cluytens, we may be pretty sure what, with some interpretive differences, the timbre
Mahler’s final work, composed in the summer of 1910, survived in a complete though sometimes skeletal short score form before his death at the age of 50. A facsimile of the sketches was eventually published in 1924. Several efforts have been made to reconstruct the work, the most well-regarded being the three editions issued by Deryck Cooke from 1960 to 1976 (this last in use here). Questions of authenticity aside, the symphony remains a deeply moving, intensely personal and profound last testament.

Thomas Dausgaard, principal guest conductor of the re-invigorated Seattle Symphony, has a special affinity for this work, which he has performed frequently around the world. His interpretation is among the finest I have ever heard and the gorgeous sound he draws from the Seattle forces is outstanding. Their expanded string section in particular has never sounded better. The engineering of the live performance from November 2015 is peerless, surpassing that of the acclaimed 1999 Rattle/Berlin DG pressing. Wildly recommended.

Daniel Foley

Future Concert Note: Dausgaard will perform Mahler’s 10th Symphony with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra on April 6 and 7, 2017.

Ravel – L’enfant et les sortilèges

Shéhérazade

Isabel Leonard; Susan Graham; Saito Kinen Orchestra; Seiji Ozawa

Decca 478 6760

► This new Decca release marks Seiji Ozawa’s 80th birthday and gives a nod to the particularly fruitful career of a conductor with a lifelong rapport with Ravel’s music. The pairing of a lyric fantasy, a triptych for mezzo-soprano and orchestra and an orchestrated movement from a solo piano suite creates an impressionistic jewel of tonal patterns and colours, oriental elements and imaginative stories.

Colette’s libretto for L’enfant et les sortilèges is whimsically charming and particularly suited to Ravel’s music. It tells the story of a young boy whose misbehaviour brings objects and talking animals to life. The opera is full of interesting characters – the armchair, the clock, the teapot, the Chinese cup and a whole array of animals (cats, frogs, squirrels and dragonflies). Ravel underscores the fantastic elements with indisputably beautiful orchestration. Mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard’s portrayal of the mischievous child is light and playful and, even more notably, the whole cast is outstanding.

Ravel’s affinity for the oriental world is evident in Shéhérazade, a trio of vocal works set to expressively romantic poems by his friend and fellow member of the avant-garde artist group Les Apaches, Tristan Klingsor. The music is dreamy, sensuous, in full rapport with the text. Mezzo-soprano Susan Graham is powerful yet full of emotional nuances.

Alborada del graciando, showcasing Saito Kinen Orchestra’s engaging interpretation of Ravel’s world, completes this highly recommended recording.

Ivana Popovic

Passion For Brass: Brassroots at 30

Brassroots; Bram Gregson

Independent CB-B-07 (brassroots.ca)

► Although they are little known outside of their home community of London, Ontario, Brassroots is one of the finest brass ensembles in Canada. With this recording they are celebrating their 30th anniversary. In 1986 when the famous Philip Jones Brass Ensemble disbanded, Karl Hermann, a trombone student at the Western University, organized a brass ensemble with the same instrumentation of four trumpets, one horn, four trombones, one tuba and percussion. Over the years there have been changes in personnel, but the only significant change has been an enlargement of the percussion to enable performance of a more expansive repertoire. Under the direction of veteran conductor Bram Gregson, Brassroots can certainly be proud of this 30-year celebration recording.

The CD opens with the Music for His Majesty’s Sackbuts and Cornets by Matthew Locke (1621–1677), arranged for modern instruments. This is a stunning performance in its precision. It’s followed by works by Venetian composer Giovanni Gabrieli and Tylman Susato, a composer from Antwerp in the same period. Then, the recording moves on to Point Pelee by Howard Cable. One minute you are hearing Baroque and Renaissance music. Then you are ushered into contemporary music from Billy May, Harold Arlen and George Gershwin. For a conductor with a lifelong rapport with Ravel’s music.}

Jack MacQuarrie

Scriabin – Symphonies 1&2

London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus; Valery Gergiev

LSO LSO0770

► Those who love to classify composers into neat categories will certainly have a stumbling block with Scriabin. He is Russian, but doesn’t sound a bit Russian...
Camp and the whole orchestra gives an exciting and heartfelt reading of the Battle of Actium. Suite No. 2 opens with Night in the Palace of the Queen’s evocative solo English horn, followed by the irregularly metered Orgy and Dances and the eerie, reverberant Tomb of Cleopatra, all played atmospherically and with technical assurance.

The earlier Study for “The Haunted Palace” (1904) dates from Schmitt’s time at the Villa Medici, after winning the Prix de Rome. It is inspired by Edgar Allan Poe’s poem as translated by Stéphane Mallarmé. Travellers through a valley see Spirits moving and hear Echoes singing in the enchanted building. The language of this work is late romantic; conductor Falletta draws a rich sound and expressive style from the Buffalo Philharmonic strings.

Roger Knox

Leonard Bernstein – Larger than Life (A Film by Georg Wülbolt) Cmajor 735908

- The beauty of Wülbolt’s documentary is the decision not to show Leonard Bernstein’s life in chronological order but rather in random, visually pleasing segments which drive the storyline, regardless how much one knows about his life.

- Footage of Bernstein conducting illustrates that he put everything – mind, body, listening and soul – into his work. The swaying, jumping and arm swinging are not affectations but the means to achieve a great orchestral performance. It wasn’t always easy for him, as seen in a clip of orchestra members chatting during his verbal direction of his beloved Mahler. Composing was a great love. Bernstein loved to work with the musical teams, as shown by driving footage from the timeless West Side Story and comments by Stephen Sondheim. Bernstein is seen leading conducting classes with enthralled participants while fun clips from his television show Omnibus and Young People’s concerts convey his passion for youth, storytelling, conducting and piano performance.

- Interspersed is footage from Bernstein interviews. Illuminating comments feature his children, Jamie, Nina and Alexander, and professionals such as Sondheim, Kent Nagano, Marin Alsop and Gustavo Dudamel, who are positioned in front of eye-catching Bernstein photographic stills from private and professional settings. In dramatic visual contrast, a bonus section has Nagano, Alsop and Dudamel speaking minus the backdrop.

- This film’s uncanny strength lies in its ability to create a personal viewing experience; one may feel that Leonard Bernstein is speaking and performing only to you.

Tiina Kilk

Leo Zeiltin – Yiddish Songs, Chamber Music and Declarations

Rachel Calloway; Guenko Guechev; Daniella Rabbani; Pittsburgh Jewish Music Festival Toccata Classics TOCC 0294 (toccataclassics.com)

Joachim Stutschewsky – Chamber Music Pittsburgh Jewish Music Festival Toccata Classics TOCC 0314 (toccataclassics.com)

- The Pittsburgh Jewish Music Festival (PJMF), in conjunction with Toccata Classics (an independent British label dedicated to producing recordings of first-rate yet overlooked classical music), has undertaken an ambitious and honourable project: releasing a series of CDs focussing on the largely forgotten and neglected music of members and composers affiliated with the St. Petersburg Society for Jewish Folk Music. As PJMF founder and director (and the CDs’ producer), cellist Aron Zelkowicz, explains in a delightful radio interview he gave this past July on WQED’s Voice of the Arts – and as noted in the meticulously researched booklet accompanying each volume – the Society, which operated between 1908 and 1918, sought to elevate the music of the shetel – klezmer, liturgical, cantorial, religious songs in Yiddish and Hebrew – to the highest level of Jewish art music, by creating scores, hosting symposia, lectures and concerts, and most critically, publishing the works (about 80) of its affiliates.

Russian Jewish Classics, Volumes One and Two, are the PJMF’s first two commercial albums, and Zelkowicz promises a total of “at least” five in the series, to be released gradually over the next few years. Each album features the music of a single composer. Volume One offers a rich variety of works by Leo Zeiltin (1884-1930), a violinist, violist, conductor, arranger, impresario and teacher, who studied with Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov. Volume Two explores the compelling chamber music of musicologist, arranger, pedagogue and cellist, Joachim Stutschewsky (1891-1982). The exhaustive notes in the aforementioned booklets provide a comprehensive biography of each composer.

With the limited space available, it’s not possible to do justice to the impressive breadth and depth of the music presented on each CD. Clearly, though, Zelkowicz’s

Fenton Schmitt – Antoine et Cléopâtre; Le Palais hanté Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra; JoAnn Falletta Naxos 8.573521

- This remarkable disc suggests that Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra concerts under outstanding conductor JoAnn Falletta are well worth the trip for Toronto area music lovers! The two three-movement concert suites of Fenton Schmitt’s Antoine and Cléopâtre (1920) began as music for ballet interludes in a new Paris Opera production of the Shakespeare play. The Alsatian-born composer created an effective fin-de-siècle amalgam from his French and German influences; he was not simply being eclectic. The opening movement of Suite No. 1 is an exotic foreshadowing of the tragedy to come, with delicate, intriguing timbres, a sultry oboe solo beautifully played and thick low- and mid-range scoring.

As for succeeding numbers, the Buffalo Philharmonic’s brass shine in At Pompey’s September 1, 2016 – October 7, 2016

Jewish Music Festival!
assemblage of accomplished musicians (all members of esteemed orchestras and university music departments, who performed the music both live at the PJMF and in the studio recordings), executes this haunting, evocative, melodic, joyous, plaintive, gorgeous and freilach music with tremendous passion and intelligence. From Guenko Guechev and Daniella Rabbant’s dramatic recitations in Zeitlin’s unique “declarations” – affecting piano music underscoring spoken Yiddish and Russian poetry (once a popular genre) – and mezzo Rachel Calloway’s glorious interpretations of several of his Yiddish songs in various arrangements, to the masterful performances, by the musicians of the PJMF, of the rhapsodic and sophisticated chamber works of Stuttschewsky, these CDs represent a wealth of material that demands renewed exploration and attention, attention it once commanded, briefly, in a bygone age.

I look forward to the rest of the series, and say “Bravo” and “Mazel Tov” to Zelkowicz, the PJMF and Toccata Classics.

Sharna Searle

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

Shostakovich – Under Stalin’s Shadow: Symphonies 5; 8; 9
Boston Symphony Orchestra; Andris Nelsons
Deutsche Grammophon 479 5201

At various times during his illustrious career, Dimitri Shostakovich was roundly criticised for being either too close or too far from the Communist cause. However, when he died in 1975 there were very few who could deny that he was the last of the great composers whose qualities were acknowledged throughout the Western world in both the modernist and traditionalist camps. Indeed Shostakovich was celebrated as the finest composer of the 20th century. Even those who did not rate him quite so highly would agree that he was one of modern music’s most fascinating characters. The idealistic Shostakovich spent his entire life under the Soviet system and believed that it was his responsibility to serve the state as an artist, and he settled down to composing “realist” music, albeit with a progressive edge.

Any performance of Shostakovich has to contend with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra’s iconic concerts, under the baton of Yevgeny Mravinsky, legendary for his incisive presentations bereft of sentimentality and strain. However Andris Nelsons’ Symphonies Nos.5, 8 & 9 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra have a sublime technical polish. In the case of Symphony No.5, there is no doubting the sincerity of the performance or the dignity with which the desolate vision is communicated. The Scherzo will forever be remembered for its glorious flow. Nelsons’ Symphony No.8 occupies the middle ground between the impassioned extremity of many Russian recordings and the sleek angst-free tones of many Western interpretations. His version is decidedly more intense, anguished and powerfully dramatic. The writing of Symphony No.9 has decidedly less of the daring precocity of Shostakovich’s First or the anguished bitterness of his 15th Symphony. Nelsons’ Ninth has all the characteristics that the master intended it to have including the marvellous tutti, finely honed themes and an almost celestial transparency and lightness. The Suite from Hamlet is a master-piece of rage and madness. Dramatized by Shostakovich in a daring musical exegesis of Shakespeare’s best-known tragedy, it caps a most enduring performance of Shostakovich by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Nelsons.

Raul da Gama

Concert Note: Andris Nelsons conducts the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Berlioz’s Symphonie Fantastique and Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No.2 with soloist Emanuel Ax on March 5 at Roy Thomson Hall.

Shostakovich – Piano Trios 1 & 2; Viola Sonata
Ashkenazy; Viontay; Lidstrom; Meinich
Decca 478 9382

The three chamber music works featured on this recording were written during three distinct stages in Shostakovich’s life (1923, 1943, 1975). showing the development of what was to become his unmistakably unique musical expression. Shostakovich wrote Piano Trio No.1 at the tender age of 17 and dedicated it to the girl he was in love with. Already in place are the typical Shostakovich elements that became more pronounced in the Piano Trio No.2 – singing melodies, textural use of string pizzicatos, percussive piano, chromatic scales and a hint of the grotesque. The second trio was dedicated to Ivan Ivanovich Sollertinsky, Shostakovich’s greatest friend who had died suddenly shortly before. The opening theme is ethereal, muted and lonesome. Nestled in between two lively, swaying and occasionally dense movements is Largo – a sorrowful ode, a yearning lament in the face of inevitability.

The Viola Sonata was written in the last few weeks of Shostakovich’s life. It is quite different from his previous works – sparse, with subdued yet powerful colours, 12-tone scales and musical quotations, most notably from Beethoven and Shostakovich himself, sombre throughout.

The intensity of Shostakovich’s music is matched by the captivatingly intense performances of these extraordinary musicians – Vladimir Ashkenazy (piano), Zsolt-Tihomér Visontay (violin), Mats Lidström (cello) and Ada Meinich (viola). Here we hear it all – the pain, turmoil, despondency, sorrow, playfulness, raggedness, tenderness and radiance. These musicians bring out every colour, every nuance, every motif with astounding conviction and utmost respect for the great composer.

Ivana Popovic

The Galilean Moons
Robert Dick; Ursel Schlicht
Nemu Records NEMU 017 (robertdick.net)

American extended flute master Robert Dick is renowned among contemporary flutists for his five-decade-long contribution to radically expanding the concert flute’s sounds, performance practice and repertoire. His work serves as a cornerstone of the flute avant-garde.

First published in 1975, his definitive reference work for flutists and composers The Other Flute: A Performance Manual of Contemporary Techniques remains in print and in demand. His contribution to flute hardware, the Glissando Headjoint®, was inspired by the electric guitar whammy bar. This telescopic flute mouthpiece designed by Dick allows downward glissandi from every note enabling the production of voice-like phrases and otherworldly sounds not heard before emanating from the flute.

Dick makes use of many of the extended flute techniques he’s catalogued, as well as his pitchbending headjoint, to evoke four contrasting extraterrestrial soundscapes in the album’s centrepiece The Galilean Moons. The four-movement suite co-composed by Dick and pianist Ursel Schlcht evokes, at times viscerally, the distinct physical environments found on each of Jupiter’s four moons.

The five other works on this album assay a tremendously wide sonic and emotional vocabulary ranging from Dark Matter, in which Dick recites texts used by Internet spammers through the unusual contrabass flute, to Dick’s multi-movement work Life Concert. The latter explores European atonality, in places haunted by the ghost of the blues, but also enriched by explicit references to African and Indian music. The piano’s strings emulate the sound of the kalimba at one point, while the primary theme of the final movement echoes aspects of the Hindustani raga Multani.

Expect a surprising and ear-opening journey from this veteran intergalactic flute traveler.

Andrew Timar
De souffles et de machines
Quasar quatuor de saxophones
Quatuor Bozzini CQB 1618 (actuellecd.com)

The first striking thing about this new record from Quasar, Canada’s premier saxophone quartet, is its minimalist packaging. The sleeve and booklet are black and white. The notes probably fill one letter-size page all-told, and they read like a pastiche of found text. Montreal-born composer Pierre Alexandre Tremblay presents an Aloysius Bertrand-inspired poem in lieu of notes; Wolf Edwards offers a wikipedia-esque blurb about predator drones. But for music that means to speak beyond the bounds of words, there can be no better introduction. Like a rare, hand-painted cassette hiding at the bottom of a bin otherwise filled with greatest-hits compilations and obsolete business audio books, these electroacoustic soundscapes wait patiently to be heard.

That spirit pervades every work on this disc, but none more so than Tremblay’s Les pâleurs de la lune. Here, electronic clicks flutter against a nocturnal saxophone backdrop. This electronic scaffolding, which also takes the form of saxophone long tones distilled into pulsewaves, is omnipresent but unobtrusive. Like circuit traces on a motherboard, these elements lay flush against Les pâleurs, where they serve a mysterious yet important function.

Listening to De souffles et de machines feels like being the only person awake on an overnight bus winding its way through a dark forest: it’s as though the night, unaware of your presence, has let its hair down. Only here, as the saxophone squalls mount, the night seems perilously close, at times, to rearing its head.

Editor’s Note: Tremblay’s Les pâleurs de la lune was awarded the 2015 Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music, presented during a Quasar concert at Toronto’s Music Gallery last March hosted by New Music Concerts.

Israfel – Music for flute and electronics Paolo Bortolussi; Keith Hamel; John Oliver Redshift Records TK443 (redshiftmusic.org)

Israfel is Canadian flutist Paolo Bortolussi’s first solo recording, and it shows. That’s not because it’s bad, however, rather it shows because Bortolussi’s enthusiasm over the freedom offered by a solo recording seems to border on giddiness. Here he has packed everything in: Israfel is simultaneously an homage to the teachers who introduced him to his passion for electroacoustic music, a catalogue of the pieces he played on the way to becoming a virtuosic electroacoustic performer and a miniature history of interactive electronic music technique.

The narrative of Bortolussi’s development as a musician presented here is certainly resonant: Bortolussi first heard Larry Lake’s Israfel while standing outside his professor’s studio before a lesson with his ear to the door. Somehow, Israfel just sounds like one of those pieces which leaves a young musician in awe of his or her teacher: the pyrotechnical virtuosity, the novelty of the tape accompaniment.

But ultimately the most compelling aspect of this disc is the way it showcases the various degrees of interactivity between a performer and electronic accompaniment. At one end of the spectrum is the aforementioned Israfel, with its unflinching pre-recorded tape accompaniment. Then there’s Kaia Saarilaho’s NoaNoa, with its pedal-activated electronics. On the bleeding edge is Keith Hamel’s Krishna’s Flute; here, the computer actually listens to what the performer is doing and responds with electronic events. Throughout, it’s Bortolussi’s consummate virtuosity which allows the listener to trace the nuances of these various techniques.

Linda Catlin Smith – Dirt Road
Mira Benjamin; Simon Limbrick
Another Timbre at97 (anothertimbre.com)

Bryn Harrison – Receiving the Approaching Memory
Aisha Orazbayeva; Mark Knoop
Another Timbre at96

Illogical Harmonies – Volume
Johnny Chang; Mike Majkowski
Another Timbre at98

ffansion/fancies
Angharad Davies; Tisha Mukarji
Another Timbre at99

When it comes to modern music, there is an audience that often wonders: “Where’s the melody?” A lazy ear often fails to discern it but it is there. Chances are that the audience was looking elsewhere. Today’s composer also holds the three traditional principal constituents of music together in his or her unique style, which, if one listened with an open ear, would reveal a world of wonderfully coherent sound. Linda Catlin Smith’s celebrated new release, Dirt Road, is one such piece of music in which melody, harmony and the rhythm of the earth, together with passion and precision, coalesce and balance ideally.

What magic and mystery she achieves in a work full of knowledges, warmth and beauty, violinist Mira Benjamin and percussionist Simon Limbrick always seem to find a direct and unimpeded path to this musical truth and eloquence. You will not hear a more fervent and inspired interpretation of this suite of 15 miniatures, played with mastery of ever-changing colour, light and shade. Every nuanced aural entity is given time to breathe and speak, to weep, sing and sigh just as Smith envisioned in her work. Immaculate virtuosity is always pressed into service, but never at the expense of emotion and passion. The endlessly mercurial and fascinating pieces reveal the composer’s patrician eloquence and refinement. And you never have to strain to hear the melody; Smith doesn’t even try to hide it under a bushel along this proverbial road less travelled.

The purity of sound with which this performance has been captured has been repeated in all four Another Timbre recordings. But more than anything else it is the beguiling melodies and other sonic surprises that inform these releases from this iconic new British label that specialises in modern music. The four recordings in question are Illogical Harmonies’ Volume with Johnny Chang (violin) and Mike Majkowski (double bass), Receiving the Approaching Memory by Bryn Harrison featuring Aisha Orazbayeva (violin) and Mark Knoop (piano) and ffansion/fancies performed by Angharad Davies (violin) and Tisha Mukarji (piano). One cannot go wrong with any of these releases.

Raul da Gama

Aldo Clementi – Momento
Quatuor Bozzini
Quatuor Bozzini CQB 1615 (actuellecd.com)

Italian composer Aldo Clementi (1925-2011) created using rigorous methods. Most of his works include canon (strict imitation) in a number of different ways. Clementi’s music is reserved and enigmatic in style, suggesting musical structure without being obvious.

One entrance to this difficult work is unaccompanied Renaissance choral music. Otto framenti’s (1978-97) is based on the 15th-century French folk song, L’homme armé, the cantus firmus (structural voice) of many Renaissance masses and motets. Each fragment in the work uses a section of L’homme armé. The string quartet members play without vibrato suggesting the sound of viols. I find the effect mystical; even more so is Momento (2005), which draws me into
George Sakakeeny, bassoon; various Oberlin ensembles
Oberlin Music OC 15-05 (oberlin.edu/oberlinmusic)

George Sakakeeny is a professor of bassoon at the Oberlin Conservatory and a virtuoso soloist with significant works commissioned for him, including the Larsen and Schickele pieces on this disc. His tone is full and well-rounded, with excellent intonation and a secure upper register, and he receives able support from Oberlin ensembles conducted by Timothy Weiss and Raphael Jiménez. Of the disc’s four well-crafted pieces, all by established American composers, I found the Bassoon Concertino (2014) by Augusta Read Thomas (b.1964) especially clear and coherent in tonal language. It is based on three modernist paintings; the bridge) effects is striking. Champions of wisely chosen repertoire and incisively inventive excitement, the result of the confluence again today reveals a palpable collaboration and keen talent of Jane Bunnett.

Listening to it, I was quickly hooked up with the perfect ensemble to aid in my musical interpretations. For example, in Satz 2 (2001) their mastery of intricate non-vibrato and sul ponticello (near the bridge) effects is striking. Champions of new music performance at a high level, with an international reputation and their own Collection QB recording label, this is an ensemble well worth experiencing.

Roger Knox

Spirits of Havana: 25th Anniversary 2-Disc Edition
Jane Bunnett
Linus (linusentertainment.ca)

This 25th anniversary re-release consists of Spirits of Havana, Jane Bunnett’s landmark album – preceding by six years the first Buena Vista Social Club CD – the follow-up album Chamalongo, plus three previously unreleased tracks. The package is enriched by a 36-page booklet stocked with period photos, plus notes by musicologist Robert Palmer and Cuban music researcher Ned Sublette.

Toronto jazz flutist, saxophonist and band-leader Bunnett’s multifaceted exploration of jazz and Afro-Cuban music has earned her numerous accolades over her career. They include multiple Downbeat awards and five JUNO Awards, the Order of Canada and two GRAMMY Award nominations, among many other honours.

In Spirits of Havana, Bunnett brings her considerable jazz flute and soprano chops to the studio, joined by top Cuban musicians including pianists Hilario Duran, Frank Emililo Flynn and Gonzalo Rubalcaba. Infusing the proceedings with particular Afro-Cuban mojo is the late singer Mercedes Valdés (1922–1996) who was key in popularising Afro-Cuban music throughout Latin America. All the tracks are supported by a killer rhythm section, serving to drive each track inexorably onward. We hear jazz layered onto Afro-Cuban songs and rhythms along with traditional Cuban tunes like Vemaya. The album is anchored by a loose-limbed, densely percussion-driven, rendition of Thelonious Monk’s Epistrophe with strong soprano sax solos by Bunnett.

Chamalongo (1998) also features Bunnett, pianists Hilario Duran, Frank Emililo Flynn, Toronto trumpeter Larry Cramer, their rhythm section, in addition to the ten-member Cuban Folkloric All-Stars. The repertoire here features traditional Cuban songs, enhanced by two Bunnett compositions, Freedom at Last which is underpinned by advanced jazz harmonies, and Piccolo Dance which indeed showcases a sprightly solo by the composer framed by the Cuban Folkloric All-Stars male singers.

The release of Spirits of Havana in 1991 proved to be a significant musical event, introducing many listeners to the vigour and beauty of Afro-Cuban music and the keen talent of Jane Bunnett. Listening to it again today reveals a palpable collaborative excitement, the result of the confluence of wisely chosen repertoire and incisively brilliant performances from its Canadian and Cuban musicians. The spirit and music on these albums remain un-dulled by the passage of time.

Andrew Timar

Soweto Stomp
Malcolm Goldstein; The Ratchet Orchestra
Mode Records 291 (moderecords.com)

Longtime Montreal resident, violinist Malcolm Goldstein, 79, has since the early 1960s negotiated the fissure between improvisation and composition from the so-called classical side of music. Now that the rest of the world has caught up with him, this fine session demonstrates how his ideas can be amplified by his adopted city’s 15-piece Ratchet Orchestra. Like the field commander who leads by example, the violinist is as much part of the fray as his much younger associates. Track one for instance Configurations in Darkness is a matchless instance of his knotty, string-jumping solo skill that’s still sonorous enough to suggest a dulcet folksy air.

More indicative of the collaboration are tracks such as In Search of Tone Roads No.2, from 2013 which is a reimaging of a lost Charles Ives composition; and the title tune written in 1985 to celebrate both the Soweto uprising against Apartheid and Martin Luther King’s achievements. Formalist without being formalistic, the first is no more an Ives copy than a photo of a smiling woman is the Mona Lisa. Instead, the cantilever arrangement mixes brass smears, peeping reeds and trombone counterpoint so that the tune evolves with its own narrative, mostly via Guillaume Dostaler’s piano chording, while also suggesting earlier pastoral themes. Meanwhile Goldstein plus two additional violinists and one violist scratch out cunning string splays that provide a circumscribed framework for the performance as it builds to a polyphonic crescendo. Invested with kwela rhythms, Nicolas Caloia’s double bass bounced as well as a shuffle beat from percussionists Isaiah Ceccarelli and Ken Doolittle. Soweto Stomp recalls Maiden Voyage as much as Nelson Mandela, with five reedists bringing in jazz inflections to mix with near-hoedown fiddle lines that together leap to a triumphant peppy and peppy conclusion. Ahead of his time for many years, it appears Goldstein has hooked up with the perfect ensemble to aid in his musical interpretations.

Ken Waxman

Dialogue
Myra Melford; Ben Goldberg
Bag Productions BAG 010 (myramelford.com)

Chamber music-styled jazz that still manages to inject spunk into compositions

Roger Knox
otherwise replete with soft-hued detailing, pianist Myra Melford and clarinetist Ben Goldberg make the most of studied interactions on these 13 tracks, mostly composed by the pianist. Able to matter-of-factly scoot from rhythmic swing to ascetic improvisations with the uncomplicated aplomb of a trapeze team making their acrobatic feats seem commonplace, only in rare instances does the duo grandstand with extended techniques. The watchword here is nuance.

For instance, a track such as Be Melting Snow may appear to be all cool jazz impressionism due to its meandering exposition, but pulsating key pumps and contralto glissandi help the snow melt with fiery improvising, exposing a tougher theme and players as in sync as they are syncopated. Sweetened Artie Shaw-like tonal clarinet variations help 9.5 open up into sprightly swing, although Goldberg’s pinched peeps and Melford’s high-energy pianism later confirm its modernity.

Throughout, the conjoined twins-like bonding is displayed from the full spectrum of piano and clarinet tones. The connection can take place during picturesque tunes that are shaped from piano notes so low that they’re almost subterranean and chameleonic reed sighs to propel the pieces forward. Or, as on City of Illusion and others, dynamic keyboard cascades and probing squeals recall the heyday – but none of the sloppiness – of 1970s’ energy music. While almost initially pushed into the next room by rugged hunt-and-peck key playing on The Kitchen, for example, the clarinetist’s speech-inflected ostinato slowly inflates to flutter tonguing, so that by the climax, Melford’s crimped high-frequency runs become free enough to also interpolate sly boogie-woogie riffs.

This same skill allows them to delineate with almost pictorial skill the desolate and lovely emotions captured on a Moonless Night.

Working in lockstep, the two still manage to positively define individual musical personalities. And that’s what makes this a dialogue of equals and a significant showcase for two of improvised music’s most prodigious talents.

Ken Waxman

Concert Note: Myra Melford will be part of a double bill with Amina Claudine Myers in concert at the Co-operators Hall, River Run Centre in Guelph on September 17.

This I Know

June Garber; George Koller; Mark Kieswetter

Independent JG 180614 (junegarber.com)

With the release of This I Know, elegant and engaging chanteuse, June Garber has gifted us with a cornucopia of rich, emotionally fecund, rarely trodden compositions as well as assembling a stellar cast of collaborators, including producer/arrangers George Koller on bass and Mark Kieswetter keyboards, as well as shining standouts Ted Quinlan on guitar, Alison Young on sax and Guido Basso on flugelhorn and trumpet. South African-bred Garber wears a couple of hats here – not only as a sublime vocalist communicator, but also as a composer and arranger. This fine project marks the return of Garber following a personal tragedy, and she has deftly transmuted her own challenging journey into a profound musical statement of loss, survival, healing and the power of love.

Garber is a skilled and versatile vocalist/entertainer, and although she approaches her work with a classic sensibility, she is also fearless in her embracing of contemporary material – including a take on Adele’s Rumour Has It and two well-crafted original tunes, the South African inspired Underneath the Jacaranda Tree and the heart-trending Unbroken.

A true stunner is Live for Life, Francis Lai’s memorable theme from A Man and a Woman. Garber glides on a simple melodic line here, and effortlessly imbues it with a heady remoulade of romance and magic.

Trumpeter Bruce Cassidy’s sumptuous arrangement of Adam Salim’s Malaka is nothing short of breathtaking, and features Garber on stirring Swahili vocals. Her bluesy side is in full throttle on Hoagy Carmichael’s Baltimore Oriole and on a fresh, guitar-infused arrangement of Peter Allen and Carole Bayer Sager’s Don’t Cry Out Loud, Garber captivates with her understatement.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Melodies Pure and True by Jim Gelcer

Jim Gelcer; Reg Schwager; George Koller

Independent (gelcer.com)

To say that talented drummer/vocalist Jim Gelcer is an eclectic artist, would be something of an understatement. With his new CD, Gelcer explores a wide variety of contemporary expressions, including Broadway, rhythm and blues, rock, soul, funk, jazz, reggae and more. Gelcer brings an interesting mashup to the musical table, incorporating elements of his father’s South African home, his mother’s Middle-Eastern mysticism and his own love of North American, rhythmic, vocal-centric forms. Gelcer acts as producer here, and his potent, power trio includes Reg Schwager on guitar and George Koller on bass.

With 11 tasty tracks, standouts include Lerner and Lane’s On a Clear Day, Lifting and swinging, Gelcer sings with a purity of tone, a resonant vocal aesthetic and a deeply imbedded rhythmic sensibility – reminiscent of Michael Franks, Ben Sidran or the late Kenny Rankin. Schwager’s inspired solo is the icing on the cake. Also of note is Jimi Hendrix’s Little Wing. It may not seem like an obvious choice for this project, but it works. Schwager’s visceral acoustic and electric guitar work melds seamlessly with Koller’s gymnastic and sonorous bass lines, and Gelcer compliments both with an ambitious vocal performance.

Other strong tracks include Gelcer’s interpretation of Sting’s metaphysically infused love song, Fields of Gold and a surprisingly tender interpretation of Witchita Lineman, the Jimmy Webb-penned pop/country classic hit by the great Glen Campbell. There is a wonderful creation of space in this arrangement, contemporizing the tune, moving it out of its established genre and imbuing it with a non-space/time sensibility.

Melodies Pure and True is just that – an absolutely delightful musical potpouri, and a joyous soundtrack for all the groovy, funky and glorious moments of your life.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Volare, The Italian American Songbook

Antonio Ciacci Quintet

Cellar Live CL10815 (cellarlive.com)

This exceptionally performed, well-conceived, well-produced jazz project came about as a result of Vancouver-based tenorist, jazz entrepreneur and producer Corey Weeds and his inspired collaboration with Italian-American pianist/composer Antonio Ciacci and also with the Italian Cultural Centre of Vancouver. A successful partnership with the Centre led to a concert series and other jazz-centric Italian-Canadian events which segued into Weeds’s collaboration with Ciacci (who was keen to transplant his successful concept of the New York City-based “Italian Jazz Days” to Vancouver) and eventually, to the creation of this fine Cellar Live recording.

Ciacci is the only fully Italian member of the ensemble, with the balance of the musicians (excepting Weeds, who is an honourary Italian) having substantial Italian heritage. The gifted musicians on the CD include Paul Gill on bass, Peter Van Nostrand on drums, Weeds on tenor and Benny Banack III on trumpet and vocals. The repertoire is an energizing mix of original, compelling compositions by Ciacci (some of which are inspired by jazz giants, like Thad Jones), American Standards, contemporary jazz compositions and a treasured Italian favourite, Volare (nel blu dipinto di blu) – authentically performed here with zest, swing and joy.

Of special note is Chick’s Tune by Chick
Corea. A dynamic, intricate and full-throttle arrangement defines this stellar track. The musical communication flows like a good Chianti, and the soloing and ensemble work are confident, symbiotic and stirring. Other standouts include the lush and romantic, *Stairway to the Stars*, featuring a solid vocal by trumpeter Banack and a warm, mellifluous tenor solo by Weeds and also Cicca’s hi-octane bop-burner, Scotty.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Blue Canvas
Brandi Disterheft; Harold Mabern; Joe Farnsworth
Justin Time JUST 255-2 (justin-time.com)

► It’s been some time since Brandi Disterheft, Canada’s prodigiously talented bassist, has released a recording under her own name. So it is appropriate to be reminded that listening to her is like putting your finger into a naked power-socket. *Blue Canvas* is lit up with a sizzling performance ten pieces long. The lasting impression they make is of deeply integrated performances that flow naturally as if the music were created on the spot. The performance is intoxicated with thrilling music by a trio that lays out its breadth and sustaining power with elegance and ease.

Although fronted by a young lady, a fact that might raise the question of feminine power, I would posit that Disterheft handles her bass violin with as much visceral audacity as the great Charles Mingus once did. She spins out the solo passages on *Prelude to the Crippling Thrill* and the introduction to *Willow Weep for Me* with dazzling facility and makes the most of her moments of emotional fire. A particular highlight of the recording is Disterheft’s vocals which play off her bass, but in an altogether different palette of thrilling, luminous colours.

It would be a travesty to even suggest that Disterheft is all that this disc has to offer. The iconic pianist Harold Mabern and drummer Joe Farnsworth complete the trio as they breathe fiery dialogues into the bassist’s sinuous lines. Theirs is a study in swing and the expressive liberation of the music’s ebb and flow.

Raul da Gama

Left
Monkey House
Alma Records ACD52762 (almarecords.com)

► Scene-setting, storytelling and just old-fashioned lyric poetry – these are just some of the wonderful aspects of *Left*, the fifth album by Monkey House, Don Breithaupt’s iconic Toronto band since 1992. The musician, keyboardist and vocalist has lavished all that and more on each of the 11 songs that he has written either alone or with celebrated partners including Jay Graydon and Marc Jordan. Celebrity appeal has its commercial benefits, but in this case a large measure of the success is owed to Don Breithaupt, who demonstrates not simply a keen musical sensibility, but a glorious turn of phrase and a unique sense of the dramatic. None of that would matter had it not been for the most impressive performances by the members of Monkey House.

You would expect nothing less of drummer Mark Kelso, bassist Pat Killbride and guitarist Justin Abedin. Each of the core members of the band – as well as the guest musicians – reveals the composer’s intentions most enthrallingly giving new meaning to the term “musicianship.” *Good to Live* and *It’s Already Dark in New York* are good examples of the expressive range of emotions that these musicians bring to the program. Breithaupt leads from the front and his vocal evocations are splendidly balanced by the rhythmic vitality of his musicality, expressed on a variety of keyboards. His performance shows itself most clearly in the beautiful *The Art of Starting Over*, which affords perfectly judged musical and textural contrast, together with a dance-like finale.

Bridges
Barry Livingston Group
Independent (barrylivingstonmusic.com)

► In June, I had the pleasure of hearing the Barry Livingston Group perform music from its first release, *Bridges*, at a house concert. It was a beautiful evening of inspired music and music-making. The CD, recorded live at Toronto’s magical Musideum (alas, recently closed) does the music – all Livingston’s – justice.

Livingston is an exceptionally gifted (yet modest) pianist and composer. A University of Toronto graduate who spent many productive years on the west coast before returning to Ontario, Livingston deftly traverses musical borders, incorporating the diverse influences of mainstream jazz, South Indian and Asian music, Latin jazz and bossa nova into his writing. Fittingly, the Toronto-based group comprises some of the most in-demand musicians from the jazz and world music scenes.

Standouts for me include Suba Sankar’s languid vocals on the Muhal Richard Abrams-inspired *Dreaming Eloquence*, and her sublime, South Indian-style intro to *Peace – Part 1*. The group shines on the Metheny-esque *Windcatcher* – inspired, in fact, by Metheny’s close associate, keyboardist Lyle Mays. Sankaran’s voice is luminous. Colleen Allen’s sax playing is gorgeous and expansive, and Livingston achieves the open sound and wider tonal palette he was aiming for, according to his liner notes. Bassist Kobi Hass and drummer Paul Fitterer round out the sound with their superb, understated and tasteful playing.

Shelia’s Bounce, dedicated to jazz great Sheila Jordan, really swings. Sankaran does some mean scatting and Allen is right on and right there with her. Straight ahead good fun. A stellar first release!

Sharna Searle

Concert note: Barry Livingston Group performs at the Church of the Incarnation Jazz Vespers on Sunday, November 13, at 4:30pm.

Miller’s Tale
Sylvie Courvoiser; Mark Feldman; Ikue Mori; Evan Parker
Intakt Records CD 270 (intaktrec.ch)

► British saxophonist Evan Parker initially assembled this quartet of free improvisers in 2015 for a performance at New York’s The Stone, achieving results that led to this studio recording of quartet and duo pieces. It’s a meeting of virtuos, each musician possessing a certain brilliance of execution, whether it’s violinist Mark Feldman’s vibrant, slashing bow work, Sylvie Courvoiser’s waterfall runs and mutating piano preparation, Ikue Mori’s ever-evolving stream of patterns and novel timbres from her electronics or Parker’s command of alternative techniques, combining multiphonics and circular breathing into teeming, oscillating waves of bird-like sound.

However, it’s the level of interaction that’s most impressive. Individual instruments come together, sometimes blurring and even fusing identities, from the whirling hive of sound that climaxes *Death of a Salesman* to the welling drama of *The American Dream*, an extended piece that reveals each member’s capacity to shape an extended piece. *Up from Paradise* strongly suggests the work of Messiaen.

The astonishing attention to detail and a consistent delicacy of mood make this sound less like collective improvisation and more like a composed suite of subtly varying textures, a unity that spreads from the four quartet pieces to the series of five duets, which includes every possible pairing except Courvoiser and Feldman, a husband-and-wife team who have recorded extensively as a duo. This is one of the most accomplished CDs of the year in improvised music.

Stuart Broomer
Unheard Bird – The Unissued Takes
Charlie Parker
Verve B0024802-02

» Perhaps no musician in jazz history (not Armstrong, Young or Coltrane) has quite inspired the devotion accorded Charlie Parker, the result of changing recording technology, incandescent improvisational genius and a brief, mythologized life. He inspired cultish devotion, from Kerouac to heroin addiction, and the pioneering bop label Dial was virtually launched to record him. One acolyte, Dean Benedetti, recorded Parker live, following him from California to New York, sometimes recording just his solos to economize on tape – the recordings run to seven CDs.

That should provide context for this 2-CD set of recordings made by Norman Granz from 1949 to 1952. It matches 52 previously unknown false starts, incomplete takes and occasional alternates with the 17 corresponding released masters. That may sound like material meant only for the scholar or completist, but its appeal may be broader. Those false starts demonstrate the invention that Parker could lavish on a theme statement; and more extensive takes show the way he would re-envision a tune in the studio. There’s even something fascinating about hearing that mercurial mind interrupted by a whistle or shout before reassembling the possibilities. Parker’s accelerated mind seems made for this, as if each interruption is an opportunity for another path, as if improvisation is a strategy for evasion.

The complete takes offer both resolution and reward for what goes before, and there are moments here from highly varied Parker projects, the session with Dizzy Gillespie and Thelonious Monk, working with small bands and large ensembles from strings to Machito’s Latin big band. It’s all fascinating stuff.

Stuart Brooner

Twenty
Metalwood
Cellar Live CL020116 (cellarlive.com)

» Metalwood, one of Canada’s prototypical electric jazz ensembles, has reunited for their first recording in over a decade. This style of jazz has been around for long enough to have become firmly entrenched in the mainstream of the music and Twenty is a testament to many of its best and most exciting aspects. Bassist Chris Tarry’s The Path Before You establishes the group’s focus on the first track. This is groove oriented, electric music played from an undeniably jazz perspective. The rhythm section of Tarry and drummer Ian Froman form a highly interactive unit, reacting to and eliciting stellar solos from multi-instrumentalist Brad Turner, on piano here, and veteran saxophonist Mike Murley. Both soloists are clearly going for it in this strong opener, capturing the intensity of the tune’s Weather Report-ish vibe.

Turner’s Bodybeard opens with an incredibly funky intro on Fender Rhodes electric piano before giving way to some deep syncopation from Tarry and Froman. Turner, playing wah trumpet, and Murley on tenor demonstrate remarkable soulfulness combined with chromaticism over the deceptive simplicity of the tune’s harmony. The brief quote from Eddie Harris’ Freedom Jazz Dance at the end of the melody is a nice nod to one of the originators of this music.

Extra Salty, the sole Murley composition on the recording, juxtaposes a compelling melody over a bass ostinato in three and features the only bass solo on the CD. Tarry solos with great tone, technique and lyricism, leaving us wanting more.

Ted Quinlan

Concert Note: Metalwood performs at the Rex September 13 and 14.

The Number 1 Beatles Jazz Album
Various Artists
Universal 4794337

» Hearing old favourite songs redone in a totally different manner from the original can be a challenge. It’s especially true when vocal songs that are basically embedded in your DNA are turned into instrumentals. So fans of the Beatles should approach this new compilation of jazz treatments of the Fab Four’s tunes with an open mind and fresh ears, because there are some magnificent performances here. Starting right off with Chick Corea and Gary Burton’s take on Eleanor Rigby, the two master musicians are totally in sync as they turn the tune into a driving, meditative work.

Some of the covers stay closer to the originals, and they’re very nice – Gregory Porter’s version of Let It Be, for instance, is warm and sincere and feels utterly right. It’s the ones that deviate and reinvent that are among my favourites however, like Grant Green’s I Want To Hold Your Hand. It’s a swiny gas. Or when Kenny Rankin unleashes his gorgeous talent on I’ve Just Seen a Face. The arrangement of the piece isn’t credited, but whoever it is poured their inventive heart into it. Diana Krall stays true to form with a lush, slowed down take of In My Life.

A couple of the tracks lean more toward easy listening than jazz, but that’s okay. When you have a combination of songwriting at the level of Lennon-McCartney and an unwaveringly talented roster of musicians covering them, it’s next to impossible to go wrong.

Cathy Riches

POT POURRI

April Snow
Stephanie Martin; Chad Irsich
Sovereign Productions SPM002 (stephaniemartin.ca)

» Luminous vocalist/composer Stephanie Martin not only possesses a delicious vocal instrument, but on her new, completely appealing recording, she also demonstrates her considerable chops as a composer of accessible, highly musical material. Expertly produced and co-written by the brilliant Chad Irsich, this gorgeously crafted CD is comprised entirely of original compositions arranged with intelligence and skill ... in fact, Martin’s musical expression is beautifully defined by the harmonically satisfying vocal and instrumental arrangements.

The talented musicians who join Martin on the project include gifted multi-instrumentalists Tom Szczesniak on bass, keyboards and accordion, David MacDougall on drums (whose work is the strong, invigorating and steady pulse of the recording), Brian Barlow on percussion, Michael “Pepi” Francis on acoustic and electric guitars, Chad Irsich and Steve O’Connor on keyboards and yeoman featured guest vocalist Neil Donnell.

Martin incorporates a number of influences into her vocal and writing style – transcending definitions and embracing elements of contemporary, pop, country and jazz music. Her clear, stunning soprano (slightly reminiscent of the late, great, Nicolette Larson) deftly glides over the 13 satisfying melodies, making it all seem so easy and organic – replete with poetic lyrics that detail vivid and visceral life experiences to which we can all relate. Top tracks include the rhythmic and exciting Brazilian-influenced Roundabout; the anthem of independence, No Hard Feeling; the blistering political statement, Circle of Elders, featuring face-melting guitar work from Francis; the gorgeous ballad, The Sweater Song, made all the lovelier by Szczesniak’s acoustic piano and the album closer, No One in Particular, a gentle and uplifting vocal duet with Donnell.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Instruments of Happiness Electric Guitar Quartet
Tim Brady; Gary Schwartz; Michel Héroux; Antoine Berthiaume
Starkland ST-224 (starkland.com)

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Lesley Mitchell-Clarke
I cannot think of anything more exciting for any electric guitar superfan than listening to the Electric Guitar Quartet. Guitarists Tim Brady, Gary Schwartz, Michel Héroux and Antoine Berthiaume are each formidable instrumentalists who join listening and technical forces touching on all styles of guitar, be it rock, funk, new music, etc.

Three composed works are featured here. Brady’s The Same River Twice: Symphony # 5.0 is full of symphony orchestra-like harmonies, riffs, guitar effects adventures, a funky waltz and an intense closing section featuring loud verbal rhythmic counting. Each group section is divided by refreshing solo guitar meanderings. Brady then takes on this work as a solo piece. The Same River Twice Symphony #5. Solo is more introspective and different in its attitude. It feels more programmatic with its washes of sound in Freeze, and the dripping effects in Thaw.

Berthiaume’s Fungi is a sensitive and classical flavoured ensemble work in 6/4 time with its peaceful interludes and sections alluding to film and tango reminiscent dance music. Brady then mixes two live studio performances of Rainer Wiens’ What is Time? Wiens imaged it as a “series of clouds, constantly changing...” by utilizing different guitar preparations either fixed or performed in random order and requiring each performer to listen to each other’s breathing. The result is a sonic blast of washes and effects.

This is great happy music to be enjoyed over and over again!

Tiina Kik

Sing Me Home
Silk Road Ensemble; Yo-Yo Ma
Sony Masterworks 88875 18101 2
(sonymusicmasterworks.com)

This latest album by Yo-Yo Ma and Silk Road examines unique and diverse perspectives of home, with original and traditional tunes composed and/or arranged by members of the ensemble. Joining them are a number of stellar guest artists, amongst them singer Rhianannon Giddens, the Grammy-winning vocal octet Roomful of Teeth, Galician band Rustica, Malian kora player Toumani Diabaté, and the great Indian sitarist Shujaat Khan, among many other notable international performers. Each track tells a unique story. The Taiko drums of Shingashi Song are later followed by the voice of Dima Orsho, who shares a glimpse into a Syrian village wedding. Fiddler Martin Hayes adds a haunting cavalry march. In Little Birdie, singer Sarah Jarosz pays sweet tribute to the late Pete Seeger, with the addition of pipa (Chinese lute) and sheng (Chinese mouth organ) to the mix while Going Home is sung in both Chinese and English by vocalist and banjo player Abigail Washburn with ensemble member Wu Tong. Master guitarist Bill Frisell creates a wonderful interplay with Silk Road members on shakuhachi (Japanese bamboo flute) and Indian tabla. This recording provides a veritable tapestry of world fusion; nonetheless, each selection is truly distinct and highly reminiscent of many diverse conceptions of home.

Dianne Wells

Nazar
Turkwaz
Independent Turkwaz01 (facebook.com/Turkwaz)

With their first album Nazar, the Toronto based vocal quartet Turkwaz introduces a wondrous world of uniquely imaginative songs. This compilation features a selection from the Middle East, Turkey, Greece and the Balkans, collected individually over many years. While the songs themselves are traditional, the creative vocal arrangements and the use of exotic world instruments make this music delightful to the ear and harmonically surprising at times. Turkwaz – Maryem Tollar, Brenna MacCrimmon, Sophia Grigoriadis and Jayne Brown – sounds both pure and raw, with sincerity and sentiment that comes from their deep appreciation of this music. Their individual voices are light yet loaded with emotion.

Collectively, the intended textures of their voices are exquisite. The lyrics, sung in Turkish, Arabic, Greek, Macedonian and Bulgarian, are pure poetry, and for the most part fragrant with love themes. Nestled in between the songs are expressive improvisatory vignettes by guest artists – Demetrios Petsalakis (spectacular on bağlama, ouli), Nagmeh Farahmand (daff, tombak), Ernie Tollar (duduk, bansuri flute, saxophone) and Andrew Downing (cello).

Among many charming songs, a few numbers stood out for me. Send Me a Message My Love, The Beloved Visited Me in the Myrtle Garden, Love on a Rainy Day and the lively Alexandris/Grandpa’s Brandly all share alluring harmonic twists and delicately ornamented melodies, the power of voices being a driving force. The word nazar is derived from Arabic “sight” or “seeing.” It is a perfect title for this album as the members of Turkwaz bring forward their musical vision to each song.

Ivana Popovic

Concert note: Turkwaz will release Nazar at the Music Gallery with guest musicians Andrew Downing, Demetri Petsalakis and Ernie Tollar on September 24.

Made to Measure
Countermeasure
Independent (countermessuremusic.com)

Toronto a cappella group Countermeasure showcases itself as a musically astute and on-the-edge vocal group. Using only their voices, they create a mind-boggling array of sounds from harmonious lyrical choral to rocking percussive to instrumental sounds. Exciting and groundbreaking to say the least, the 14 young members are led in this energetic band project by composer/arranger Aaron Jensen.

A plethora of styles and influences are technically and convincingly performed. Cole Porter’s I’ve Got You Under My Skin is a funky percussive rendition with lush harmonies, horn and bass sounds supporting soloist Qwyn MacLachlan. Jensen’s ballad Fox in the Field highlights more classic wistful colourful harmonies and phrases. Train the A Take draws on the standard Take the A Train as fragments of melodies are combined and repeated while amazing train-like vocal noises keep it moving. Covers of a Middle Eastern world music-flavoured Bruce Cockburn’s Lovers in A Dangerous Time, and pop, jazz and you-name-it spiced Beatles’ I Saw Her Standing There give each song refreshing new aural lives. The title track Made to Measure is an uplifting touch of musical theatre written by member J-M Erlandson. Witty yet never sarcastic, the show goes on with brevity, drama and comedy. Sometimes there is too much of a good thing as so many stylistic references and percussive sounds overtake the essence of the piece. Nonetheless, Countermeasure is a rising star in the Canadian music and recording scene.

Tiina Kik

The Wholenote

September 1, 2016 - October 7, 2016
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Something in the Air
Musical Inspirations Arise from Unexpected Sources

KEN WAXMAN

Creativity may, as the aphorism says, be 90 percent perspiration and 10 percent inspiration. But finding the proper inspiration can be a challenge in itself. Like a mathematical theorem made up of various formulae, stimulus for music – especially creative music – arrives from anywhere. Consider these disc whose genesis couldn’t be more dissimilar, but whose interpretation is of uniform high quality.

Turning another page in its scorebook filled with the themes of composers from the so-called classical music canon, Montreal-based Quartetski – now a quintet – Does Bartók, on Mikrokosmos Sz 107 (Ambiances Magnétiques AM 224 CD actuelecd.com). It reconfigures to group improvisation piano pieces composed by Hungarian Béla Bartók (1881-1945) to synthesize musical and technical problems. Bartók, who was as attuned to Magyar folk music as his contemporary Arnold Schoenberg was to serialism, could never have imagined Quartetski’s instrumental make-up, unless he was also a futurist. The band is reedist Philippe Lauzier, guitarist Bernard Falaise, violinist Joshua Zubot, drummer Isaiah Ceccarelli and Pierre-Yves Martel, playing electric bass and synthesizer. Like films whose interpretation of a literary source is radically different, but representational, Quartetski’s 25-track variant of the oeuvre adding jazz, folk, rock and electronic inflections must be judged on its own. One reductionist way to approach this material is to itemize how often and quickly musical currents appear and disappear. For instance, take the many transitions which are evident during the sequence five tracks: En mode mélodysen #48, Unisson divisible #52, Mélodie en dixièmes #56, Majeur et mineur #59, Troïlets #75 and Hommage à Robert Schumann #80. Near-heavy metal thuds and clangs struggle for space alongside pastoral reed notes and high-European string swells. Later, like a space ship from the future landing in primitive times, contemporariness tims are subsumed beneath electronic loops. Paradoxically, like a space ship from the future landing in primitive times, contemporary problems are imagined Quartetski’s instrumental make-up, unless he was also a futurist. The band is reedist Philippe Lauzier, guitarist Bernard Falaise, violinist Joshua Zubot, drummer Isaiah Ceccarelli and Pierre-Yves Martel, playing electric bass and synthesizer. Like films whose interpretation of a literary source is radically different, but representative, Quartetski’s 25-track variant of the oeuvre adding jazz, folk, rock and electronic inflections must be judged on its own. One reductionist way to approach this material is to itemize how often and quickly musical currents appear and disappear. For instance, take the many transitions which are evident during the sequence five tracks: En mode mélodysen #48, Unisson divisé #52, Mélodie en dixièmes #56, Majeur et mineur #59, Troïlets #75 and Hommage à Robert Schumann #80. Near-heavy metal thuds and clangs struggle for space alongside pastoral reed notes and high-European string swells. Later, like a space ship from the future landing in primitive times, contemporariness tims are subsumed beneath electronic loops. Paradoxically, when the themes are more obtuse, a buoyant melody is created where temporary timbres are subsumed beneath electronic loops.

A jazz score composed for a free-form dance company, Touch My Beloved’s Thought (Greenleaf Music GRE-CD-1050 greenleafmusic.com) has clear-cut themes and a point of view; but like a film recast with new actors to give it contemporary resonances, part of its achievement is what it’s not. That’s because the inspiration for alto saxophonist Greg Ward’s creation, interpreted by his 10 Tongues band, was that a Chicago dance company wanted to choreograph movements to something like Charles Mingus’ 1963 milestone, The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady. Taking that as a challenge, Ward adapted elements of Mingus’s seminal work without emulating any of the music itself and used different instrumentation ranging from the cornet on top to the bass trombone and baritone saxophone on the bottom to do so. A couple of times his own sour reed bites approximate the sound of earlier soloists and in the finale, Gather Round, The Revolution Is at Hand, a direct Mingus theme is interpolated. But mostly Ward’s music is more romantic, bluesy and utilitarian than its model. Especially noteworthy is The Menacing Lean, where a bolero beast superseded Marcus Evans’ timed drum rolls, preceding a stop-time challenge from baritone saxophonist Keele Jackson and tenor saxophonist Tim Haldeman that moves the ensemble to effortless swing. Jason Roeke’s ringing double bass line and Dennis Laxion’s piano note emphasis enhances the climax. Later, Norman Palm’s lazy trombone slurs and call and response from the saxophonists frame the penultmate tracks. Round 3 and Dialogue of the Black Saint come across as much a brass player’s derby’s tip to Mingus’ influence Duke Ellington and many pre-modern trombonists as dance accompaniament. Sonically illuminating many motifs from staccato tonguing to muted nostalgia, Ward suggests strategies for the dancers. Then, like a mathematician marshalling various hypotheses into a theorem, he uses the concluding sequence to build the instrumental sections up to excited cacophony and down to calm for an appropriately simultaneous summation and homage.

An even better known 20th-century composer is Bob Dylan, whose 1966 2-LP milestone Blonde on Blonde is the inspiration for Berlin quartet Absolutely Sweet Marie (ASM)’s Another Side of Blonde on Blonde (Tiger Moon: Records TMR 003 tigermoonrecords.com). Unlike Dylan’s electrified guitars and keyboards-focused session, the band – trumpeter Steffen Faut, trombonist Matthias Müller, tenor saxophonist Alexander Beierbach and drummer Max Andrzejevsy – play the songs in the same sequence as the original disc, but completely acoustically. Dylan’s canon is no more inviolable than Bartók’s and ASM shows its skill by re-contextualizing the familiar themes to take on new resonance. The marching band/Dixieland outlines of tunes such as Rainy Day Women #12 and 35 and Most Likely You Go Your Way, I’ll Go Mine are easily converted to poppy showcases with R&B-styled sax riffs and trumpet exotica. But like the climber who first rappels up the Matterhorn then tackles Mount Everest, upping the challenge is more breathtaking. Absolutely Sweet Marie for instance, takes on a trumpet and trombone Mariachi sheen, while Pledging My Time becomes a canon as born tremolos decorate the theme. Replete with altissimo slurs from Beierbach, Temporary Like Achilles is ground down into atomos, just as art restorers sometimes find traces of an earlier picture on the canvas underneath another. ASM exposes unexpected jazz linkages in some of the songs. Cross pulsations inject the chorus of Sun Ra’s Space is the Place into the melody of One of Us Must Know; while the transformation of Fourth Time Around into an energetic bebop rocker is both mocked and underlined as John Coltrane’s unmistakable introduction to A Love Supreme is heard. The crowning achievement is when the four inject a circus-like atmosphere into I Want You via yelping horn parts to make it swing in all senses. As notable and thorny as alloying steel, the anthemic Just Like a Woman is re-imagined with a horn trio, with Beierbach almost tying himself into knots as he improvises freely.

In terms of slightly off-centre inspirations, consider the Umlaut Big Band’s Euro Swing Vol. 2 (Umlaut UMFR-CD18 umlautrecords.com). While the 16-piece French orchestra puts a new spin on swing-era tunes, the transcriptions on which they’re based – mostly created by its saxophonist/director Pierre Antoine Badaroux – are unique. That’s because these pre-World War II recordings either featured jazzers like Duke Ellington visiting Europe, or were played by local bands directed...
by Americans such as drummer Sam Wooding or alto saxophonist Benny Carter, who were European residents at the time. Undoubtedly Carter (1907-2003), who spent time in Holland, Belgium, England and France, is the avatar of the session. Like comparing a pre-renaissance canvas to the Mona Lisa, hear how the primitive two-beat feel of Bull Feet Stomp, with its so-called hot choruses, first recorded by drummer Wooding in 1929 is replaced by the balanced classicism of Carter’s arrangements from less than ten years later. Tracks such as a mid-range treatment of Honeysuckle Rose, first recorded in Paris in 1937, with its buffed single-string break from guitarist Roman Vuillem in plus Badaroux’s alto, move the exposition forward to modernity, while the carefully harmonized reed section of I’m Coming Virginia, initially recorded in 1938 in Paris, confirms the music’s maturity. At the same time, while staying within the originals’ bumpy-smooth patterns, the band members’ solos are neither clones nor caricatures. Despite the Charleston echoes on 1925’s Piccadilly Strut, pianist Bruno Ruder takes into account the relaxed Count Basie-type style that wouldn’t be common until a few years later. Similarly Emil Strandberg’s muted trumpet glides ocean-liner-like on the reed riffs created for Ellington’s 1933 Stockholm-cut Serenade to Sweden, while the high-pitched brass blasts of the trumpet plus trombonist Fidel Fourneyron transform the cartoon soundtrack-like feel of Wooding’s 1925 Berlin-recorded Shanghai Shuffle into something more plausible and daring. The most creditable solos come from clarinetist Antonin-Tri Hoang. He brings the same effective fluttering tonguing and animated commitment to his parts whether it’s partial singsong on Piccadilly Strut, timed modulations on Sweet Madness initially done by Freddy Johnson in 1933 Paris, or bolstered sound waves on Blue Room, a 1940 Carter arrangement for Jean Omer. The enthusiasm of the other bands may be singular, but an equally notable eponymous set by the Brooklyn Blowhards (Little i music littlemusic.com) is a case study in post-modernism. Arranged by reedist Jeff Lederer, and played by the eight-piece band plus two guests, the 14 tracks owe allegiance to both the over-the-top free jazz of saxophonist Albert Ayler (1936-1970), who died by drowning, and the obdurate melodies of traditional sea shanties. The linkage may seem opaque, but once the gale-force bluster that characterizes Lederer’s tenor saxophone glossolalia on Ayler’s Bells is immediately followed by the heaving plunder smears from Brian Drye’s trombone on the traditional Haul Away Joe, the primitive power and connection of both concepts is obvious. When two saxophones flutter tonguing and flurries of cornet and trombone breaths are coupled with tremolo throbs, other Ayler lines such as Dancing Flower and Heavenly Home conjure up images of the late saxophonist dancing a sailor’s hornpipe. A similar transformation is evident with the sea shanties. Like pieces of rural furniture which can become condominium showpieces, ditties such as Black Ball Line and Haul on the Bowline pick up unexpected contemporary cadences. The former matches Lederer’s commanding vibrations with staccato overblowing from tenor saxophonist Petr Cancura as percussion replicates a flottilla call to arms. Cornetist Kirk Knuffke’s tongue pirouettes cunningly subvert the melody of the second shanty which speeds up to suggest a brass band blaring as it transverses the ship. Art Bailey’s accordion splatters owe more to zydeco than zig-zag sailing; while Gary Lucas’ bottleneck guitar runs help move Mary Larose’s singing of Shallow Brown and other ditties from traditionally paced to frenetic. Like a melancholy air played during a burial at sea The Language of Resistance, composed by Lederer and played with maximum solemnity on soprano saxophone precedes Larose’s recitation of The Seaman’s Hymn which in its transmogrifying sentiments, creates a proper memorial for Ayler and classic seafaring while transforming their qualities into born-again music. Good music can make just about anything a source of inspiration.

Old Wine, New Bottles
Fine Old Recordings Re-Released
BRUCE SURTEES

In September of 1966, exactly 50 years ago, 18 years after the introduction of the long-playing vinyl disc and 17 years before the CD, there were 31 of Haydn’s 104 symphonies in the record catalogue. The name symphonies enjoyed multiple performances, including the Farewell, the Schoolmaster, the Oxford, the Surprise, the Miracle, the Military, the Clock, the Drum Roll and the London. The unnamed Symphony No.88 had five versions. Well-known, saleable conductors and their orchestras were the order of the day. These performances predated the formation of original instruments groups and their adoption of what are believed to be historically correct practices. Some years ago I had an informative conversation with a fellow from Decca who had recently returned from Esterházy where they were to film performances by Christopher Hogwood and the Academy of Ancient Music playing Haydn in the very location for which the works were written. The musicians arrived well-prepared but when the orchestra began playing, to everyone’s utter dismay, in that venue, what they had diligently rehearsed was clearly at odds with what Haydn would have heard. As I was given to understand, changes were made and lessons learned.

Last year Decca issued a 32-CD set of all the Haydn Symphonies that Hogwood and the Academy were able to finish before the project ended. To top that, Decca has issued another box, this one of the Haydn – Complete 107 Symphonies (4989604, 35CDs). This new set incorporates all the Hogwood performances plus recordings by Frans Brüggen directing the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and also the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century. Neither had set down the symphonies Nos. 78 through 81. Decca selected the Accademia Bizantina conducted by Ottavio Dantone to provide them. This orchestra, managed autonomously by its guardian members, was founded in Ravenna, Italy in 1983 with the intention of “making music like a large quartet.” Recorded in 2015, their focus and totally unexpected energy comes as something of a shock as one plays through the set. If you wonder how the accepted 104 symphonies grew to 107 it is because of the inclusion of the “A & B” early symphonies and the Sinfonia Concertante in B-Flat major (Hob.1.105) from the same year, 1792, as the Symphonies 97 and 98. So here it is — the first complete edition of the historically informed performances of the 107 Haydn Symphonies employing “original” instruments. Yet, as performing music is not an exact science, each of the four ensembles is clearly different from the others, making the whole package all the more interesting. There is a fine collection of “the most beautiful operatic moments” from Decca Records appropriately titled Opera Gold (4788210, 6CDs). In a box only 5/8 of an inch thick are 100 tracks of superb renditions of all the familiar and some, perhaps, unfamiliar solos, duets and larger ensembles drawn from the treasured archives of English Decca. Decca documented so many of the great ones:

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Pavarotti, Horne, Sutherland, Freni, Tebaldi, Kaufmann, Bergonzi, von Stade, Nucci, Te Kanawa, Milnes, Ghiaurov, Tourangeau, Fleming and Corelli. Conductors include Mehta, Bonyenge, von Karajan, Pappano, Molinari-Pradelli, Serafin and Solti. All are on the first of the six CDs. This elegant little black box with gold lettering would be a thoughtful and lasting house gift instead of wine or flowers to take to an invitation to a friend’s home. Shop around, it can be found for about $20.

Since 2013 when DG issued Archiv Produktion 1947-2013 (4791045, 55 CDs) we have waited for a follow-up set which has now arrived, Archiv Produktion Analogue Stereo Recordings 1959-2013 (4791045, 55 CDs). As a background to Archiv Produktion we should go back to the spring of 1941 when all shares of Deutsche Grammophon were transferred to Siemens AG. Through the 1940s and the 1950s, under Ernst von Siemens, a music lover, the company became the industry leader in Germany and garnered international recognition. Siemens worked passionately, building a spectacular catalogue of classic performances by Karl Richter and the Munich Bach Orchestra, the Loewenguth Quartet, Simon Preston, Ralph Kirkpatrick, Pierre Fournier, August Wenzinger, Karl Ristenpart, Marcel Couraud, Nikolaus Harmoncourt, Josef Ulsamer, Maurice André, Charles Mackerras, Fernando Germani, Michel Corboz, Edward Melkus, the Melos Quartet of Stuttgart, Jürgen Jürgens, Helmut Walcha, John Eliot Gardiner, Kenneth Gilbert, Jordi Savall and many, many others. The repertoire includes much Bach. Also of special particular interest are performances of Schubert’s Arpeggione Sonata played on an arpeggione by Klaus Stock accompanied by Alfons Kontarsky and 19 Weber Lieder sung by Peter Schreier with Konrad Ragossnig playing guitar. Also David Munrow leading the Early Music Consort of London in Music of the Gothic Era now complete on 2 CDs. That group, as some remember, included Christopher Hogwood playing harp and portative organ. The curiosity in the mix is Gong Kebyar playing Gamelan Music from Bali, sacred and dance music recorded in there in 1972. The sets have booklets with photos of the artists and recording data. The complete details of both sets may be seen on line at deccaclassics.com.

This second Archiv box contains only performances from 1959 through to 1981. Does this hint of yet a third box? •


• CLICK to LISTEN! • CLICK to BUY! • thewholenote.com/listening
Let’s see now. With Handel’s Ariodante – Richard Jones’ version premiering at the Four Seasons Centre with the Canadian Opera Company October 16 to November 4 – we have a love-wracked title character who makes Hamlet seem like a laugh riot, living in Scotland’s Orkney Islands, you know, remote, lonely and windswept where they have mean, seaweed-eating North Ronaldsay sheep, little summer to speak of and folks going around in thick woolly sweaters that render most forms of sexual contact tricky, if not extremely itchy.

Jones’ punky production, which premiered in 2014 at the Aix Festival, goes whole hog, er, whole sheep, with this Orkney claustrophobia vibe. Besides excess tartan there’s lots of wallpaper. “What made my mind up about the production was Jones’ idea to move the setting from Scotland itself to the Orkneys,” says COC general director Alexander Neef. “He turns it into an even more remote place. Handel thought Scotland itself was a remote place.”

The new setting is Scotland of the recent past, where the heroine, Ginevra, suffers mightily to be with the man she loves, Prince Ariodante – British mezzo soprano Alice Coote, a Jones favourite, for the COC performances – only to be accused of being unfaithful to him.

“The story is wintry,” Jones tells me enthusiastically on the phone, his tone anything but wintry. “The music is baroque but the setting is 1970s Scotland. There is a tension between the two. People look at it more acutely because of that.”

Besides tension we get lying, cheating, the hero’s attempted suicide and lots of knitwear. How much fun is that? Well, lots actually: “Yes, there is this sense of melancholy that is found in many pieces of the period which I find intoxicating,” says COC music director, Johannes Debus. Despite a childhood spent as a pianist/fiddler in Baroque-rich West Germany he’s making his Handel-conducting debut with Ariodante. “There is a lushness to the score. Opera at his time was an entertainment that also touches you.”

Debus was born in 1974, the year David Bowie released Diamond Dogs. Rock is not foreign to his musical thinking; his understanding of it will not likely inhibit his still-growing reputation. Ariodante, produced in 1735, was the by-product of an aggressive new marketing venture by Handel which would have made Andrew Lloyd Webber proud. In 1734, Handel moved his company from the Haymarket’s King’s Theatre to John Rich’s Theatre Royal, newly installed at Covent Garden, to find a better location and a company with a chorus and dancers. (Speaking of location: along with the COC and Aix, this Ariodante is a co-production with the Dutch National Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago.)

“Handel always had dancers in mind: this music itself was based on dance, the sarabande, the gavotte and the bourée,” Debus continues. “Baroque music uses words the way rock does: there is always a certain rhythmical aspect to them. It’s an expression of youth. And there is the aspect of popularity in the music itself. The singers at the time were all pop stars of the period, idolized by everyone. When people went to the opera then it was not as it is today. They chatted. They might have sung along to the music. There was no holy, sacred atmosphere.”

Ariodante’s Aix debut was interrupted by France-wide strikes by arts-related workers fearful of cutbacks in their benefits. One British singer had her entrance blocked by “about 40 protestors who were blowing klaxons.” By then though, the current Handel revival – one to rival the composer’s last period of rediscovery in the 1920s – was in full swing. “I was a latecomer to Handel,” COC general director Alexander Neef admits, “but once I rounded that corner I saw him next to Mozart and Verdi.”

The Aix success this season of Krzysztof Warlikowski’s young and restless take on Handel’s Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno, confirms what Jones and Debus believe is Handel’s intrinsic connection to today’s popular culture. Handel wrote for the street and his own generation. Il trionfo, Handel’s first oratorio, was written when he was just 22.

Jones himself comes to Ariodante through the prism of pop not opera seria. The formulaic courtliness observed by Handel’s characters and understood by his audience is not replicated in Jones’ direction, although his characters, turning themselves into manipulatable puppets, are looking for motivation from somewhere. But where, the TV? The movies? Today’s sitcom, not George II’s 18th century court, informs this Ariodante.

Maybe this hardly promises the signature shock and awe involved in some of Jones’ earlier productions like his recent grit’n’grimy version of A Midsummer Night’s Dream, his Royal Shakespeare Company debut, which had him labelled a “vandal.”

Believing that “theatre and opera are marginal to most people,” Jones says, “I am selfishly willing these great works work. And I am trying to work with people who can stimulate.”

Debus is on board with that. “I cannot say I have a vast experience with Baroque music although I’ve conducted it here and there and one of my favourite composers is Bach,” he says. “At the end though, no matter how much you do research on how the music may have been played at the time, in the end it’s the interpretation that makes the music work. You have to have someone with the right instinct for the music and the vastness of the emotion there. The result can be a very lively performance that also touches you.”

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marco berti and sondra radovanovsky in norma (san francisco opera, 2014), photo: cory weaver.
On March 26, 2009, during a live radio broadcast and webcast from the Rolston Recital Hall of the Banff Centre in the Alberta Rockies, the young Canadian composer Andrew Staniland became a double winner. The jury in the CBC/Radio-Canada Evolution competition for young Canadian composers named him the winner of both the National Grand Prize ($20,000) and the Prix de l’Orchestre de la Francophonie Canadienne ($5,000) for his composition Devoolution, a work composed during a month-long residency (along with his co-finalist composers, David Adamcyk, Vincent Ho, Geoff Holbrook and Gordon Williamson at the Banff Centre). The live audience and the online listeners voted too and, accordingly, the People’s Choice award ($5,000) went to Vincent Ho.

CBC/Radio-Canada’s Evolution Composers Competition was a unique event. It followed in the footsteps of the earlier CBC/Radio-Canada National Radio Competition for Young Composers, which had been the principal means by which the national music departments of both CBC Radio and Radio-Canada (with the collaboration of the Canada Council for the Arts) identified and developed emerging young Canadian composers. I served as English Radio coordinator of that competition, which ran from 1974 to 2003.

It had been a productive investment in talent development; its laureates, collectively, form a Who’s Who of Canadian composers of the present, people such as Denys Bouliane, Brian Current, Chris Paul Harman, Melissa Hui, Kelly Marie Murphy, Michael Oesterle, James Rolfe and Ana Sokolovic. The Grand Prize winner of what turned out to be its final edition, in 2003, was Analia Luigdar.

Following that 2003 competition, when we would have begun planning the next edition of the project, my Radio-Canada co-coordinator and I were advised that a new direction would be required for any future competition. A small group of producers from both CBC and Radio-Canada was formed, and we drafted a number of proposals that addressed several criteria, especially a desire for the inclusion of a much greater new media component. The process of discussing, debating the details of the proposals and persuading all the various authorities in both networks proved to be a very long one. Eventually, the CBC/Radio-Canada Evolution competition launched in 2008.

Canadian composers under the age of 35 were invited to submit samples of their work to a pre-selection jury. There were 150 entries, and five composers were selected by the jury as finalists to advance to the second round, which was held at the Banff Centre. Each finalist composer received a $5,000 grant as recognition of their selection.

In March of 2009, the five finalists arrived in Banff and participated in a draw to determine the final details of the orchestraition of the competition pieces they would write during their month-long residency. While at Banff, the composers also produced blogs describing the experience of composing competitively. A team of videographers documented the residency. The blogs, videos and other assets were posted online, providing the public a window into the finalists’ experiences as they composed their competition pieces.

The Ensemble contemporaine de Montréal (ECM+) and their artistic director, Véronique Lacroix, were chosen as the performing entity for the final phase of Evolution, due in part to their demonstrated commitment to the mission of encouraging emerging composers. The members of ECM+ arrived in Banff at the end of the composition process, rehearsed the newly composed works and then performed the five compositions in a live broadcast/webcast in the presence of the final-round jury. Andrew Staniland and Vincent Ho prevailed as winners; all five composers gained valuable experience and international visibility, not to mention the performances and broadcasts on both radio networks.

The Evolution competition was praised as a resounding success. The new format, combining both new media and conventional broadcasting, appeared to achieve the goal of encouraging emerging young Canadian composers, while providing audiences unprecedented access to and involvement in the various stages of the competition. In fact, the members of the organizing team, producers Sandy Thacker at CBC, Pascale Labrie at Radio-Canada and I were awarded a CBC President’s Award later in 2009 for our efforts. Unfortunately, major structural and budgetary changes were under way at both CBC and Radio-Canada that gradually reduced their capacity to produce original content; despite efforts to continue and develop the young composers’ competition, it was to be no more.

For the participating young composers, however, the Evolution experience proved to be a watershed moment. Looking back, Andrew Staniland makes the following observations: “In retrospect, 2009 was a turning point for me ... On the positive side, it was a year of winning the National Grand Prize at the CBC’s Evolution Composers Competition, and the year I was offered an amazing job at Memorial University, a place I am proud to call home. On the negative side, it was the last year of the CBC Young Composers Program. I was one of the last young composers to enjoy the mentorship and visibility that the CBC had so richly offered to previous generations. While I am grateful for the support I received and the relationships made, I know that composers coming after me will have a harder go of it.”

“I remember the final night of the Competition in March 2009. It was a capstone event preceded by a wonderful month surrounded by creativity, amazing colleagues and the natural splendours that Banff is well known for. I was stunned when they called my name as the grand prize winner. Stunned not only for the honour, but by the palpable contrast in the room. Many of the CBC crew working that night were given notice that very evening that their jobs were gone. On the stage, a prize bestowed; in the control room, layoffs and the final dismantling of new music at the CBC. That last CBC young composers competition was a very bright light in a very dark time.”

A dark time indeed. The years between 2007 and 2010 marked the cessation of the various projects that had supported the development of Canadian composers at CBC Radio, including the CBC Radio Orchestra, CBC Radio’s participation in the International Rostrum of Composers, the CBC Records label, CBC commissions, CBC composition competitions and the network contemporary music program Two New Hours. In spite of this, young composers who had enjoyed earlier support from CBC Radio continued to develop and flourish. For example, Andrew Staniland’s requiem for the AIDS pandemic, Dark Star Requiem (words by Jill Battson, commissioned by Tapestry New Opera) was a highlight of the 2010 Luminato Festival. Our CBC Radio recording of this major work has recently been leased by the Centrediscs record label and is now available to the public. The release of Dark Star Requiem will receive special notice this fall as we approach World AIDS Day on December 1.

The long legacy of CBC Radio’s development of Canadian composers was a proud one, inspired by The Broadcasting Act and marked by the creation of significant works by distinctive Canadian artists. I was pleased to play a role, along with many gifted colleagues, in that history. Whether the road ahead offers similar promise for future generations of emerging Canadian composers remains to be seen.

David Jaeger is a Toronto-based composer, producer and broadcaster.
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