OUT WITH THE OLD
IN WITH THE NEW
COMBINED ISSUE
DECEMBER/JANUARY
“Tafelmusik owns this town when it comes to Handel’s seasonal classic.”
– The Globe and Mail

TAFELMUSIK’S ORIGINAL MESSIAH
Amanda Forsythe, soprano, Krisztina Szabó, mezzo-soprano, Colin Balzer, tenor, Tyler Duncan, baritone

HANDEL MESSIAH
Directed by Ivars Taurins
December 14–17 at 7:30pm
Koerner Hall, 273 Bloor St. W.
(416) 408-0208

SING-ALONG MESSIAH
Directed by “Herr Handel”
December 18 at 2pm
Massey Hall, 178 Victoria St.
(416) 872-4255

INTIMATE GERMAN BAROQUE
Featuring Peter Harvey, baritone
Long-time Tafelmusik collaborator Peter Harvey joins Music Director Emeritus Jeanne Lamon and a chamber ensemble of musicians for this exploration of the richly passionate music written in Germany in the decades before J.S. Bach.
January 19–21 at 8pm, January 22 at 3:30pm
Jeanne Lamon Hall, Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre
427 Bloor St. W.
(416) 964-6337

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tafelmusik.org
Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 8PM
KOERNER HALL
Tickets start at only $45
Violinist Gidon Kremer his Kremerata Baltica perform a program entitled “Russia – Masks and Faces” with works by Weinberg, Tchaikovsky, Pärt, and Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition accompanied by visuals by Soviet era artist Maxim Kantor.
Generously supported by David G. Broadhurst

The Glenn Gould School Concerto Competition Finals
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 10AM MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
Free (ticket required)
Hear the talented solo performers of The Glenn Gould School compete for the opportunity to perform a concerto with the Royal Conservatory Orchestra during the 2017-18 season.

Rebanks Family Fellowship Concert
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7 7:30PM MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
Free (ticket required)
Hear artists on the cusp of major careers. These concerts feature solo and chamber works performed by Rebanks Fellows currently enrolled in the one-year Rebanks Family Fellowship and International Performance Residency Program at The Glenn Gould School.
Generously supported by the Rebanks Family and The W. Garfield Weston Foundation

Academy Chamber Orchestra
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17 7:30PM MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
Free (ticket required)
String students from the Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists come together as the Academy Chamber Orchestra to perform two special concerts.

Diana Doherty and Dennis Kim
SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2PM MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
Tickets are $25
Australian oboist Diana Doherty, known for her “brilliant playing,” (The Australian) is currently Principal Oboe with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Canadian violinist Dennis Kim was recently appointed Concertmaster with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. They will perform works by Bach, Mozart, and others.

JCT Trio
SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 8PM KOERNER HALL
Tickets start at only $25
A sizzling new ensemble features Stefan Jackiw (violin), Jay Campbell (cello), and Conrad Tao (piano). They will perform trios by Ives and Dvořák, as well as one early and one late trio by Mozart.
Generously supported by David G. Broadhurst
Part of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Mozart Festival

Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 8PM PRE-CONCERT CHAT 7:15PM KOERNER HALL Tickets start at only $45
Violinist Gidon Kremer his Kremerata Baltica perform a program entitled “Russia – Masks and Faces” with works by Weinberg, Tchaikovsky, Pärt, and Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition accompanied by visuals by Soviet era artist Maxim Kantor.
Generously supported by David G. Broadhurst

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OPERA CANADA CHORUS
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Donata D’Annunzio Lombardi, soprano
Diletta Rizzo Marin, mezzo soprano
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Salute to Vienna
New Year’s Concert
Celebrate with Strauss Waltzes and Operetta Excerpts, featuring European Singers, Dancers and Full Orchestra!

Strauss Symphony of Canada
Matthias Fletzberger, conductor (Vienna)
Polina Pasztircsák, soprano (Budapest)
Alexander Kaimbacher, tenor (Vienna)
Featuring dancers from Kiev-City Ballet &
International Champion Ballroom Dancers

Sunday, Jan. 1, 2017 at 2:30 pm
Roy Thomson Hall

Artists and programme subject to change
ATMA Classique is delighted to reissue Simphonies des noëls, the very first recording made by Les Violons du Roy and Bernard Labadie. Featuring instrumental works celebrating the nativity by 17th and 18th century composers, this album includes Corelli’s famous Christmas Concerto in G minor.
Bangs and Whimpers

A
t some times of the year (and in some years more than others) I find myself thinking about my dear former neighbour, Ida Carnevali, founder of the Kensington Carnival Arts Society (KCAS).

As I wrote in this spot, back in May 2006, the various projects of KCAS over the decades were “a living example in the art of throwing some transforming activity into the path of the ordinary, nowhere more dramatically and effectively than in the annual Kensington Festival of Lights which to this day takes the form, at sunset every winter solstice, of a hand-made lantern-lit Market-wide march, from scenario to scenario, re-enacting all the world’s yearning for light.”

“Scenario ambulante,” she called it, organizing various scenes to be performed along the route of the march, enlisting everyone she could round up to participate and then leading the audience on a journey to discovery the story.

As I wrote back then, “It is that potential for accidental discovery that I yearn for in the urban context. Urban art, it seems to me, should be judged by the extent to which it can be ‘come across’ by people engaged in the ordinary. And even more so by the extent to which the artists themselves are willing to go beyond ‘business as usual’ by availing themselves of the opportunities for chance encounters and spontaneous collaboration.”

In the KCAS Festival of Lights solstice drama, during the Ida years, there were great battles in the streets between giant puppets representing forces of darkness and light, sometimes Hannukah scenes, there were great battles in the streets between giant puppets representing the artists themselves are willing to go beyond “business as usual” by availing themselves of the opportunities for chance encounters and spontaneous collaboration.

It was interesting to read what I wrote ten years ago about urban art and the need for accidental discovery, and about artists being willing to go beyond the ordinary. Much more than I felt back then, it seems as though these are things that willy-nilly are under way, and somehow they make more easily described sense this time round.

Take the World View column in this issue (page 4), as an example, with its description of secret concerts, and how they have the potential to breathe life into ordinary space. “Ida knew that,” I say.

And after that it snowballed effortlessly into a tradition which rekindles without discussion every time there is snow at the solstice.

But I have to confess that what got me thinking about Ida on this particular day was a gloomer thought – that sometimes a year

THANKS TO THIS MONTH’S CONTRIBUTORS
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FOR OPENERS | DAVID PERLMAN
deserves to go out without any fanfare, especially a year as loud and globally destabilizing and politically topsy-turvy as 2016 has been. Maybe instead it should be sent slinking into the night with neither a wish nor a prayer, nor even a snowball hurled after it.

“Not with a bang but a whimper,” as T.S. Eliot said?

Well, maybe. But then again, maybe not. If I look around this room, change goes on here at The WholeNote, in lots of quietly methodical and interesting ways.

One example: last month you could have accessed a flip-through edition of this print magazine three days before the print edition hit the street, and within a couple of days of the print magazine hitting the street you could have gone to the online listings on our website and used the Ask Ludwig search engine there for listings in any genre, geographic zone and date range we cover.

(Ten years ago, by contrast, if you wanted to look at our live concert listings you would have waited for a copy of the magazine to arrive at one of the hundreds of places to which it was distributed in the thousands, by a dedicated crew of drivers and hoppers, most of them music lovers themselves. Just for you, dear reader, to pick up, free of charge.)

We still do that, so you still can. (And a quiet thank you to all the drivers and hoppers who make that fact possible, month in and month out.)

But this month if you’d known about it, you could have accessed the searchable online listings for December/January a full week before we went to press. And, all going as planned, if you go back to the website to Ask Ludwig for help at the beginning of January, you will find hundreds of listings already on line, clear through to the end of the season. More than ever, when the world feels dauntingly big, everything that adds to the potential for accidental discovery of art and music on a human scale is a victory of sorts.

Throw a snowball in a fire and make a wish.
Parallels can be an interesting way of laying down the tramlines of a story, as long as one doesn’t try to force them to intersect. Around the time I was planning to get together for what seems to be becoming an annual (podcast) chat with concert-pianist Stewart Goodyear, I received in the mail, courtesy Prism Publishers, a just-published memoir titled Above Parr: Memoir of a Child Prodigy by pianist Patricia Parr, due to be launched on December 1 at Hazelton Place in Toronto (the same day this issue of our magazine hits the streets).

Growing up in Toronto features prominently in Patricia Parr’s story, as does in Stewart Goodyear’s. So too does the challenge of what one might call “the downside of the upside” – namely how the individual artist deals with being labelled a child prodigy very early on, in a culture that takes nearly as much delight in falling stars as it does in rocket-like rises to fame.

Patricia Parr’s rise was particularly meteoric. She had played her first solo concert at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto in 1944, at the age of seven, attracting plaudits from the music critics of all three Toronto papers.

“Genius,” ‘wonder child,” ‘prodigy.’ On it went: a litany of accolades,” she writes. “From the age of eight onwards, I was performing as soloist with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in Massey Hall; the Toronto Philharmonic at the ‘Prom Concerts’ in Varsity Arena; the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in the Eastman Theatre, and the New York Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall. I held the distinction of being the youngest artist ever to be engaged in a concert-pianist Stewart Goodyear, I received in the mail, courtesy Prism Publishers, a just-published memoir titled Above Parr: Memoir of a Child Prodigy by pianist Patricia Parr, due to be launched on December 1 at Hazelton Place in Toronto (the same day this issue of our magazine hits the streets).

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a row, playing all five Beethoven piano concerti in a single concert. Discussing the Niagara concert, I challenged his commitment to chronological order, pointing out that he had played No.2 before No.1. He was quick to set me straight, pointing out that No.2 was in fact composed before No.1 was.

It’s as though he commits the the pieces he performs to logical and emotional memory, by accessing the emotional and historical narrative of a given composer’s life as it reveals itself, moment by moment in the works that give expression to that life. Goodyear will freely admit that his approach to the music he plays is very emotional, and he’s never shy of letting loose dynamically to express it. “I don’t mind making an ugly sound,” I remember him saying, “but it has to be what the composer was feeling.”

Autobiography: It is also possible to see how he applies that same storytelling rigour to the mixed programs he puts together for recitals. Take his upcoming concert December 4 at Koerner Hall. There are tell-tale fingerprints of his musical relationship, past and present, with Toronto, his home town, all over the program.

It starts with the first piece on the program, Bach’s Partita No.5 in G Major BWV 829 which was, as Goodyear explains, on the very first recital that Glenn Gould gave, in 1955, at the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC. That particular Gould recital captured Goodyear’s imagination to such an extent, that he reconstructed the same program last year at the Phillips Collection, in celebration of the 60th anniversary of Gould’s original landmark recital (and will repeat it again later this spring on February 5 for the Women’s Musical Club of Montreal).

The program continues with Beethoven’s Sonata No.32 in C Minor Op. 111, one of the first three that the 15 year-old Goodyear had to learn for Fleisher at Curtis, and the triumphant finale of his first one-day Beethoven Sonatathon as part of Luminato, at Koerner Hall, in 2012. The program then continues with a work of his own, Acabris! Acabra! Acabram! a world premiere based on a rather diabolical French Canadian fable and commissioned from Goodyear by Phil and Eli Taylor (name sponsors of the young artist program at the RCM) in celebration of the sesquicentennial.

Two diabolically difficult pieces by Fryderyk Chopin follow (Fantaisie-Impromptu in C-sharp Minor Op. 66 and the Ballade No. 4 in F Minor Op. 52) after which the program concludes with what he calls the “dessert after the main course” selections from his own concert-length arrangement of Tchaikovsky’s Nutcracker (which incidentally he will take to the Phillips Collection this year December 18, in a return visit “after his noteworthy re-creation of Glenn Gould’s iconic 1955 recital last season.”

On the road: Interesting as this one program is, the range (both geographical and in terms of repertoire) that he will cover over the course of the winter and spring tells the story of a solo artist, not content with a particular niche, continually bent on both discovery and rediscovery.

In addition to the performances already mentioned, he will do Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto No.2 in Memphis on January 14 and 15; Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No.1 with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto (January 24, 25 and 27); and then a recital program at the Burlington Performing Arts Centre on February 3, 2017.

After that it’s Grieg’s Piano Concerto in Halifax February 9, Mussorgsky’s original solo piano version of Pictures at an Exhibition in Prague on February 15, Poulenc and Prokofiev in Omaha on March 17 and 18, and to top it off, a performance of the Beethoven Sonatathon on March 28 at the Savannah Music Festival, in Georgia.

“Goodyear’s commitment to classical music began at age three when he was introduced to Beethoven’s piano sonatas through recordings by Vladimir Ashkenazy, which he listened to in a single day,” the notes for the festival inform us...

Two Tales: Parr and Goodyear: parallels can be an interesting way of laying down the tramlines of a story, as long as one doesn’t force them to intersect. The world allows for many different iterations of a fulfilling musical life.
T

wenty-two winters ago, Toronto-based impresarios Attila and Marion Glatz took the plunge. The previous year they had acted on a hunch and rented the George Weston Recital Hall in North York for a New Year’s Day performance of “Salute to Vienna” (the “salute” of the title being a nod to the Vienna Philharmonic’s New Year’s Concert from the Golden Hall in Vienna’s Musikverein, these days, broadcast to over 90 countries all over the world and watched by more than 50 million viewers).

The cautionary wise had told the Glatzes they were crazy – that attempting to get Torontonians to go out to such a thing on New Year’s Day was folly. Short version, they sold out the Weston that very first year.

“Just a fluke,” the pundits continued to warn. “Take our word for it. We know the city. After the last Handelian ‘Amen’ has subsided, the musical Night falls Silent around here, except for drinking songs and increasingly raucous rounds of Auld Lang Syne followed by hungover remorse and resolution writing. Nothing happens till around the tenth of January, after which it’s serious musical business again.”

Being cautious incrementalists and prudent business people, the Glatzes listened to the advice and immediately switched the event from the 1100-seat Weston to 2,500-seat Roy Thomson Hall for the following year. They sold that one out too, as they have done pretty much ever since. Tickets for this year’s iteration are scarce as hens’ teeth, as the saying goes – it’s easier to get tickets to Hamilton (Hamilton Place in Hamilton, Ontario, that is, where the same cast will perform “Salute” a day later).

Flagship and Fleet: Now in its 23rd year, the RTH “Salute to Vienna” is arguably still their flagship event (although the on-the-ground team organizing the January 1 Lincoln Center version might argue differently). In any case, the sheer size of the fleet is now as impressive as the flagship. This year, “Salute” will be staged in 24 North American cities over the first few days of January, seven of them Canadian, and six in Florida alone, according to Andrea Warren, affable VP Marketing and Project Development for Attila Glatz Concert Productions, Inc. Around one third of the Florida attendees are Canadian Snowbirds, according to Andrea Warren, affable VP Marketing and Project Development for Attila Glatz Concert Productions, Inc. Around one third of the Florida attendees are Canadian Snowbirds, according to Andrea Warren, affable VP Marketing and Project Development for Attila Glatz Concert Productions, Inc. Warren tells me, as indeed the Glatzes themselves tend to be these days! Nor is “Salute to Vienna” the only show on the Glatz book. At RTH it has, for the past eight years, been paired with a New Year’s Eve operatic extravaganza titled “Bravissimo,” which starts at 7pm and offers the guarantee that you will be out by 10.

And the Glatz name crops up all over the calendar as presenter or co-presenter of a wide range of potential crowd-pleasing concerts and touring shows. For example, if you type the word Glatz into our “Ask Ludwig” listings search engine at thewholenote.com, for the period October 2016 to January 2017, it yields twelve results, ranging from an October 28 RTH performance titled “Magnificat” by the touring KlangVerwaltung Orchester and Chorgemeinschaft Neubeurern Chorus, to Sony Centre film presentations with live accompaniment (“Amadeus Live” in October and “E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial Live in Concert” in late December to the aforementioned upcoming performances of “Salute to Vienna” and “Bravissimo.”

As mentioned, “Bravissimo” is the New Year’s Eve prequel to “Salute” (albeit featuring an entirely different cast of soloists, a different conductor, and very different repertoire from “Salute’s” Viennese diet of light opera and operetta). It tends to be an operatic highlight reel – overtures, choruses, arias, duets, etc – usually featuring four soloists. They’ve played with the formula from year to year, sometimes matching rising “name” local soloists with Glatz favourites from Europe, sometimes bringing in a purely European cast of soloists. This year it’s the latter, but with, as Warren puts it, “a fun twist. We’re bringing two sets of operatic couples, on and off stage, to kick up the realism in opera’s larger-than-life emotions.”

The “real life” couples are Donata D’Annunzio Lombardi, soprano, Diletta Rizzo Marin, mezzo soprano, Leonardo Caimi, tenor, and Lucio Gallo, baritone. Fittingly enough, it’s the tenor and the soprano (Caimi and Lombardi) who are real-life partners, as are the mezzo and the baritone (Marin and Gallo). Judging from the announced repertoire, audiences will be regaled with everything from the tender to the titillating, ranging through arias, duets, trios, quartets, choruses, overtures and preludes, by Mozart, Puccini, Bizet, Leoncavallo, Verdi, Puccini, Wagner, Offenbach, Mascagni, Bellini...you get the picture. Rest assured, you won’t have to attend a pre-concert chat to figure out whether you’re enjoying yourself (although host for the evening, opera buff Rick Phillips, would be fully capable of delivering one!). Both the chorus and orchestra for the evening, although hired individually for the event (rather than as pre-existing ensembles), will be comprised of seasoned local musical specialists in the repertoire on display.

Baritone Lucio Gallo, a returnee from last year’s event, Warren informs me, is probably the main reason for this year’s formula. “He brought the house down last year,” Warren says, “with a larger-than-life rendition of the quack doctor in Donizetti’s L’elisir d’ amore,
singing “Üdite, udite, o rustici,” strutting across the stage with an enormous bottle of his famous cure-all (in fact, a bottle of cheap Bordeaux), touting it to the village people as a cure for everything from asthma to wrinkles to loneliness.

It might be a bit rash to tout “Bravissimo” as a New Year’s Eve “cure-all” since it will likely precede most of the evening’s hangovers. But very likely a good time will be had by all!

New Year’s Concert 2017
The Vienna Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel
At the top of this story I mentioned that the Glatzes’ “Salute to Vienna” paid homage to the Vienna Philharmonic’s New Year’s gala concert from the Golden Hall in Vienna’s Musikverein.

Just announced, the 2017 Vienna New Year’s Concert will be conducted by Venezuelan-born, 35-year old El Sistema-trained and Los Angeles-based Gustavo Dudamel, the youngest ever conductor to lead the event. It will be his debut at this event, but by no means his first outing with the Vienna Phil, with whom he has appeared as a regular guest conductor, starting as far back as 2007. (He is also in his 18th season as music director of the entire El Sistema project, and continues to lead the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra in Venezuela.)

At first glance, Dudamel and the light-opera-fuelled, Golden Hall New Year’s Day event seem an odd match. As the release about the event pointed out, Dudamel has through the years carried a social force mandate with him wherever he goes; guest-conducting youth orchestras, encouraging socially motivated music projects, or ensuring that young people from disadvantaged communities have access to his concerts. His response to recent events in Venezuela may have somewhat diminished the glow, but entering his eighth season as music director of the LA Phil (and with a contract extended to the end of 2021-22), he has nevertheless been instrumental in dramatically expanding the scope of its community outreach programs, including most notably through the creation of Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA), and related local educational initiatives, which bring music to children in underserved communities of Los Angeles.

With the Vienna Philharmonic regarding the New Year’s Concert as “a musical greeting to the world that is offered in a spirit of hope, of friendship and of peace at the start of the New Year,” it will be interesting to hear (and see) what happens when the spirit of Dudamel and the spirit of Vienna meet.

The live recording of the 2017 New Year’s Concert will be available (via Sony) on CD and as a download (international release on January 9), as well as on DVD and Blu-ray (January 25), on vinyl (March 3) and as a digital long-form video (February 17).

David Perlman can be reached at publisher@thewholenote.com.
Singing Along with Herr Handel

HEATHER WRIGHT

For the last 25 years, my favourite day of the year has been the last Sunday before Christmas. That is the day when, along with thousands of other choral enthusiasts, and conducted by George Frideric Handel himself, I get to sing the wondrous choruses of the Messiah.

The first time I participated in the sing-along, I was eight months pregnant with our first son. I like to think that his musicality and perfect pitch owe something to this first concert experience, albeit in utero. That first time I went by myself, but over the years I have gone with many others, settling over the last decade into a pattern with a treasured friend with whom I regularly sing classical duets. For the past three years, I have had the added pleasure of initiating my daughter-in-law and my granddaughters into this wonderful tradition.

Indescribable pleasures of the sing-along: the soloists, the other singers, the wonderful period instruments used by the Tafelmusik players, their beautiful playing of this amazing piece of music, and the thrill of singing it together, culminating with the exhilaration of the Hallelujah chorus. Even the line-up in the cold outside Massey Hall manages to beguile. Everyone is in high spirits, ready to launch into rousing song once in the warmth of the hall. And those of us who have been doing it for decades know how to dress and when to come….

But, for me, Herr Handel himself (Ivars Taurins), alone, is worth the planning, the lining up, the practising and then singing the hard soprano runs. I believe in his performance. It manages to take us back to that first performance of Messiah in 1742, to live the extraordinary power of the music, while also offering satiric glances at the topical issues du jour. For one afternoon, every year, on the stage of one of the best concert halls in the world, George Frideric Handel lives and manages to beguile. Everyone is in high spirits, ready to launch into rousing song once in the warmth of the hall. And those of us who have been doing it for decades know how to dress and when to come….

Heather Wright, a civil servant working for the Government of Ontario, is a WholeNote reader who loves to sing. For more on Handel’s Messiah in this, and other, productions, see Choral Scene on page 30.

Beat by Beat | Classical & Beyond

Life-Changing Musical Moments

PAUL ENNIS

Charles Richard-Hamelin

It is said that making your mark in a prestigious international competition changes your life and for Charles Richard-Hamelin that is exactly what happened when he was 25. “There is something magical about this legendary hall [Warsaw Philharmonic Hall] that somehow made it possible for me to be myself on stage, and be able to say what I wanted to say, at least most of the time,” he wrote on the Scene and Heard International website.

Richard-Hamelin won the silver medal at the International Chopin Piano Competition in 2015 as well as the Krzysitan Zimerman Prize for best performance of a sonata and his career took off. “This silver medal was of course incredibly unexpected and has single-handedly changed my whole life,” he said. “I’ve never performed professionally outside of Canada before the Chopin and now I have confirmed engagements in Canada, the USA, Poland, France, Spain, Mexico, Japan and South Korea.”

By May 2016 when he spoke to Yves Leclerc (Journal de Québec) he had already given 40 concerts that calendar year with 40 more to come. One of those concerts is his upcoming Sinfonia Toronto performance, December 9, of Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.23 in A Major K488 conducted by Nurhan Arman. The pattern continues in 2017 when he joins Christian Reif and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony January 13 and 14 for Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.20 in D Minor K466. The following evening he gives a recital for the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society that mirrors most of the repertoire Analekta captured on the CD of his May 2016 Quebec City concert – two Beethoven Rondos, Enescu’s Suite No.2 and Chopin’s “Heroic” Polonaise No.6. There his playing sparkled, his confidence was clearly evident, his musicianship mature and engaging.

“I love this new life, even if it is a bit tiring,” he said to Leclerc. “I am not in a position, however, where I can afford to refuse offers that arrive on my table. This is what will enable me to secure a future abroad. I have contracts for the next two years and we will see if it will continue and open doors.”

A mere five months before his Chopin Competition success, he was awarded the prestigious Career Development Award by the Women’s Musical Club of Toronto. That venerable institution will reap the benefits of their prescience when Richard-Hamelin returns May 4, 2017, for his first Toronto solo recital since winning the Chopin Competition prizes.

Isabelle Faust and the Mozart @ 261 Festival.

When German violinist Isabelle Faust was 11, she played in a string quartet. “That was in Stuttgart, where I grew up,” she told Jeff Kaliss (San Francisco Classical Voice, May 28, 2012). “That was my father’s brilliant idea. It was even more unusual than now that young kids would get together and try to do chamber music. My brother Boris also played in this, the viola part. And the parents had a very important role to play, driving everybody from one rehearsal to the other. We played for five years, every weekend rehearsals and lessons and competitions, national and international, and we started, slowly, to play little concerts. At age 15, we stopped with that. I wanted to make an impression with my solo playing, [to learn] where I actually stood internationally. So I went to participate in this Leopold Mozart Competition in Augsburg, and I was so lucky. I won it right away. So that opened a new chapter in my musical life.”

Winning led to her playing Dvořák under Yehudi Menuhin, an experience she found to be special since “if you play the standard repertoire, you can see that the conductor knows every little corner, and whether technical difficulties require a bit of attentive conducting.”

PAUL ENNIS
Known for her pristine sound and incisive approach, Faust will be the soloist in Mozart’s Violin Concertos Nos. 1 and 3 in Koerner Hall January 18 and 20, part of the TSO’s Mozart @ 261 Festival. All five of the composer’s concertos for violin were completed during the year he turned 19 (1775) but none is so universally loved as the elegant, playful and joyous Third which is particularly tuneful and buoyant.

When Faust spoke with Aart van der Wal for the Dutch website Opus Klassiek in April 2011, she talked about keeping an open mind (and open ears) about different performances of familiar repertoire: “Music must be enjoyed without prejudice. I notice so often that people have made up their minds already before really listening to a piece. They know it all, they have heard it so many times, and they know exactly which recordings are fabulous and which are not. It happens often that one is so deeply engaged with one specific recording or interpretation that each and everything else is compared to and diminished by it. I was at a concert where a Beethoven symphony was performed. One of the critics recognized me and, already before the performance, started to explain to me which specific very old recording he thought was the one and only version of this symphony… I advised him not to go to any concert anymore because he would never be happy with any living conductor, or any live performance for that matter.”

Mozart @ 261 begins January 11 and 12 under Peter Oundjian, with wunderkind Leonid Nediak (b.2003) playing Mozart’s final piano concerto on a program that also includes Mozart’s moving Symphony No.40 K550. The festival continues January 13 and 14 when Emanuel Ax brings his pianistic geniality to the spirited Concerto No.16 K451 and the effervescent Concerto No.22 K482. Mozart’s vigorous Symphony No.33 K319 opens the program with the TSO led by Michael Francis. Bernard Labadie leads the orchestra in the grand Symphony No.38 K504 “Prague” which concludes the January 18 and 20 concerts.

The Heath Quartet. The Heath Quartet – making their Canadian debut in concerts in Kitchener-Waterloo and Toronto in January – is a young British ensemble whose star has recently risen considerably since their recording of Tippett’s string quartets won Gramophone magazine’s 2016 Chamber Music Award. It was their debut recording. A slew of adjectives like “vibrant, adventurous, irresistible energy” has followed in their wake over the last few years. First violinist Oliver Heath, violist Gary Pomeroy and cellist Chris Murray originally met at Manchester’s Royal Northern College of Music. Five years after getting together, they moved to London in 2009 where they met Cerys Jones, freshly returned from graduate studies at Juilliard. She became their second violinist, and their career path ascended. Now, November 2016, she has announced that she is stepping down from the quartet to devote more time to her family.

“We had eight wonderful years with Cerys,” Ollie Heath told me via email. “But that chapter has now closed and we are looking forward to the next stage in the future of the quartet.” I asked what qualities he was looking for in a new violinist. “To be a great second violinist you
need many different qualities,” he said. “To be a first-rate violinist and musician, of course, and to have the ability to be the glue of the ensemble, but most importantly you need a strong fire in your belly! Our first teacher said a good second violinist is always on the brink of revolution.”

I asked how he would characterize the ensemble’s approach to quartet playing. “We try to be as truthful to the composer’s intentions as possible,” he said. “To discover the way of speaking each composer’s language in a way that communicates most dynamically the emotional core of the work. Also we are very communicative with one another when we perform – there is a lot of energy that flows between the members of the quartet. We are also open to things being different from performance to performance – we never try to create a definitive way to interpret a work.”

The programs in Toronto for Moorendale Concerts January 22 and for the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society January 20 are somewhat similar, with Bartók’s first and Dvořák’s 13th in each, but opening with Bach Organ Preludes in Toronto and Beethoven’s Op.18 No.3 in Waterloo.

I asked how he constructs a program. “Nearly always we begin a concert with a piece from earlier in the repertoire,” Heath said. “The simpler, cleaner textures and conversational aspects of these pieces is a good way of bringing everyone ‘into the room,’ and introducing the possibilities of what a string quartet can do. The second work is often more complex – more demanding on both listener and player. We then fill the second half with a more generously sized work – from one of the Romantic, nationalist composers or one of the big Beethoven quartets.”

Ergo Bartók’s masterful String Quartet No.1 Op.7 which is formally modelled on Beethoven’s unsurpassable String Quartet No.14 Op.131 (the movements of each are played without a break, for example). And Dvořák’s String Quartet No.13 Op.106, with its joyous opening, poetic slow movement, idiomatic third, and ebullient conclusion, one of the composer’s most expressive chamber works, emblematic of his return home in 1895 after his American sojourn.

Till Fellner. Viennese-born Till Fellner has spoken elsewhere of his pleasure working with Kent Nagano and the Montreal Symphony on their ECM recording of Beethoven’s Fourth and Fifth Piano Concertos, mentioning the orchestra’s ability to play softly and transparently. In our conversation for The WholeNote’s March 2015 issue, I asked about his own transparent approach with its focus on the music’s singing lines. He confirmed that transparency (clarity) and a singing way of playing the piano are essential goals of his. He told me that when he played for his teacher Alfred Brendel in 1990, it was the first movement of Beethoven’s Appassionata Sonata that started the teaching process. Brendel told him that the beginning of a Beethoven sonata was crucial, that everything is there. Brendel also said that your playing should be so clear that a musical person would be able to write down the score just by listening.

Fellner’s subtle approach and the apparent ease with which he and the OSM carry it off augurs well for their appearance performing Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No.4 Op.58 at Roy Thomson Hall December 8. In a brief interview (available on YouTube) with Jim Cunningham of Classical 89.3 in Pittsburgh, Fellner talked about the character of that same concerto which he was about to perform with the Pittsburgh Symphony in late November 2013: “It’s a very poetic piece, a lyrical piece – even pastoral – so it’s very different from the other Beethoven concertos. The second movement is an Andante con moto so it shouldn’t be played too slowly. It’s a tragic movement. The music kind of dies away at the end of this movement. There are lyrical elements in the third movement but there is also this joy and enthusiasm. It’s like seeing a person you haven’t seen for a very long time.”

December 13, Fellner turns his musical artistry to Brahms (Four Ballades Op.10) and Schumann (Humoreske in B-flat Major) in a recital presented by the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society.

Music Toronto. The invigorating sounds of the St. Lawrence Quartet will again fill the Jane Mallett Theatre, January 26. The exuberant Geoff Nuttall leads the quartet in their continuing examination of the treasure trove that is the music of Haydn, this time with his Quartets Op.20 Nos.1 and 5. The two Haydn quartets booked works by Rachmaninoff and Jonathan Berger. On his website, Berger describes Suallow, commissioned by the St. Lawrence String Quartet in celebration of their 25th year: “My daughter taught me that swallows communicate in a rich sonic repertoire that humans categorize as chirps, whines, and gurgles. These sounds – lowered in pitch and stretched in time – inspire the musical materials of my sixth quartet. In addition to chirps, whines, and gurgles, the work pays homage to blues musician Mance Lipscomb, as well as Haydn. (In the scherzo of the third movement), and Schubert (in the elegiac fourth movement).”

Young American pianist Sean Chen, who finished an impressive third in the most recent Cliburn Competition makes his Toronto debut January 10 with an ambitious program primarily devoted to his piano transcriptions of larger works. He sets the stage with one of Ligeti’s Musica Ricercata and L’esclaireur du diable (Étude No.XIII) before beginning a series of his own transcriptions: Mozart’s Offertorium from his Requiem and Madalmina (Catalogue Aria) from Don Giovanni and Rachmaninoff’s Symphony No.2 mvt.3. Beethoven-Liszt’s Symphony No.2 mvt.3 and 4 completes what promises to be a wild ride.

Dec 4: The highly skilled artistry of Toronto’s own Stewart Goodyear is on display at Koerner Hall in a typically ambitious program that includes Bach’s Fifth Partita, Beethoven’s final piano sonata, two Chopin favourites, selections from his own concert-length piano arrangement of Tchaikovsky’s The Nutcracker (’Tis the season) and the world premiere of Acabris! Acabras! Acabram! commissioned in honour of Canada’s 150th birthday. Jan 28: Goodyear returns home to perform Tchaikovsky’s evergreen Piano Concerto No.1 with Peter Oundjian and the TSO after their mini-tour to Montreal and Ottawa.

Dec 11: Simone Dinnerstein links Schubert’s Impromptus and Philip Glass’ Metamorphosis at the Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts in Kingston. If you’re wondering what these two composers share besides a common birthday (January 31), pianist Hans Pålsson shed light on their musical kinship on the Swedish TV series I döda mästares sällskap (In the company of dead masters). One example: they both have an economical way of composing; they use simple harmonics, few tones and a limited amount of musical material.

Dec 11: Syrinx Concerts showcases clarinetist Shalom Bard in trios
The incomparable Marc-André Hamelin in recital

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Tickets after January 1st $60

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Tickets on sale to December 31st $45
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$10 full-time students, $35 accompanying non-students

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by Brahms and Beethoven. **Feb 5:** Syrinx presents two pianists: Walter Buczyński performing his own Sonatas Nos.13 and 14; and Richard Herriot playing works by Chopin, Albéniz, Ravel and Turina. The octogenarian Buczyński, a Canadian icon, is an accomplished pianist whose devotion to the classical repertoire has informed his compositions.

**Dec 13:** The Cameron House, once home to Handsome Ned and countless other musicians, atypically plays host to “A Winter’s Night” with works by Bach, Schumann and Mozart performed by the Duo Mechant (Joseph Nadurata, viola; Linda Shumas, piano) and James Petry, clarinet.

**Dec 13:** Ukrainian-Canadian Dmitri Levkovich’s Heliconian Hall recital includes such staples of the piano repertoire as Chopin’s Sonatina No.2 and 12 Études.

**Dec 19:** The amazing talents of Nadina Mackie Jackson are on display in her traditional “Vivaldi Christmas Concert,” six festive and rarely heard bassoon concerti performed by Toronto’s top professional bassoonists, including Michael Sweeney, Catherine Chen and Jackson, with chamber strings and harpsichord. **Jan 22:** Jackson’s Bassoon out Loud series continues with a recital by Chen, the TSO’s new associate principal, accompanied by pianist Rachael Kerr, performing works by Jeanjean, Elgar and Boudreau, as well as a two-bassoon concerto with Jackson herself.

**Jan 13:** If you’re in **London**, don’t miss the vibrant, musically mature playing of the Dover Quartet in works by Mozart, Britten and Shostakovich (in which they are joined by pianist Arthur Rowe).

**Jan 14:** Pocket Concerts’ latest presentation of quality chamber music in an intimate setting features violinist Csaba Koczó and pianist Emily Rho performing two musical pillars, Beethoven’s Sonata No. 9 Op. 47 “Kreutzer” and Brahms’ Sonata No. 3 in D Minor Op. 108.

**Jan 15:** The Royal Conservatory presents Canadian violinist Dennis Kim, who was recently appointed concertmaster with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, and Diana Doherty, currently principal oboe with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, in works by Bach and Mozart, among others, in Mazzoleni Hall. **Jan 21:** Stefan Jackiw (violin), Jay Campbell (cello) and Conrad Tao (piano) – the JCT Trio – perform an early and a late trio by Mozart as well as music by Ives and Dvořák in this unusual program in Koerner Hall. **Feb 4:** Gidon Kremer and his Kremerata Baltica return to Koerner Hall, thanks to the RCM, in a program with an Eastern European tilt: works by Pärt, Weinberg, Shostakovich (in which they are joined by pianist Arthur Rowe), and his Kremerata Baltica return to Koerner Hall, thanks to the RCM, in a program with an Eastern European tilt: works by Pärt, Weinberg, Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky and Silvestrov.

**Jan 27:** Armenian-born Kariné Poghosyan returns to Sinfonia Toronto to play Schumann’s Impulsive and passionate Piano Concerto in A Minor.

**Jan 28:** at the First Chamber Music Series presents pianist Angela Park, violinist Yehonatan Berick and cellist Rachel Mercer – the AYR Piano Trio – in a Saturday afternoon Hamilton recital. The program by the three high-powered musicians includes works by Vsaëye, Haydn and Sigesmund but the icing on the cake is Schubert’s luminous Trio Op.100 in E-Flat Major. **Jan 29:** the “Star Canadian Trio” travels to the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society’s Music Room for a reprise.

**Feb 7:** Nineteen-year-old violinist Kerson Leong – First Prize-winner in the Junior Category of the 2010 Menuhin Competition – and collaborative pianist Philip Chiu perform works by Ravel, Poulenc, Fauré, Debussy and Dompierre in this free noontime concert at the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre. Leong can also be heard Jan 11 and 12 with the TSO, launching Mozart @ 261 with the famous funeral march.
Ensemble Vivant

CHRISTMAS TIDINGS

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TOUR DATES

Sun Nov 27 - St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Orillia — SOLD OUT
Thurs Dec 1 - River Run Centre, Guelph
Sat Dec 3 - Sanderson Centre, Brantford
Fri Dec 9 - Toronto Centre for the Arts, North York
Sun Dec 11 - FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, St Catharines
Fri Dec 16 - Living Arts Centre, Mississauga
Sun Dec 18 - Dundas Street United Church, London
Wed Dec 21 - Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts
Thurs Dec 22 - Isabel Bader Centre, Kingston
Fri Dec 23 - Centreponté Theatre, Ottawa

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As in jazz, in writing this column it’s sometimes delightful how one small thing can lead into another. Mid-November, publisher David Perlman and I found ourselves in attendance at the Ken Page Memorial Trust gala at the Old Mill (see last month’s column), where each guest received a jazz recording tucked under the napkin on their table. Mine was courtesy of Humber College from their “New Standards” series. All recordings on the Humber Records label feature performances by Humber students and faculty; making the recordings is not only a priceless experience for all involved, but also a neat way to archive the talent that goes through the program.

Speaking of talent, and how one thing leads to another, one of the musicians featured on track two of said New Standards collection was someone I was planning to write about in this month’s column. Ladies and gentlemen, there are three chances this month for you to see one masterclass, Buddy DeFranco, with whom I would jam on the fly. Buddy DeFranco, with whom I would jam on Moonglow – which I remember was one of the few tunes I really knew at the time. In this one masterclass, Buddy DeFranco gave me so much of the encouragement and support I needed in order to continue pursuing music and, in particular, the clarinet.

While in my early studies, I was influenced first by many traditional clarinetists/classics, such as Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Pee Wee Russell, Woody Herman, and, of course, Buddy DeFranco. About two years after I began playing clarinet (at age ten), I would attend a life-changing workshop in Toronto with the one and only Buddy DeFranco, with whom I would jam on Moonglow – which I remember was one of the few tunes I really knew at the time. In this one masterclass, Buddy DeFranco gave me so much of the encouragement and support I needed in order to continue pursuing a career in performance with a focus on clarinet/woodwinds. Studying privately with Vladimir Belov and Peter Stoll, I eventually began to pick up the other woodwinds (alto first, followed by tenor saxophone) and now am equally at home switching between the various doubles.

In the midst of my studies, I would be influenced greatly by Eddie Daniels and Canadian clarinetist, James Danderfer. Both these clarinetists are highly inspirational, as they push the sonic boundaries of contemporary jazz clarinet while also being exceptional saxophonists/composers and arrangers. They would have a huge influence in shaping my perception of what it means to be a jazz clarinetist in the 21st century.

OD: You’ve included two vocal pieces in your album, performed by Denzal Sinclaire. Tell me a bit about this experience and working with singers in general and what that means to you?

JG: While at Humber, I received music lessons and attended classes/ensembles under the tutelage of some of the top musicians in the city and country, such as Pat LaBarbera, Neil Swainson, Geoff Young, Mark Promane, Kirk MacDonald, Drew Jurecka and so many more. The environment of the school welcomes musical exploration and creativity while honing the theoretical, rudimentary and technical skills of jazz and contemporary idioms of music. It was an honour to be surrounded by so many knowledgeable teachers, as well as a prosperity of talented up-and-coming musicians, so many of whom will become the voice of the next generation of professional musicians in Toronto’s music industry. The strong sense of community within Humber provides an incredible support for creative development/collaboration and experimentation. This environment (and the amazing musicians within it) was truly a great setting for me to explore my personal musical ambitions and further pursue my interest in composition and original music.

Jacob Gorzhaltsan’s Fly Softly CD release is December 1 at Jazz Bistro at 9pm; he’s also at the Emmett Ray on December 19 at 7pm.

**Gorzhaltsan and Disterheft: How Humber Helped**

**O R I  D A G A N**

Jacob Gorzhaltsan and James Danderfer are two of the voices you can hear on the Humber College’s prestigious jazz program. Both were influenced by Humber’s community, which provides an incredible support for creative development/collaboration and experimentation. This environment and the amazing musicians within it were truly a great setting for them to explore their personal musical ambitions and further pursue their interest in composition and original music.

Jacob Gorzhaltsan’s Fly Softly CD release is December 1 at Jazz Bistro at 9pm; he’s also at the Emmett Ray on December 19 at 7pm.

OD: You’ve included two vocal pieces in your album, performed by Denzal Sinclaire. Tell me a bit about this experience and working with singers in general and what that means to you?

JG: The album features two vocal pieces sung by Denzal Sinclaire. He is an incredible musician and, in my opinion, is easily one of the greatest male jazz vocalists in Canada, not to mention an incredibly warm and kind-hearted, supportive human being. I had the pleasure of performing with him around a year ago at a few Soulpepper Cabaret concerts and instantly thought his voice would be the perfect fit for a couple of my original songs. It was a real thrill to have him join us in the studio, and I am so thankful for the opportunity and experience. I have always had an interest in lyrics and songs, and it is an absolute delight to be in Toronto where there is such a vast wealth of singers and songwriters. I have been honoured to have shared the stage with so many great Toronto singers, such as Jackie Richardson, Divine Brown, Sophie Milman, JulieMichels, Don Francks, Laura Hubert, Denzal Sinclaire, Denielle Bassels, Andrew Penner, Big Rude Jake and many more. It is such a delight to be surrounded by so many strong and compelling voices, and they have all helped in their own way to shape my playing, expression, and exploration into song/lyric writing.

OD: Tell me a bit about your experience studying at Humber College. What were your favourite aspects of this post-secondary program, and what are the most important lessons you learned there?

JG: While at Humber, I received music lessons and attended classes/ensembles under the tutelage of some of the top musicians in the city and country, such as Pat LaBarbera, Neil Swainson, Geoff Young, Mark Promane, Kirk MacDonald, Drew Jurecka and so many more. The environment of the school welcomes musical exploration and creativity while honing the theoretical, rudimentary and technical skills of jazz and contemporary idioms of music. It was an honour to be surrounded by so many knowledgeable teachers, as well as a prosperity of talented up-and-coming musicians, so many of whom will become the voice of the next generation of professional musicians in Toronto’s music industry. The strong sense of community within Humber provides an incredible support for creative development/collaboration and experimentation. This environment (and the amazing musicians within it) was truly a great setting for me to explore my personal musical ambitions and further pursue my interest in composition and original music.
and at the Burdock Music Hall on December 30 at 8:30pm.

Disterheft: Composer, vocalist and JUNO-winning jazz bassist, Brandi Disterheft has released four records since graduating from Humber College. She also speaks about her time there fondly: “Humber College taught me the importance of memorizing a plethora of jazz standards; I also learned how to rhythm read at brisk tempos. Lenny Boyd taught me Miles Davis solos. Don Thompson allowed me to believe that it is possible to change and revolutionize jazz, as he is one of the great innovators of the double bass. If he could be potently lyrical and play those peaking, clear lines that made your stomach sink, then I also could somehow contribute to the art form via exploration and hard work.”

Disterheft is currently on tour celebrating her latest Justin Time release, Blue Canvas, featuring 80-years-young piano legend Harold Mabern with dazzling drummer Joe Farnsworth. Always one to choose her collaborators carefully, Disterheft reflects upon the experience of working with these two particular musicians: “Harold’s piano playing reflects that potent, romantic nostalgia one can only achieve from a lineage of years of living and hearing the music. His focus while entering that “dream world” when performing reminds me of when I had the opportunity to play with Hank Jones. It seems nothing can get in the way of their music, and it’s their special place. Harold is also a gracious human being who innately supports people. Joe and I have been a rhythm section team as sidemen for numerous records under the bandleader and alto hard-bop player Vincent Herring (Smoke Sessions Records) with other world-class players such as Cyrus Chestnut and Jeremy Pelt. Playing with time with Joe is to effortlessly soar across the sky while holding onto an oversized helium balloon gliding over a raging river. His finesse and power is something I experienced when I was in my early 20s when Laila Biaggi and I opened for Pharoah Sanders at the Toronto Jazz Festival. Joe was playing drums, and you never forget hearing him live for the first time.”

The very same can be said of Disterheft’s own approach to music. In her hands the acoustic bass drips gloriously with a well-oiled liquid groove, and what makes her exciting to watch is that she always goes for it, with each solo resulting in surprising smiles, nods or hollers, depending on the audience.

In his review of Blue Canvas in the September WholeNote, Raúl da Gama wrote that “listening to her is like putting your finger into a naked power-socket,” later adding that she “handles her bass violin with as much visceral audacity as the great Charles Mingus once did...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.” If you get this memo in time, catch Brandi Disterheft on December 3 at Jazz Bistro where she will be celebrating Blue Canvas with Mabern and Farnsworth on the bandstand – do not miss this gifted composer whose interpretations of standards are always fresh. Cheers to Brandi, Jacob, everyone at Humber College and most of all to you, live music lovers, who keep us all going! 🎉

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

Traditions Welcome Christmas!

Tues., Dec. 13, 2016 7:30 p.m.
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Looking Anew at Listening

WENDALYN BARTLEY

Recent world events, and particularly what’s happening to our southern neighbours in the US, have had a great impact on most of us. I’ve been reflecting on a theme that always seems to resurface throughout the ages during times of chaos and disturbance: how can music (and other creative arts) affect and support social change, transformation and even revolution? I agree with the notion that pursuing the creative act itself is one form of resistance. Yet I wonder what these times are asking of us regarding the creative process itself.

On November 23, I attended the Rainbow Nation concert presented by Soundstreams. It was a tribute to the legacy of Nelson Mandela and included a beautiful array of artistic styles and performers from South Africa, Canada and the US. During one of the short theatre skits that functioned as interludes between musical numbers, a conversation between a father and daughter brought home a profound truth. The father was distraught that his daughter was involved in student protests, particularly since his generation had struggled so much for the right to education. Her ringing reply was “Just listen.” The importance of listening is a message I’ve seen written over and over again in the numerous articles that have flooded my social media pages since the US election.

Warbler’s Roost

In my September column, I wrote about New Adventures in Sound Art (NAISA)’s programming of three sound installations as part of the in/future Festival at Ontario Place, noting how the practice of creating site-responsive works requires attention to the multi-layered elements of any given environment.

A few weeks ago, I travelled to a place called Warbler’s Roost to participate in a listening and soundscape weekend. A small group of sound artists gathered at this artist retreat and performance space, located about one hour north of Huntsville, to engage in the process of listening, recording and creating. Organized by the Toronto Soundhacking Meetup group in tandem with Darren Copeland, artistic director of NAISA, we began early on Saturday morning with a soundwalk – a collective act of walking in silence and listening to the environment. We then spent time both individually and in small groups making recordings of both the soundscape and of our sonic interactions with the environment. Back in the Warbler’s Roost studio, we listened to the recordings and then, again collectively, created a short composition from them that was performed later that evening as part of a NAISA concert. Within one day, we went from the simple act of being present with the sounds around us to a form of witnessing through recording and interacting to the act of creation and sharing. In a sense, this is the heartbeat that drives the musical creative act: cultivating presence and witnessing through creativity. These simple actions point to a way forward in generating listening behaviours that can inform and model how to live in a complex and diverse world.

I often find myself writing in this column about the culture and practice of listening. For example, in the October column, I spoke about the listening legacies of both R. Murray Schafer and Pauline Oliveros, along with the next-generation approach of Oliveros’ collaborator Doug Van Nort.

Dealing with these larger questions of social impact is an ongoing process of paying attention to what is emerging from the grist of what is being offered by those committed practitioners involved in the day to day music-making world. So with these thoughts as a background, let’s turn now to what is happening locally in the upcoming months of December and January.

Stephen Clarke

Early in the new year, at Gallery 345 on January 8, Arraymusic Ensemble member Stephen Clarke will present a concert of solo piano works by four composers, each of whom has a very distinctive voice: Giacinto Scelsi (Italy) Udo Kasemets (Canada), Horatiu Rădulescu (Romania/France) and Gerald Barry (Ireland). I talked with Clarke about the repertoire and his interest in the music of these composers, two of whom he has had personal friendships with.

It is the more mystical approach that both Scelsi and Rădulescu share that intrigues Clarke, as both these composers incorporate different influences from Eastern philosophies and religions. In fact it was Rădulescu’s interest in Hindu and Byzantine music and the way it works with natural resonances that sent him in the direction of pursuing what is known as spectral composition, a style that focuses on working with the overtone or harmonic series. Clarke will be performing Rădulescu’s 1968 piano sonata, Cradle to Abysses, a tightly structured atonal work with a mystical atmosphere, which...
was written just before the composer made his shift to spectral-based music. It is often thought that spectral composition began in the mid-1970s with French composers such as Grisey and Murail. However, Rădulescu’s forays into working with overtones, which can take one into a deeper relationship with the natural acoustic world, predate the French school.

To highlight the contrast between spectral and non-spectral approaches, Clarke chose to include Udo Kasemets’ Feigenbaum Cascades (1995) in the program. Hence the title of the concert: “Cascades and Abysses.” The Kasemets piece, a spectral work written originally for Clarke, works with the harmonic series in a “beautifully pure mathematical way that speaks for itself.” In sharp contrast to this simplicity, Clarke will perform two works by Gerald Barry, a composer known for his more hyperactive and ironic approach as demonstrated in his ability to use banal material and infuse it with a highly charged energy. In Humiliated and Insulted, Barry’s piece written for Clarke in 2013, the audience will hear a work that sounds like a congregation singing a hymn, yet something has gone terribly wrong. Everyone is singing together, but not from the same spot in the score and, to make it more pronounced, no one even seems to notice.

Other opportunities to hear Clarke perform include a concert in early March where he will present a complete program of Rădulescu’s music on the Bosendorfer piano at St. Andrew’s Church. This piano comes equipped with extended lower notes, which are called for by the composer in these works. This concert will give fans of spectral composition ample opportunity to hear Rădulescu’s masterful approach. Clarke will also be performing on February 5 in a concert of works by Italy’s Salvatore Sciarrino, this year’s visiting composer at the University of Toronto’s New Music Festival. This final concert of the festival is a collaboration with New Music Concerts during which four of Sciarrino’s works spanning 1981 to 2015 will be heard.

**U of T New Music Festival**

Sciarrino, one of Europe’s leading composers, writes music that seeks to portray the fragility of life, often creating pieces that are on the edge of audibility and pushing the instruments to their extreme limits. In his biography, he describes his style as “leading to a different way of listening, a global emotional realization, of reality as well as of one’s self.” Sciarrino’s music can also be heard during the festival at a concert featuring music for piano on January 30, which will also include works by Nono, Fedele and Berio.

The festival highlight will be the performance on February 1 of Sciarrino’s opera The Killing Flower (Luci mie traditrici) produced by Wallace Halladay and Toronto New Music Projects. The libretto is based upon the play Il tradimento per l’onore, which was first performed in Rome in 1664. A story of intrigue, love, betrayal and murder, the opera has become Sciarrino’s most often performed work out of his 14 music-theatre pieces composed to date. He recognizes the influence cinema plays in the creation of works for the stage and approaches his own creative process with this in mind. He openly declares that what he really wants through his composing is “to change the world.” Additional festival events include the performance of the Karen Kieser Prize-winning work by Sophie Dupuis, Perceptions de La Fontaine, a noon-time lecture by Sciarrino on February 2, and a concert of music by contemporary Italian composers on February 4.

**Electroacoustic Technologies**

Turning now to innovative performers using electroacoustic technologies, two women making waves in this field will be visiting Toronto over the next two months. First, American composer and
sound artist Andrea Parkins, along with her ensemble, will be performing at the Music Gallery on December 20, using interactive electronics to create relationships and contrasts between the real and the ephemeral. She will collaborate in this performance with local artists Lina Allemano, Germaine Liu and Jason Doell. On January 7, theremin virtuoso Carolina Eyck from Germany will perform the world premiere of her latest composition as part of a New Music Concerts program. She will also be in town to celebrate the release of her new CD, Fantasias for Theremin and String Quartet. Other composers whose works will be presented at the NMC event include Canadians D. Andrew Stewart and Omar Daniel, Bohuslav Martinú from Czechoslovakia and Maurice Ravel.

Two events that Soundstreams will be offering will be the return of the popular “Electric Messiah,” December 5 to 7, featuring wild and wacky renditions of Handel’s classic with singers Christine Duncan, Carla Huhtanen, Gabriel Dharmoo and Jeremy Dutcher, with electronic backup from Cheldon “Slowpitch” Paterson on turntables, Jeff McLeod on organ and John Gzowski on guitar. Moving ahead to February, Soundstreams is celebrating 100 years of Estonia’s independence by bringing the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir to town on February 2, performing world premieres by Canadian composers Omar Daniel and Toronto-born Riho Esko Maimets (who is of Estonian heritage), along with compositions by Arvo Pärt.

QUICK PICKS

Canadian Music Centre
Dec 12: Centrediscs CD Launch: Canadian Flute Masterpieces.

Canadian Opera Company
Jan 5: “Vocal Series” – First Nations mezzo-soprano Marion Newman presents a concert on the theme of reconciliation, featuring works by Canadian composers.

Other
Dec 12: Toronto Masque Theatre – No Tongue Will Tally by Harry Somers and Claude Bissell.
Jan 10: Music Toronto – Sean Chen plays two works by Ligeti, as well as his own piano transcriptions.

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FACULTY OF MUSIC

NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL
January 29 to February 5, 2017

The 2017 New Music Festival centres around the work of Italian composer Salvatore Sciarrino, Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor in Composition. Partnering with New Music Concerts, the festival offers insight into the rich Italian culture of contemporary music, alongside the creativity emerging from Toronto and U of T.

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Susan Hoeppner, flute; Cameron Crozman, cello
Wallace Halladay, saxophone; Sharon Wei, viola

Dec.11/16: Jeanie Chung, piano
Shalom Bard, clarinet
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The Dilan Ensemble: (from left) Richard Robeson, Sina Khosravi and Shahriyar Jamshidi.

Beat by Beat | World View

Sofar Sounds Musical Placemaking

ANDREW TIMAR

There’s a new music presenter on the block which also chooses to keep details of its concerts on the down-low. It’s the Toronto iteration of the Sofar Sounds international franchise, begun in 2009 in London, UK, a sort of a Meetup for music concerts. It initially came to my attention because the series has significant world music content, and it’s the primary reason I’m visiting it in this column.

Meet Jonathan Campbell of Sofar Sounds Toronto (SST). He began to organize covert alternate space concerts in the city’s core last year. “SST has regular concerts twice a month. Our secret, intimate shows in alternative locales showcasing the talent and diversity of the city aspire to bring the magic back to live music. We advertise online a [concert] date and the neighbourhood in which it will take place. Yes, we keep the artists secret but [I feel] they will definitely be up the alley of many WholeNote readers.” SST intends to stay: “We’re booked well into 2017.”

I asked about SST’s mission. Campbell explained, “It’s the local branch of the global Sofar Sounds movement, now in nearly 300 cities worldwide. We produce our concerts in alternative locales – offices, studios, galleries, living rooms, backyards and more – celebrating the wealth, diversity, breadth and depth of the artists working and living in or passing through our city.”

By choosing hyperlocal venues with individual curators – they sign up on the SST website for the experience of “hosting a gig” - rather than more typical mainstream halls or commercial pubs, Campbell identifies an important feature of his endeavour: the honouring of cozy “spaces, neighbourhoods and places.” Rather than being a secondary element, a lifestyle soundtrack, he argues that in such intimate, personalized settings, music can be savoured for its own sake. He explicitly referred in our interview to placemaking, a multifaceted approach used by urban planners and human geographers to the planning, design and management of public spaces with the intention of creating spaces that promote people’s health, happiness and wellbeing.

Placemaking is a philosophy and a process with political resonance due to its close relationship to the notion of place identity. Place identity is not purely a theoretical issue, however. It informs a worldwide movement to protect places of significant local heritage in the face of the powerful forces of cultural globalization. Interestingly, it has direct parallels themes in musical themes I occasionally explored in this column: local and regional vs. transnational identities as reflected in music performance, production, mediation, and in audience and critical reception. SST is exploring aspects of this in Toronto. It’s about the room and how the audience feels in it, as much as about the music being performed.

I asked Campbell about SST’s core audience and its incorporation of various global musics. He referred to programming goals including a commitment to ethnically diverse music and raising SST’s profile among world music audiences.

“I think these two issues are deeply related. Geographically, we’ve been downtown directed, but that reflects the nature of our core demographic. The typical person that has signed up [to attend our concerts] is a hip young urbanite in their 20s or 30s, a person whose experience of live music has been mainly relegated to the bars, clubs and other venues of the indie, rock, punk and folk scenes. On one hand we love the idea of having performers of every colour, shape, size, musical style, form, discipline. But, because the bulk of our audience feels at home in the indie, rock, punk and folk genres, it’s been a harder sell to book artists outside of those scenes. On the up side, I think that the more people hear about or experience what our rooms feel like, the more that’s going to change, leading to greater variety in the music genres on offer.”

Campbell’s programming, in line with most Sofar Sounds events around the world, as reflected in their numerous YouTube videos (more on that later), primarily appears to reflect mainstream vernacular music. Great Lake Swimmers, Royal Wood and The O’Pears have presented polished sets. On the other hand, SST has also sought to stretch preconceived hipster notions of the live music experience by expanding what’s on offer. For example, Pocket Concerts presented an authoritatively played program of J.S. Bach string trios. Last December, indigenous cellist/composer Cris Derksen, a 2016 Instrumental Album JUNO nominee, single-handedly built from layers of powwow-ready sounds with her cello, Western classical music chops and new school electronics.

To ramp up audience anticipation, SST has fun holding back the names of the musical acts it presents, yet it does something few other presenters do: it sends follow-up messages to individual ticket holders. Titled “Thanks for Coming! You were watching...” the email messages offer a thumbnail of each artist on the roster. Campbell notes that “we also track alumni artists’ future gigs and link to them on our Facebook page for the benefit of our followers.”

I’m not at liberty to disclose the identity of future performers – remember the lure of the “secret” concert, the cultivated air of mystery and the element of exploration in SST’s mandate? I can, however, speak about a few of the world music performers who have animated its low-keyed venues. On a hot July 2015 evening in the backyard of a private Toronto home, the Rajasthani Barmer Boys raised their voices in praise to perform songs steeped in the Manganiyar Sufi music tradition. Earlier this year Burkina Faso griot Amadou Koune animated the dreary March weather in a downtown walkup with songs accompanied by kora and jembe. Sections of all these sets can be viewed on the SST YouTube channel.

A few weeks ago the Dilan Ensemble directed by kamancheh specialist Shahriyar Jamshidi played a program of Kurdish music. On another show, the ten-piece Toronto band Zuze, mashing up Iranian folk melodies with Afrobeat rhythms, shared a stage with traditional Iranian percussionist Amadou Koune in a set combining Inuktitut song and poetry.

In a different concert, the accomplished Toronto-based Arabic and Jewish musician-singers Maryem Tollar and Aviva Chernick joined Iranian percussionist Naghmeh Farahmand in a new music project dubbed Walking East Trio. In addition, sharing the bill with two other acts, singer-songwriter Dieuwaide Charles sang, accompanying himself on guitar, music reflecting a mix of Haitian roots and African rhythms. That concert, held in a private home in the Trinity Bellwoods neighbourhood (yes, marked “secret” in the invitation), was also part of Toronto’s Third Annual Festival of House Culture, yet more evidence of several layers of placemaking in action.

Campbell confirms that “of the three or four acts at every show, at least one will be a surprise to many in our audience – and that’s our...
intention. I can’t emphasize enough how awesome it’s been to watch audiences react to something clearly completely out of their wheelhouse. Whether it’s Bach played by a chamber trio, a griot singing traditional Burkina Faso songs accompanied by a kora, a rapper backed by live musicians, experimental electronic post-rock, or a solo singer-songwriter, audiences recognize that these are amazing musicians. Before SST, they might see a listing in a magazine or walked by a venue with a sign, but would never imagine going to their concerts. But the in-person experience is a powerful one. It says ‘this is for anyone who wants to hear it.’ It’s been so rewarding for us to be able to introduce artists who don’t generally have access to audiences outside of their own ethnicities. We [imagine that we] live in a city that houses every ethnicity, culture, or tradition on earth, yet we [nevertheless] tend to live in our own local worlds. What’s been amazing to behold is that by creating an air of mystery around audiences not knowing who they’re going to see, we’re able to demonstrate how silly it is that we’re not [culturally] more intermingled. Because great music is great music. Period."

That’s why, he says, a well-known artist like Lena (aka Anastasia Tchernikova) of Musica Reflecta can entrance a room full of people with a program of solo minimalist piano pieces by Philip Glass and Arvo Part as much as a well-known folk group like Great Lake Swimmers, who followed that performance. "There is so much going on in this city, and, to use the old adage, there’s so much that people don’t even know they don’t know about. We want to help change that."

While Campbell makes a strong case for an era of post-genre concert experiences, what’s in it for the individual musician or group? SST promises an attentive audience, an unusual, unexpected, fun, intimate venue with social media follow-ups on Facebook and Instagram. Each act gets a very modest honorarium. More valuable perhaps, SST provides a high-quality edited video of an item in their performance, uploaded directly to the international Sofar Sounds YouTube channel.

For newly formed groups, it’s an opportunity to connect with an enthusiastic young adult audience in an attentive listening “quiet room” environment. For bands used to gigging in noisy bars where the focus is not necessarily on the music they’re making, the latter is a precious quality. For more established musicians, SST facilitates a connection with a young adult audience demographic, to listeners who may not be familiar with their careers, repertoire or even the genre of music they play.

While mum’s the word on the identity of the global musicians appearing in SST’s December and January concerts, I can divulge two of the locations it has already announced. One is the hip Boxcar Social at Harbourfront Centre overlooking Lake Ontario and the other is “a secret location” in Evergreen Brick Works nestled in the neo-bucolic post-industrial setting of the Don River Valley.

After speaking with SST producer Campbell, I am confident that SST’s programming will continue towards its goal of genre diversity. Gongs, ukuleles and dulcimers will undoubtedly share future SST rooms with guitars, drum kits and keyboards.

Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer. He can be contacted at worldmusic@thewholenote.com.
The past two years have seen Toronto opera companies unveil exciting new works or new interpretations of older works in December and January. This season, both large and smaller companies are saving these kinds of productions for spring 2017. In April 2017, the Canadian Opera Company presents a new production of Harry Somers’ *Louis Riel* (1967). In the same month, Opera Atelier revives Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s *Médée* (1693), which it will then take to Versailles. Tapestry Opera will present its grandest new opera since *Iron Road* (2001) in the form of Aaron Gervais’s *Oksana G.* in May. And Toronto Masque Theatre will present the world premiere of *The Man Who Married Himself* by composer Juliet Palmer. The reason for all this activity in 2017 is that companies are pulling out all the stops in celebration of Canada’s sesquicentennial that year.

For this December and January, however, most companies are sticking to the tried and true, and, given the general sense of unease in the world, perhaps that is not a bad thing. For professional, fully staged productions, Toronto Operetta Theatre is first off the mark with Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Pirates of Penzance* (1879), the work by the duo most often staged by professional opera companies and the only one to be staged regularly in non-English-speaking countries. Since 2014, there have been productions of *Pirates in Münster, Luxembourg, Caen and Saarbrücken.*

**TOT’s Pirates**

This year’s *Pirates* will give audiences a chance to hear two performers who are better known for their work with Opera Atelier, sing in a genre far removed from Baroque opera. Tenor Colin Ainsworth, who will sing Jason for Opera Atelier in next year’s *Médée,* sings the role of Frederic, the young lad mistakenly apprenticed to a pirate. Bass-baritone Curtis Sullivan, who has sung La Haine in *Armide* and Samiel in *Der Freischütz,* will take on the role of Major-General Stanley. TOT favourite Elizabeth Beeler will sing Ruth, the “piratical maid of all work,” and Vania Chan will sing the Donizetti-like role of Mabel. Austin Larusson and Anthony Rodrigues will share the role of Sergeant of Police, and Nicholas Borg and Janaka Welihinda will share the role of the Pirate King. Derek Bate, resident conductor for the COC, will conduct and TOT artistic director Guillermo Silva-Marin will direct. The operetta runs December 27, 30, 31, 2016, and January 6, 7 and 8, 2017.

**Mozart’s Flute**

The winter season at the Canadian Opera Company begins January 19 with Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*. This will be the first revival of the COC’s own production, designed by Myung Hee Cho and directed by Diane Paulus, that had its premiere in January 2011. For the revival, Ashlie Corcoran will recreate Paulus’ direction. Tenors Andrew Hajj and Owen McCausland will alternate in the role of Tamino. Sopranos Elena Tsallagowa and Kirsten MacKinnon will share the role of Tamino’s beloved Pamina. Baritones Joshua Hopkins and Phillip Addis will alternate as Tamino’s bird-selling sidekick Papageno. And bass-baritones Goran Juric and Matt Bohler will share the role of the magician Sarastro, accused of having kidnapped Pamina. Coloratura soprano Ambur Braid, recently seen as Dalinda in Handel’s *Ariodante* at the COC, will sing the demanding role of Pamina’s mother, the Queen of the Night, at all 12 performances. Tenor Michael Colvin is Pamina’s guard Monostatos. The conductor will be Bernard Labadie, best known as the founding conductor of the Montreal-based period instrument ensemble Les Violons du Roy. The opera runs from January 19 to February 24.

**Street Scene by Request**

If one is looking for more unusual fare, Kurt Weill’s American opera *Street Scene* (1947) is coming back to town for the first time since Voicebox/Opera In Concert mounted it Feb 1, 2015, at the Jane Mallet Theatre. This time, Opera by Request is taking the ambitious project on. With lyrics by the poet Langston Hughes and a book by the playwright Elmer Rice, based on his own play, the action takes place outside a multi-ethnic tenement on the East Side of Manhattan over two hot days in 1946. The opera has two plots involving the Maurrant family. One plot line follows young Rose Maurrant and her romance with a neighbour Sam Kaplan, though she is being harassed both by her boss and by another neighbour. The other follows Rose’s parents, Anna and Frank, and Anna’s affair with the milkman Steve Sankey. Subsidiary stories deal with a woman about to have a baby and the eviction of a couple who can’t pay the rent.

One impediment to the opera being produced is that it has 19 named singing roles, ten named speaking roles and other roles for children and dancers. The cast is headed by soprano Shannon Mills as Rose, soprano Kellie Masalas as Anna, baritone Austin Larusson as Frank and Avery Krisman as Sam.

Music director and pianist for the opera, William Shookhoff, provided me with some background to the production. “*Street Scene* came about as a project envisioned by Shannon Mills, who works with a number of the COC children, and Brandon White, whose specialty is collaborative theatre and design. It was their feeling that this piece was as relevant now as ever (perhaps more so since November 8) and that, to do it justice, it needed to be presented in a more descriptive format than the usual concert arrangement. The church will be transformed by use of backdrops, suggesting tenement apartment...
windows, and various minimal set pieces. Dress will indicate hot summer and there will be no music stands, with far more interaction than concert format allows." Street Scene runs December 2 and 3 at the College Street United Church.

Opera by Request has two other concert performances slated for January. On January 14, it presents Humperdinck’s Hansel and Gretel (1891) with Kate Carver as the pianist; and on January 27, Mozart’s Don Giovanni (1787) with William Shookhoff as the pianist.

St. Anne’s G&S Treat

For Gilbert and Sullivan fans there is a real treat coming up in January. The amateur company St. Anne’s Music and Drama Society (MADS) will present a fully staged production, with an 18-piece orchestra, of The Grand Duke (1896), the final comic opera written together by the famous duo. In its day, it was the partnership’s only financial failure, unlike the equally rare Utopia, Limited (1893) that preceded it. Like G&S’s first collaboration Thespis (1871), it concerns a theatrical troupe that takes on political power. The Central European setting allows Sullivan the chance to imitate Viennese music extensively for the first time. The D’Oyly Carte Opera Company did revive Utopia, Limited once for the company’s centenary in 1974, but it never revived The Grand Duke, even though it recorded both. This neglect only helped reinforce the view elsewhere that these two were undeserving of revival.

Productions by other companies such as MADS, however, have found that with cuts mostly to Gilbert’s unusually extensive dialogue, The Grand Duke is eminently enjoyable. MADS, first launched in 1963 by pianist Clifford Poole, wife Margaret Parsons, and Roy Schatz, has placed The Grand Duke in its regular cycle of G&S operas, meaning it is performed every 11 or 12 years. It was previously staged in 1996 and 2007.

Roy Schatz’s daughter Laura, the stage director, informed me of the challenges and rewards of the piece: “I very much like The Grand Duke and think it deserves to be performed more often. One of the challenges for any group who wishes to perform it is the number of leads necessary – 14 to be precise. It should not have come up in our rotation for another couple of years, but our group recently had an influx of very talented singers and I wanted to be able to feature them as well as our regular wonderful leads. We have a cast of over 50 and they are enjoying the challenge of learning one of the G&S operas that is seldom performed.” The Grand Duke will be staged at the Parish Hall of St. Anne’s Anglican Church from January 27 to February 5 for four evening and four matinee performances.

Christopher Holle is a Toronto-based writer on opera and theatre. He can be contacted at opera@thewholenote.com.
The Taliskers’ Eclectic Niche

HANS DE GROOT

Many years ago, in the mid-90s, I sang in the Toronto Classical Singers. When an orchestra was needed, the choir as often as not engaged a newly formed group, the Talisker Players Chamber Music Orchestra, to accompany us. Talisker was set up under the leadership of the violist Mary McGeer and violinist Valerie Sylvester to provide amateur choirs with needed instrumental accompaniment. Within ten years, the Players were accompanying between 20 and 30 choirs a year and they maintain an active schedule to this day, with McGeer still active in the ensemble. Important as the orchestra is on the choral scene, within five years of its founding, the Talisker Players Chamber Ensemble had also come into being, and it is for the latter that the group is now best known, particularly for their ongoing series of chamber concerts (four or five a year) at Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, which almost always offer carefully curated thematic explorations of the relationship between poetry/spoken word and a widely eclectic and challenging range of music.

Their concert on January 29 is their second for this season and is a bit of a departure from the norm, in that the words and music are not separate. Titled “’S Wonderful,” it presents the music of George and Ira Gershwin, who gave us some of the most memorable songs of the 20th century. The soloists are Erin Bardua, soprano, and Aaron Durand, baritone.

The Talisker Players’ two remaining concerts this season are “Land of the Silver Birch” and “A Mixture of Madness.” Both are more reflective of the Players’ trademark style.

“Land of the Silver Birch” on March 28 and 29 is an exploration of folk song reflective of British and French settlement in Canada over time, with music ranging from Ludwig von Beethoven’s Scottish Folk Songs to Four Canadian Folk Songs for flute, viola, cello and piano, a new work by Alexander Rapoport. Whitney O’Hearn, soprano, and John Allison, baritone, will be the soloists, and John Fraser is the reader.

“A Mixture of Madness” on May 16 and 17 is trademark Talisker. Featuring rising soprano Ilana Zarankin, and Bruce Kelly, baritone, as soloists, and with Andrew Moodie as actor/reader, it promises to be an erudite and yet entertaining romp from Aristotle to Peter Maxwell Davies’ Eight Songs for a Mad King, by way of Purcell, Vaughan Williams and (a new commission) Alice Ping Yee Ho’s The Madness of Queen Charlotte (for flute, violin cello and piano).

Looking back (and looking forward): The Canadian Opera Company has announced the winners in its annual vocal competition. Top prize went to the mezzo Simone McIntosh, while Samuel Chan and Gregory Schellenberg (both baritones) received the second and third prizes respectively. The audience prize went to the soprano Myriam Leblanc (and that marks the first occasion, as far as I can recall, that the first prize awarded by the jury and the audience prize did not coincide). Winning a prize does not automatically guarantee entrance to the COC Ensemble Studio but most prizewinners are offered a place there and I look forward to hearing them in opera or in concert.

Anyone who has ever sung in a Canadian church choir will be familiar with Healey Willan’s anthems, but the November 18 concert presented by the Canadian Art Song Project presented us with a much less familiar part of his compositions. Willan composed over 100 art songs, most of them now out of print. They were beautifully sung by Martha Guth, soprano, Allyson McHardy, mezzo, and Peter Barrett, baritone. A particular pleasure was to hear Guth sing O Littlest Hands, a song composed in 1920 for Willan’s baby daughter Mary. Mary, now Mary Mason and in her mid-90s, was in the audience and the concert provided the first occasion for her to hear the song. The Canadian Art Song Project intends to make a new volume of Willan’s art songs available. Will there eventually also be a CD? I certainly hope so. I recommend the Project’s next concert: on May 17 you will be able to hear Dawn Always Begins In the Bones, a newly commissioned work by Ana Sokolović.

Canadian Opera Company Free Vocal Concerts:
Dec 1: Chelsea Rus, soprano, the winner of the Schulich School of Music’s Wirth Vocal Prize, performs.
Jan 5: Marion Newman, mezzo, sings in Echo/Sap’a by Dustin Peters among other works.
Jan 24: Goran Jurić, bass, sings works by Tchaikovsky and Sviridov.

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Operas

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Jan 26: Jacqueline Woodley, soprano, sings Baroque music with members of the COC Orchestra Academy.

Jan 31: Philip Addis, baritone, and Emily Hamper, piano, perform works by Ross, Ravel and others.

Feb 2: The soprano Elizabeth Polese sings Debussy and Stravinsky.

U of T Faculty of Music Free Concerts:
Jan 19: Colin Ainsworth, tenor, and William Aide, piano, perform works by Duparc, Schumann and Liszt.

Jan 25: Singers from the faculty of music will perform as part of the Singer and the Songs Series.

QUICK PICKS
Dec 1: Music Toronto presents a recital by Suzie LeBlanc, soprano, and Robert Kortgaard, piano, with recently commissioned settings of poems by Elizabeth Bishop. The program, at the St. Lawrence Centre, will also include works by Schumann and Villa Lobos.

Dec 2: Toronto Early Music Centre presents Emily Klassen, soprano, and Meagan Zantingh, mezzo, in “Stella di Natale: A Journey from Advent to Christmas,” in a concert featuring a cantata by Scarlatti and other works, at St. David’s Anglican Church.

Dec 3: Kelsey Taylor, soprano, and Eugenia Dermentzis, mezzo, will be the soloists in an Oakham House Choir Society concert. The main works to be performed are Vivall’s Glória and Mendelssohn’s Christmas cantata From Heaven on High, at Calvin Presbyterian Church.

Dec 10: Soulpepper presents “What the World Needs Now (Songs of Love and Hate),” a musical journey through the Mad Men era. The singers are Wendy Lands and Jim Gillard, at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts.

Dec 11: OriginL Concert Series presents Brenda Emns and Susan Suchard, sopranos, and Hubert Razack, countertenor, in “Celebrate Life!” at Lawrence Park Community Church.

Dec 11: The Aga Khan Museum presents Maryem Tollar in “Arabica Coffee House Concert” featuring traditional songs from Syria’s Arabic classical and popular repertoire.

Dec 12: Andrea Ludwig, alto, and Bud Roach, tenor, will sing in “O Tannenbaum: The Tree of Life,” presented by the Toronto Masque Theatre at The Atrium at 21 Shaftsbury Avenue.

Dec 13 to Dec. 23: Coal Mine Theatre presents Louise Pitre singing in A Coal Mine Christmas which includes Dylan Thomas’ story A Child’s Christmas in Wales read by Kenneth Welsh.

Dec 31: Free Times Cafe presents Sue and Dwight, Michelle Rumball and Tony Laviole in a concert featuring the folk songs of Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, Peter, Paul and Mary, and Woody Guthrie.

Jan 19 to 22: The baritone Peter Harvey will perform with Tafelmusik, at Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, in a concert of German Baroque music that will include the lament Wie bist du denn, o Gott? by Johann Christoph Bach and the cantata Ich habe genug by J. S. Bach. Jan 21: Harvey will give a free masterclass beginning at 1pm in the same location.

Jan 20: John Greer will give a free vocal masterclass at York University’s Tribute Communities Recital Hall.

Jan 20: Lorna McDonald, soprano, will sing songs from New France at the Alliance Française, as well as selections from the opera The Bells of Baddeck (libretto by Macdonald, music by Dean Burry). Jan 29: Alliance Française presents Judith Cohen leading a concert of medival songs of courtly love, with Michael Franklin, Andrea Gerhardt and others.

Feb 1 and 2: Karina Gauvin, soprano, and Russell Braun, baritone, are the soloists with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in Fauré’s Requiem and Detlev Gl CENTER’s orchestration of Brahms’ Four Serious Songs by Brahms.

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

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Written by Hannah Moscovitch
Directed by Ross Manson
Composed by Ngo Kong Kie
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Season of Staples and So Much More

BRIAN CHANG

Festive! Festive! Festive!

Holiday music is inseparable from the joy of the season. Every choir has a performance in the next few weeks and while you check out your favourites and traditional hits, try something new and different. There are a host of options in my column this month. Financially, these concerts can help solidify revenue for arts organizations. Just like Indigo sells more in the holiday season than the rest of the year combined, choirs rely on the revenue from holiday concerts to be in the black. The National Ballet of Canada does this with an entire month of productions of The Nutcracker. Arts organizations are desperately in need of solid sales so that new and innovative programming continues to fill the rest of our months. So here we go. Onward into a season of staples!

Oh Lord, Messiah:

Ask a chorister about Handel’s Messiah and you will get a lot of opinions, mostly favourable. Some scathing. Some complicated. This time of year, almost every choir will perform Messiah in its entirety or at least the iconic Hallelujah movement.

Along the way, something is often forgotten – Messiah is not easy. It’s long and technical. It is nuanced and requires diligence and a strong artistic interpretation. It requires musical instinct for appropriate accents and separation, stresses and vowel placement on fugal runs. Sure, an average singer can jump in and go for it and muddy their way through the music but the result is just that – mud. I’ve heard so many versions of choirs belting out Hallelujah at the top of their lungs without regard for blend or nuance. I admit that this is a thrill and a delight to sing, but let’s not get carried away.

Any chorister who tells you they can do the runs of For unto Us a Child Is Born flawlessly every single time is probably not a very good listener. His Yoke Is Easy is another challenging number. Try saying the vowel “ee”. Now try saying it 12 times in four seconds. Then add various rhythms and try to get 20 people in a section to sing it all the same way. Another continuous sore spot is the tuning in the exposed Graves of Since by Man Came Death. Exposed chorales like this are tuning death for unprepared and undisciplined choirs. It is challenging! But also, incredibly fun.

Handel’s writing is also quite forgiving of mistakes. Since by Man Came Death, if heading towards tuning death, is suddenly whipped back into shape with a very loud Allegro from the orchestra. There are very few parts in which the various voicings of the choir are not supported by instrumentation.

I have sung over 20 performances of Messiah over the last few years, a rare chance to get to know a piece of music so intensely that I’ve developed my own personal approach to performing it. For me, the songs mark out a roadmap for the evening. After the doors close, late-comers are permitted to enter again usually after And the Glory of the Lord, which is about eight minutes into the whole performance. So I don’t usually relax until the bass soloist begins For Behold, Darkness Shall Cover the Earth. It isn’t the first time we hear the bass, but when he begins so quietly and begins a build over the 16ths, the effect is exquisite. The second half is my favourite. Getting to the Hallelujah isn’t even the highlight for me. My favourite aria The Trumpets Shall Sound usually halts the end of the final chorus. (Sometimes, Worthy Is the Lamb follows; however, it depends on the edits of the conductor.)

For me, there is no greater movement than Worthy Is the Lamb followed by the epic Amen. The grand D-major chord is a powerful opener to the end of the masterwork. On the very last page, the sopranos hit a high A followed by the tenors a few bars later. This is always the flashing exit gate to the song. For choirs, this is a moment of collective inhalation and exhalation that brings the grand work to an authoritative close. Pure joy when done right!

Oh Lord, Recorded Messiahs:

Toronto has played home to two iconic recordings of Messiah and may well add a third to the mix. Tafelmusik under Ivars Taurins released a recording of the work on period instruments in 2012. For many, this is a gold standard for Messiah interpretations. In 1987 (the year I was born), Sir Andrew Davis recorded a modern interpretation of the work including the forces of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. This recording has long been a staple of Messiah listeners across the world. Little did I know that I would then be part of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir for a new recording to be released for the 2016 holidays. (See David Olds’ review in this month’s Editor’s Corner.) This new version (in which Worthy Is the Lamb, by the way, is the final chorus) is the grandest interpretation of the work ever. These are all very different interpretations of the work and show the diversity of sound with the same music. (Tafelmusik doesn’t have a lost sheep braying through).

Oh Lord, Big Messiahs:

This year is unusual for the two biggest Messiahs. Normally Tafelmusik and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra productions overlap. This year, they barely do, with Tafelmusik all but done before the TSO starts. Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and the Tafelmusik Chamber Choir perform a period interpretation on period instruments under the baton of perennial favourite Ivars Taurins at Koerner Hall December 14 to 17. The ever-popular “Sing Along Messiah” celebrates its 30th anniversary December 18 at Massey Hall.

The biggest game in town is always the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir at Roy Thomson Hall, December 18 to 21 and 23. Notably, the conductor changes every year. This year it’s Nicholas McGegan, conductor of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Chorale who leads.

Oh Lord, More Messiahs:

Elmer Iseler Singers and the Amadeus Choir: December 2, 8pm at Metropolitan United Church.

Soundstreams presents “Electric Messiah,” a stripped-down four-voice, guitar and electronics concept. Vocal improv goddess Christine Duncan is one of the featured soloists: December 5 to 7, 8pm at the Drake Underground.

London Pro Musica and the #WePlayOn (former musicians of Orchestra London) re-create the Dublin Messiah: December 7, 7:30pm at the Drake Underground.

Special Advent and Christmas Events at Metropolitan United Church

Services on Sundays at 11 a.m

Sunday, December 4, 1:30 pm
Deck the Halls: Downtown Carol Sing with the Metropolitan Silver Band and Organ
Donations benefit our Community Services Ministry

Sunday, December 18, 11:00 am
Cantata #10 “My Soul Magnifies the Lord” by J. S. Bach, with the Metropolitan Choir and members of the Talisker Players

Sunday, December 18, 7:00 pm
Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols

Saturday, December 24, 5:00 pm
Pageant on the Front Steps 11:00 pm: Christmas Eve Communion

Metropolitan United Church, 56 Queen Street E, Toronto 416-363-0331 (ext. 26) www.metunited.org
at First St. Andrew’s United Church, London.

Chorus Niagara is joined by the Talisker Players: December 10, 7:30pm at FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, St. Catharines.

Oh yeah, there’s other music this season! The Upper Canada Choristers and Cantemos present a different take on holiday music with “Noche de Paz: an Old World and New World Christmas.” The feature is Argentinian composer Ariel Ramirez’s Navidad Nuestra representing a distinctly Latin American sound and rhythm. Cantemos, an 11-voice Latin ensemble made up of members of the Choristers, will perform a few smaller carols from Colombia and Peru: December 2, 8pm at Grace Church on-the-Hill.

The Tallis Choir of Toronto presents “Monteverdi: Vespers of Christmas Eve.” Artistic director Peter Mahon promises a period interpretation and performance that will evoke a Renaissance Christmas Eve in St. Mark’s, Venice: December 3, 7:30pm at St. Patrick’s Church, Toronto.

Singing OUT! presents “Not Another Fa La La.” There’s always choreography! Saturday December 3, 7:30pm at Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts.

The Oakville Children’s Choir presents three different sets of concerts. The first is “Stories, Songs, and Snow” featuring Lineage by Andrea Ramsey and Ngoma by Moira Stanley. Both composers worked with the choir on their visit to the Pacific International Choral Festival earlier this year: December 3, 7pm at St. John’s United Church, Oakville. The second, “Community Carol Concerts,” also at St. John’s United Church, takes place December 10 at 1:30pm and 4pm. The choir then joins the Oakville Symphony Orchestra to perform carols and the fun Suite from John Williams Christmas in the 14th annual “Family Christmas Concert”: December 11, 1:30pm and 4pm at the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts.

The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir presents “Festival of Carols” with the Salvation Army Canadian Staff Band. (I’ll be in the tenors!): December 7, 7:30pm at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.

Exultate Chamber Singers present “A Time for Celebration: A Canadian Christmas.” University of Toronto professor Hilary Apfelstadt’s Exultate Chamber Singers are always a delight. Featuring Ring Wild Bells by Stephanie Martin, O Magnum Mysterium by Timothy Corlis and a premiere of a new arrangement of Silent Night by Exultate singer/composer J. Scott Brubacher: December 9, 8pm at St. Thomas’s Anglican Church.

Univox presents “Serenity, Hope, Light” celebrating all the various holidays of the season. The feature is Bach’s Lobet den Herrn alle
Heiden (Praise the Lord, all ye nations): December 9, 8pm at Christ Church Deer Park.

**Pax Christi Chorale** presents *Ode on the Nativity* by C.H.H. Parry with the **Asian Boys Choir** and other guests: December 10, 7:30pm and December 11, 3pm at Grace Church on-the-Hill, as well as their eighth annual *Children’s Messiah*, at 4pm December 17 at Church of St. Mary Magdalene.

**Echo Women’s Choir** celebrates its 25th anniversary with “Ain’t Life Sweet.” Special guest Annabelle Chvostek joins the choir with a special arrangement of her song *Black Hole.* The choir will feature songs and arrangements by Vermont artist Brendan Taafe and Penny Lang among others: December 11, 7:30pm at Church of the Holy Trinity.

The super accessible and diverse **City Choir** presents “This Shining Night, a Bright-Hearted Concert.”: December 13, 7:30pm at St. Peter’s Church.

**Incontra Vocal Ensemble** (which I also sing in) performs “*O Nata Lux:*” December 14, 7:30pm at Regis College, University of Toronto.

**That Choir:** “Carols.” Most fun a choir can have, legally. ‘Nuff said: December 18, 8pm at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, Toronto.

The huge conglomeration of the **Toronto Children’s Chorus** ensembles (nine of them!) come together for their annual Roy Thomson Hall concert – “A Child’s Christmas.” Special guest, Stratford Festival veteran Geraint Wyn Davies will narrate the evening. A variety of instrumentalists including TSO musicians will join in the fun: December 17, 2pm at Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto.

The JUNO award-winning **Toronto Mass Choir** presents “*A Gospel Christmas,*” featuring special guests and a truly uplifting concert experience: December 17, 7pm at Bayview Chapel, Tyndale University College.

**Oh Lord, a New Year!**

Our double listing for December 2016 and January 2017 would be remiss without some highlights early in 2017.

Every year the **Toronto Mendelssohn Choir** hosts five or six emerging conductors in a weeklong intensive. This culminates with a free concert featuring the choir and the **Elora Festival Singers:** January 28, 3pm at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.

The **Toronto Symphony Orchestra** is joined by the **Amadeus Choir** and the **Elmer Iseler Singers** in a performance of Fauré’s *Requiem:* February 1 and 2, 8pm at Roy Thomson Hall.

**Soundstreams** presents the **Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir** featuring Rachmaninoff’s Vespers and more. February 2, 8pm at St. Paul’s Basilica.

Follow Brian on Twitter @bfchang. Send info/media/tips to choralscene@thewholenote.com
It’s a bit of a shame that, with all the marketing behind Christmas, no one ever remembers – let alone observes – Advent anymore. The pre-Christmas season has a rich repertoire of music behind it that often gets ignored in favour of Messiahs, Nutcrackers and Christmas carols, but a few Toronto-based artists are mining this hard-to-market season for interesting music that will keep audiences entertained throughout the month of December. Musicians in Ordinary have been mentioned in this column before as a group that’s known for doing interesting programs of a seasonal nature throughout the year, and I’m pleased to say they’ll be doing just that this month. On December 9 at 7:30pm, the group will bring a concert of Monteverdi, Gibbons and Byrd to St. Basil’s Church. They’ll also be joined by the Pneuma Ensemble, a new group specializing in medieval music, for some Advent tunes from 13th-century Portugal. Besides being seasonally appropriate (especially if, like many people out there, you’re already sick of hearing Christmas music by the time December rolls around), it’s a concert that won’t be done by any other groups in town any time soon. There’s scarcely any chance to hear any pre-Renaissance music in Toronto, and medieval music is hardly heard anywhere, so I’ll be very interested to hear what the Pneuma Ensemble can bring to the music scene. If you’re looking for a chamber concert in early December, the Musicians in Ordinary and Pneuma sounds like an excellent choice.

The Oratory: If you’re not particularly into medieval or chamber music, there’s another Advent-themed concert worth checking out before Christmas. The Oratory at Holy Family has a regular series of concerts of vocal and chamber music, but this December, the venue has decided to feature a soloist who is one of the music scene’s best-kept secrets. Toronto-based organist Phillip Fournier brings a distinctly Lutheran flavour to Holy Family Church on December 7 at 8pm with a solo concert that includes Buxtehude, Bach and Scheidt. Fournier is a great organist and improviser who plays Bach particularly well, and hearing him play solo is positively delightful.

For some actual Christmas music over the Christmas season, consider a few groups that are willing to explore somewhat less-played music for the holidays: The Toronto Consort will be putting on an interesting program devoted entirely to Christmas music from the Middle Ages that will feature the work of two notable women from the period. The posthumous legacy of the German abbess, writer, composer and mystic Hildegard of Bingen has already been revived with a slew of CD recordings from the mid-90s onward. Judging from the fact that most of the albums had titles like Canticles of Ecstasy, Heavenly Revelations, and Vision, the artists and record labels were trading on the mystic aspect of Hildegard’s life as much as the music she wrote.
One wonders what the undoubtedly erudite and pious 12th-century nun would make of the new age marketing of her records, but no matter. The music remains extraordinary. Less well-known than Hildegard is a later mystic and nun, Anna of Cologne, who, as a 16th-century compiler of hymns and songs from a non-cloistered community, collected songs in both Latin and Middle German by other composers, who, with some very rare exceptions, remain completely unknown to us. The result is a uniquely spiritual take on the Christmas holidays, and where other musical groups emphasize the festive side of the holidays, Hildegard’s and Anna’s music shows us a more somber side of the darkest days of the year. Check out the Consort at Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, December 9 through 11.

**Cantemus:** Still, there’s nothing wrong with wanting to celebrate, and if you’d rather listen to a choral ensemble for a dose of holiday cheer, consider going to a concert by the Cantemus Singers in December. Their concert, “In Dulci Jubilo,” will be a lively and joyful celebration of the music of Praetorius, Hassler, Schütz and Bach. Cantemus is an a cappella group devoted to Renaissance madrigals and chansons, and they will do a fine job with repertoire that’s upbeat and festive. Catch them in two performances, at the Church of the Holy Trinity on December 3 at 7:30pm, and at St. Aidan’s Anglican Church on December 4 at 3pm.

**Haydn Operatic Gem in Concert:** Among the Classical composers, it’s generally agreed that Mozart is the father of modern opera and Haydn the founder of the instrumental music we enjoy today. But besides composing on an exhausting schedule that included symphonies, chamber music and solo performances specifically tailored to the tastes of one Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, one of the most powerful aristocrats in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Haydn was also responsible for managing an opera troupe for the amusement of his employer. In addition to two concerts a week of instrumental music, Haydn was contractually obliged to put on a different opera every week at the Esterházy palace. And although there was no way Haydn could have composed 52 operas a year, he did manage to write about 15 (that we know of) while employed by the prince, although unfortunately, none of them are performed more than occasionally. But on February 5 at the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts at 2:30pm, Opera in Concert and the Aradia Ensemble will be presenting one of these forgotten gems by the founding father of the Classical canon.

L’Isola disabitata was an opera written by Haydn in 1779 based on a libretto by Metastasio and is an excellent example of the mature style of a prolific composer whose works were just starting to circulate around Europe. Although we don’t associate Haydn with opera today, he was more than capable of writing great vocal music, and Aradia and Opera in Concert will give this work the level of excitement and interpretive insight it needs. Get to this concert if you possibly can.

**Beauséjour in Belleville:** Outside the city, Belleville audiences can look forward to hearing a gifted solo musician in the new year. The talented Quebecois harpsichordist Luc Beauséjour has an encyclopedic catalogue of albums behind him and will be coming to play in St. Thomas’s Church in Belleville for a pay-what-you-can concert. No word yet on the program, but Beauséjour is a veteran of solo Baroque keyboard music and a technically flawless musician. If you’re in the Belleville area, you should definitely try to make it to his show on January 15 at 4:30pm.

**Taylor’s TEM:** Closer to the city, countertenor Daniel Taylor has made a name for himself as a soloist and opera singer, but lately his choir and chamber music performances have been gaining both notice and acclaim. Led by Taylor, the Choir of the Theatre of Early Music is made up mainly of younger Montreal-based singers. January 21 at 8pm, St. Jude’s Celebration of the Arts presents the group in a concert of contemporary and Renaissance a cappella vocal works by some great English choral composers, including Thomas Tallis, William Byrd and John Taverner. Taylor is a gifted singer with a glorious voice who has a fine ear for young talent, and the TEM choir is an exceptional group of voices.

David Podgorski is a Toronto-based harpsichordist, music teacher and a founding member of Rezonance. He can be contacted at earlymusic@thewholenote.com.

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**Newmarket Citizens’ Band Sesquicentennial**

With Canada’s sesquicentennial year only one month away, municipalities and organizations all over the country are searching their archives for records of significant events over the past 150 years which could stimulate community interest in this year of reflection and celebration. Unfortunately, in the band world, there are few bands whose history goes back even half that 150-year time span. One band which does have some good material in their archives is the Newmarket Citizens’ Band. In a recent exploration of the band’s archives, they found a photograph of the band taken in the year 1883. With the sesquicentennial year approaching, what better time to show off this picture, to show the citizens of the community that their band has been there to provide music for town events for all but five years of Confederation.

The Newmarket Citizens Band in front of Old Town Hall, Newmarket.

At an evening meeting of council, several members of the band, wearing their red blazers, arrived for the presentation. In the announcement of their deputation to council, the band pointed out that “Since 1872, the Newmarket Citizens’ Band has been an integral part of the cultural and social landscape of the town of Newmarket.” To commemorate the opening of the newly restored Old Town Hall they presented a large framed photograph of the town band taken in August 1883 just a few weeks after the original opening of the Old Town Hall on July 1, 1883.

The photo of the band was taken during the Firemen’s Excursion to Niagara Falls on the Civic Holiday, August 8, 1883. An article about the event, including this photo, was published in the Newmarket Era of the day. Approximately 250 residents travelled by train and then steamship to Niagara Falls and the band went along to provide entertainment. It is a prime example of the band’s long involvement in the social and cultural life of the town. The write-up of the trip mentioned that the band, reinforced by two gentlemen from Sharon and Bolton, “enlivened the trip by music on the fore deck; good music is never so pleasing as on the water.”

A formal public unveiling of the photo was scheduled to take place at the band’s “Simple Gifts” Concert at the Old Town Hall on Botsford Street, Friday, December 2, 2016. (On a personal note, some 35 years ago, I played there for a few years in monthly concerts of The
Newmarket Jazz Appreciation Society, and our small Dixieland group was known as “The Botsford Street Ramblers.”

Since it is rare to find this much information about a band’s activities almost 150 years ago, it is worth including here some of the historical information about the band recently presented to the Newmarket mayor and council. “The band formed in 1872 with roots going back to as early as 1843. Walter W. Roe, son of the town’s postmaster and fur trader, William Roe, circulated a petition among the local business community to raise funds. The 12 band members contributed $5 each and along with 69 other contributors raised the sum $319 to purchase instruments.”

To quote the petition: “Whereas we, the undersigned, think it a disgrace to the inhabitants of Newmarket that they should have, on all festive occasions, to send to the small villages of Aurora and Sharon for a band, we have determined, with the consent and assistance of our fellow-townsmen, to form one of our own.”

The timing of the recent presentation could not have been better from a number of perspectives. For one, the band delegation met with the mayor and council within a few days of the reopening of the beautifully restored Old Town Hall, which is now destined to be a prime performance venue. For another, it has only been a few weeks since the band was informed that they would now have an excellent permanent rehearsal home complete with storage in a large town recreation centre. Wandering from place to place for rehearsals has been the norm since their former rehearsal space was destroyed by arsonists many years ago. Last but not least, it just also happened a few days after the band paraded, as it has for years, in the town’s annual Santa Claus parade.

Just outside of the council chambers, in the lobby of the town hall, there is a large imposing mural depicting “The Newmarket Citizens’ Band gathered under the big elm in 1883.”

New Horizons. By now it should not be a surprise, but I just received a note about yet another New Horizons group that we had not previously heard from. Lynda Shewchuk, music director of Lakeshore New Horizons Bands in Bowmanville, tells us that the band is now in its sixth year. She says that the thriving group is “not very large” with only 60 members! They have a senior band, intermediate band and a beginners class. They also have a small jazz band. She states that “our members are very active and enthusiastic, with many playing in two or even three bands. Quite a few of our members play two different instruments, one in each concert band.”

Recent Events: In early November the Milton Concert Band lost one of its long time members, Rev. Christopher Snow. On November 6 “A Memorial Concert for Chris Snow” was presented to proclaim “A life celebrated through music.”

On November 20 the Wychwood Clarinet Choir continued to amaze with their unique arrangements of works for orchestra and concert band. This time it was the Holst Second Suite in F for concert band. In the early 1920s the leaders of Britain’s Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall lamented the lack of larger serious works for concert band. Until then, if bands wanted to play longer multi-move- ment works they had to rely on transcriptions of orchestral works. They commissioned Gustav Holst to write two suites for concert band. Since then these suites have been part of the concert band repertoire. This transcription maintained all of the highlights and nuances contained in the original. Local composer Pen Watkin also contributed a fine version of Villanesca, Spanish Dance No.4 by Granados. In a conversation after the concert, Watkin mentioned that, for sesqui-centennial year 2017, he might like to write some arrangements of Canadian works. I did not mention it then, but I would like to suggest Calixa Lavallée’s La rose nuptiale.

Initiatives. Every once in a while, we hear of initiatives taken by bands to either help with their finances or otherwise enhance their relationship with their communities. In November, the Aurora Band held its annual holiday market where shoppers could find one-of-akind gifts from 38 unique local vendors. For their Canada 150 festivities, the band has commissioned a composition from professor Bill Thomas of York University. The band will give the premiere performance of this number at its concert on Canada Day, 2017.

On the fundraising front, the Strings Attached Orchestra has become a registered charity to provide some financial incentive for donors so that they may continue to bring music into the community. Coming Events

Dec 5: Resa’s Pieces will present “A Tribute to the Beatles and Beach Boys,” 7:30pm at York Mills Collegiate.

Dec 6: Silverthorn Symphonic Winds present the next concert in their series, 50 Minute Soiree. These mini-concerts feature a variety of lighter music, perfect for unwinding after a day at work. At 7:30, Wilmar Heights Event Centre – Concert Hall.

Dec 9: The Aurora Community Band will present holiday entertainment like no other – its “Heroes and Monsters: A Holiday Concert” – at 7:30, Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria St., Aurora.

Dec 10: For their annual holiday concert, “The Bells of Christmas,” the Milton Concert Band will not only include the traditional musical favourites but will feature, as guests, Eden Bells A-Peel, a long-established handbell choir from Eden United Church in Mississauga. In Victorian times, it was very fashionable to go carol singing with small handbells to play the tune of the carol. Sometimes there would be no singing, just the music of the handbells. Handbell ringing is still popular today and if you have never heard a handbell choir, then this is a concert well worth a visit: 8pm Milton Centre for the Arts, 1010 Main St. East, Milton.

Dec 11: The Clarington Concert Band presents their “Most Wonderful Time Of The Year” featuring singers Father Paul, Kelly Robertson and Lisa Heitzner, 2pm at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, 127 Liberty St. South, Bowmanville.

Dec 11: The Strings Attached Orchestra presents their third annual “Friends and Family Holiday Concert,” 2pm at Congregation Ban’s Torah, 465 Patrician Ave., Toronto. Jack MacQuarrie plays several brass instruments and has performed in many community ensembles. He can be contacted at bandstand@thewholenote.com.

...under the big elm in 1883.
**The WholeNote LISTINGS**

The WholeNote listings are arranged in five sections:

### A. Concerts in the GTA
- **GTA (GREATER TORONTO AREA)** covers all of Toronto plus Halton, Peel, York and Durham regions.
- **BEYOND THE GTA** covers many areas of Southern Ontario outside Toronto and the GTA. Starts on page 58.

### B. 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 62.

### C. IN THE CLUBS (MOSTLY JAZZ)
- is organized alphabetically by club. Starts on page 64.

### D. THE ETCETERAS
- 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 66.

### E. 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 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 February 1, 2017 to March 7, 2017. All listings must be received by Midnight Sunday January 8.

### LISTINGS
- can be sent by e-mail 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 416-323-2327 x27 for further information.

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

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### Thursday December 1


**1:30:** Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring In Concert. Kaitlyn Lusk, soprano; Alastair Thorburn-Vitols, boy soprano; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Canadian Children's Opera Company; Ludwig Wicki, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. $46-$85. Also Dec 2, 3.

**7:30:** University of Toronto Faculty of Music. World Music Ensembles. Iranian Music Ensemble; Klezmer Ensemble; Japanese Drumming Ensemble. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

**7:30:** York University Department of Music. York University Symphony Orchestra. Mark Chambers, conductor. Tribute Communities Recital Hall, Accolade East Building, YU, 4700 Keele St. 416-736-5888. $15; $10(arts worker). Also on Jan 13.

**8:00:** Aurora Cultural Centre. East Coast Family Christmas with The Ennis Sisters of Newfoundland. Holiday songs and traditional Irish folk tunes. 22 Church St., Aurora. 905-713-1818. $35/$30(adv).

**8:00:** Canadian Music Centre. Paul Pultford and Cheryl Davil. In Concert. Smith: Ballad; Storring: Vale; Waller: Lines; Anthems; Simms: wires at rest (tend to tangle). Paul Pultford, cello; Cheryl Davil, piano. 20 St. Joseph St. 416-961-6601. $15; $10(arts worker). Also on Jan 13.

**8:00:** Live at Massey Hall. Half Moon Run. Guests: Plants and Animals. Massey Hall, 178 Victoria St. 416-872-4255. $18.94-$39.50. In support of Native Youth Sexual Network.

**8:00:** Music Toronto. Suzie LeBlanc. Alasdair MacLean. The silkien water is weav- ing and weaving: John Plant: Sunday 4am (Elizabeth Bishop); Villa Lobos: String Quartet No.1 movements 1-3; Ivan Moody: Paris 7am (Elizabeth Bishop); Schumann: Six Songs Op.107; and other works. Suzie LeBlanc, soprano; Robert Kortgaard, piano; Blue Ensign String Quartet; Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-336-7723. $55; $10(st).

**8:00:** Royal Conservatory/Instituto Italiano

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

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**50,000 FREE CONCERT LISTINGS. AND COUNTING.**

Help The WholeNote grow. To contribute, visit [www.patreon.com/thewholenote](http://www.patreon.com/thewholenote)

**A GRAND TOUR OF ITALY**

December 1–4
Trinity St.-Paul’s Centre

December 6
George Weston Recital Hall
tafelmusik.org

- 8:00: Tafelmusik. A Grand Tour of Italy. Corelli: Christmas Concerto; works by Castello, Uccellini and Marini. Cristina Zacharias, violin; Rodolfo Richter, violin and guest director. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, Jeanne Lamon Hall, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-964-6337. $39 and up; $31 and up(sr); $15 and up(up to 36). Also Dec 2, 3, and 4(3:30); Dec 6(6:00; George Weston Recital Hall).


**Friday December 2**


- 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Wind Symphony. Applebaum: Three Strawford Fanfares; Suite of Miniature Dances; Tchesnokov: Salvation is Created; Cable: Point Pelee; Scottish Rhapsody; Grcy: Evensong; and other works. Gillian Chreptyk, trumpet; Jeffrey Reynolds, conductor. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queens Park. 416-408-0208. $30; $20(sr); $10(st).


- 8:00: Elmer Iseler Singers. Messiah. Han del. Guests: Allison Angelo, soprano; Andrea Ludwig, mezzo; Zach Finkelstein, tenor; Peter McCallivray, baritone; Amadeus Choir; Lydia Adams, conductor. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-217-0537. $5; $50(ad); $20(st); 5:30-pre-concert dinner at Alumni Club, 91 King St. (Sto).

- 8:00: Flato Markham Theatre. Quinn Sulivan. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $9-$54.

- 8:00: Gallery 345. Queen Mob Trio. Improvised music/drawing on the influences of jazz, musique actuelle, rock, new music, early 20th century classical music. Ig Henneman, viola; Lori Freedman, clarinets; Marilyn Lerner, piano, 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-6781. $25; $10(ad).

**Saturday December 3**


- 2:00: Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Carol Sing. Guests: Alex Leslie Gordon, Kenneth Welsh, True North Brass; Bach Chil dren’s Chorus; That Choir; Hedgerow Singers; Yorkminster Park Baptist Church Choir. 1585 Yonge St. 416-241-1288. Free. Donations accepted. In support of food banks across Canada.


- 3:30: St. Michael’s Choir School. Christmas at Massey Hall. Guests: Matt Dusk, vocalist; True North Brass; SMCSSA Choir; Vincent Cheng, Dr. Jerzy Cichocki, Marie Conkey, Terri Dunn, conductors; William O’Meara, Joshua Tamayo, accompanists. Massey Hall, 170 Victoria St. 416-872-4255. $20-$60. Also Dec 4.


- 7:00: Oakville Children’s Choir. Stories, Songs, and Snow. St. John’s United Church (Oakville), 2021 Lawrence Avenue East (at Warden). 905-872-7355. $15 (child). Also 7:30.

**ORDER TICKETS ONLINE AT SPO.CA OR CALL 416 429-0007**

A CANADIAN FAMILY HOLIDAY CONCERT

DECEMBER 3, 2016: 7:30PM

SALVATION ARMY SCARBOROUGH CITADEL

2021 LAWRENCE AVENUE EAST (AT WARDEN)
December 3 - 4, 2016
AT 3PM

Music in the Air

Kingsway Organ Recital Series

Kingsway Recital Hall, 390 militarystreet, Toronto. $30 to $40. Free for students.

Jazz Vespers

St. Michael's Choir School, 200 Gladstone Ave. 416-596-2461. $30 to $40.

Christmas at the Met

Sony Centre. 1 Front St. E. 416-368-0204. $30 to $90. Free for students.

Sunday December 4


1:00: Recorded concert of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. $30 to $75. Free for students.


2:00: Caledon East Carol Sing. Christmas Spirit. Wintervals. Fantasies on the Huron Carol; As a Wind from the North; Italian Expressions and a wide variety of Latin rhythms. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-596-3070. $15.

8:00: Mississauga Festival Choir. A Mississauga Christmas. Twas the Night Before Christmas and others; annual sing-along. Mississauga Symphony; Hazel McCallion, narrator. Hammermill Hall, Living Arts Centre, 414 Living Arts Dr. Mississauga. $30 to $60. $375. $32 (st). $15 (child).

8:00: Music Gallery. Moondog 100. Nexus Percussion; Mike Smith Company, 197 John St. 416-204-1087. $17 (adv). $10 (st) members.


8:00: Tafelmusik. A Grand Tour of Italy. See Dec 1. Also Dec 4 (10.30); Dec 6 (8.00). George Weston Recital Hall.


8:00: Tafelmusik. A Grand Tour of Italy. See Dec 1. Also Dec 4 (10.30); Dec 6 (8.00). George Weston Recital Hall.


DECEMBER 5, 7PM
KICK-ASS MUSIC FOR BASSOON AND PIANO
Stellar pianist Stephan Sylvestre and Nadina Mackie Jackson play Prokofiev’s Sonata in D major, op. 94 and the mysterious, magnificently tortuous Skalkottas Sonata Concertante.
Bassoon Out Loud at HELICONIAN HALL 35 Hazelton Avenue, Toronto $30 / $20
nadinamackiejackson.com
Festival of Carols

Join the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir for this annual joyous celebration of music for the season, and add your voice to the audience carol sing-along with jubilant brass accompaniment.

CANADIAN STAFF BAND
DAVID BRIGGS, ORGANIST

Wednesday, December 7
at 7:30 PM

Yorkminster Park Baptist Church
(just north of Yonge and St. Clair)

Tickets start at $35
$20 VoxTix for 30 years and under.

Tickets: www.tmchoir.org
or call RCM TICKETS at 416.408.0208

● 7:30: Musicians in Ordinary. Renaissance and Medieval Music for Advent. Plainchant, Cantigas de Santa Maria from 13th-century Galicia/Portugal, and works by Monte-verdi, Gibbons, Byrd, and others. Musicians in Ordinary with Christopher Verrette; Ensemble Pneuma; St. Michael’s Schola Cantorum; Michael O’Connor; conductor. St. Basil’s Church, University of St. Michael’s College, 50 St. Joseph St. 416-926-7148. Free; donations welcomed.

● 7:30: Oakville Choral Society. Twas the Night before Christmas. Mendelssohn: Hymn of Praise; Siemens: Twas the Night before Christmas. Clearview Christian Reformed Church, 2300 Sheridan Garden Dr., Oakville. 905-338-3823. $30/$25(adv); $15(st); free.(under 13). Also Dec 10.

● 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Pianofest. Students from the piano area perform. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208, Free.

● 8:00: Caliban Arts Theatre/Trane Live Events. In Concert. The All-Star Ritual Trio (David Murray, saxophone; Sir Kahil El’Zabar, drums; Harrison Bankhead, acoustic bass). Remi Lounge, 1205 Dundas St. W 416-722-4635. $45. Also 10:30.

● 8:00: Etobicoke Philharmonic Orchestra. Holiday Spectacular. C.T. Smith (arr): A Rhapsody on Christmas Carols; Chlaikovsky: “March” from the Nutcracker; Handel: Water Music (excerpts); seasonal vocal selections. Paul Anthony Williamson, tenor. Harbour Valley United Church, 76 Anglesey Blvd., Etobicoke. 416-239-5665. $30/$25/$22(st/adv); $15(st). Also Dec 10, 11, 13, 17, 23(all 7:30); 11, 17, 18, 24(all 4:30); 24(1:30).


● 10:30: Caliban Arts Theatre/Trane Live Events. In Concert. The All-Star Ritual Trio (David Murray, saxophone; Sir Kahil El’Zabar, drums; Harrison Bankhead, acoustic bass). Remi Lounge, 1205 Dundas St. W. 416-722-4635. $45. Also 8:00.

● 10:30: Lula Music and Arts Centre. Marta Elena Perez Vallin, vocals; Shana Brown, soprano; Angela Renglich, conductor. Guests: Etobicoke School of the Arts Chamber Choir; Humber Valley United Church, 76 Anglesey Blvd., Etobicoke. 416-569-9271. $25. 6:00: Christ Church Deer Park. 416-971-9229. $25; $20(st); $15(under 13).

● 10:30: Lula Music and Arts Centre. Marta Elena and Salsa Star. Traditional Cuban rhythms merged with contemporary music and salsa. Marta Elena Perez Vallin, vocals; Larry Mesa Benitez, piano. Lula Lounge, 1565 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307. $15; women free before 10:00.

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**Saturday December 10**


- **7:00: Bayfair Baptist Church.** Toronto Mass Choir, 817 Kingston Rd, Pickering. 905-839-4621. $20.

- **7:30: Bach Children’s Chorus and Bach Chamber Youth Choir.** Make You Merry. Linda Beaupré, conductor; Eleanor Daley, piano. Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St., North York. 1-855-985-2787. $35-$40.


- **7:30: Choral of the Holy Trinity.** The Christmas Story. See Dec 9. Also Dec 16, 17, 22, 23(all 7:30); 11, 17, 18, 24(all 4:30); 24(1:30).

- **7:30: Eto etobicoke Centennial Choir.** Sacred Traditions 2016. Britten: A Ceremony of Carols; Dossie: carols; Bieble: Ave Maria; carol sing-along. Shana Brown, soprano; Erin Ronningen, alto; and other singers; Angela Schwarzkopf, harp; Carl Steinhauser; piano; Harry Renglich, conductor. Guests: Eto etobicoke School of the Arts Chamber Choir; Humber Valley United Church, 76 Anglesey Blvd., Etobicoke. 416-569-9271. $25. 6:00: Christ Church Deer Park.

- **7:30: Korean Canadian Chamber Concerts.** An Instrumental Christmas. Mozart:

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**Exultate Singers and Artists Director**

**A CANADIAN CHRISTMAS**

Friday, December 9, 2016, 8pm

Northern Lights
Featuring several stunning works by OLA GJEILO
& other seasonal selections

JENNY CROBER, Artistic Director
ELIZABETH ACKER, Accompanist

Elizabeth Loewen Andrews, Laurel Mascarenhas, violin
Rory McLeod, viola
Wendy Solomon, cello

Saturday, December 10, 2016 • 7:30 pm
Eastminster United Church,
310 Danforth Avenue (Chester subway), Toronto
$25 Gen. Adm. $20 Seniors $10 Students
416-947-8487
www.vocachorus.ca
& S Christmas Carol Quartet. St. Andrew’s United Church (Bloor St.), 117 Bloor St. E. 416-783-0322. $20. Refreshments included.

● 2:30: Village Voices. Glad Tidings. Rutter: Gloria; Moran: Unto Us a Son Is Born; Helvey: O lux beatissima; Grant: Bread of Heaven; Willcocks: Carols. Mirs Slovianenko, sopranos; Joan Andrews, flute; Oksana Vignan, conductor; Albury Gardens Brass Quintet. Markham Missionary Church, 5438 Major Mackenzie Dr. E., Markham. 905-762-4172. $28; $25(sr); $10(st); free(under 12).

● 3:00: Blessed Trinity Chorus. Sing Along with Us: Traditional Holiday Favourites. Lauridsen: 0 nata lux, Handel: Hallelujah Chorus; Rutter: All Bells in Paradise; Sing-along carols with orchestra. Blessed Trinity Choirs (John Holland, conductor); The Margaritas Ensemble; TDSB Youth Orchestra. 3220 Bayview Ave. 416-496-8575. $10(sr/st); free(under 12).


● 3:00: Harmony Singers. Winter Song. Seasonal favourites. Christmas Eve; Cool Santa; Christmas Lullaby. Jerusalem Harvey Patterson, conductor; Bruce Harvey, accompanist. Humber Valley United Church, 76 Anglesey Blvd., Etobicoke. 416-239-5821. $20; $15(sr/st); free(under 10). Refreshments.

● 3:00: Orchestra Toronto. Youth at the Holidays. Britten: Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra; Respighi: The Adoration of the Magi (from Three Botticelli Pictures); Via: ludi: Concerto in F minor (Winter’); Higdon: Percussion Concerto. Trevor Rines, narration; Michael Murphy, percussion; Marta Hidy; Corey Gemmell, violin; Kevin Mallo, conductor. George Weston Recital Hall, 5040 Yonge St. 1-855-987-2787 . $43; $37(sr); $15(youth)/$10(upper). Long & McQuade Petting Zoo. 2:15: pre-concert chat.

● 3:00: Pax Christi Chorale. Ode on the Nativity. Parry: Ode on the Nativity; Pales tina: Hodie Christus natus est; Matthew Emery: new commissions; and works by Holst, Pärt, and Poulenc. Shannon Mercer, soprano; Aslan Boys Choir. Grace Church on the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Rd. 416-487-7884. $45; $40(sr); $25(st).

● 3:00: Royal Conservatory. Vocal Concert: The King’s Singers @ Christmas. Works by Tchaikovsky, Lawson and Pärt; traditional seasonal songs. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208, from $40.

● 3:30: Story of Christmas. Fourth Annual St. Anne’s Community Cantate. Neighborhood Christmas concert. Missis sauga Children’s Choir; St. Anne’s Jazz Quin tet. 270 Gladstone Ave. 416-536-3160. $15; $10(st); free(under 12). In support of the Youth Scholarship Program of the Community Police Liaison Committee of Toronto Police Division 14.


Jeanie Chung piano
Shalom Bard clarinet
Thomas Wiebe cello

Sunday Dec. 11, 3pm
Helenicon Hall
SyrinxConcerts.ca


● 3:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The Twelve Days of Christmas: Family Holiday Concert. Colin Mochrie, narrator; Highland Creek Pipe Band; Resonance Youth Choir; The Spot Holiday Dancers; Earl Lee, BBC Resident Conductor: Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-596-3375. From $26.


● 4:00: Eglington St. George’s United Church. Never a Brighter Star. Christmas celebration with carols, choir, orchestra and organ. Hayes: Gloria; Forrest: Never a Brighter Star; works by Handel, Whitacre and Willcocks. Eglington St. George’s Choir; Mary Lou Fali lis, special guest host; Andrew Adair, organ; Krista Rhodes, piano; Shawn Grenke, conductor. 35 Lytton Blvd. 416-481-1141. $35.

● 4:00: Oakville Symphony Orchestra. Family Christmas. Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts, 130 Navy St. Oakville. 905-815-2021 or 888-468-7784. $15-$45. Also 1:30.

● 4:00: Original Concert Series. Celebrate Life! Classics and original music for choral and solo voices. Brenda Enns, soprano; Susan Suchard, soprano/conductor; Hubert Razack, tenor; Jinne Kim, violin; Lizzie Lavado, piano/organ. Lawrence Park Community Church, 2100 Bayview Ave. 416-410-7109. $30.


● 4:00: University Settlement Music and Arts School. End of Term Student Concert. St. George the Martyr Church, 179 John St. 416-598-3444 x243/244. Free. Also 4:00; Dec 12(7:00).


● 4:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec. 9. Also Dec 16, 17, 22, 23(all 7:30); 17, 18, 24(all 4:30); 24(1:30).


● 6:00: Aga Khan Museum. Arabic Coffee House Concert. Traditional songs from Syria’s Arabic classical and popular repertoire in a traditional coffee house setting. Al Qawa Ensemble; Maryem Tollar. 77 Wynford Dr. 416-646-4677. $40; $36(Friends). In Diwan. Coffee included in ticket price.

● 6:00: University Settlement Music and Arts School. End of Term Student Concert. St. George the Martyr Church, 179 John St., 416-598-3444 x243/244. Free. Also 4:00; Dec 12(7:00).

● 7:00: Mississauga Big Band Jazz Ensemble. Annual Christmas Concert. Cooksville United Church, 2500 Mimoso Row, Missis sauga. 905-270-4757. $20; $10(sr/child).

● 7:00: Echo Women’s Choir. 25th Anniversary Concert: Ain’t Life Sweet. Chocolate: Black Hole; Taufe: I Cross Till I Am Weary; Barnwell: We Are; Small: Everything Possible; Harris, bassoon; Curtis Vander Hyden, horn.

● 7:30: Transac Club. QH in Concert 292 Brunswick Ave. 416-923-8137. PWYC.

● 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Percussion Ensemble. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

● 7:30: We Sing For Their Supper. Seasonal Concert. The Detours, Donne Roberts, Els


● 8:00: Blythwood Winds. Holidays...In Space! Music from Star Wars and holiday songs. Tim Crouch, flute; Elizabeth Eccleston, oboe; Anthony Thompson, clarinet; Kevin Harris, bassoon; Curtis Vander Hyden, horn. Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. 647-567-7906. PWYC.

● 8:00: Snaggle. Christmas Single Release Show Featuring Brownman Ali. Nick Maclean, synth; Graeme Wallace, tenor sax; Michael Murray, guitar; Tom Groessel, drums; Doug Moore, bass. Guest: Brownman Ali; trum pet. Máy Café, 876 Dundas St. W. 416-389-2643. $10. Attendees on the ‘advance list’ will receive a free download of ‘Christmas Tune’. Email snaggle251@gmail.com.
Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts presents its 10th annual...

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Wednesday, Dec 14, 2016
7:30 pm

St. Clare Parish
1118 St. Clair Ave W

General Admission $15

A. Concerts in the GTA

- 8:30: Hughes’ Room. Sultans of String: Christmas Caravan. Original songs, world music-inspired classics and seasonal selections. Chris McKhool, violin; Kevin Laliberté, violin; Drew Biriston, bass; Eddie Patton, guitar; Chenda Leon, percussion; Guest: Rebecca Campbell, vocals. 2261 Dundas St. W. 416-531-6604. $30/$25(adv).

Monday December 12

- 10:30am: Humbercrast United Church. Music and the Word. Handel: Messiah (Christmas portion) with strings, trumpet and organ. Jennifer Krabbé, soprano; Whitney O’Hearn, alto; Matthew Dalen, tenor; Daniel Thiellman, bass; Chancel Choir; Melvin Hurst, conductor. 16 Baby Point Rd. 416-767-6112. Freewill offering.

- 12:00 noon: Roy Thomson Hall/AmaDeus Choir of Greater Toronto. The Season of Joy. Seasonal songs and winning entries from the Choir’s annual Seasonal Song-Writing Competition. AmaDeus Choir of Greater Toronto; Shawn Grenke, organ; Lydia Adams, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-872-4255. Free.


- 7:00: University Settlement Music and Arts School. End of Term Student Concerts. St. George the Martyr Church, 197 John St. 416-598-3444 x243/244. Free.

- 7:30: Toronto Masque Theatre. O Tannenbaum: The Tree of Life. Samers/Bissell: No Tongue Will Tally; and other seasonal songs and stories. Alison Melville, recorder; Andrea Ludwig, alto; Bud Roach, tenor; and others. Atrium, 21 Shaftebury Ave. 416-410-5461. $25.

Monday December 19


Tuesday December 13


- 7:30: Orpheus Choir of Toronto/Hanna- ford Street Silver Band. Traditions: Welcome Christmas! Jackie Richardson, vocals.

- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. A Jann Arden Christmas. Jann Arden, vocalist; Etobicoke School of the Arts Chorus; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $39.75. Also Dec 14(0:00, 8:00).

Wednesdays December 14


- 2:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. A Jann Arden Christmas. Jann Arden, vocalist; Etobicoke School of the Arts Chorus; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $33.50. Also 8:00.


- 7:30: Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts Music Department. A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. St. Clare Church, 1118 St. Clair Ave. W. 416-393-5556 x0. $15.

- 8:00: Cameron House. A Winter’s Night. Bach: Sonata No.1 for viola da gamba and keyboard; Schumann: Märchenerzählungen (Fairy Tales) Op.132 for clarinet, viola and piano; Mozart: Kegelstatt Trio K498 for clarinet, viola and piano. Duo Mechant (Joseph Nadurata, viola; Linda Shumas, piano); James Petsy, clarinet. 480 Queen St. W. 416-703-0811. PWYC.

- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. A Jann Arden Christmas. Jann Arden, vocalist; Etobicoke School of the Arts Chorus; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $39.75. Also Dec 14(0:00, 8:00).
Handel Messiah
December 14-17 at 7:30pm
Koerner Hall, (416) 408-0208

Sing-Along Messiah
December 18 at 2pm
Massey Hall, (416) 872-4255
tafelmusik.org

TAFELMUSIK’S ORIGINAL MESSIAH
Handel Messiah
December 14-17 at 7:30pm
Koerner Hall, (416) 408-0208

Sing-Along Messiah
December 18 at 2pm
Massey Hall, (416) 872-4255
tafelmusik.org

- 8:00: Cerkowny Chamber Orchestra. With Bells On. Selected Christmas songs with singing-along carols. Paul McCulloch, conductor. Little Trinity Anglican Church, 425 King St. E. 647-528-7159. $10; free(child).
- 8:00: Georgetown Bach Chorale. A Canadian Christmas. House Concert (Georgetown), 157 Main St., Georgetown. 905-873-9909. SOLD OUT. Also Dec 17, 18, 22(both 2:00).
- 8:00: Rose Theatre. Quartets. Cindy Church, Caitlin Hanford, Gwen Swick and Sylvia Tyson. 1 Theatre Ln., Brampton. 905-874-2800. $50.
- 8:00: Soulpepper Concert Series. Rose (A Concert Presentation). Based on Gertrude Stein’s The World Is Round. Young Centre for the Performing Arts, Distillery District, 50 Tank House Ln. 416-866-8666. $36; $25(st/child). Opening night. Also Dec 17 and 22(both 2:00).
- 10:30: Lula Music and Arts Centre. Papiosco y Grupo Rítmicos de Toronto. Jorge Luis Torres (aka Papiosco), percussion; and others. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307. $15; women free before 10:00.

Saturday December 17
- 2:00: Roy Thomson Hall. Toronto Children’s Chorus: A Child’s Christmas. Thomas: A Child’s Christmas in Wales (with orchestral arrangements by Telfer); and seasonal songs. Guests: TTC Alumni Choir; Judy Leman, harp; Stan Klebanoff, trumpet; Andy Morris, percussion; members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra; Geraint Wyn Davies, narrator. 60 Simcoe St. 416-872-4255. $35.50-$45.50.
- 2:00: Soulpepper Concert Series. Rose (A Concert Presentation). Based on Gertrude Stein’s The World Is Round. Young Centre for the Performing Arts, Distillery District, 50 Tank House Ln. 416-866-8666. $36; $25(st/child). Also Dec 22(00).
- 4:00: Cathedral Church of St. James. Organ Recitals: David Briggs. 60 Simcoe St. 416-872-4255. $35.50-$45.50.
- 4:00: Soulpepper Concert Series. Rose (A Concert Presentation). Based on Gertrude Stein’s The World Is Round. Young Centre for the Performing Arts, Distillery District, 50 Tank House Ln. 416-866-8666. $36; $25(st/child). Also Dec 22(00).
- 4:00: Pax Christi Chorale. The Child’s Christmas. Messiah, For children and families. Handel: Messiah; Larissa Konius, soprano; Caitlin Wood, soprano; Maria Souls, mezzo; Jacques Arsenaud, tenor; Dion Mazzurolli, baritone; with orchestra. Church of St. Mary Magdalene (Toronto), 477 Manning Ave. 416-410-1570. PWYC.

Saturday, December 17
Pax Christi Chorale presents
The Children’s Messiah
Church of St. Mary Magdalene
Pay what you can
PAXCHRISTICHORALE.ORG

Saturday Dec 17 at 8 pm
opening notes at 7:15 pm
A Tour of Carols
Songs of Christmas, brought home
Calvin Presbyterian Church
26 Delisle Ave
1 block north of Yonge & St Clair
(416) 763-1695
torontochamberchoir.ca

Luminous seasonal carols & Charpentier’s Messe de Minuit
December 17, 2016
7:30pm
Grace Church on-the-Hill
300 Lansdowne Road
www.annexsingers.org
4:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 9. Also Dec 22, 23(all 7:30); 18, 24(all 4:30); 24(1:30).


7:00: Amadeus Choir. Winter Lullabies: Seasonal Music to Soothe the Soul. Bach Children’s Chorus (Linda Beaupré, conductor); Erica Goodman, harp; Shawn Grenke and Eleanor Daley, piano/organ; Lydia Adams, conductor. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-446-0188. $40; $30(sr); $25(under 30); $20(st).

7:30: Amadeus Choir. Winter Lullabies: Seasonal Music to Soothe the Soul. Bach Children’s Chorus (Linda Beaupré, conductor); Erica Goodman, harp; Shawn Grenke and Eleanor Daley, piano/organ; Lydia Adams, conductor. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-446-0188. $40; $30(sr); $25(under 30); $20(st).

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7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 9. Also Dec 22, 23(all 7:30); 18, 24(all 4:30); 24(1:30).


8:00: Georgtown Bach Chorale. A Canadian Christmas. Exploring traditions brought to Canada by immigrants and from First Nations tribes. House Concert (Georgetown), 157 Main St. 905-875-9909. SOLD OUT. Also Dec 18.

8:00: Kindred Spirits Orchestra. Grand Romantics. Wagner: Overture to Rienzi; Brahms: Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra, Berlioz: Harold in Italy; Conrad Chow, violin; Andrew Ascenzo, cello; Keith Ham, viola; Alex Petrenko, host; Kristian Alexander, conductor. Flato Markham Theatre, 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $30-$40; $25(sr); $15(youth). 7:15: pre-concert recital and discussion.

8:00: Kindred Spirits Orchestra. Grand Romantics. Wagner: Overture to Rienzi; Brahms: Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra, Berlioz: Harold in Italy; Conrad Chow, violin; Andrew Ascenzo, cello; Keith Ham, viola; Alex Petrenko, host; Kristian Alexander, conductor. Flato Markham Theatre, 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $30-$40; $25(sr); $15(youth). 7:15: pre-concert recital and discussion.

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8:00: Kindred Spirits Orchestra. Grand Romantics. Wagner: Overture to Rienzi; Brahms: Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra, Berlioz: Harold in Italy; Conrad Chow, violin; Andrew Ascenzo, cello; Keith Ham, viola; Alex Petrenko, host; Kristian Alexander, conductor. Flato Markham Theatre, 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $30-$40; $25(sr); $15(youth). 7:15: pre-concert recital and discussion.
8:00: **Mississauga Symphony Orchestra.** Highlights from Messiah. Handel. Soloists; Mississauga Festival Chamber Choir; Denis Mastromonaco, conductor. Hammerson Hall, Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $30-$65.

8:00: **Music Gallery.** Kith and Kin Holiday Wassail. 197 John St. 416-204-1080. $18/$16(adv); $12(members/arts); free(12 and under).

8:00: **Ontario Philharmonic.** Christmas at the Opera with Michael Ciuco. Gounod: Faust (excerpts); Romeo and Juliet; Verdi: La traviata: De miei bollenti spiriti; Handel: Comfort ye, ev’ry valley (from Messiah); Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker Op.71 (excerpts); Christmas carols; and other works. Michael Ciuco, tenor; Marco Parisotto, conductor. TDUT Regent Theatre (Oshawa), 50 King St. E., Oshawa. 905-721-3399 x2. $45-$56.

8:00: **Toronto Chamber Choir.** A Tour of Carols. Christmas carols from various nations. Guest: Kirk Elliott. Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle Ave. 416-763-1695. $30/$25; $12.50(under 30).


**Sunday December 18**

1:00: **Hugh’s Room.** The Ault Sisters 18th Annual “Celebrate the Season.” The Ault Sisters; Chris Bruder, piano; Tom Alkobell, bass; and Ethan Ardelli, drums. 2261 Dundas St. W. 416-531-2399 x2. $45-$56.

2:00: **Tafelmusik.** 30th Anniversary of Tafelmusik’s Sing-Along Messiah. Handel. Amanda Forsythe, soprano; Kristina Szabó, mezzo; Colin Balzer, tenor; Tyler Duncan, baritone; Ivars Taurins, director. Massey Hall, 176 Victoria St. 416-872-4255. $40; $45(sr); $30(under 36). Seating is assigned by voice parts. Families and friends may sit together in the mixed-voice section.

3:00: **Mississauga Symphony Orchestra.** A Merry Little Christmas. Holiday songs and sing-a-longs. Sleigh Ride; Nutcracker Suite (excerpts); Skater’s Waltz; Vivaldi: Four Seasons (Winter). Mississauga Symphony Youth Orchestra; Resonance Youth Choir (Robert Anderson, conductor); Denis Mastromonaco, conductor. Hammerson Hall, Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $35-$40. With instrument petting zoo.

3:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** Messiah. Handel. Yulia Van Doren, soprano; Abigail Lewis, mezzo; Isaiah Bell, tenor; Daniel Okulitch, bass-baritone; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Nicholas McGegan, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $44.75. Also Dec 19, 20, 21, 23(eves).

4:00: **No Strings Theatre.** Denise Williams and Friends: Happy Holidays in the Hood! Classics, Secular, Music Theatre, Spirituals, Jazz. Sunday December 18th at 4:00 PM.

4:00: **No Strings Theatre.** Denise Williams and Friends: Happy Holidays in the Hood! Crossover classical, music theatre and jazz. Maya Kilttron, vocals; Jill Fillion, soprano; Karen Skidmore; mezzo; Steven Henrickson, baritone; Ben MacDonald, saxophone; and others including past, present and future students of No Strings Theatre; Patrick Mauert, stage director; William Shoookhoff, music director. Wychwood Barns, 601 Christie St. 416-551-2093. $25; $20(sr/et); $15(child).


7:00: **Choir of Trinity-St. Paul’s United Church/VIVA! Youth Singers of Toronto.** Carols by Candlelight. A seasonal service of music and candlelight. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-922-1167. Free.


7:00: **Music at Metropolitan.** Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols. Metropolitan
A. Concerts in the GTA

Choirs; Patricia Wright and Saya Ojiri, organ. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-363-0331 x26. Freewill offering.


8:00: Georgetown Bach Chorale. A Canadian Christmas. Exploring traditions brought to Canada by immigrants and from First Nations tribes. House concert (George-town), 157 Main St., Georgetown. 905-873-9909. SOLD OUT.

8:00: That Choir. Carols from Christmases past and present. Jerzy Cichocki, conductor. Wexford Collegiate School for the Arts Chamber Choir; Craig Pike, conductor. St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. 416-419-1756.

Monday December 19

5:00: Bassoon Out Loud. Vivaldi Christmas Concert. Vivaldi: Six Bassoon Concerti. Michael Sweeney, Samuel Banks, Catherine Chen and Nadina Mackie Johnson, bassoons; with chamber strings and harpsichord.

December 19, 5PM
VIVALDI CHRISTMAS
Six festive and rarely-heard bassoon concerti performed by Toronto’s top bassoonists, including Michael Sweeney, Catherine Chen, Samuel Banks and Nadina with chamber strings and harpsichord.
Bassoon Out Loud at HELICONIAN HALL
35 Hazelton Avenue, Toronto $30 / $20
nadinamackiejackson.com


Tuesday December 20

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


8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Messiah. See Dec 18(3:00). Also Dec 20, 21, 23.

NEROSSA MUSIC PRESENTS
GETTING A HANDEL ON THE MESSIAH (excerpts)
Dec 20, 8pm
Lawrence Park Community Church
Dec 21, 8pm
Calvin Presbyterian Church
nerossamusic@gmail.com

8:00: Nerossa Music. Getting a Handel on the Messiah. Handel: Messiah (excerpts). Kira

Ontario Arts Council Conseil des Arts de l’Ontario
An Ontario government agency un organisme du gouvernement de l’Ontario
Braun, soprano; Madison Ryley Arsenault, mezzo; Paul Williamson, tenor; Steven Henrikson, bass-baritone; Paolo Busato, organ/conductor. Lawrence Park Community Church, 2180 Bayview Ave. 416-786-3109. $20. Also Dec 21 (Calvin Presbyterian Church).

8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Messiah. See Dec 18. Also Dec 23.

Thursday December 22


7:30: Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts Music Department. A Christmas Roundelay, Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts, 36 Greenfield Ave. 416-393-5556 x.0. $15. Also Dec 22.

Friday December 23


7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 9. Also Dec 23(7:30); 24(1:30); 24(4:30).

Saturday December 24


**A. Concerts in the GTA**

11:00: **All Saints Kingsway Church**. Candlelight Christmas Celebration and Choral Eucharist. 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-247-5181. Freewill offering. Religious service. Also at 7:00pm.

11:00: **St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto)**. Free. Religious service. St. Andrew’s Choir; Dan Bickle, organ. 73 Simcoe St. (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-363-0331 x26. Free; Latin America: samba, salsa, bossa nova and more. $120 Yonge St. 416-395-5639. Free; registration required.

2:00: **Toronto Operetta Theatre**. Pirates of Penzance. Gilbert & Sullivan. Colin Ainsworth, tenor (Frederic); Vania Chan, soprano (Mabel); Curtis Sullivan, baritone (Major General); Elizabeth Beeler, alto (Ruth); Derek Bate, conductor; Guillermo Silva-Marín, stage director. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-6754. $45-$95. Also Dec 30, Jan 6(all 8:00); Dec 31, Jan 7, 8(all 3:00).

**Tuesday December 27**

2:00: **North York Central Library**. Cassava Latin Band. Clap, sing, dance to rhythms of Latin America: samba, salsa, bossa nova and more. 5120 Yonge St. 416-395-5639. Free; registration required.

5:00: **Toronto Operetta Theatre**. Pirates of Penzance. Gilbert & Sullivan. Colin Ainsworth, tenor (Frederic); Vania Chan, soprano (Mabel); Curtis Sullivan, baritone (Major General); Elizabeth Beeler, alto (Ruth); Derek Bate, conductor; Guillermo Silva-Marín, stage director. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-6754. $45-$95. Also Dec 30.


**Wednesday December 28**

2:30 pm **Toronto Operetta Theatre**. Pirates of Penzance. See Dec 27. Also Jan 6(all 8:00); Dec 31, Jan 7, 8(all 3:00).

10:30: **Lula Music and Arts Centre**. Chris Bottomly. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307. $15; free before 8:00.

**Thursday December 29**

2:00 and 7:00: **Flato Markham Theatre**. The Nutcracker. Ballet Jürgen. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $39-$44. Also at 7:00.


**Friday December 30**


8:00: **Trent University**. Canadian Film Festival. Screening of a select film from the annual Canadian Film Festival. Also at 7:00. 350 College St. 416-977-5000. Free.

**Saturday December 31**

8:00: **Toronto Operetta Theatre**. Pirates of Penzance. See Dec 27. Also Jan 6(all 8:00); Jan 7, 8(all 3:00).

10:30: **Lula Music and Arts Centre**. Roberto Linares Brown. Lula Lounge, 1855 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307. $15; women free before 10:00.

3:00: **Toronto Operetta Theatre**. Pirates of Penzance. See Dec 27. Also Jan 6(all 8:00); Jan 7, 8(all 3:00).

7:00: **Attila Glatz Concert Productions**. E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial Live in Concert. Motion Picture Symphony Orchestra; Evan Mitchell, conductor. Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, 1 Front St. E. 1-855-872-7669. $49-$99. Also Dec 30.

7:00: **Free Times Cafe**. 60s Folk Revival: Where Have All the Folk Songs Gone? Works by Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Peter Paul and Mary, and Woody Guthrie. Sue and Dwight, Michelle Rumball, and Tony Lavola. 320 College St. 416-967-1078. $50(buffet); $25(show). Reservations required. Songbooks provided. Champagne and party favours at midnight with prizes.

**Sunday January 1**


**Cablelight Christmas Eve Services**

7 PM **Lessons & Carols** Organ, brass band & our renowned choir

11 PM **Worship & Carols** Organ & our choir

**Bravissimo! Opera’s Greatest Hits**

**New Year’s Eve 7:00 pm**

Tickets: 416.872.4255 roythomson.com

**Tickets:** 416.872.4255 roythomson.com
from operettas with full orchestra and dancers. Strauss Symphony of Canada; Polina Pazitzikova, soprano; Alexander Kaimbur, tenor; dancers from Kiev City Ballet; Matthias Fritzberger, conductor; and others. Tyson Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 1-855-872-5000. $65-$115. Also Jan 2 (Hamilton).

Tuesday January 3


Wednesday January 4


Thursday January 5


Friday January 6


● 7:30: Lula Music and Arts Centre. Ernesto Cervini Trio. Ernesto Cervini, drummer-composer; Kelly Jefferson, tenor saxophone; Artie Roth, bass. Lula Lounge, 1555 Dundas St. W. 416-588-2037. $15; free before 8:00.

● 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Jazz Faculty Concert with Dave Liebman. Mike Murley, saxophone; Jim Vivian, bass; Terry Clarke, drums. Upper Jazz Studio, 90 Wellesley St. W. 416-408-0208. Free.

● 8:00: Gallery 345. 345 Baroque Ensemble. Sixth Annual “Elixir Mixer” concert. Works by Bach, Graun, Mozart and others. Guests: Patricia Ahern, violin; Matt Antal, viola. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $20/$10.

● 8:00: Toronto Operetta Theatre. Pirates of Penzance. See Dec 27. Also Jan 7, 8 (all 8:00).


Saturday January 7

● 3:00: Toronto Operetta Theatre. Pirates of Penzance. See Dec 27. Also Jan 7 (3:00).

● 7:30: Li Delun Music Foundation. New Year’s Concert 2017. Tchaikovsky: Polonaise (from Eugene Onegin); Puccini: Turandot (selections); Verdi: Rigoletto (selections); Hong Hu Capriccio; Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No.1; and other works. Haochen Zhang, piano; Romulo Delgado, tenor; Donghua Feng, erhu; Toronto Festival Orchestra; Junping Qian, conductor. George Weston Recital Hall, 5040 Yonge St. 416-250-3708. $30-$88.

Sunday January 8

● 3:00: Toronto Operetta Theatre. Pirates of Penzance. See Dec 27.


● 7:30: Transac Club. GU in Concert. 292 Brunswick Ave. 416-923-8137. PWYC.

● 8:00: Gallery 345/Arraymusic. The Art of the Piano: Cascades and Abysses. Works by Rádulescu, Kasemets, Barry and Scelsi. Stephen Clarke, piano. Gallery 345, 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $20/PWYC.

January 10th at 8 pm

Music Toronto

● 8:00: Music Toronto. Contemporary Classics Series: Sean Chen, Piano. Toronto debut.
A. Concerts in the GTA

Ligeti: Musica Ricercata; Lescailier du diable; Mozart-Chen: Offertorium from Requiem; Madamimz (Catalogue Ars) from Don Giovanni; Rachmaninoff-Chen: Symphony No.2 mvts 3; Beethoven-Liszt: Symphony No.4 mvts 3 and 4. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. $55; $10(st).

Wednesday January 11


8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra/Royal Conservatory. Mozart@261 Festival: Magnificent Mozart. Mozart: Piano Concerto No.27 K595; Rondo for Violin K373; Symphony No.40 K550. Leonid Nediak, piano; Konseron Leong, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-598-3375. From $39. Also Jan 14(8:00).

8:00: Canadian Music Centre. Paul Pulfrod and Cheryl Duvall. In Concert. Smith: Ballad; Storring: Vale; Waller: Lines; Anthems; Simms: wires at rest (tend to tangle). Paul Pulfrod, cello; Cheryl Duvall, piano. 20 St. Joseph St. 416-961-6601. $15; $10(st/arts worker).

Saturday January 14


7:30: Opera by Request. Hansel and Gretel. Humperdinck. Shannon Halliwell-McDonald, mezzo (Hansel); Brittany Stewart, soprano (Gretel); Jake Flynn, baritone (Father); Erin Armstrong, soprano (Mother); Brigitte Bogar, soprano (Witch); Nartica Portillo, mezzo (Sandman/Dew Fairy); Kate Carver, conductor/piano. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20.


8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra/Royal Conservatory. Mozart@261 Festival: Emanuel Ax Plays Mozart. Mozart: Symphony No.33 K319; Piano Concerto No.14 in E-flat K449; Piano Concerto No.22 in E-flat K482. Emanuel Ax, piano; Michael Francis, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-598-3375. From $39. Also Jan 14(8:00).

8:00: Canadian Music Centre. Paul Pulford and Cheryl Duvall. In Concert. Smith: Ballad; Storring: Vale; Waller: Lines; Anthems; Simms: wires at rest (tend to tangle). Paul Pulford, cello; Cheryl Duvall, piano. 20 St. Joseph St. 416-961-6601. $15; $10(st/arts worker).

Sunday January 15

Diana Doherty and Dennis Kim

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2PM
MAZZOLEN CONCERT HALL

Tickets on Sale Now! 416.408.0208
www.performance.rcm.ca

2:00: Royal Conservatory. Mazuollos Masters: Diana Doherty and Dennis Kim. Works by Bach, Mozart and others. Diana Doherty, oboe; Dennis Kim, violin. Mazuollos Concert Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $25.

5:00: Windermere String Quartet. Heard in the Hanover Rooms. Playel-Trio for two violins and cello in E-flat; Haydn: Mermaid’s Song; Pleasing Pains; Arianna a Novax; Quartet Op.64 No.3. Meredith Hall, soprano. St. Olave’s Anglican Church, 380 Windermere Ave. 416-789-0525. $25; $20(sr); $10(st). On period instruments.


5:00: Chelsea McBride’s Social- ist Night School. The Twilight Fall Album Release Party. Double big band event. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307. $20/$15(ad); $25(with CD)/$20(ad with CD); $15(sr/st/arts workers)/$10(ad); $20(sr/st/arts workers with CD)/$15(ad with CD).

Monday January 16

8:00: Temple Sinai Congregation of Toronto. MIR Trio. Dance Series: Dance Ontario’s Dance Week-end Preview. Gadfly Dance. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W.

Tuesday January 17

12:00 noon: Canadian Opera Company. Dance Series: Dance Ontario’s Dance Week-end Preview. Gadfly Dance. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W.

WINDERMERE STRING QUARTET

with guest Meredith Hall

January 15, 3:00

Sunday January 15

Emanuel Ax Plays Mozart

Jan 13 & 14

Michael Francis, Conductor

TSO.CA

Piano Concerto No.22 in E-flat K482. Emanuel Ax, piano; Michael Francis, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-598-3375. From $39. Also Jan 14(8:00).

Friday January 13


7:30: Lula Music and Arts Centre. (Monday) Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307. $15; free before 8:00.


8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra/Royal Conservatory. Mozart@261 Festival: Emanuel Ax Plays Mozart. Mozart: Symphony No.33 K319; Piano Concerto No.14 in E-flat K449; Piano Concerto No.22 in E-flat K482. Emanuel Ax, piano; Michael Francis, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-598-3375. From $39.


MIR Trio

With Igor Geftner on cello, Mark Skazinetzky on violin, and Rachael Kerr on piano

Monday January 16 at 8:00 p.m.

Tickets in Advance: $15 | Tickets at the Door: $18

To register, please visit www.templesina.net or call 416.487.4161.
Lucio Silla K135; Violin Concerto No.1 K207; Violin Concerto No.3 K216; Symphony No.38 K504 “Prague.” Isabelle Faust, violin; Bernard Labadie, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-588-3575. From $39. Also Jan 20(7:30).

Thursday January 19


12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Student Composers Concert. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

Wednesday January 18


Friday January 20


Friday, January 20, 1–8 pm

Music Media Showcase

Three works by contemporary composers, performed by Winnipeg’s renowned Winnipeg New Music Ensemble. All compositions are the result of a commissioning/development initiative at Tafelmusik, supported by the Canada Council for the Arts. The concerts will feature works by Gordon Murray, Teri W rather, and Tafelmusik’s creative director, Helene Grimaud. Throughout the day, Tafelmusik’s Registrar and Manager of Development, Terri Anthony, will be available to discuss the new commissioning process, which is aimed at fostering new relationships between Tafelmusik and emerging composers.

Friday, January 20, 3:30 pm

Jeanne Lamon Hall, Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre

Tafelmusik presents

Recital of the songs and music of New France by Lorna McDonald Soprano

January 20th


JCT Trio
SAT. JAN. 21, 8PM KOERNER HALL

TICKETS ON SALE NOW! 416.408.0208
WWW.PERFORMANCE.COM/MUSIC.CA

cello; Conrad Tiao, piano. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. From $25. Part of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Mozart@261 Festival.


• 8:00: Tafelmusik. Intimate German Baroque. See Jan 19. Also Jan 22(mat).

Sunday January 22

• 1:15: Mooredale Concerts. Music and Truffles: Heath Quartet. Interactive concert for young people age 5-11; adults welcome. Host Joanna will help explore the music and set up a battle of the players with an audience vote. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-364-3714 x103. $20. 3:15: Main performance.

The Small Concerts Series

HAPPY BIRTHDAY/ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY
January 23
James Wallenberg, Peter Heidrich, Edward Elgar

www.associates-tso.org


Music Toronto St. Lawrence Quartet

January 26 at 8 pm


Friday January 27

• 1:00: York University Department of Music. Music at Midday: Aria with Me. Young singers from the studios of Catherine Robbin, Stephanie Bogle, Norma Burrows, Michael Donovan and Karen Rymal. Tribute Communities Recital Hall, Accolade East Building, YU, 4700 Keele St. 416-748-0700. Free.

• 7:30: Lula Music and Arts Centre. Laura Fernandez. Jazz concert with compositions from her upcoming recording. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307. $15; free before 8:00.

• 7:30: Opera by Request. Don Giovanni. Mozart, Michael Robert-Broder, baritone, (Don Giovanni); Christopher Wilson, baritone (Leporello); Paul Williamson, tenor (Don Ottavio); Allison Arends, soprano (Donna Anna); Kathleen Promane, soprano (Donna Elvira); Britany King, soprano (Zerlina); William Shoekhoff, conductor/piano. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2955. $20.


• 7:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Jazz Composers Concert. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

Music Toronto

The Conductor and the Song Series

Thursday January 26


Thursday January 19


Wednesday January 25


Monday January 23


• 7:30: Tafelmusik. Intimate German Baroque. See Jan 19. Also Jan 22(mat).

The Heath Quartet Canadian Debut
3:15pm January 22

• 3:15: Mooredale Concerts. Heath Quartet. J.S. Bach (transcribed): Three Organ Preludes: Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier BWV731; Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr BWV662; In dulci
Saturday January 28

● 2:00: St. Anne’s Music and Drama Society. The Grand Duke. See Jan 27. Also Jan 28, Feb 2 (3 all 7:30); Jan 29, Feb 4 (all 2:00).

● 3:00: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. Choral Conductors’ Symposium Concert. Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Elora Festival Singers; Michael Bliss, organ; Noel Edison, conductor; and other conductors. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1558 Yonge St. 416-598-0422.

Free. First come, first seated. Concert will be webcast live.


● 7:30: Aga Khan Museum. Mwazahat and Qudood. Canadian Arabic Orchestra; Canadian Arabic Choir. 77 Wynford Dr. 416-646-4677. $40 (Friends).


PWYC. Re-scheduled from Nov 26.

● 7:30: Canadian Opera Company. The Magic Flute. See Jan 19. Also Feb 13, 3:10, 16, 18, 24(all 7:30); Jan 29, Feb 19(2:00); Feb 4(4:30).

● 7:30: St. Anne’s Music and Drama Society. The Grand Duke. See Jan 27. Also Jan 28, Feb 2, 3(all 7:30); Jan 30, Feb 29, 4 (all 2:00).


● 8:00: Guitar Society of Toronto. Bandin’ Dead Gecko Duo (Italy). Tango music by Piazzolla, Pujol and others. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 416-964-8289.

$35/$30(adv); $30/$25(st)/$25(adv).

● 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto 1. Edward Top: New work (world premiere/TSO commission); Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No.1; Dvořák: Symphony No.7. Stewart Goodyear, piano; Peter Dundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $39.75.

Sunday January 29

● 2:00: Canadian Opera Company. The Magic Flute. See Jan 19. Also Feb 1, 3, 10, 16, 18, 24(all 7:30); Feb 19(1:00); Feb 4(4:30).

● 2:00: St. Anne’s Music and Drama Society. The Grand Duke. See Jan 27. Also Feb 2, 3(all 7:30); Feb 5(all 2:00).


The Magic of the Gershwin Songbook

Jan. 29, 3:30 pm & Jan. 31, 8 pm
www.taliskerplayers.ca

Talisker Players Music


● 6:00: Georgetown Bach Choir. Romantic Duo for Violin and Piano. Works by Kreisler, Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Rubenstein. Edwin Huizinga, violin; Ronald G eidarus, piano. House concert (Georgetown), 157 Main St., Georgetown. 905-873-9905. $45 (advance only). Soups, cheeses and desserts following concert.


Monday January 30


● 12:30: York University Department of Music. New Music Festival: Conservatorio G. Tartini (Trieste)/Uff Composition Student Exchange Concert. M2 Ensemble (Michael Bridge, accordion, Michael Murphy, percussion) and guests. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Festival runs Jan 29-Feb 5.

Tuesday January 31


● 1:00: Cathedral Church of St. James. Organ Recital: Ian Sadler. 65 Church St. 416-364-7865. Free. Donations welcomed.


● 4:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. New Music Festival: Americas. Modern music of the Americas. Emmanuele Baldini, violin; Roberto Turrin, piano. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Festival runs Jan 29-Feb 5.

● 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. New Music Festival: Conservatorio G. Tartini (Trieste)/Uff Composition Student Exchange Concert. M2 Ensemble (Michael Bridge, accordion, Michael Murphy, percussion) and guests. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Festival runs Jan 29-Feb 5.


● 4:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. New Music Festival: Americas. Modern music of the Americas. Emmanuele Baldini, violin; Roberto Turrin, piano. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Festival runs Jan 29-Feb 5.
**Wednesday February 1**

- 7:30: **Canadian Opera Company. The Magic Flute.** See Jan 19. Also Feb 2, 7, 10, 16, 24 (all 7:30); Feb 19 (2:00); Feb 4 (4:30).

**Thursday February 2**

- 12:00 noon: **Canadian Opera Company. Piano Virtuoso Series: French and Russian Masterpieces.** Solo piano works by Debussy and Scriabin; Debussy: Quatre chansons de jeunesse; Stravinsky: No Word from Tom (From the Rake’s Progress). Geofrey Conquer, piano; Elizabeth Poliese, soprano. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-393-8231. Free. First-come, first-served. Late seating not available.
- 12:00 noon: **Roy Thomson Hall. Noon Hour Concerts: Bach, Beethoven, Brahms...and the Boys.** Victoria Scholars; St. Michael’s Choir School Choirs; Jerzy Cichoń, conductor; William O’Meara, organ. 60 Simcoe St. 416-872-4235. Free. First-come, first-served seating.

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**20th Annual Free Noon Hour Choir & Organ Concerts**

Enjoy an hour of beautiful music performed by outstanding Canadian choirs and organists, spotlighting Roy Thomson Hall’s magnificent Gabriel Kney pipe organ.

**Victoria Scholars Men’s Choral Ensemble & the Choirs of St. Michael’s Choir School**

Bach, Beethoven, Brahms ... and the Boys

**Thursday February 2**

- 12:00 Noon: Jerzy Cichoń, conductor William O’Meara, organ

FREE ADMISSION

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416-872-1255

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**Sunday February 5**

- 7:30: **York University Department of Music. Faculty Concert Series: Avtaara. Sundar Viswanathan, saxophone/flute/vocals; Felicity Williams, vocals; Michael Oschip-inti, guitar; Justin Gray, bass; Ravi Naimpally, tabla; Max Senit, drums. Tribute Communities Recital Hall, Accolade East Building, YU, 4700 Keele St. 416-736-5888. $15; $10 (or/ysical)

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**Canadian Opera Company.**

- 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Fauré: Requiem.** Samy Moussa: A Globe Itself Inholding; Brahms/Detlev Glanert: Four Preludes and Serious Songs; Fauré: Requiem. Karina Gavin, soprano; Russell Braun, baritone; Amadeus Choir; Elmer Iseler Singers; Jean-Willy Kurz, organ; Stéphanie Denève, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. From $33.75. Also Feb 2.

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**Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir**

Feb. 2. St. Paul’s Basilica

**Sunday February 5**

- 8:00: **Soundstreams.** Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. Celebrating Estonia’s upcoming 100th year of independence. Rachmaninoff: Vespers; works by Pärt, Daniel and Maimets. Kaspars Putniņš, conductor. St. Paul’s Basilica, 83 Power St. 416-408-0208. $84.50-$67.50.

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**Friday February 3**

- 11:00am: **Tafelmusik.** Close Encounters of the Cross-Channel Kind. Works by Purcell, Leclair and Couperin. Heliconian Hall, 416-964-6337. $24-$40; $22-$35 (or/ysical and under). Also Feb 5.

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**Canadian Opera Company. Götterdämmerung.** Wagner, Andreas Schager, tenor (Siegfried); Christine Goerke, soprano (Brünnhilde); and others; Tim Albery, director.

- 6:00: **University of Toronto Faculty of Music. New Music Festival: Composing for Dance Concert.** U of T Composition students collaborate with Toronto’s choreographers.

- 7:30: **University of Toronto Faculty of Music. New Music Festival: Electrica Intermezzo.** Works including live electronics and surround sound. Dennis Patrick, presenter. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Festival runs Jan 29-Feb 5.

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**Saturday February 4**

- 12:00 noon: **University of Toronto Faculty of Music. New Music Festival: Music of Our Time - Contemporary German Music.** Works by Lohengrin. Wagner, Christoph McAlae, tenor (Lohengrin); Michele Gusson, soprano (Elsa); Andrew Teas, baritone (Telramund); Kristine Davandino, soprano (Ortrud); Michael Robert-Broder, Harry Manx and Friends. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. From $40.
A CANADIAN PANORAMA
A TRIBUTE TO CANADIAN MUSIC TO CELEBRATE OUR 150TH BIRTHDAY

Sun. Feb. 5 | U of T Walter Hall

www.NewMusicConcerts.com


4:00: Church of St. Mary Magdalene (Toronto). Organ Fireworks. Andrew Adair, organ. 477 Manning Ave. 416-531-7955. Free.

4:00: St. Olave’s Anglican Church. Choral Festival for The Queen’s Accession. 360 Windermere Ave. 416-769-5886. Contributions accepted. Religious Service. Royal festive tea follows.

5:00: St. Olave’s Anglican Church. Music for Royal Occasions. Celebrating the accession of The Queen. 360 Windermere Ave. 416-769-5886. Contributions accepted.

Sun. 5th Feb. at 4 p.m.

Evensong for the Queen’s Accession
plus Royal Festive Tea and at 5:
MUSIC FOR ROYAL OCCASIONS
Our invited guest musicians present majestic music fit for the Queen, marking the eve of her accession 65 years ago in February 1952.

St. Olave’s Church
Bloor and Windermere
416-769-5686
stolaves.ca

The Magic Flute. See Jan 13. Also Feb 10, 16, 18, 24(all 7:30); Feb 19(2:00).

Tuesday February 7


7:30: Canadian Opera Company. The Magic Flute. See Jan 13. Also Feb 10, 16, 18, 24(all 7:30); Feb 19(2:00).

Music TORONTO
Ilya Poletaev
February 7 at 8 pm


Sunday February 5

2:00: Canadian Opera Company. Götterdämmerung. Wagner. See Feb 8(1:00). Also Feb 8, 11, 14, 17(all 8:00), 25(4:30).

2:00: Oakville Symphony Orchestra. Northern Reflections. Couthard: Canadian Fantasy; Grieg: Piano Concerto; other works. Christopher Goodpasture, piano. Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts, 130 Navy St., Oakville. 905-815-2021 or 888-489-7784. $25-$64; Also Feb 6(2:00).


8:00: New Music Concerts. New Music Festival: A Portrait of Salvatore Sciarrino. Sciarrino: Introduzione all’oscurto for 12 instruments; Vagabonde Blu for accordion; Trovare un equilibrio, è necessario? for flute and string quartet; Piano Sonata No.4. Archeologia del telefono, concertante for 13 instruments. Branko Đinović, accordion; Stephen Clarke, piano; NMC Ensemble; Robert Aitken, director. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-961-9584. $35; $25(sr/arts workers); $10(st); 715; pre-concert talk. Festival runs Jan 29-Feb 5.

Wednesday February 8

8:00: New Music Festival: Prima Zombie - The Diva That Just Wouldn’t Stay Dead. Rocco Rupolo, director. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-961-9584. $35; $25(sr/arts workers); $10(st); 715; pre-concert talk. Festival runs Jan 29-Feb 5.

Saturday February 4

5:00: Greater Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra. Waltzes and Overtures. J. Strauss II: Eine Nacht in Venedig; Tales from the Vienna Woods; Mascagni: Overture to Cavalleria rusticana; Ponchielli: Dance of the Hours; Verdi: Overture to Il trovatore; arias by Puccini, Verdi and Lehár. Rocco Rupolo, tenor; Paolo Busato, conductor. Columbus Centre, 901 Lawrence Ave. W. 647-238-0015. $25; $20(st).

Sunday December 11

**2:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. Piano Series: Schubert and Glass in Dialogue. Schubert: Impromptus; Glass: Metamorphosis. Simonne Dinetter, piano. 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424. $28-$52; $24-$48(faculty/staff); $26(st).**


**3:00: Young People’s Concert. SATURDAY DECEMBER 10. Thursday December 8**


**Sunday December 11**

**7:30: Grand Philharmonic Choir. Christmas Homemaking. Dove: There Was a Child (Canadian premiere); and other Christmas favourites. Jacqueline Woodley, soprano; Andrew Haji, tenor; Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Grand Philharmonic Chamber Singers; Grand Philharmonic Youth Choir (Amanda Brunk, conductor); and others; Mark Vuorinen, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-578-1570 or 1-800-265-8977. $30-$78; $14(st) and under 30s; $5(high school and younger).**

**8:00: Wellington Winds. Carols, Arias and Surprising Treasures. Christmas carols, opera arias and other works. Trompette, alto sax, clarinet, and tuba soloists from the ensemble; Daniel Warren, conductor. Knox Presbyterian Church (Waterloo), 50 Erb St. W., Waterloo. 519-669-1237. $20; $15(st); free(st).**

**Tuesday December 13**

**12:00 noon: City of St. Catharines. 26th Annual City of St. Catharines Civic Carol Concert.**

**26th annual civic christmas carol concert**

**Presented by the city of St. Catharines**

**Tuesday, Dec. 13th Doors 11:30 am**

**St. Catharines**

Concert. Laura Secondary School Concert Choir (Dave Sidler, conductor); Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School Concert Choir (J.P. Dupont, conductor); St. Catharines Civic Brass Ensemble (Steve Fralick, conductor); Ross Stretton, organist; Steve Fralick, brass and percussion; Peter M. Partridge, conductor; massed choirs. St. Thomas Anglican Church (St. Catharines). 99 Ontario St., St. Catharines. 905-688-5601 x2160. Freewill offering. Proceeds to Community Care.

**8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Till Fellner. Piano. Brahms: Four**

**Saturday December 10**

**2:30: Ensemble Vivant: “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” With Chorus Niagara Children’s Choir.**

**7:30: Ensemble Vivant. Christmas Tidings: “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” Catherine Wilson, piano/conductor; Guests: Chorus Niagara Children’s Choir (Amanda Nell), conductor) FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-668-0722/1-855-515-0722. $47-$52; $32-$37(under 13). Also Dec 16(Mississauga), Dec 18(London), Dec 21(Richmond Hill), Dec 23(Kingston), Dec 24(Kennett).**

**Monday December 12**

**7:00: London Pro Musica Choir. Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol. Readers from the Shaw and Stratford Festivals; Erin Bardua, soprano; Vicki St. Pierre; mezzo; London Pro Musica Choir; Dr. Charlene Pauls, conductor. Bishop Cronyn Memorial Centre, 442 William St., London. 519-914-5769. Free Donations in support of El Sistema Music Program for Children.**

**Tuesday December 13**

**12:00 noon: City of St. Catharines. 26th Annual City of St. Catharines Civic Carol Concert.**

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**8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Till Fellner. Piano. Brahms: Four**

**Saturday December 10**


**Also Dec 11.**


**7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. Ensemble Series: Toronto Symphony Orchestra Chamber Soloists. Mozart: Clarinet Quintet; Messiah: Quartet for the End of Time. Jonathan Crow; violin; Joaquin Valdenea, clarinet; and others. 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424. $28-$52; $24-$48(faculty/staff); $26(st).**

B. Concerts Beyond the GTA


Wednesday December 14


● 4:00: Dan School of Drama and Music, Queen's University. Sistema Kingston Holiday Concert. First and second Sistema Kingston students (grades 2-5) perform holiday songs in string ensemble, rhythm ensemble and choir. Molly Brant Public School, 30 Lyons St., Kingston. 613-533-2424. Free.

Thursday December 15


Friday December 16


● 8:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Yuletide Spectacular: Screening of animated film The Snowman, based on the book by Raymond Briggs. Performed with original music and carol sing-along. Grand Philharmonic Choir; Grand Philharmonic Children's Choir; Contemporary School of Dance Ltd; KWS Youth Ensemble, 57 Young St. W., Waterloo. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $19-$88. Also Dec 17(mat); eve); 18(mat).

● 8:00: Theatre Anacona, Theatre Anacona, Jingle All The Way. Festive songs for the season. Old Firehall Arts Centre, 334 Wilson St. E., Ancaster. 905-304-7469. $22; $20(st); $12(st). Also Dec 17(mat/eve).

Saturday December 17

● 2:00: Theatre Anacona. Theatre Anacona, Jingle All The Way. Festive songs for the season. Old Firehall Arts Centre, 334 Wilson St. E., Ancaster. 905-304-7469. $22; $20(st); $12(st). Also Dec 16, 17(eve).

● 2:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Yuletide Spectacular. See Dec 16. Also Dec 17(8:00); 18(2:30).

● 2:30: Niagara Symphony Orchestra. Dream of Christmas...Rêve de Noël: The Circus Is Coming to Town! Zacada Entertainment; Bradly Thachuk, conductor. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722 or 1-855-515-0722. $69; $64($34); $54($29) and under; $14(fst); $12(st); $5(eve); Also Dec 17(2:30); 18(3:00).

● 8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Yuletide Spectacular. See Dec 16. Also Dec 18(2:30).

● 8:00: Theatre Anacona. Theatre Anacona, Jingle All The Way. Festive songs for the season. Old Firehall Arts Centre, 334 Wilson St. E., Ancaster. 905-304-7469. $22; $20(st); $12(st). Also Dec 16, 17(mat).

Sunday December 18

★ 2:00: Ensemble Vivant. Christmas Tidings: ”It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” Catherine Wilson, piano/conductor; Guests: Junior Amabile Singers (Wendy Landon and Jackie Norman, conductors.) Dun-das Centre United Church, 482 Dundas St., London. 519-672-8800. $45; $28(under 13). Also Dec 21(Richmond Hill), 22(Kingston), 23(Notre Dame).


★ 2:30: Niagara Symphony Orchestra. Dream of Christmas...Rêve de Noël: The Circus Is Coming to Town! Zacada Entertainment; Bradly Thachuk, conductor. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722 or 1-855-515-0722. $34; $12(st); $5(eve); Also Dec 17(2:30) and 7:30.

★ 4:00: Music At St. Thomas. Carols by Candlelight. Festival of nine lessons and carols in the traditional style of King's College, Cambridge. Christmas carols and songs with audience sing-along. St. Thomas' Junior and Senior Choruses; Matthieu Latrelle and Francine Nguyen-Savaria, conductors. St. Thomas' Anglican Church (Belleville), 203 Church St., Belleville, 613-982-3638. PWYC. Reception follows.

Monday December 19

● 7:30: Peterborough Singers. Handel's Messiah, Emmanuel McAsteer, soprano; Daniel Taylor, countertenor; Jacob Abrahamse, tenor; Alex Dobson, bass; Ian Sadler, organ; Paul Owsey, trumpeter; David Byrnes, trumpeter; George Gjerde, conductor. St. George's Cathedral (Kingston). 905-742-0722. $47; $35(st); $25(st). Also Dec 21(mat, St. Catharines).

Tuesday December 20

● 5:00 and 7:30: Elora Festival Singers. Festival of Carols. St. John's Anglican Church (Elora), 36 Henderson St. Elora. 519-846-0331. $40; $17(st); $6(child). Also Dec 21.

Wednesday December 21

● 12:00 noon: Music at St. Andrews. Srooge’s Christmas. By Ken Jones. Cast of sixteen from U of T Music Faculty (Scarborough); Ensemble TrypTych; Lenard Whiting, conductor. St. Andrews Presbyterian Church (Barrie), 47 Owen St., Barrie. 705-726-1711. $5; free(st).

● 5:00 and 7:30: Elora Festival Singers. Festival of Carols. See Dec 20.

Thursday December 22

● 4:00: Gallery Players of Niagara. A Celtic Christmas. Music of Ireland, Wales and the Scottish Highlands. Douglas Miller, flute; David Braun, violin; Deborah Braun, harp; Guy Bannerman, narrator. Grace United Church (Niagara-on-the-Lake), 222 Victoria St., Niagara-on-the-Lake. 905-468-1525. $5-$35. Also Dec 22(mat, St. Catharines).

Friday December 23


● 7:30: Melissa-Marie Shriner. Sixth Annual Christmas in the Village Concert. Carol sing-along and reading of ’Twas the Night before Christmas. The Christmas Song. I’ll Be Home for Christmas, O Holy Night, Mary Did You Know? and other works by Niagara composers. Melissa-Marie Shriner; vocals; Aidan Miller; piano; Clark Johnston, upright bass; Richard Crossman, emcee; Christmas in the Village Ensemble. Pelham Community Church, 461 Canboro Rd., Fenwick. 905-841-8917. $20($17 adv). Venue is accessible.

● 7:30: Ensemble Vivant. Christmas Tidings. ”It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” Catherine Wilson, piano/conductor; Guests: Junior Amabile Singers (Wendy Landon and Jackie Norman, conductors.) Dundas Centre United Church, 482 Dundas St., London. 519-672-8800. $45; $28(under 13). Also Dec 21(Richmond Hill), 22(Kingston), 23(Notre Dame).

● 7:30: Ensemble Vivant. Christmas Tidings: ”It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” Catherine Wilson, piano/conductor; Guests: Cross Town Youth Chorus (Kurt Ala-Kantti, conductor). Centrepointe 105 Centrepointe Dr., Nepean.
Sunday January 8


Wednesday January 11


8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Contemporary Works for Cello and Piano. Simms: wires at rest (tend to tangle); Waller: Lines for cello and piano duo; Anthems in A Minor for cello and piano; Storrning: Vale; Linda Catlin Smith: Ballad for cello and piano. Paul Pulford, cello; Cheryl Duvall, piano. KWCMS Music Room, 57 Young St. W., Waterloo. 519-886-1673. $20, $10(st).

Monday January 2


Friday January 20


Thursday January 19


Sunday January 22

7:30: Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra. Brilliant Beethoven. Haydn: Symphony No.16; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No.2; Mozart: Divertimento for Wind Instruments No.35; Brahms: Symphony No.1; Saint-Saëns: Symphony No.3; Shostakovich: Piano Quintet in G Minor Op.57. Graham Mackenzie, oboe; Aisselin Noskcy, principal guest conductor. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722 or 1-855-515-0722. $36, $25 (sr); $14, $12 (st); $5(eyeGO). Also Jan 22 (2:30).

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Live By Request. Audience votes for selections to be performed live. John Morris Russell, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $19-$86.

Saturday January 7

12:00 noon: Don Wright Faculty of Music, Martinis Brooks Concerto Competition Final Round. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-688-3767. Free.

Saturday January 14


Saturday January 21


Saturday January 28

12:00 noon: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Winter Chamber Music. Various. Mike Lazaridis Theatre of Ideas, Perimeter Institute, 31 Caroline St. N., Waterloo. 519-886-1673. $20(st).

Thursday January 17

7:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. KW Glee. Pop hits from favourite artists including Michael Jackson, Sam Smith, Adele and many more. KW Glee; Steven Lehmann, KW Glee music director; Amanda Kind, KW Glee artistic director; Trevor Wager, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $36. Seated event. Also Jan 18.

Wednesday January 18

7:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. KW Glee. Pop hits from favourite artists including Michael Jackson, Sam Smith, Adele and many more. KW Glee; Steven Lehmann, KW Glee music director; Amanda Kind, KW Glee artistic director; Trevor Wager, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $36. Seated event.

Tuesday January 24


8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Live By Request. Audience votes for selections to be performed live. John Morris Russell, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $19-$86.


Monday January 1

9:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Piano Concerto No.20 in D Minor; Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No.3; Schubert: Symphonies Nos. 5 and 8; Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.5; Beethoven: Symphony No.5; Mahler: Symphony No.10. Elgar: Wand of Youth Suite; Rimsky-Korsakov: Flight of the Bumblebee; and other works. Charles Richard-Hamelin, cello; Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $30 ($20(st)).

Saturday December 31


Sunday January 1

3:00: Stratford Symphony Orchestra. New Year in Vienna: Lehar; Gold and Silver Waltz; Strauss II: Blue Dragon Waltz; Voices of Spring Waltz; Wiener Blut Waltz; Strauss I: Radetzy March. Knox Presbyterian Church (Stratford), 142 Ontario St., Stratford. 519-271-0930, $40, $10(st).

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Contemporary Works for Cello and Piano. Simms: wires at rest (tend to tangle); Waller: Lines for cello and piano duo; Anthems in A Minor for cello and piano; Storrning: Vale; Linda Catlin Smith: Ballad for cello and piano. Paul Pulford, cello; Cheryl Duvall, piano. KWCMS Music Room, 57 Young St. W., Waterloo. 519-886-1673. $20, $10(st).

B. Concerts Beyond the GTA

**Friday January 27**

- **12:30:** Don Wright Faculty of Music. Fridays at 12:30 Concert Series. Marie Johnson, clarinet; Tina Yanchus, piano. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767.

- **1:30:** Stratford Symphony Orchestra. Celtic Celebration. Recitations of poetry by Robbie Burns alternating with solo and accompanied music. Anderson: Irish Suite; Michael Flaten: River Dance Suite; Lord of the Dance; Chris Meyer: Celtic music arrangements; others by Anne Lederman. Anne Lederman, fiddle; Stratford Police Pipe Band; Knox Presbyterian Church (Stratford), 142 Ontario St., Stratford. 519-271-0990. $40; $10(st).

- **8:00:** Don Wright Faculty of Music. 2017 Fred Patterson Piano Competition Final Round. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767.

- **9:00:** Don Wright Faculty of Music. Opera: The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte). See Jan 27. Also Feb 3, 4, 5(mat).


- **10:** McMaster School of the Arts. Friday Evening Concert. Shoshana Telner, stage director. Paul Davenport Theatre, Talbot College, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767.

- **10:** 5 at the First. Ayr Piano Trio. Performing Arts, 36 King St. W., Kitchener. 519-745-4771 or 1-888-745-4771. $11(child).

- **10:** Don Wright Faculty of Music. Post-concert meet the performers. Also Feb 4(Elimina), 11 (Conrad Centre, Kitchener).

- **11:** Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Piano Trio. Works by Haydn; Javan: Gypsy Trio; Sigismund: Suite for solo cello; Schubert: Trio Op.100 in E-flat. Angela Park, piano; Yehonatan Berick, violin; Rachel Mercer, cello. First Unitedarian Church of Hamilton, 370 Dundurn St. S., Hamilton. 905-399-5125. $20; $15(st); $5(st/unwaged); free(under 12).


- **8:** Don Wright Faculty of Music. Opera: The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte). See Jan 27. Also Feb 3, 4, 5(mat).

**Saturday January 29**

- **10:** Gallery Players of Niagara. Uncharted Waters. Works from Mediterranean instrumentalists to traditional Scandinavian tunes. Kirk Elliott, violin/accordian/bagpipes; Margaret Gay, cello; Katherine Hill, voice/nyckelharpa; Alison Melville, violinist/recorder/flute; Colin Savage, clarinet/recorders; Jeffrey Wilkerson, percussion/saw; David Woodhead, guitar. KWS Brass, Kitchener. 519-886-1673. $8-$35.

- **8:** Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Chamber Music Recital. Haydn: Trio No. 25 “Gypsy”; Schubert: Trio No. 2 in E-flat; and other works. Yehonatan Berick, violin; Rachel Mercer, cello; Angela Park, piano. KCWCS Music Room, 57 Young St. W., Waterloo. 519-886-1673. $35; $20(st).

**Sunday January 30**

- **11:** Ayr Piano Trio. Bella the Tuba Gets Her Melody. KWS Brass Quintet. Conrad Centre for the Performing Arts, 36 King St. W., Kitchener. 519-745-4771 or 1-888-745-4771. $11(child).

- **8:** Don Wright Faculty of Music. Post-concert meet the performers. Also Feb 4(Elimina), 11 (Conrad Centre, Kitchener).

- **3:** At the First. Stratford Symphony Orchestra. Celtic Celebration. Recitations of poetry by Robbie Burns alternating with solo and accompanied music. Anderson: Irish Suite; Michael Flaten: River Dance Suite; Lord of the Dance; Chris Meyer: Celtic music arrangements; others by Anne Lederman. Anne Lederman, fiddle; Stratford Police Pipe Band; Knox Presbyterian Church (Stratford), 142 Ontario St., Stratford. 519-271-0990. $40; $10(st).

- **8:** Don Wright Faculty of Music. 2017 Fred Patterson Piano Competition Final Round. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767.

- **9:** Don Wright Faculty of Music. Opera: The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte). See Jan 27. Also Feb 3, 4, 5(mat).

C. Music Theatre

These music theatre listings contain a wide range of music theatre types including opera, oratorio, musicals and other performance genres where music and drama come together. Listings in this section are sorted alphabetically by presenter.


- **4:** Canadian Opera Company. Götterdämmerung: Der Ring’s Ende. Music and libretto by Richard Wagner. Andreas Schager, tenor (Siegfried); Christine Goerke, soprano (Brünnhilde); and others; Tim Albery, director. Toronto Symphony Orchestra. See Jan 27. Also Feb 4, 5(mat).$35-$235. (Sun under 30). English Surtitles. Opens Feb 2, 6:00pm. Runs to Feb 25. Days and times vary. Visit coc.ca for details.
bass; David Warrack, music director. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $64-$69. Feb 8-10, 8:00pm. 

Grand Theatre/Catalyst Theatre. Vigi-

lante. Music, lyrics and book by Jonathan Christenson. Grand Theatre, 471 Richmond St. London. 519-472-8800. $29.95-

$82.50. Opens Feb 7, 7:30pm. Runs to Feb 11. Tues-Thurs(7:30pm), FrSat/Sat(8:00pm), Sat(2:00pm).

Hart House Theatre. Carrie: The Musical. Music by Michael Gore, lyrics by Dean Pitch-

ford, book by Lawrence D. Cohen, based on the novel by Stephen King. Richard Ouzounian, director. 7 Hart House Circle, 416-978-8489. $28; $17(tur); $15(st). Opens Jan 20, 8:00pm. Runs to Feb 4. Wed-Sat(8:30pm), Sat(2:30pm).


Lower Ossington Theatre. It’s A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play. Written by Joe Landry. Lower Ossington Theatre, 100A Ossington Ave. 416-976-0468. $49.99. Opens Dec 8, 7:30pm. Runs to Dec 30. Thurs-Sat(7:30pm), Sat/Sun(2:30pm). Note: no show Dec 25.

Mirvish. Come from Away. Music, lyrics and book by Irene Sankoff and David Hein. Royal Alexandra Theatre, 260 King St. 416-872-1212. $35-$150. Runs to Jan 8. Tues-Sat(8:00pm), Wed/Sat(2:00pm).


Mirvish. Stomp. Matchboxes, brooms, garbage cans, Zippos lighters and more fill the stage with energizing beats at STOMP; the inventive and invigorating stage show that’s dance, music and theatrical performance blended together in one electrifying rhythm. Ed Mirvish Theatre, 244 Victoria St. 416-872-1212. $25-$75. Opens Jan 31, 8:00pm. Runs to Feb 5. Tues-Sat(8:00pm), Sat/Sun(2:00pm), Sun(7:00pm).

Mirvish. Saturday Night Fever. Music and lyrics by the Bee Gees, book by Nan Knight-
ton (with Arlene Phillips, Paul Nicholas and Robert Stigwood), based on the 1977 film. Princess of Wales Theatre, 300 King St. W. 416-872-1212. $25-$150. Opens Feb 7, 7:30pm. Runs to Feb 12. Tues-Sat(7:30pm), Wed/Sat/Sun(2:00pm).


Natio

Soulpepper Concert Series. A Very Soul-

pepper Christmas. A family concert celebrating the season of the sounds from around the globe. Featuring Mike Ross leading an all-star line-up of Toronto’s best musicians. St. Law-

rence Centre for the Arts: Jane Mallett The-

atre. 27 Front St E. $25-$60. Dec 20(2:00pm) and 7:30pm.

St. Anne’s Music and Drama Society. A Grand Duke. Music by Arthur Sullivan, lyrics by W.S. Gilbert. St. Anne’s Parish Hall, 651 Dufferin St. 416-922-4415. $27($22/st). Opens Jan 27, 7:30pm. Runs to Feb 5. Thurs/Fri(7:30pm), Sat/Sun(2:00pm). Also Jan 28 at 7:30pm.


ium, 3747 Riverside Rd. W., Ancaster. 905-304-7848. $15($12/st); $10($15/st). Opens Jan 20, 7:30pm. Also Jan 21(2pm/8pm).

Toronto Opera Etica Productions of Pene-

dance. Music by Arthur Sullivan, libretto by W.S. Gilbert. Colin Ainsworth, tenor (Fre-

eric); Vania Chan, soprano (Mabel); Curtis Turton, baritone (Major General); Elizabeth Beeler, alto (Ruth); Derek Bate, conductor; Guillermo Silva-Marin, stage director. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St E. 416-386-7729. $29.75-$73. Feb 5, 2:30pm.

Volcano Theatre/Tarragon Theatre. Infin-

ity. A Dora award-winning play by Hannah Moscovitch with an original score by com-
poser Njo Kong Kie. Paul Braunstein, Vivien Endicott-Jones, Amy Raphael, director; Andrea Tyniec, yola; Ross Manson, stage director. Tarragon Theatre, 35 Bridgeman Ave. 416-318-1717. $60; $49($9); $29(st). Opens Jan 4, 8:00pm. Runs to Jan 29. Tues-Sat(8:30pm), Sat(2:30pm).

Young People’s Theatre. Seussical the Musical. Music and lyrics by Thad Phil-

ley, book by Lynn Ahrens. Dr. Seuss' Gerald in velvet by W.A. Mozart, libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte. Royal Alexandra Theatre, 260 King St. 416-872-1212. $35-$150. Runs to Jan 8. Tues-Sat(8:00pm), Wed/Sat(2:00pm).

Opera by Request. Street Scene. Kurt Weill. Semi-staged performance. Shannon Mills, soprano (Rosa Murri); Jaclyn Grossman, soprano (Anna Maurrant); Arthur Larusso, baritone (Frank Maurrant); Avery Krisman, tenor (The Mayor); Erin Armstrong, soprano (Abraham Kaplan); Deena Nickelfork, sop-
рано (Olga Olsen); Jay Lambie, tenor (George Jones); Will Ford, tenor (Lipo Fiorentino); William Shookhoff, piano and music direc-
tor; College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20. Opens Dec 3, 7:30pm. Also Dec 4. 4:00pm.

Opera by Request. Hansel and Gretel. Music by Engelbert Humperdink, libretto by Adelheid Wette. Shannon Hallwell-McDon-
ald, mezzo (Hansel); Brittany Stewart, sop-
рано (Gretel); Jake Flynn, baritone (Father); Erin Armstrong, soprano (Mother); Brigitte Bogar, soprano (Witch); Norita Portillo, mezzo (Old Dwarf/Fairy); Kate Carver, con-
ductor/piano. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20. Jan 14, 7:30pm.

Opera by Request. Don Giovanni. Music by W.A. Mozart, libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte. Michael Robert-Brodar, baritone (Don Giovanni); Christopher Wil-
ello; Paul Williamson, tenor (Don Ottavio); Allison Arends, soprano (Donna Anna); Kath-
leen Promane, soprano (Donna Elvira); Britanny King, soprano (Zerlina); William Shookhoff, conductor/piano. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20. Dec 11, 7:30pm.

Opera by Request. Lohengrin. Music and libretto by Richard Wagner. Christopher McRae, tenor (Lohengrin); Michele Cusson, soprano (Elisa); Andrew Tees, baritone (Telra-
mund); Kristine Dandavino, soprano (Ortrud); Michael Robert-Brodar, baritone (Herald); William Shookhoff, conductor/piano. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20. Feb 4, 7:00pm.


Paul Davenport Theatre Western University, London. $30/$20 (adults/students & seniors)

January 27 - February 5, 2017
Music Director - Tyrene Paterson
Stage Director - Theodore Baerg

Tickets: 519-672-8800 or tickets.grandtheatre.com

Full of fun and fantasy - a perfect family opera! Sung in original German with both English dialogue and surtitles™
I am not built for the cold. Not only am I unable to handle sub-zero temperatures – I’m also incapable of acclimating to all temperature shifts. Every winter I have this problem, and every winter I don’t know how to solve it: I walk around outside wearing layer upon layer of clothing. I’m talking multiples of everything: I’ve got sweatpants on under my jeans, regular socks on under my thermal socks, and under my sweater is at least one other sweater. And I’m still cold, so I go inside. All of a sudden, I’m frantically stripping off at least three layers of clothing, but by now I’m boiling hot and sweating bullets. It’s my least favourite thing about winter.

My favourite thing about winter, on the other hand, is the irreverent stuff non-Christs do to poke fun at themselves for being the outsiders during the holiday season. One such example is Sam Broverman’s annual engagement, “A Jewish Boy’s Christmas,” happening at Jazz Bistro, in which he pokes gentle fun at the culture and the experience of being Jewish in a Christian-dominated North America. I’ve always known Broverman for his ability to write amusing alternate lyrics to tunes, which seem to work perfectly with
the wholenote.com
Old School Yule
12pm(4, 18)/11:30am(11)
Farnsworth
(bass)
Scott Hunter
jazzbistro.ca
251 Victoria St. 416-363-5299
nee
Brown
CD release
January 20
Children's Aid Foundation
the Can' A Fundraising Concert for Child
presents JANIS JOPLIN'S BIRTHDAY BASH!
13, 14, 15
National Guests
Whiteley & Diana Braithwaite and Spe
Vinnick
$35(adv)/$40(door).
December 21
A Bluesy Christmas
Show
$22.50(adv)/$25(door); 8:30pm
The Monkian style – playing with four mallets, in the tradition of Gary
piano colossus. Davidson uses elements and trademark gestures of
Monk's body of work has led to this weekly ongoing tribute to the jazz
vibraphonist of remarkable dexterity and wit, whose fascination with
Monk. One of the project's two co-founders, Dan Gauche, moved to
Music is a project dedicated to exploring the music of Thelonious
\n
You can hear Broverman and his guests (among them, members of
the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, with whom he has served as a chor-
ister, and Whitney Ross-Barris, about whom I have written) at Jazz
Bistro on the evening of December 11.

Monk Is Here To Stay
With a vast repertoire from which to draw, a revolving-door-style
lineup and a fervent desire to explore, there's very little risk of Toronto
mainstay Monk's music going stale. As the name suggests, Monk's
Music is a project dedicated to exploring the music of Thelonious
Monk. One of the project's two co-founders, Dan Gauche, moved to
the West Coast. The remaining co-founder, Michael Davidson, is a
vibraphonist of remarkable dexterity and wit, whose fascination with
Monk's body of work has led to this weekly ongoing tribute to the jazz
piano colossus. Davidson uses elements and trademark gestures of
the Monkian style – playing with four mallets, in the tradition of Gary
Burton, must help, I imagine, with the idiomatically pianistic phrases
and textures he plays with – and he also channels the playful, curious
spirit, the sense of humour and whimsy, for which Monk was known.

Monk's Music, a project that has been happening for about seven
years now, plays every Sunday evening, alternating between the
Tranzac at 5pm on the first and third Sunday of each month, and the
Emmet Ray at 6pm on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.
There are no cover charges, and no excuses!

It's getting really cold out there, friends. Bundle up, but don't
bundle up too much.

Bob Ben is The WholeNote's jazz listings editor. He can be reached at jazz@thewholenote.com.
D. In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

Poetry Jazz Café
224 Augusta Ave. 416-599-5299
poetryjazzcafe.com (full schedule)

Remix Lounge
1305 Dundas St. W.
remixlounge.ca (full schedule)
December 8 8pm David Murray (sax) with The All Star Ritual Trio: Sir Kahil El-Zabar (drums), Harrison Bankhead (bass).

Reposado Bar & Lounge
136 Ossington Ave. 416-532-6474
reposadobar.com (full schedule)
Every Wed 7pm vs. Spy vs. Spy. Every Thu, Fri 10pm Reposadoists Quartet: Tim Hamel (trumpet), Jon Meyer (bass), Jeff Halischuk (drums), Roberto Rosenman (guitar).

Reservoir Lounge, The
52 Wellington St. E. 416-955-0887
reservoirlounge.com (full schedule).
Call for cover charge info.

Rex Hotel Jazz & Blues Bar, The
194 Queen St. E. 416-598-3475 therex.ca (full schedule)
For complete rules, regulations and eligibility requirements: please see orianachoir.com and contact art@orianachoir.com. Deadline for submission: January 09 2017.

Only Café, The
972 Danforth Ave. 416-463-7843 theonlycafe.com (full schedule).
All shows: 8pm unless otherwise indicated.

Paintbox Bistro
555 Dundas St. E. 647-748-0555
paintboxbistro.ca (full schedule)

Pilot Tavern, The
22 Cumberland Ave. 416-923-5716
theplot.ca

Every Thu, Sat Tyrone Yaremco and his Rhythm. Every Wed The Digs. Every Thu Stacey Kanik. Every Fri Dee Dee and the Dirty Martins.

E. The ETCeteras

Competition:
• Jan 09 11:59pm: ORIANA Women’s Choir. 2016/17 Canadian Choral Composition Competition. Open to Canadian citizens and landed immigrants; winning entry will be performed at ORIANA’s May 27 2017 concert. For complete rules, regulations and eligibility please see orianachoir.com and contact artistic director Mitchell Pady at competition@orianachoir.com.

Festivals, Festivities

Lectures, Salons, Symposia
• Dec 01 11:30: Miles Nadal JCC. Gilbert & Sullivan: Pokes&TurvyDom. The masters of the Savoy Theatre took a cue from Strauss and Offenbach and ran with it. Their light operas conquered new audience all over the world. Find out the “whys and wherefores” with Guillermo Silva, general director of Toronto Operetta Theatre. 750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211 x155. $4 at the door.
• Dec 04 2:00: Toronto Opera Club. Great Singers of the Marinsky and Bolshoi Theatres of Tsarist Russia. Stephen R. Clarke, guest speaker. Edward Johnson Bldg.. Room 330, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-924-3940. $10.
• Dec 07 10:00am: Istituto Italiano di Cultura. Music before World Wars: 400 Years of Italian Opera. The dawn of a new era: from Verdi to Puccini’s Turandot. Lecture by Sebastiano Bassichetto. 496 Huron St. 416-921-3802 x221. $20, $15 (IDO students).
• Jan 24 7:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by Richard Brunskill, Louis Applebaum. Distinguished Visitor in Film Composition. Walter Hall, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-978-3750; music.utoronto.ca. Free.

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. December 3 Stephen Stanley. December 17 Ike Cedar & The Daydrinkers.

Tranzac
229 Brunswick Ave. 416-923-8137
tranzac.ca
3 shows daily, various styles. Mostly PWYC.

Every Mon 10pm Open Mic Mondays. Every Fri Friends of Hugh Oliver (folk).
This month’s shows include: December 21 10pm Emily Denison. December 4 5pm Monk’s Music. December 6 10pm Peripheral Vision. December 11 10pm The Lima Allemano Four. December 13 10pm Michael Davidson. December 20 10pm The Ken McDonald Quartet.
December 27 10pm Nick Fraser Presents. December 30 10pm The Ryan Driver Sextet.

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and test your opera knowledge over a pint in a round of opera trivia. Trivia master Rus sel Harder of Trivia Club hosts this game show-inspired quiz night. The Fifth Pub House, 221 Richmond St. W. Reserve tickets in advance by calling 416-363-8231 or visit coc.ca/OperaAftershocks Free.

Jan 28 9:00am-5:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music / York University / Ryerson University. DMX: Digital Media at the Crossroads: Examining the evolving digital media universe in Canada. Features panels on digital disruption in the music industry, the future of publishing in the digital age and more. Open to students, faculty and public. Walter Hall, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-978-3750; for information on speakers, conference fees, and registration: digitalmediaatthecrossroads.ca


Feb 02 3:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by Suzanne G. Cusick, Professor of Music at the Faculty of Arts and Science at New York University. Room 130, Edward Johnson Bldg, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-978-3750; music.utoronto.ca. Free.

Feb 06: Canadian Opera Company. Opera Insights: Götterdämmerung from Scratch: A Novice’s Guide. Join CCC Music Director Johannes Debus as he leads participants through the score of Wagner’s Götterdämmerung. Playing excerpts from the score on piano, Debus shares fascinating musical insights into this complex and masterful work. No musical background required! Education Centre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. Available on Jan 08, 15, 22, 29 and Feb 05.

Feb 07:10am: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. New Music Festival: Composition Master Classes with Salvatore Sciarrino. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Festival runs Jan 29–Feb 5.

Feb 09:10am: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. New Music Festival: Composition Masterclasses with Salvatore Sciarrino. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Festival runs Jan 29–Feb 5.

Feb 10:10am: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by viola player Laura Jones. Bring your own viola/cello and join in the playing of an early music piece. Armour Heights Community Centre, 2140 Avenue Road. 416-779-5750. $20.


Feb 12:30: Toronto Early Music Workshop. Workshop coached by viola/cello player Laura Jones. Bring your own viola and test your opera knowledge over a pint in a round of opera trivia. Trivia master Russell Harder of Trivia Club hosts this game show-inspired quiz night. The Fifth Pub House, 221 Richmond St. W. Reserve tickets in advance by calling 416-363-8231 or visit coc.ca/OperaAftershocks Free.


Feb 14 5:00-9:30: Canadian Opera Company. Youth Opera Lab: Opera for Musical TheatreLovers – The Magic flute. For young adults between the ages of 16 and 24. Activities include an interactive lecture with sopranos and opera educator Kyla Millan; a backstage tour with assistant technical director Jake Gow; a behind-the-scenes glimpse of a working rehearsal of Mozart’s The Magic Flute. 416-363-8231 or education@coc.ca Application available at coc.ca/YOL. Registration opens Dec 05. Free.

Feb 17 9:00am: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by violinist Rodolfo Richter. Focus on violin and viola repertoire. Lecture with violinist Rodolfo Richter.


Feb 20 2:00: Young Events. Masterclass. Free admission (donations suggested).


Feb 23:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by violinist Rodolfo Richter. Focus on violin and viola repertoire.

Feb 24:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by violinist Rodolfo Richter. Focus on violin and viola repertoire.

Feb 25:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by violinist Rodolfo Richter. Focus on violin and viola repertoire.

Feb 26:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by violinist Rodolfo Richter. Focus on violin and viola repertoire.

Feb 27:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by violinist Rodolfo Richter. Focus on violin and viola repertoire.

Feb 28:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Lecture by violinist Rodolfo Richter. Focus on violin and viola repertoire.
AUDITIONS FOR SOLOISTS The Kindred Spirits Orchestra invites soloists to affirm their interest in performing one of the following concerti with the orchestra during its 2017-2018 season. For more information visit www.KSOrchestra.ca or contact info@KSOrchestra.ca.

CONCERTI by Rachmaninoff (Nos. 1 or 2; Piano), Tchaikovsky (No. 2), Prokofiev, Saint-Saëns, or Dvořák; PIANO CONCERTINO by Rachmaninoff (Nos. 1 or 4; Rhapsody), Tchaikovsky (No. 2), Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Shostakovich (No. 2), Strauss (Burlesque), Chopin, Liszt (No. 2; Totentanz), Saint-Saëns, or Ravel (in G); SOLI SATB for Beethoven’s Ninth. For more information, contact jill@yokoyama.com.

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AUDITIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

AUDITIONS FOR SOLOISTS - The Kindred Spirits Orchestra invites soloists to affirm their interest in performing one of the following concerti with the orchestra during its 2017-2018, 2018-2019 or 2019-2020 concert seasons: VIOLIN CONCERTI by Schumann, Bartok, Shostakovich, or Britten; CELLO CONCERTI by Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Saint-Saëns, or Dvorák; PIANO CONCERTI by Rachmaninoff (Nos. 1 or 4; Rhapsody), Tchaikovsky (No. 2), Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Shostakovich (No. 2), Strauss (Burlesque), Chopin, Liszt (No. 2; Totentanz), Saint-Saëns, or Ravel (in G); SOLI SATB for Beethoven’s Ninth. For more information, e-mail gm@KSOrrchestra.ca.

Available positions with the KINDRED SPIRITS ORCHESTRA: 1st Horn, 2nd trumpet, 1st and 2nd Bass Trombone, Pianist, sectional Violins, Violas, Cellos and Contrabasses. The KSO is an auditioned-based civic orchestra in residence at Flato Markham Theatre. Weekly rehearsals are held on Tuesday evening at Cornell Recital Hall (HWY 407 ETR and 9th Ln). For more information visit www.KSOOrchestra.ca or e-mail jobertsevillena@GM@KSOrchestra.ca.

COUNTERPOINT COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA invites volunteer 1st & 2nd violinists and other musicians in all sections including percussionists to play with us in our 33rd Season. Monday evening rehearsals. Concerts are Dec 10, March 25 & June 10th. Contact us at info@ccorchestra.org www.ccorchestra.org.

THE CELTIC FIDDLE ORCHESTRA OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO is looking for additional musicians: violin, viola, cello, bass and flute. We practice twice a month on Sunday afternoons from 1:30 to 4:00 at the DEPCC in Oakville. Please contact Jill Yokoyama at 905-635-8079 or e-mail cfoso.exec@gmail.com

YORKMINSTRELS SHOW CHOIR welcoming new SATB singers, especially men! Broadway, musicals: violin, viola, cello, bass and flute. We practice twice a month on Sunday afternoons. Contact Sandi: mail@yorkminstrels.com Website: www.yorkminstrels.com

INSTRUCTION & COURSES

CLARINET, SAXOPHONE, FLUTE, RECORDER, TRUMPET, TROMBONE, PIANO LESSONS. PhD in music from UofT, 28 years of experience. Leo 416-879-9679; yanalo1@yahoo.com


LESSONS FOR ALL! Friendly and firm - I'm an experienced musician and mom teaching piano and singing to children (and young at heart) in my Toronto home (East Leslieville). To discuss your child's need for music-making, please contact kskwhite@gmail.com.

ON A HAPPY NOTE PIANO LESSONS: Experienced teacher: classical, popular music, and theory. Students of all ages welcome, Bathurst and Eglington area. 416-783-9517. Welcome, Bathurst and Eglinton area.

PIANO LESSONS WITH CONCERT PIANIST: EYE EGOYAN eveego yan.com All ages, all levels welcome, at Earwitness Studio, 3060. “Now there’s a teacher!” R.D., age 13. For info contact eveegoyan.com All ages, at Earwitness Studio, 3060. “Now there’s a teacher!” R.D., age 13. For info contact eveegoyan.com.
Musical Practice in
Health-Care Communities:
Five Case Studies

According to their website, “the largest audiences of professional musicians to audiences seques-
tered in long-term care in Ontario (and through its other provincial partners, to all ten provinces). According to their website, “the largest audiences in health-care for arts programs are found in residences for elders.” The website also points out that many of these people would other-
wise be unable to access live music or theatre arts for the rest of their lives, and that most public health authorities do not have mandated standards or budgets for providing quality of life programs for people living in chronic care residences. This is where HASO wants to see this situation change and its concert program is an agent of that change. HASO hopes “to rapidly develop...along the lines [already] established by Health Arts Society (BC) and Société pour les arts en milieux de santé (Québec).” Its growth indeed appears to have been exponential. HASO already presents 200 concerts per year under the banner of Concerts in Care and, to date, over 10,000 concerts have been delivered to audiences in care in Canada by the Health Arts Societies, reaching a national audience of over 400,000.

Those are impressive audience numbers by most metrics. And in terms of the quality of music on offer, on January 29, 2016, HASO appointed Jeanne Lamon, the former music director of the Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, as the society’s new artistic director. Her role includes guiding HASO’s Concerts in Care program of professional music concerts. The announcement was accompanied by a concert presented by Lamon (violin) along with colleagues Cristina Zacharias (violin), Christina Mahler (cello) and Lucas Harris (lute) at the Castleview Wychwood Towers long-term care home in Toronto.

Michael Garron Hospital: Carol Kirsh, the volunteer concert music programmer at Michael Garron Hospital (formerly Toronto East General), is holding an ethnic musical mirror up to the multiple communities East General serves – and which serve it. In our recent
telephone conversation and email exchange, Kirsh – who is herself an amateur musician – told me that she is attempting to stretch the cultural envelopes of the music and musicians she presents, to better reflect the cultural backgrounds of the hospital’s patients, health-care workers and surrounding east-Toronto community.

“The catchment area of our hospital is the most diverse in Toronto,” Kirsh told me. “I am working with musicians to put on free noon-hour concerts – about four per year – featuring the music of [our diverse] heritages. I want to reflect the soul of the community. [While the concerts are free.] we nevertheless recognize the importance of paying fees to professional musicians.”

The first concert in the series was held November 15, featuring Toronto’s stylishly virtuoso Payadora Tango Ensemble. It performed repertoire drawn from the core Buenos Aires tango tradition, as well as signature compositions by Astor Piazzolla. “A Venezuelan hospital volunteer opened the concert with South American music,” said Kirsh. The series continues on January 17, 2017 with Toronto-based Demetri Petsalakis curating a concert of Greek music, reflecting the worldmusic.ca

**REMEMBERING**

**Pauline Oliveros**

May 30, 1932 – November 24, 2016

“In hearing, the ears take in all the sound waves and particles and deliver them to the audio cortex where the listening takes place. We cannot turn off our ears – the ears are always taking in sound information – but we can turn off our listening. I feel that listening is the basis of creativity and culture. How you’re listening is how you develop a culture and how a community of people listens is what creates their culture.”

**– Pauline Oliveros, from an interview with Alan Baker, American Public Media (2003)–**

**Pauline Oliveros with a synthesizer in 1966.**

“listening in every possible way to everything possible to hear no matter what one is doing.”

And that is indeed what has evolved throughout her career. She has created a legacy that has profoundly altered the awareness and musical practices of so many people worldwide. For myself as a young student at the time of that initial encounter, it began a process of questioning the way things are defined in music. And as I look back on the many experiences I have had with her over the years, each one of these memories marks a significant moment of learning, of expanding and of questioning assumptions. This is the gift of the expanded listening process she has brought to the world. I return again to her definition of Deep Listening:

In closing, I would like to recount two short stories from my own personal encounters with Pauline. The first took place during one of her visits to Toronto, sometime in the 1990s. With a small group in a forest close to Gayle Young’s home in Grimsby, Pauline led us in a personal encounters with Pauline. The first took place during one of her visits to Toronto, sometime in the 1990s. With a small group in a forest close to Gayle Young’s home in Grimsby, Pauline led us in an excursion to a local cave to do some soundmaking. Before we even got to the cave, her instructions were to start listening as we walked along the path, to become aware of all the other beings living in the fields and skies above, to listen to their presence and become as non-disruptive as possible. We continued in this mode after arriving at the cave, and only towards the end of our stay did we add our own sound-making as participants in the larger field of sound around us.

Her gift to the world is so vast that it is almost impossible to sum it up in words. She affected and influenced so many because she herself treated each encounter as an opportunity to witness and be fully present.

Wendalyn Bartley
December’s Child

Ambur Braid

M J BUE LL

Ambur Braid grew up in Terrace, BC, and graduated from Claremont High School in Victoria, where she worked for a year at the Italian Bakery “to gear up for my move to Toronto and my undergrad at the Glenn Gould School.” A graduate of the GGS, Royal Conservatory of Music and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, she was a member of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio during which time you may have seen her in the title role of Semele, as Adele in Die Fledermaus and Vitellia in La clemenza di Tito. With Opera Atelier you may have seen her as Konstanze in Die Entführung aus dem Serail and Queen of the Night in Die Zauberflöte.

Braid recently debuted at Lisbon’s Teatro de São Carlos as Anne Truelove in a new production of The Rake’s Progress and made her UK debut as the Queen of the Night, to all accounts formidable, at the English National Opera, a role which she then sang for Opera Calgary. After a change of pace as Dalinda in the COC’s recent Ariodante, Braid will return to sing the Queen of the Night in all 12 performances of their upcoming January 2017 Magic Flute.

Apparently undaunted by her demanding opera schedule, this coloratura without borders also has time and energy to prepare and sing collaborative concerts like “The Living Spectacle: Songs in all 12 performances of their upcoming January 2017 Magic Flute. Apparently undaunted by her demanding opera schedule, this coloratura without borders also has time and energy to prepare and sing collaborative concerts like “The Living Spectacle: Songs in all 12 performances of their upcoming January 2017 Magic Flute.

Soprano Ambur Braid is a Torontonian who goes to Athens whenever possible. She has a poodle and a partner who both travel the world with her and for that she is incredibly grateful. Beyond music, some of her other pastimes and pleasures include cleaning, reading, eating, shopping and hosting dinner parties.

Suppose a friendly fellow asks what you do for a living? I’m an opera singer. You’re right, I’m not fat, but here are my Viking horns.

If you were driving alone and could sing along to any recording, what would you choose?

Always David Bowie.

About that childhood photo…?

There’s a video of it and it’s pretty great.

Your absolute earliest memory of music? My brother singing along to Billy Idol. He was super into it.

Musicians in your childhood family? Everyone appreciated music in my family, and music was always playing in our house! My mother (a social worker) would sing to me after each bath (I still love baths), and my father (a notary public) attempted to sing in church. It wasn’t amazing. My older brothers played a lot of Bon Jovi, Billy Idol, Tiffany and the Georgia Satellites. And my eldest brother had a blues band.

A first recollection of making music? My debut, singing Jesus Loves Me in French and English, was as a three-year-old in church. Then singing Keep Your Hands to Yourself with my brother’s band as a five-year-old. There’s a video of it and it’s pretty great.

What experiences helped form your appetite for staged works? Going to London and NYC with my parents to see musicals - I just stared at the conductor. I guess I still do!

When did you begin to think of yourself as a career musician? I don’t remember a time when I didn’t think of myself as a career musician. I did dabble in floristry and event planning, though.

Does teaching/mentoring figure in your life?

There are some young singers who stay in contact with me for proof that he can sing something catchy about absolutely anything.

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

~

AMBUR BRAID

RECENT / UPCOMING

- Dalinda in Ariodante | The Canadian Opera Company | Oct/Nov 2016
- Queen of the Night in The Magic Flute | Oper Frankfurt (debut) | Dec 2016
- Queen of the Night in The Magic Flute | The Canadian Opera Company | Jan/Feb 2017
- Oksana in Oksana G. | Tapestry Opera (premiere) | May 2017

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS! HERE’S WHAT THEY WON

Ambur Braid will be the Queen of the Night in the Canadian Opera Company’s 2017 production of Mozart’s The Magic Flute (Jan. 19 to Feb.24) and everyone else had better watch out for the fireworks! This includes Elena Tsallagova and Kirsten MacKinnon (Pamina); Andrew Haji and Owen McCausland (Tamino); Joshua Hopkins and Phillip Addis (Papageno); Goran Juric and Matt Boehler (Sarastro); Michael Colvin (Monostatos). Bernard Labadie conducts, Ashlie Corcoran directs. A pair of tickets for DEBORAH DAVIS.

May 24 to 30 Ambur Braid will sing the title role in Tapestry Opera’s Oksana G., with Keith Klassen, Adam Fisher and Kristizna Szabo. This ambitious premiere production, with a full orchestra and chorus conducted by Jordan de Souza, will be directed by Tom Diamond. It’s the uncompromising and powerful story of a young Ukrainian woman lured into sex trafficking and her extraordinary battle to escape it. A pair of tickets each for SUSAN MIDDLETON and MARYLIN GILLESPIE.

thewholenote.com
Ten days ago I thought I knew what I would write about in this month’s column, but so much has happened since then: the death of Leonard Cohen on the heels of the release of his final work You Want It Darker – darker indeed! the change in the weather from beautiful, colourful days of unseasonably high temperatures to high winds, sub-zero thermometer readings, bare trees and the first sight of snow as I sit down to write this; and the last-minute arrival of a number of particularly interesting discs (most of which will have to wait until February).

► It is literally a case of “this just in” – couriered to me the afternoon before my deadline – with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra’s new recording Handel Messiah (Chandos CHSA 5176(2)), with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and soloists Erin Wall, Elizabeth DeShong, Andrew Staples and John Relyea. TSO Conductor Laureate Sir Andrew Davis not only conducts but is responsible for the new arrangement for full modern orchestral forces. In his booklet notes, Davis tells us that this labour of love, dedicated to the memory of his parents, took ten months to prepare in advance of 2010 performances with the TSO. I first became aware of the mammoth scope of this version when Davis and the TSO revisited it for the 2015 Messiah performances last December. At that time I needed to hire a contrabassist for New Music Concerts’ “Portrait of Philippe Leroux” and approached Fraser Jackson, the TSO musician who is our usual go-to for contra. Fraser said that although Messiah doesn’t usually require quadruple winds and brass, for Davis’ version it was all hands on deck as full orchestral resources, and then some, are called for.

This recording was prepared from those live performances at Roy Thomson Hall last year so I knew not to expect a lean, historically informed approach and in fact was a little concerned about just how bombastic it would turn out to be. I am pleased to report that Davis achieves a nice balance between restraint in the accompaniment to the arias and larger forces in the choruses. Especially effective is the power of the Hallelujah Chorus toward the end of which Davis added sleigh bells “because this passage has always brought to my mind the picture of proudly rearing horses!” This is contrasted with the opening aria of Part Three where the soprano is accompanied only by clarinet and solo strings. The final chorus which begins in full voice is reined in for the “Amen” fugue which begins with organ accompaniment and gradually builds to a magnificent and triumphant finale that threatens to bring down the house.

Producer Blanton Alspaugh and the engineers of Soundmirror Inc. have done an impressive job of capturing the TSO and Mendelssohn Choir in glorious full spectrum sound. The vocal soloists are in top form, although I must say that personally I find soprano WALL’s wide vibrato a little hard to take – it’s simply not a taste I have acquired. A highlight for me is the alto aria “But who may abide…” and the bass’ “The people who walked…” Personal tastes aside, this new recording does the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and, indeed, Toronto itself proud.

Concert notes: There are some two dozen opportunities to hear full performances of Messiah listed elsewhere in these pages, plus a number of concerts featuring excerpts from the iconic work. The Toronto Symphony Orchestra promises a somewhat different approach this year with famed early music expert Nicholas McGegan at the helm. The TSO offers five performances with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and soloists Yulia Van Doren, Abigail Lewis, Isaiah Bell and Daniel Okulitch at Roy Thomson Hall December 18 (matinee), 19 through 21 and 23 at 8pm.

► If there was any doubt that the flute is a going concern in our fair city, activities in the last six months have certainly laid that to rest. My association with Robert Aitken has given me an insider’s view of some of these, including New Music Concerts’ “Flutes Galore” last April with an orchestra of 24 members of the flute family – piccolo to contrabass – featuring (many of) this city’s finest players. This came just days after the Canadian Flute Association’s Latin American Flute Festival which had involved some of the same musicians along with international guests. Since then, Soundstreams’ “Magic Flutes” included Aitken and fellow Torontonian Leslie Newman, with international stars Marina Piccinini, Claire Chase and Patrick Gallois. This was followed by “Flute Day” at the University of Toronto with workshops, masterclasses and a flute choir concert with Aitken, Newman, Nora Shulman, Stephen Tam, Camille Watts and faculty students, and the following week Esprit Orchestra’s presentation of R. Murray Schafer’s Flute Concerto with Aitken as soloist. Interspersed with this has been a series of flute showcases, demonstrations and concerts by internationally renowned flutists sponsored by Long & McQuade, hosted by Gallery 345. And this is all just in the realm of the classical flute tradition. Bill McBurnie’s Extreme Flute, Jamie Thompson’s Junction Trio and Jane Burnett’s myriad activities are just a few examples of how diverse the local flute scene is.

One of the other late arrival discs features another star in Toronto’s flute firma- ment, Susan Hoeppner. Following on their JUNO award-winning 2012 Marquis release American Flute Masterpieces, Hoeppner and pianist Lydia Wong have just released Canadian Flute Masterpieces, this time on the Centrediscs label (CMCCD 23116). The disc begins with Gary Kulesha’s Sonata for Flute and Piano, which is dedicated to Hoeppner who premiered it with the composer in 2014. The effective work is in three contrasting movements, a bright Allegro molto, a brooding Slowly, freely and the toccata-like Moderately fast finale. It is freely tonal but among the effects used are microtonal bending of notes, unpitched breath sounds and whistle tones in the flute line and small cluster chords in the piano part. This is followed by Michael Conway Baker’s moving Elegy in an arrangement for flute and piano.

As in many of Srul Irving Glick’s works, Sonata for Flute and Piano is a tuneful secular piece which incorporates a traditional Hebrew melody, in this case a chant for the Jewish New Year. Oskar Morawetz wrote his Sonata for Flute and Piano in 1980 for another towering figure in the flute world, Jeanne Baxtresser, who served as principal flute for both the Montreal and Toronto Symphony Orchestras before accepting the position of solo flutist with the New York Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta. Morawetz was a self-avowed traditionalist and this sonata is a good example of that with its charming melodic turns and the rhythmic intensity of its outer movements.

An arrangement for flute and piano of Larysa Kuzmenko’s Melancholy Waltz from Suite of Dances provides a haunting contrast to both the preceding track and the final work, Arctic Dreams I, by Christos Hatzis, written for Hoeppner and percussionist Beverley Johnston. Hatzis explains that Arctic Dreams is a palimpsest of sorts, a piece written overtop material that was originally recorded for Footprints in New Snow, the third movement of the radio document- ary Voices of the Land, about the Inuit and their culture, created with CBC producer Keith Horner. The work’s soundtrack opens with Inuit throat singing and the Arctic landscape of the title is effectively
superimposed with melodic flute and vibraphone textures.

I first met Hoeppner in my capacity as a concert recording producer at CJRT-FM and I can vouch for her dedication and concern that only first-rank performances be recorded for posterity. She and Wong have risen to the occasion on this project and both the performances and the production values of this Mazzoleni Hall recording are outstanding. While I might have called them Canadian “gems” rather than “masterpieces,” I have no qualms about recommending this fine recording.

**Concert note:** On December 12 at 5:30pm Susan Hoeppner launches **Canadian Flute Masterpieces** at the Canadian Music Centre.

➤ I grew up understanding that John Weinzweig was the “Dean of Canadian Composers” but in my formative years came to the realization that, as with so many things Canadian, there are Two Solitudes and that Jean Papineau-Couture (1916-2000) was “The Dean” in La Belle Province. He was born into one of the most distinguished Quebec families and his forebears include the statesman Louis-Joseph Papineau and the composer Guillaume Couture, who was his paternal grandfather. As a matter of fact Papineau-Couture was named in honour of his grandfather’s masterwork, the oratorio *Jean le Précureur, John the Baptist*.

There are many parallels between the two “deans.” After studies at home in Toronto, Weinzweig went to the USA to study at the Eastman School and Papineau-Couture left his native Montreal to attend the New England Conservatory and later studied with the iconic Nadia Boulanger who spent the war years in America. Both moved back to Canada to establish careers as composers and university professors. They were founding members of the Canadian League of Composers (CLC) and the Canadian Music Centre (CMC) and enjoyed a friendly rivalry over the decades. I had the pleasure of meeting Papineau-Couture on several occasions and the privilege of interviewing him for my program *Transfigured Night* at CKLN-FM in the 1980s. He was a charming man and a generous soul, a fierce champion of the rights of artists and staunch defender of serious culture. He was also an active administrator serving as the president of the CLC, the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec and the Canadian Music Council, dean of the music faculty at the Université de Montréal and the director of the Montreal office of the CMC.

I was delighted when I heard that *Quatuor Molinari* was recording his complete music for string quartet along with the string trio *Slanó* (ATMA ACDz 2751). And even more delighted to find that in addition to the String Quartets 1 and 2 with which I was familiar, there was a third from 1996 and an incomplete fourth recently found among his papers. So we are effectively presented with works spanning nearly half a century and all the periods of his mature career. *String Quartet No.1* dates from 1953 and shows the influence of French composers of the early 20th century. By the centennial year when he composed *String Quartet No.2*, although eschewing the serial school of composition, he was exploring an expanded tonality using all 12 tones. It is the string trio from 1975 that is the most experimental, with its elaborate use of extended techniques and layering of timbres. *Quartet No.3* is a one-movement work which presents a sense of stylistic transition, moving away from the somewhat abrasive world of the string trio, embracing a certain lushness while at the same time approaching the sparse lyricism with which we are presented in the posthumous final work. Although unfinished, I must say that it does not give the impression of being incomplete.

This is a wonderful retrospective of one of our most important composers on the occasion of his centennial and it includes two world premiere recordings. Kudos to founding first violinist Olga Ranzenhofer and the members of the Molinari Quartet for their ongoing commitment to the music of our time through recordings of some of the most significant works of the last half century and their efforts to develop new repertoire with the Molinari International Composition Competition, the sixth of which took place in 2015. Praise is also due to the designers of the attractive and informative package which includes some wonderful photos of Papineau-Couture throughout his life, from an adolescent in a sailboat suit through to the pensive, but ever-smiling, grand old man.

➤ This month we say goodbye to another grand old man and icon of the Canadian music scene, **Leonard Cohen**. Much like David Bowie’s final offering *Black Star*, Cohen’s *You Want It Darker (Columbia/Sony)* seems a precursor, with such lyrics as “I’m ready my Lord,” “I’m leaving the table; I’m out of the game” and “I’m traveling light, it’s au revoir” recurring throughout the nine-song release. Produced by Adam Cohen, the disc features lyrics by his father set to music co-written with Patrick Leonard, Sharon Robinson and Adam himself. There is an overall consistent feel, mostly mellow and melancholy with Cohen’s haunting sprechstimme vocals, but with occasional upbeat respites such as *Steer Your Way*, with rhythmic fiddling from David Davidson and background vocals by Dana Glover and Alison Kraus. The orchestration is quite varied, from the title track with drums, two B3 organs and keyboard, cantor Gideon Y. Zelermyer and the Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue Choir, to a quintet of accompanists

Some reviews in this section have a little arrow like this above the cover:

All these reviews (see ads below) have been enhanced online at TheWholeNote.com/Listening
in *Leaving the Table* who play between them drums, bass, nylon-string guitar, guitar, mellotron, celeste, keys, piano, electric and pedal steel guitars. One very effective juxtaposition is *Treaty* – “I wish there was a treaty we could sign; it’s over now, the water and the wine; We were broken then, but now we’re borderline; I wish there was a treaty; I wish there was a treaty; Between your love and mine” – with the final track, which is a revisiting entitled *String Reprise/Treaty*. This features an extended string prelude by Patrick Leonard which is somewhat reminiscent of another contextual anomaly, producer Jack Nitzsche’s *String Quartet from Whiskey Boot Hill* on Neil Young’s eponymous album back in 1968.

On the credits page of the booklet, Cohen includes an extended tribute to his son, saying, in part “I want to acknowledge, with deep gratitude, the role my son Adam Cohen played in the making of *You Want it Darker*. Without his contribution there would be no record. At a certain point, after over a year of intense labour the project was abandoned. Adam took over...and brought these unfinished songs to completion, preserving of course, many of Pat [Leonard’s] haunting musical themes. It is because of my son’s loving encouragement and skillful administration, that these songs exist in their present form. I cannot thank him enough.” We should all be thankful for this moving *memento mori*.

We welcome your feedback and invite submissions. CDs and comments should be sent to: DISCoveries, WholeNote Media Inc., The Centre for Social Innovation, 503 – 720 Bathurst St. Toronto ON M5S 2R4. We also encourage you to visit our website thewholenote.com where you can find added features including direct links to performers, composers and record labels, “buy buttons” for online shopping and additional, expanded and archival reviews. 

David Olds, DISCoveries Editor
discoveries@thewholenote.com

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**Strings Attached**

**TERRY ROBBINS**

The outstanding Georgian violinist Lisa Batiashvili is back with simply ravishing performances of the Tchaikovsky and Sibelius Concertos with Daniel Barenboim leading the Staatskapelle Berlin (Deutsche Grammophon 479 6038).

The recordings are the direct result of the artists’ collaboration in the final open-air free concert of the annual State Opera for All concert series in Berlin, initiated by Barenboim in 2006. For the past four years Batiashvili has been the guest artist, playing the Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Sibelius concertos – indeed, it was her televised performance of the latter with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra that prompted Barenboim to make the initial contact.

The Berlin studio recordings here were made within days of the 2015 and 2016 Tchaikovsky and Sibelius concert performances, and they are simply stunning. Batiashvili has a rich, clear tone with wonderful depth and a brilliant top, and Barenboim supplies a perfectly judged accompaniment with an unerring instinct for when to hold back and linger awhile and when to forge ahead. It all makes for sensitive, thrilling and passionate interpretations that grab you from the opening bars and never let go.

Add a simply outstanding orchestral and recording quality and these are performances that can hold their own with any on record.

**►** The English violinist Tamsin Waley-Cohen is the soloist in the Violin Concertos by American composers Roy Harris and John Adams on a new Signum Classics CD with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Andrew Litton (SIGCD468).

The Harris concerto was written in 1949 on a commission from the Cleveland Orchestra for its concertmaster Joseph Gingold, but the premiere was cancelled when numerous discrepancies between the score and the orchestral parts couldn’t be corrected in time for the concert. It was 35 years before Gregory Fulkerson and the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra gave the first performance in 1984, with Fulkerson’s recording the following year making the concerto available to a wider audience. It’s a work that is very much of its time, optimistic with a strong nostalgic feel and an American Western country folk feel throughout. Waley-Cohen consulted the manuscript source in the Library of Congress in Washington and was apparently enchanted by the rhapsodic solo writing. It certainly shows in her terrific performance here.

The Adams concerto was completed in 1993, and while in the traditional three-movement form is described by the composer as having no sense of traditional competition between orchestra and soloist, the violin instead making its way unimpeded through the body of the orchestra, which remains below or behind it. There’s a tranquil Chaconne middle movement, and a Toccata finale that is right out of the same drawer as Adams’ *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*.

Outstanding performances make this a significant addition to the 20th-century violin concerto discography.

**►** If you like your Bach bright, clean and with an abundance of energy, then you will really enjoy BACH, the new CD from the Serbian violinist Nemanja Radulović (Deutsche Grammophon 479 5933). It’s described as being in a way the continuation of his exploration of the Baroque repertory following his Vivaldi project, *The Five Seasons*, but it’s just as clearly a return to his roots and his earliest musical studies.

His former fellow student Tijana Milošević joins him in a performance of the *Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor BWV1043* in which the outer Vivace and Allegro movements are just about as fast as you’re likely to hear them. There is lovely clean playing throughout, though. The string ensemble Double Sens provides a crystal clear accompaniment.

The *Concerto in A Minor BWV1041* receives similar treatment, with a particularly lovely slow movement; Radulović really does have a beautiful tone.

The other J. S. Bach works on the CD are a mixture. The short Gavotte from the Partita No.3 BWV1006, the only solo piece on the disc, is clean and bright. The remaining three works are all presented in arrangements for violin and strings by Aleksander Sedlar: the Toccata & Fugue in D Minor BWV565 (where Les Trilles du Diable provide the accompaniment); the *Air in D Major* from the Orchestral Suite No.3 BWV1068; and the *Chaconne in D Minor* from the Partita No.2 BWV1004. There is more than a hint of the old Leopold Stokowski transcriptions here.

Radulović also learned the viola in his native Belgrade and studied the Viola Concerto in C Minor that was long thought to be by Johann Christian Bach but is now described as being “reconstructed” by Henri Casadesus. It is included here as a nod to his student days.

**►** Chora Brazil is the debut CD from the Toronto ensemble Tio Chorinho (tiochorinho.com), the only ensemble in Canada dedicated...
to performing Brazilian choro music, the primarily instrumental musical form which originated in the suburbs of Rio de Janeiro in the late 19th century and provided the foundation for several modern Brazilian musical styles. The group members are Eric Stein (mandolin), Avital Zemer (seven-string guitar), Maninho Costa (percussion), Carlos Cardozo (cavaquinho) and Andre Valério (guitar and cavaquinho).

The 12 tracks are mostly compositions by the masters of the genre, including six by the mandolin virtuoso Jacob do Bandolim, two by Waldir Azevedo and two by Pixinguinha. It’s just an absolute delight from start to finish, with some outstanding playing by the core members and occasional guest performers. Stein’s mandolin work is particularly impressive, often having the same sort of sound as the Portuguese guitar in fado music. Check out the videos of their performances on their website.

It’s a terrific debut CD; play it on a grey day and your room will be filled with sunshine!

**Concertango Grosso** is a new CD from the ATMA Classique label featuring the music of the Quebec composer François Dompierre (ACD22739).

The 2015 title track was commissioned by and is dedicated to the pianist Louise Bessette and also features Denis Plante on bandoneon, Kerson Leong on violin, Richard Capolla on bass and the Orchestre de chambre Appassionata under Daniel Myssyk. It’s a highly enjoyable four-movement piece, clearly – and inevitably – influenced by Astor Piazzola, but always more than just simple imitation or pastiche. The bandoneon certainly imparts an air of complete authenticity.

Bessette is also the soloist in the Concerto de Saint-Irénée for piano and string orchestra, a classically structured work that takes its inspiration from popular music of North and South America, including jazz in the opening movement and Latin music in the third.

The terrific Kerson Leong was in fine form in the Concerttango Grosso, so it’s no surprise to hear him join Bessette and do some great fiddling in Les Diables. The five short movements were originally written (for violin and orchestra) as the required violin work in the 1979 Montreal International Music Competition, and the piece is heard here in a new arrangement for violin, piano and string orchestra.

La Morte de Céleste, the final track on the disc, is a rich, romantic and simply lovely short piece for string orchestra.

There’s more fine fiddling on Of Witches and Devils – works by Paganini, Tartini and Locatelli played by violinist Luca Fanfoni and pianist Luca Ballerini on a new Dynamic CD (CDS 7749).

Some strong playing in Fritz Kreisler’s version of Tartini’s Sonata in G Minor, known as the “Devil’s Trill,” opens the program, but things really get interesting with the first of three Paganini works – Introduction and variations in G Major MS44 on Nel cor più non mi sento (by Paisiello). This was one of Paganini’s dazzling show pieces and features all the usual tricks: left-hand pizzicato; arpeggios and runs; multiple stops; runs in thirds, sixths, octaves and tenths. It no longer has us believing that the composer was in league with the devil, but it still has challenges that Fanfoni certainly does more than just surmount.

The lyrical Adagio from the Concerto No.3 in E Major MS50 is next, followed by the Sonata a preghiera MS23, the work more commonly known as Variations on the G String on Moses’ Prayer from Rossini’s opera Mosè in Egitto. It’s noted here as the traditional version, by which they mean the one we’re used to hearing. More on that later.

Locatelli’s Capriccio for solo violin (“Il Labirinto Armonico”) from L’arte del violino Op.3 is a short but quite astonishing piece with a constant flurry of bowing interrupted by single notes ticking away. Then it’s back to Paganini for Le streghes, Variations on a theme by Franz Süssmayr MS19 followed by the fascinating final track. The Moses’ Prayer Variations, it turns out, are only the final part of the complete Sonata a preghiera. Not only is this the first recording of the unabridged original version, it is played on Paganini’s own violin and with the string tuned up a minor third, a trick that Paganini himself used to obtain an even higher sound.

Fanfoni tends to favour speed over clarity, and the intonation seems a little less sure than in the traditional version, but it makes for a unique ending to a very interesting CD.

**Imagined Memories** is a 2-CD issue featuring string quartets by Franz Schubert and Ralf Yusuf Gawlick in performances by Austrian ensemble the Hugo Wolf Quartett (musica omnia moo704).

Schubert’s String Quartet No.13 D804 (Rosamunde) has a lovely brooding and delicate start, and a sensitive performance throughout, recorded with a fair amount of resonance. It’s included here because the start of the quartet is quoted at the beginning and the end of the Gawlick quartet, which the composer describes as “an autobiographical work that probes into the realms of a relationship that never was, a bond with my biological mother, whom I never met.” The opening also quotes quartets by Smetana, Borodin and Shostakovich.

**Tchaikovsky String Quartets Nos. 1 & 3**

**Francois Dompierre - Concertango Grosso**
ATMA Classique proudly presents the world premiere recording of Concertango grosso performed by pianist Louise Bessette, who commissioned the work from composer François Dompierre.

**Russian Piano Music vol. 12:**
Sergei Bortkiewicz
Rachmaninov, Chopin and Scriabin’s sound worlds peppered with wonderful individualism produce the great Romantic music of Bortkiewicz.

**Alice Sara Ott / Wonderland**
Available at L’Atelier Grigorian, 70 Yorkville Ave., Toronto & grigorian.com
To say that Gawlick’s compositional process was complicated is an understatement: seven pages of booklet notes outlining thoughts, choices, graphic charts, Memory Triangles and spaces, Memory Footprints and numerical integers taken from various combinations of the initial letters of the composer’s and his birth mother’s names are almost impenetrable at times. Still, all that matters is the music – and there’s a great deal of tender, sensitive, beautifully effective writing here. Of the 17 short sections in the main body of the work, played without a break, most fall between one and two minutes in length and none reaches four minutes. It’s mostly quiet and soft, not difficult to listen to, although not traditionally tonal, and clearly quite personal and intimate.

The work was commissioned by the performers and was recorded shortly after its Carnegie Hall premiere in April of this year. Their outstanding performance here can be considered definitive.

Contemporary string quartets are also featured on Green Ground (Dacapo 8.226153), five works from 2011 by the Danish composer Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, who died just this past June at the age of 83. The works were written for and dedicated to the composer’s longtime collaborators the Kronos Quartet and also the vocal quartet Theatre of Voices under their director Paul Hillier. These world premiere recordings are of live concert performances in Copenhagen on December 4, 2012.

The titles of the CD and the works are, at first sight, quite confusing: No Ground; Green; No Ground Green; New Ground and New Ground Green, but there is a clear logical progression here. Last Ground, the composer’s ninth string quartet from 2006, was supposed to be his last, but a tenth quartet, New Ground, and an eleventh, No Ground, were written in 2011 (three more were to follow in 2013).

When PGH felt that the two new quartets needed to be connected, he wrote Green for four voices and wooden percussion, taking lines (“To the Greenwood we must go”) from Desire, by the Renaissance English composer William Cornysh as his starting point. Green is then superimposed (a technique PGH had used before) on both New Ground and No Ground to produce, in effect, two new works.

It’s certainly a fascinating soundscape, and quite difficult to describe. There are some extreme techniques employed and a basic lack of tonality, although there are beautiful moments in Green. Also, the New Ground quartet uses the ground from Pachelbel’s famous Canon, albeit with an extra bar and a chromatic twist thrown in for good measure. Don’t be fooled by the apparent easier access, though – things soon become more complicated.

Again, a set of what must be definitive performances of some quite fascinating works.

The German composer Karl Amadeus Hartmann wrote his Sonatas 1 and 2 and Suites 1 and 2 for solo violin in 1927 when he was only 22, but despite destroying a great deal of his early works chose to preserve these, going as far as burying them in a metal box in his friend’s garden during the years of the Third Reich. Never performed during his lifetime, the two suites were first performed in Spokane, Washington in 1984 and 1986, and the two sonatas were premiered by Thomas Zehetmair in Munich in 1987. At the time, Zehetmair called them “among the best things written for unaccompanied violin during the 20th century.”

They are featured on a new CD by the German violinist Renate Eggebrecht on the Troubadisc label that she founded in 1991 (TRO-CD 01417). They are uncompromisingly tough pieces, and the 72-year-old Eggebrecht’s somewhat dry tone and slow vibrato tend to make her playing sound a bit unsure at times.

As the booklet essay points out, these works place enormous demands on both the technique and especially the musicality of the performer. At times, it’s hard to shake the feeling that the sheer effort to get through them limits the interpretation here, and a check of the audio samples of Ingolf Turban’s excellent and smoother recordings on the Claves label would seem to confirm this. If that wasn’t enough, the brilliant Russian violinist Alina Ibragimova included these unaccompanied works on her debut recital CD in 2007, and you can hear audio samples of her recordings on the Hyperion Records website.

What’s really interesting, though, is that this CD is actually Volume 8 in a Violin Solo series that Eggebrecht has compiled, and the range of composers – Reger, Skalkottas, Honegger, Bacewicz, Milhaud, Bartók, Hindemith, Bloch, Stravinsky, Schnittke, Rodrigo among others – is quite astonishing. It sounds like a highly significant series that should be much more widely known.

The music of the Uzbekistan composer Dilorom Saidaminova is performed by her son, the violinist Tigran Shiganian and friends on a new Blue Griffin Recording CD (BGR.414). It’s the first commercial recording of her works.

The music here is essentially tonal and very pleasant. Saratov for solo violin, soprano and traditional instruments is a lovely, meditative piece; the two Sonatas for violin and piano are strong works; Umid for violin and piano and the two trios Where there is no time...for violin, clarinet and piano and Sabo for violin, cello and piano are all well-written and effective.

The CD comes with a short DVD featuring Saidaminova talking about the works on the CD and a rather strange and pointless outdoor “performance” of Saratov which is poorly filmed and quite obviously mimed to a pre-recorded track.

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L ouis L ortie has added another recording to his list of more than 30 on the Chandos label. In Après un rêve: A Fauré Recital, Volume 1 (Chandos CHAN 10919) Lortie programs works from different periods in Fauré’s life. In the first volume of what will be a series, Lortie offers some of the early works that have easy and familiar appeal. He plays his own transcription of Pavane Op.50, originally for chorus and orchestra. It’s a clever treatment with the piano doing remarkably well at being a pizzicato string section at the same time as being a choir.

He also includes a couple of nocturnes, barcarolles and the nostalgic Après un rêve Op.7 No.1 using Percy Grainger’s 1939 arrangement. Fauré’s Suite from Pelléas et Mélisande Op.80 brings the recital to the threshold of the 20th century. Its opening Prélude is exquisite as is Sicilienne. In both these sections as well as the closing La mort de Mélisande, Lortie astonishes with a frequent bell-like touch.

Similarly he captures the modern flavour of the Nine Préludes Op.103 (1910) by emphasizing the angular rhythms and chordal patterns of the three very fast Préludes. The balance of the set is true to Fauré’s slightly wistful and lifelong melancholic nature. Lortie knows his composer’s voice and uses it as beautifully as ever.

Divine Art’s growing Russian Piano Music Series has a new addition in Russian Piano Music Vol.12 – Sergei Bortkiewicz (Dynamic 25142). It features Italian pianist Alfonso Soldano playing the music of Bortkiewicz (1877-1952), who produced a substantial body of works, both large and small scale. The majority was for piano but he also wrote for violin, cello and piano trio. He opposed modernism and evolved his musical language using the vocabulary of the late 19th
Nicholas Phillips is an energetic promoter of new music, specifically piano works of the last decade by American composers. He finds new works that have already been recorded and contributes to their longevity by giving them a second recording, hence, Impressions (Blue Griffin Records BGR.109). The one exception, Keyboard of the Winds (2015) is by composer Stacey Garrop. She builds an impressive sonic picture of a Colorado mountain range using massive chordal patterns and angular melodies to evoke the jagged rock formations. Equally angular is Jonathan Pieslak’s Shards (2008). Phillips embraces the duality of this work shifting adeptly between its spiky opening and the quieter, extended moments of repose.

Carter Pann’s White Moon Over Water (2011) draws inspiration from nocturnal kayaking on a wide river in Maine. Its central section depicting the expanse of starry sky is breathtaking with Phillips deep in his element. Hommage à Trois (2005) by Mark Olivieri is a brilliant collection of three stylistic tributes to composers particularly meaningful to him. The tributes to Aaron Copland and James Brown, especially, are beautifully crafted and immediately evoke their dedicatee’s memories.

This recording’s most effective work is Pann’s She Steals Me, a short Appalachian style waltz that lingers harmonically on many passing notes and unresolved progressions. The effect is profoundly touching and Phillips does a masterful job in leveraging its emotional potential.

Originally recorded in 1978 and released in 1980, Edvard Grieg’s Concerto in A Minor Op.16 is where the composer truly shows his respect for structure, applying his unique subtleties to show us that no part is too small. He finds room for every melodic idea to develop into its own musical entity. The orchestra too, under Essa-Pekka Salonen, is in full agreement with this approach. Nothing, absolutely nothing is hurried in this performance. Only the final movement is near the traditional tempo. Her personal stamp on this work shapes it in unique ways. Her phrasing is often quite unusual and the pace of the work is slower than often heard. She very deliberately lets us know that she is exploring something of natural mysticism. She calls it Grieg’s “Wonderland.”

The orchestra too, under Essa-Pekka Salonen, is in full agreement with this approach. Nothing, absolutely nothing is hurried in this performance. Only the final movement is near the traditional tempo. The effect of this on the concerto is to take an already monumental piece to an even grander scale. Ott’s quest for Grieg the mystic continues through her playing of selections from the Lyric Pieces and Peer Gynt where Notturno and

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Benjamin Grosvenor / Homages Available at L’Atelier Grigorian, 70 Yorkville Ave., Toronto & grigorian.com

Murray Perahia / Bach: French Suites Available at L’Atelier Grigorian, 70 Yorkville Ave., Toronto & grigorian.com

Sas Agapo With fervor and passion, the great pianist and composer Alain Lefèvre unveils Sas Agapo, an album inspired by the songs, moods and colors of Greece. Fascinating, picturesque and gorgeous music.

Mahan Esfahani / Bach: Goldberg Variations Available at L’Atelier Grigorian, 70 Yorkville Ave., Toronto & grigorian.com
Solveig’s Song, respectively, reflect this most poignantly. There’s plenty of raw folk energy as well though: March of the Trolls (Lyric Pieces Book V. Op.54) and In the Hall of the Mountain King (Peer Gynt Suite No.1) leave no doubt about the dark side of Nordic myths.

This new recording Homages: Bach-Busoni; Mendelssohn: Franck; Chopin; Liszt (Decca 483 0255) by Benjamin Grosvenor is youthful, powerful and profoundly exciting. At age 24 Grosvenor seems already to have conquered everything. Completely unhindered by technical challenges, he probes the alternating quiet and explosive episodes of Romantic works that look to the past for inspiration. Busoni’s arrangement of Bach’s Chaconne from BWV1004 is titanic yet floats soul searchingly through its many still moments. He plays Mendelssohn’s Fugue: Allegro con fuoco from Op.35 No.5 at an impossible speed with unbelievable clarity. Chopin’s Barcarolle in F-sharp Major Op.60 is voiced so superbly that it often sounds like two separate pianos. With selections from Liszt’s Années de pèlerinage, Grosvenor reaches the pinnacle of his Homages to conclude an astonishing program that sets the heart racing.

Pianist Kirill Gerstein is as eloquent in interview as he is at the keyboard. The notes in Liszt – Transcendental Études (Myrios Classics MYR01) are insightful answers to questions about the transcendental nature of these études. Gerstein argues that their extreme difficulty leads to a heightened technique that transcends the traditional requirements of playing the instrument. He then describes Liszt’s intention that this transcendence go beyond the physical and technical.

Likening the performance of the cycle to the disciplined movement of Tai Chi, Gerstein describes his own experience in overcoming the technical challenges of these pieces. For him, it was as if he combined the discipline and exertion of a martial art with meditation to find that the transcending experience lay not just in the music but in the act itself.

This becomes very clear as the performance reveals his virtuosic ease with the most difficult passages of Feux follets, Ricordanza and Wilde Jagd. And when Liszt’s moments of resolution or respite occur, Gerstein is so obviously playing from someplace deeply and internally transcendent that his assertions about the experience become remarkably credible. It’s a beautifully performed set of the Études and equally well recorded.

Deeper quests for meaning are becoming less rare among performers of all ages. In Johann Sebastian Bach – French Suites (Deutsche Grammophon 479 6565) Murray Perahia titles his notes “A Personal Devotion” and describes his lifelong love of Bach ignited by a performance of the St. Matthew Passion under Pablo Casals in the early 1960s. What moved the young Perahia was the humanity of Casal’s approach. It rejected the strict mechanical conventions of the time and channelled the composer’s voice through more modern sensibilities.

Perahia himself was greatly discouraged by the preference for the harpsichord and rejection of the piano as a legitimate instrument for Bach’s keyboard music. After two years of harpsichord study, he decided to return to his first keyboard love and bring to it some of the harpsichord technique he’d acquired. This hybridization has produced a style of baroque piano playing that has all the lightness of the period instruments but brings to it the emotional palette of our present day.

Perahia’s playing is consequently a product of considerable forethought. His application of the whole range of the piano’s expressive capability is carefully measured. He pedals very lightly, articulates immaculately and communicates superbly.

Alain Lefèvre is one of Quebec’s best-selling recording artists. A recent stay in Greece was the inspiration behind his newest CD Sas Agapo (Anekitka AN 2 9297). Lefèvre is widely known for his creative and improvisational gift as well as his formidable keyboard technique. Combined, they ensure that his performances are highly engaging and entertaining. Sas Agapo is a collection of programmatic expressions for the piano – a musical album of Aegean experiences.

Lefèvre’s inspirations are both visual and emotional. Something as simple as watching an elderly couple enjoying a seaside picnic becomes the creative kernel for Promenade à Katourli. The piece is melancholic yet light and drifts between numerous short episodes punctuated by beautifully placed dissonances.

The opening track Sas Agapo is highly stylized to reflect the modal nature of traditional Greek music. Its charged rhythms are instantly captivating and Lefèvre’s repeated keyboard runs are part of the exhilarating experience of listening to this piece.

Romance, personal loss and the general future of humanity are some of the other musings that take shape in this recording. Its conclusion is the wonderfully colourful and impish character piece Grand Carnaval in which Lefèvre shows off some of his most impressive skills as composer and performer.

Concert note: On January 21 Alain Lefèvre is featured in André Mathieu’s Rhapsody romantique as part of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra’s “Canadian Legacy” concert at Roy Thomson Hall.

The Goldberg Variations are most often heard performed on piano, and we’ve come to assume that new recordings of the work will, naturally, be played that way. So, while harpsichord performances have narrower appeal, it’s a delight to encounter one so completely engaging and satisfying as in Bach – Goldberg Variations, Mahan Esfahani (Deutsche Grammphon 479 5929). Here’s a performance with enough zest and colour to rival your favourite piano version.

Esfahani achieves this several ways. He plays with a clean and agile technique. He is tastefully impressive with his elaborate ornamentation. His phrasings benefit from tempo relaxation at critical points (sounds). Performers who do this argue for the impact of the interpretive continuity this creates. Esfahani’s performance bears this out once again.

A fascinating feature of this recording lies in a brief note from the harpsichord technician who describes his tuning approach and explains his choices for sweeter major thirds in the keys of G and D, the home for most of the variations.

Before playing Nada in Hamburg – Johannes Brahms (MEI Enterprises 261 43930) one has to accept Nada Loutfi’s stylistic premise that the young Brahms played very much lighter pianos while in Hamburg. This would require a distinct departure from conventional approaches. Accents would be shorter, there would be more staccato and a great deal less use of the sustain pedal. Loutfi argues that modern interpretations overload and misrepresent the sound Brahms
imagined at the time of these compositions.

As if to underscore her point, she programs two pieces for the left hand, where performers generally tend to pedal more generously in order to bridge the gaps the single hand is to required leap. The Bach Chaconne for the Violin, (Etude No.5) and the Etude for piano for the left hand after Franz Schubert (Etude No.6) both require a moment for the ear to adjust but quickly establish a credibility based on Loutfi’s sensitive and intelligent phrasings. The Schubert, especially, becomes an extraordinarily beautiful technical display.

From Brahms’ Eleven Chorales for Organ Op.122, Loutfi plays No.s2, 4 and 8. The organ score is for manuals alone and the parts so intricately woven that it’s often impossible to solo the chorale over the surrounding accompaniment. Nevertheless Loutfi does a wonderful job using the piano’s dynamic advantage to achieve this very feat.

The Sonata Op.1 No.1 in C Major takes on a very different feel from most other performances. Loutfi’s light detached style quickly becomes the norm and draws more attention to other aspects of her interpretation. Most noteworthy is her very introspective and raptured playing of the second movement, Andante.

This is quite an unusual disc that intelligently challenges some of our conventional ideas about how Brahms should be played.

VOCAL

Palestrina – Missa Papae Marcelli; Motets
Sistine Chapel Choir; Massimo Palombella
Deutsche Grammophon 4796131

David Olds’ notes in the November
Editor’s Corner set the
historical backdrop for Palestrina’s Missa Papae Marcelli. This particular recording looks back to original Renaissance sources rather than existing editions. What is more, its authenticity is enhanced as it was recorded within the Sistine Chapel, the result being a more intimate sound.

So it is, with the initial Kyrie eleison and Credo, as the young boys of the Chapel bring a human, almost relaxed interpretation. Incidentally, the recording notes include some enchanting photographs of the choir off-duty and clearly happy in their choral responsibilities.

More solemn is the two-part Tu Es Pastor
Ovitum, taken from Matthew 16:19 and composed for the coronation of Pope Sixtus V in 1585. This motet has a dominant element of mercy, especially appropriate in the Holy Year of Mercy decreed by Pope Francis for 2016.

The plea for mercy is reflected in the Kyrie of Oculos Meos, its second part expressing that plea at its most direct.

Palestrina’s works do not have to be long or complex: O Bone Jesu, at under two minutes, conveys an intensely spiritual message in a simple structure. Equally uplifting is the Sistine Chapel’s interpretation of Benedictisti, Domine, with its theme of God’s forgiveness for His people’s iniquities.

Last of the longer pieces in this selection is Jubilate Deo. This tests the abilities of the Sistine Chapel Choir – and its chief chorus master Massimo Palombella – more than any other piece on the CD. It goes without saying that its rendition of the Gloria Patri will revive even the most jaded of listeners.

Michael Schwartz

Canzonette Spirituali, e Morali
Capella Intima; Bud Roach
Musica Omnia mo0701 (musicaomnia.org)

Capella Intima is a Canadian vocal ensemble led by tenor/baroque guitarist Bud Roach and includes singers Sheila Dietrich, Jennifer Enns Modolo and David Roth. Flawless intonation, excellent diction and infectious enthusiasm (including strummed guitar) mark the group as a major contributor to the Baroque music scene.

As explained in Roach’s excellent program notes, Canzonette Spirituali, e Morali (published 1657) includes canzonettas (here, spiritual songs in a popular vein), solo arias with recitative, and dialogues. Intended for the oratory rather than church worship, these musical exhortations for personal piety previously designated as anonymous are now attributed to the priest Francesco Ratis.

Variety in the 22 works on this CD chosen from the Canzonette is demonstrated by some of my favourites. The opening Poverello, che farai? (Poor thing, what will you do?) is a simple strophic song warning us to change our ways. Capella Intima’s virtuosity shows in fast-tempoed Fuggi, fuggi, fuggi (“O run, run away [from this deceitful world]”). To La mala compagnia – “Bad company will lead you to the tavern, and if you don’t want to go, you’ll get a good beating” – Capella Intima adds slaps and moans! Other numbers are tender: Spera Anima (Place your hope, my soul) is emotionally affecting while Angiol del Ciel (O Heavenly Angel) lives up to its title.

The accompanying booklet contains English translations but original Italian texts must be downloaded. I suggest listening to only a few pieces at a time as the texts’ meanings are crucial.

Roger Knox

Wandering Heart
Chor Leoni
Independent CLR 1611 (chorleoni.org)

In the wake of a much-loved Canadian icon’s recent passing, it seems uncannily prophetic to have chosen settings of Leonard Cohen’s poetry for the centrepiece of this recording. Wandering Heart, by Latvian

Like the review? Listen to some tracks from all the recordings in the ads below at TheWholeNote.com/Listening
I Capuleti e i
Dmitri
80
dead, takes poison and dies. Juliet wakes up in a drugged sleep and, thinking that she is gains access to Juliet's tomb where she lies Romeo travels back from Mantua to Verona, of the two works. In Shakespeare's play, the sequence of events in the final scenes in their dinner jackets; the Montagues are

(a musical setting by Nicola Vaccai in 1830. There that libretto for his opera in 1830. There canons, the faithful and secularists alike. Pärt devotees will be enrap

Concert note: On February 2, Soundstreams presents the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir in favourites by Arvo Pärt and selections from Rachmaninoff’s Vespers along with works by Torontonians Omar Daniel and Riho Esko Mäimets at St. Paul’s Basilica.
When in 1997 Isabel Bayrakdarian took the MET auditions by storm, we knew something special was happening. The voice was breath-taking, light, shimmering, silvery and agile. The compliments piled up after some spectacular stage performances. I still vividly remember her star turn at the side of Ewa Podles in the COC’s Julio Cesare. A succession of JUNO-winning albums followed and then... her career seemingly stalled. When I heard her again a few years later, I realized that her voice was changing. From a light-as-mist soprano, it was becoming more dramatic, gravitating more and more towards a mezzo-soprano, it was becoming more dramatic, gravitating more and more towards a mezzo-soprano.

Jonas Kaufmann has it all: one of the most beautiful tenor voices in the world and a stage presence that makes him a convincing leading man, especially when portraying a passionate lover. He is sought after by most if not all the important opera companies. He was chosen to inaugurate the beautiful and controversial Elphié, the new Elbphilharmonie Hall in Hamburg, a $1 billion orgy of architecture and acoustics. He has a rare quality, namely artistic integrity, which enabled him to walk away from a disastrous production of Manon Lescaut at the Met with just weeks to spare. Why, oh why did he record this crossover album?

The answer is very simple: at his level of fame and success, unlike in most of classical music nowadays, these recordings are still big business. Sony Classical realized that they have on their hands a possible platinum or double platinum seller. At different times, different artists have been put under the same pressure: Caruso, Kiepura and now Kaufmann. Having repeatedly stated my bias against crossover recordings in this space, I decided to put it aside and give the disc a thorough listen. It will sell like hotcakes. The reason is simple: Jonas Kaufmann. No matter how schmaltzy the material, no matter how insipid the playing of Orchestra del Teatro Massimo di Palermo, that voice is simply superb. Shower tenors of this world, rejoice! This is your singalong album. The reason I fully support this CD is also simple. I sincerely hope it will obliterate Michael Bolton and Andrea Bocelli in the popular consciousness. If we are going to devour aural candy, it may as well be delicious!

Dolce Vita
Jonas Kaufmann
Sony Classical 88875183632
(sonymusicmasterworks.com)
The Musical Clock and other Timeless Masterpieces
Suzanne Shulman; Valerie Tryon
Marquis Classics MAR 81471 (marquisclassics.com)

Yes, a clever title for a most interesting programme of music, mostly for flute and piano but with two compositions for solo flute, impeccably performed by Camerata co-founder Suzanne Shulman and pianist, Valerie Tryon. From the opening Allegro vivace from Haydn’s The Musical Clock (the first of five) you can hear the great chemistry between the two, and it gets even better; by the fifth Tryon has proven that you can double tongue on the piano as she matches Shulman’s double-tonguing wizardry! The Sonata in B-flat Major K378 by Mozart is next. Originally composed for violin, it gives the performers something a little more substantial to work with. The Andantino second movement gives us an opportunity to hear Shulman’s dark low register. (Thank you, Suzanne Shulman, for playing this in the original key, not the transcribed for flute version!)

Next up is an intoxicating dose of wistful fin-de-siècle melancholy, a sonata by the very accomplished but little known French composer, Mélanie Bonis, followed by Francis Poulenc’s wonderful – can I say iconic? – Sonata, in which Shulman was tutored by Jean-Pierre Rampal, for whom it was written. Need I say more?

The two last pieces are Harry Somers’ Etching – The Volland Suite and Milton Barnes’ Music for Solo Flute, to both of which Shulman brings such artistry that I am convinced that these two pieces by Canadian composers are truly timeless masterpieces.

Transcendental – Daniil Trifonov plays Franz Liszt

Deutsche Grammophon 479 5529

Deutsche Grammophon has struck gold again, this time with the young Russian pianist Daniil Trifonov. This is his fourth recording for the Gesellschaft and what a recording it is! Liszt’s 12 Études d’exécution transcendante are the Mount Everest of pianism. Very few have recorded them completely, because it is a titan effort both physically and emotionally, but this fellow recorded them at one sitting, lasting well over an hour and got up at the end not showing any signs of fatigue. Here is Liszt as it should be played and how he must have looked: a handsome trim young man with flowing hair and a grand manner, with a rapt expression and total absorption, cascading octaves, making the piano thunder with superhuman energy. One can easily believe that women fainted hearing him and ran away from their husbands following him anywhere.

Apart from this colossal physical effort Trifonov plays with imagination and intelligence, understanding the structure and capturing the different moods of each étude. Some are wild, like Mazeppa, depicting a man being dragged through the steppes by galloping horses, some are meditative (Paysage, Vision) or heroic (Éroica) or charmingly playful (Feux Follets) or culminate in an insane hunt (Wilde Jagd). At No.9, Ricordanza the mood changes into glorious, soft melodies, sublime moments only Liszt, “the magician of the keyboard.” could create.

The 2-CD set actually has all the Concert Études of Liszt and Disc 2 features the well-known favorites Un sospiro, La leggerezza, Gnomeenreigen etc. and the complete Paganini Études also superlatively performed. You can see a preview and a glimpse of what went on in making the recording on YouTube.

The Tchaikovsky Project – Pathétique; Romeo & Juliet
Czech Philharmonic; Semyon Bychkov

The Tchaikovsky Project – Pathétique; Romeo & Juliet

Decca 483 0656

A formidable pairing of the great Symphony No.6 with the Romeo & Juliet Fantasy Overture featuring Russian conductor Semyon Bychkov and the Czech Philharmonic launches The Tchaikovsky Project on the Decca label, a multi-year endeavour devoted to re-examining the composer’s greatest orchestral works. Was it really 26 years ago that Bychkov recorded the Pathétique with the Concertgebouw? How appropriate that he has stayed faithful to the orchestra where he started: Orchestre Métropolitain of Montreal. The record under review, Symphony No.2, is part of a Bruckner cycle which is now almost complete: only No.5 and (and perhaps No.0) are as yet unrecorded.

I am a great admirer of Bruckner’s sacred music but I find his symphonies harder to come to terms with. Too often, it seems to me, a movement will begin beautifully but then fail to develop. I may be quite wrong here and I am willing to believe that a conversion is still possible. If that happens, this CD may well have taken its part. Nézet-Séguin shapes the music beautifully and gets wonderful playing from the Orchestre Métropolitain, particularly from the principal wind players.

The Musical Clock and other Timeless Masterpieces
Suzanne Shulman; Valerie Tryon
Marquis Classics MAR 81471 (marquisclassics.com)

Concert note: On January 28, the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra performs Tchaikovsky’s “Pathétique” Symphony and works by Moravec, Prokofiev and Shostakovich at MacMillan Theatre as part of the University of Toronto New Music Festival.

Bruckner 2
Orchestre Métropolitain; Yannick Nézet-Séguin
ATMA ACD2 2708

I heard Yannick Nézet-Séguin early in his career when he conducted the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. It was immediately clear that we had an outstanding conductor here. Since then he has become the music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic and of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Soon he will also be the music director of the Metropolitan Opera in New York. In many of his recordings, however, he has stayed faithful to the orchestra where he started: Orchestre Métropolitain of Montreal. The record under review, Symphony No.2, is part of a Bruckner cycle which is now almost complete: only No.5 and (and perhaps No.0) are as yet unrecorded.

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Czech Philharmonic; Semyon Bychkov

Decca 483 0656

A formidable pairing of the great Symphony No.6 with the Romeo & Juliet Fantasy Overture featuring Russian conductor Semyon Bychkov and the Czech Philharmonic launches The Tchaikovsky Project on the Decca label, a multi-year endeavour devoted to re-examining the composer’s greatest orchestral works. Was it really 26 years ago that Bychkov recorded the Pathétique with the Concertgebouw? How appropriate that he has stayed faithful to the orchestra where he started: Orchestre Métropolitain of Montreal. The record under review, Symphony No.2, is part of a Bruckner cycle which is now almost complete: only No.5 and (and perhaps No.0) are as yet unrecorded.

I am a great admirer of Bruckner’s sacred music but I find his symphonies harder to come to terms with. Too often, it seems to me, a movement will begin beautifully but then fail to develop. I may be quite wrong here and I am willing to believe that a conversion is still possible. If that happens, this CD may well have taken its part. Nézet-Séguin shapes the music beautifully and gets wonderful playing from the Orchestre Métropolitain, particularly from the principal wind players.

Ravel

Yuja Wang; Tonhalle-Orchester Zurich; Lionel Bringuie

Deutsche Grammophon 479 4954

DG’s latest issue of Yuja Wang is the fifth in a row of the pianist’s bestselling discs. It has already earned Gramophone
American piano music. Her first CD was a collection of piano music from Cuba and Brazil. And in August, the Humber College grad – presently a doctoral music student at California’s Claremont Graduate University (CGU), with a teaching gig at Cal State LA – released Milhaud & Ginastera. Her second indie effort – in a recent interview with CGU’s magazine, The Flame, Deschênes calls herself an “indie pianist” (followed by, “if there’s such a thing!”) – offers two sets of dances for solo piano: one largely inspired by Rio de Janeiro’s neighbourhoods; the other, a well-known trio of Argentinian dances.

After a two-year stay in Rio (1917–18), French composer Darius Milhaud composed his 12-dance suite, Saudades do Brazil. Untranslatable, “saudade” suggests a feeling of longing, melancholy or nostalgia, a fixture in the music and literature of Brazil. In that same Flame interview, Deschênes says she chose these pieces “because they are such unique little gems of music.” And they are, each one its own, self-contained iteration of saudade, some poignant and dark, others more playful with driving rhythms. All tonally interesting, harmonically colourful and utterly charming. Deschênes captures the essence of saudade, tapping into an emotional connection to the material – you sense she’s both moved by it, yet at the same time, focused on the task at hand, technique crisp and clean.

Alberto Ginastera’s Danza Argentinas are also gorgeous gems, and Deschênes executes them deftly and sensitively; the middle, an achingy beautiful invocation.

Deschênes’ disc is a gem. ¡Fantástico!

Sharna Searle

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

Milhaud & Ginastera
André-Ann Deschênes
Independent (aadpiano.com)

Los Angeles-based Canadian pianist André-Ann Deschênes has a thing for Latin music. Her first CD was a collection of piano music from Cuba and Brazil. And in August, the Humber College grad – presently a doctoral music student at California’s Claremont Graduate University (CGU), with a teaching gig at Cal State LA – released Milhaud & Ginastera. Her second indie effort – in a recent interview with CGU’s magazine, The Flame, Deschênes calls herself an “indie pianist” (followed by, “if there’s such a thing!”) – offers two sets of dances for solo piano: one largely inspired by Rio de Janeiro’s neighbourhoods; the other, a well-known trio of Argentinian dances.

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lyrical approach in this work. All three movements of the concerto maintain a constant, mercurial energy leavened with explosive outpourings of orchestral frenzy. This is tough music to love, but easy to admire.

Daniel Foley

**Wind blown – Sonatas for wind instruments**
*by Peter Hope*
*Various Artists*
*Divine Art dda 25137 (divineartrecords.com)*

> Wistful sentiments dominate the opening movements of most of the works on this collection of wind music by British composer Peter Hope. His music can be called contemporary in terms of date (all six works were composed in the space of six years, between 2009 and 2015) but in character it’s all unabashedly anachronistic. As capably written as the pieces are, one can only imagine Hope has determined that the harmonic and rhythmic language of the most conservative 20th-century composers is sufficient to his artistic needs. The writing for recorder goes even further back in time, echoing the pre-Baroque era with open parallel harmonies. He ventures into the popular idioms of jazz and klezmer styles, which sadly come off as cliché rather than truly engaging. His kaleidoscopic and meandering. For those seeking such, comforting.

Max Christie

**A Land So Luminous – Music by Richard Causton; Kenneth Hesketh**
*Continuum Ensemble; Philip Headlam*
*Prima Facie PFCDO51 (thecontinuunensemble.co.uk)*

> In 1993, two Canadians – pianist-conductor Philip Headlam and pianist Douglas Finch – co-founded Britain’s Continuum Ensemble specializing in contemporary music. Here they present first recordings of works by two prominent English composers, both in their 40s but very different stylistically.

Kenneth Hesketh’s *A Land So Luminous* for violin and piano and *IMMH* for solo cello feature fragmentary outbursts, prolonged pauses and directionless meandering. In *IMMH*, an “imagined shamanic ritual, marking the passage from life to death,” the cellist plucks, bows, vocalizes and knocks on the cello’s body, but with no discernible trajectory. Hesketh’s three-movement *Cautionary Tales* for clarinet, violin and piano was adapted from his five-movement Netsuke for large ensemble. Both works ostensibly depict literary “events and characters” but offer only more fragments, silences and meandering.

Five engaging pieces by Richard Causton follow, providing welcome contrast. *Threnody* for soprano, two clarinets and piano is a moody setting of a Russian anti-war poem from 1915. His 13-minute *Rituals of Hunting and Bloodling*, two movements for large ensemble, would make an effective ballet score, with its wildly syncopated rhythms of the chase followed by the solemn initiation of hunters being ceremonially marked with their prey’s blood. *Sleep for solo flute* is a dignified elegy, commissioned by a widower in memory of his wife. Finally, Douglas Finch plays two atmospheric piano pieces, *Non Mi Comporto Male* and *Night Pice*, contemplative homages, respectively, to Fats Waller and Mozart.

One thumb down; one thumb up.

Michael Schulman

**Richard Danielpour – Songs of Solitude; War Songs**
*Thomas Hampson; Nashville Symphony; Giancarlo Guerrero*
*Naxos 8.559777*

> On the day the Twin Towers fell, Richard Danielpour was at the composers’ retreat in Aaron Copland’s former Peekskill, NY, home. His artistic response to 9/11 was to begin work on *Songs of Solitude*, settings of six scathing Yeats poems. Danielpour’s melodic, rhythmic and colouristic predilections link him to Copland and Bernstein, two fellow New York-based composers of Jewish ancestry. Echoes of Copland appear in the cycle’s orchestral opening and closing; Bernstein is channelled in the *Jazzy Drinking Song*. The longest song, lasting nine of the cycle’s 28 minutes, sets Yeats’s most famous poem, *The Second Coming*. But the music fails to match the power of these often-quoted lines.

There’s power aplenty, though, in *War Songs* (2008), inspired, writes Danielpour, by photographs of young soldiers killed in Iraq. Set to haunting Civil War poems by Walt Whitman, four dirge-like, elegiac songs precede the shattering final song, *Come up from the Fields Father*, at 11 minutes, nearly half the cycle’s duration. I was left both shaken and stirred.

Both cycles were composed for baritone Thomas Hampson, here in characteristically fine voice, fully expressive of the words (texts are included).

Roger Knox

**Transformations**
*Aaron Tindall; tuba; various ensembles*
*Bridge Records 9471 (bridgerecords.com)*

> The convergence on this disc of horn-playing composer Gunther Schuller (1925-2015) and tuba virtuoso Aaron Tindall in *Concerto No.2 for Contrabass Tuba and Symphony Orchestra* (2008) is highly successful. Professional French horn player Schuller’s orchestration skills and affinity for low-registered instruments are evident; at the opening the solo tuba emerges wonderfully from darkness. With the Ithaca College Symphony Orchestra under Jeffrey Meyer, Tindall gives an adept, eloquent recording of this mostly expressionist concerto. Horn-tuba affinities recur in *Concerto for Tuba and Wind Ensemble* (2013). It begins with an offstage horn echoing the tuba, and continues with motifs over a minimalist weave. Tindall’s melodic shaping and building together with the Ithaca Wind Ensemble in the second movement is remarkable, but unfortunately the composer’s turn to a jazz finale is awkward.

Harmonien (2006) by Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007) is played here on tuba, not the original bass clarinet. Including a wealth of sounds and processes, it is a solo tour de force for Tindall. The composer’s claims of colour and time-of-day associations do not resonate with me, though. The bold *Are You Experienced?* for electric tuba, narrator, and chamber orchestra (1987-89) by David Lang (b.1957) would ideally be best experienced live or on DVD. Its imaginative take on the situation of having received a brain injury breaks new ground, and Tindall’s evocation of Jimmy Hendrix’s fuzz-tone guitar on the electric tuba is truly amazing!

Michael Schulman
Vyacheslav Artyomov was preparing for a life in astrophysics, but these two symphonies (parts of a tetralogy) are unlike The Planets, unless you think of them as Uber-Holst: they cause a visceral reaction and suggest a metaphysical cri de coeur. My initial reaction to them was that they sounded like the soundtrack of some 1940s film noir or an original-series Star Trek episode – which is apt, since they embody mystery and the unknown. In his essay, Musica Perennis, the composer said “Serious music is created by the spirit for the Spirit,” and these twin-released CDs reflect his view of music as a mediator between God and man, but also as science. While I find the Threshold of a Bright World symphony more arresting than the Gentle Emanation, they are both accessible, and while Artyomov is often compared to Arvo Part, I hear a little more of Rautavaara.

The orchestration in Ave Atque Vale and Gentle Emanation is a little jarring due to the highlighting of the percussion parts. But Ave, Crux Alba, a choral (Helikon Theatre Choir) and orchestral setting of the Hymn of the Knights of Malta, returns to the majesty and mystery Artyomov is known for in his musical quest for spirituality. Tristia II, based on the 19th-century poems of Nikolai Gogol and with spoken parts read by Russian actor Mikhail Philippov, carries on the potential—soundtrack feel and allows us non-Russian speakers to hear the cries of the artist to God for inspiration; the suspense in the middle tracks suggests Him mulling the petitions over.

Both CDs are in memoriam of the composer’s friend and colleague, Mstislav Rostropovich, and both have expansive liner notes. Rostropovich, and both have expansive composer’s friend and colleague, Mstislav Rostropovich, and both have expansive liner notes. Rostropovich, and both have expansive composer’s friend and colleague, Mstislav Rostropovich, and both have expansive liner notes.

“Moondog 100” along with Nexus Percussion and guest vocalist Suba Sankarin on December 3 at the Music Gallery.

John MacMurchy’s Art of Breath Volume One
John MacMurchy Independent (johnmacmurchy.com)

Toronto woodwind stalwart John MacMurchy has produced a sonically refreshing album that manages to combine sophistication and accessibility across a variety of musical genres. The eight original compositions contained in Art of Breath flow together in a natural way, a testament to MacMurchy’s writing and arranging skills. The somewhat unusual instrumentation, a septet augmented by vocals and a string quartet, makes for a broad colour palette. The front line of MacMurchy’s tenor saxophone, clarinet and harmonica, Bruce Cassidy’s trumpet, flugelhorn and EVI (electronic valve instrument) and Dan Ionescu’s guitar provide a large ensemble sound with a few twists. Alan Hetherington’s highly informed percussive work adds a nice touch of groove and authenticity to the tracks.

Expat Cafe introduces most of the band with Ionescu’s slightly overdriven guitar tone and soaring approach giving way to pianist Mark Kieswetter’s patiently constructed and harmonically lush solo. MacMurchy and Cassidy build intensity with spirited trading on tenor and EVI. Working Title Blues evokes Art Blakey in its soul jazz vibe and boff-oriented improvisation. Drummer Daniel Barnes and bassist Ross McIntyre swing hard and make concise solo contributions.

Vocalist Whitney Ross-Barris is also the lyricist of Now You’ve Gone Away. Her understated style and economy of phrasing lend themselves perfectly to the Latin-tinged ballad, as does the atmospheric string quartet arrangement and MacMurchy’s soulful harmonica. Yvette Tollari brings her rich voice and poignant delivery to Dandelion Wine. MacMurchy’s hauntingly beautiful elegy to a departed friend.

Ted Quinlan

It’s Easy to Remember
Corey Weeds Quintet featuring David Hazeltine
Cellar Live CL031716 (cellarlive.com)

Vancouver tenor saxophonist Cory Weeds teams up with New York pianist David Hazeltine in this impressive live outing. Recorded at the Cellar Live CL031716 label and featuring Hazeltine’s characteristic chord-melody playing, this recording is a testament to the Quintet’s musical cohesion and spontaneity. The combination of Hazeltine’s virtuosic chops with Weeds’ swinging and soulful alto lines results in a cohesive and enjoyable listening experience.

John MacMurchy
Independent (johnmacmurchy.com)

Margins
See Through 5
All-Set! A8005 (all-set.org)

The All-Set! Imprint is fast becoming a beacon of originality as a fast-growing world of boutique and independent music labels. Its penchant for featuring artful cover graphics that appear more inclined towards corporate identity than visually describing musical content is unusual, to say the least. But nothing could prepare the listener for what to hear on each of their releases; not even the names of rather well-known experimental musicians whose work lies within each release. A case in point is Slow Bend by the bass duo See Through Two.

On this masterful performance by Rob Clutton (bass, banjo and fretless Fender bass) and Pete Johnston (bass) we glimpse music quite from another realm of bass violin, with the sound of the banjo providing not just relief, but occasionally elevating the music to the upper layers of this tonal realm. The personality of each piece is characterized by the rhythmically brevity of its title but often takes the dallying conversation between the two bassists to fascinating harmonic spaces. This adventure that takes as its starting point, in place of metric lassitude, a steady beat which is then stretched and moulded with infinite varieties of rubato. As a result, the rather explicitly titled Range that begins the set to Traif, which suggests not the end, perhaps, but the beginning of another journey, the refreshing overall impression is of a great colouristic soundspace that is rather dynamic and rich in possibility.

In addition to Slow Bend, but completely different in every aspect of music, recent releases have also included Mike Smith’s Famous Wildlife Movies, a fascinating collection of pieces which emerges as an epic in miniature for large ensemble performed with special authority and elan. Two years after Aurochs’ Rational Animals comes Another Helpful Medicine, which seems to have been created in a crucible ignited by an explosion of collective imagination. Finally the recent collection of releases includes Margins by See Through 5, a quintet whose music is characterized by its gauze sonority, laser-like projection, finely calibrated articulation and uncanny rhythmic equilibrium.

Raul da Gama

Concert note: All Set! founder Mike Smith’s the Mike Smith Company is featured in...
Smalls in NYC, the album’s nine tunes make a compelling case for the variety to be found in contemporary mainstream jazz. The programming is an eclectic mix of standards and originals with Hazeltine’s considerable arranging skills shedding new light on a few old chestnuts.

The opening track, Kenny Drew’s With Prestige establishes the band’s hard-bop credentials. Weeds sounds right at home here, incorporating a relaxed, swinging style with a big tone and impeccable lines. Trumpeter Joe Magnarelli’s loose, behind-the-beat phrasing opens into a tour de force of double-time ideas. Hazeltine demonstrates a classic style, playing with a deep-time feel and exquisite taste. Paul Gill’s arco bass solo summons up Paul Chambers in its facility, sound and note choice.

The late Ross Taggart, a brilliant musician/composer and a Vancouver compatriot of Weeds, is remembered in two of his compositions. Exposure introduces a modal vibe to the recording, and the players take full advantage of the leeway it allows. Solos explore greater angularity and Hazeltine makes a playful reference to Surrey With A Fringe On Top. Drummer Jason Tiemann contributes aggressive, up-tempo playing and an explosive solo. The title track, It’s Easy To Remember is full of twists and turns. All of the players negotiate Hazeltine’s complex arrangement with the combination of confidence and abandon that defines this recording.

**Oddara**

**Jane Bunnett and Maqueque**

Linus Entertainment 270244 (linusent.ca)

> Award-winning soprano saxophonist/flutist Jane Bunnett has a knack for putting together great bands. In fact, she has been doing so since before the release of her first recording, In Due Time (1987), through to the acclaimed Spirits of Havana band, which celebrated their 25th anniversary this year (see Andrew Timar’s review in the September 2016 issue of The WholeNote).

Her latest outing showcases the all-female band, Maqueque (meaning “the energy of a young girl’s spirit”), formed five years ago. This group follows in the Bunnett tradition of ensembles featuring not only phenomenally talented players, but also great chemistry amongst the musicians. This chemistry is evident throughout Oddara, Maqueque’s follow-up to their 2014 self-titled debut CD.

Accordingly, core band members Dánae Olano (piano, vocals), Celia Jiménez (bass, vocals), Magdelys Savigne (percussion, vocals), Vissy García (drums) and Elizabeth Rodríguez (violin, vocals) all turn in great, inspired performances. However, it is the group dynamic, deep listening, empathy and superb communication that come to the fore on each track.

Highlights include the Melvis Santa composition, Power of Two (Ibeyi). Based on a traditional Afro-Cuban chant, the song opens with a call-and-response section, before seguing into a beautiful pentatonic vocal and flute melody. On Dream, the ensemble showcases their versatility as they navigate a variety of textures and turns in this multi-layered arrangement. Bunnett’s distinctive sound and impeccable musicianship shine throughout. This is music brimming with joy, mastery, beauty and passion.

**All My Treasures**

**Lauren Bush**

Independent (laurenbushjazz.com)

> Currently based in the UK, Canadian jazz vocalist Lauren Bush showcases her diverse musical abilities as she sings and scats a selection of her favourite tunes with energy and a distinctive vocal colour while being supported by her superb band comprised of Liam Dunachie (piano/arranger), Andrew Robb (acoustic bass) and David Ingamells (drums).

The opening I've Got Just About Everything I Need is a fast-paced jazz tune arranged by Canadian musician Don Thompson. Bush sings the challenging plethora of words set at a higher pitch with conviction and clarity. The addition of a horn section provides a welcome New Orleans-flavoured sound for instrumental solos and for Bush to sing a bouncy version of Street Georgia Brown. But it is the slower tunes where Bush performs the best. Her sultry vocal opening in the Latin tune Dindi leads to varied vocal stylings with a great horn solo. The Mancini/Mercer song Charade suits her voice perfectly, allowing her to lay back and expand her subtle vocal lyrical qualities while listening closely to the band to set her phrases. Likewise the kid’s show classic, A, You’re Adorable is given an accented vocal performance against more legato sections, a rousing piano solo and touches of Fender Rhodes chimes.

Kudos to Bush for choosing songs that are both well suited to her voice, and also those more musically challenging. Excellent performances by both Bush and her band set the stage for an exciting musical future.

**The Long Slog**

**Snaggle**

Browntasauras Records NCC-1701G (snagglemusic.com)

> Many young musicians today put out records that feature a wide range of playing styles. It’s a healthy trend, especially when the program makes intrinsically musical sense from start to finish. However, not many musicians make their records sound as elegant and sophisticated as Snaggle. The record in question is The Long Slog and it comes courtesy of the well-known Toronto musician, Brownman Ali. Snaggle is a quintet comprising six young Torontonians and the smoky syntax of their keyboards,
guitar, tenor saxophone, trumpet, bass and drums is quite unique.

Each of the instrumentalists brilliantly addresses keyboardist Nick Maclean’s compositions, bringing the music’s intense rhythmic interplay and extended lyrical passages to life. Each of Maclean’s charts is superlative although Theorum and Lagaan, which feature the electric trumpet of Brownman Ali, are especially riveting. Bassist Doug Moore does contribute Nonuhno, which features not only a tongue-twisting title, but also a tantalizing pulse.

While the relentless swirling down into the furthest reaches of their instruments’ capabilities might be the first aspect of this record to captivate the listener, one is soon drawn into the music’s inner machinations – the sensuous inner rhythm, vivid harmonic colours and the overall wonders and mysteries of the music. The wonder of the musicians’ playing is how engagingly, artfully, flowingly and creatively they pour themselves into the songs, adding further lustre to this recording, which is stylish, responsive and richly atmospheric.

Raul da Gama


Safe Travels
Sharon Minemoto
Pagetown Records PTCD007 (sharonminemoto.com)

► Pianist Sharon Minemoto – soulmate of the late, ineffable Ross Taggart – celebrates Taggart’s life and genius with this rather special, heartfelt homage: Safe Travels. Bidding farewell especially in rather bittersweet circumstances is never easy at the best of times. Musically the temptation to let sentimentality take over is all too real. Minemoto eschews that with a program of music that is informed by nuanced, poetic rumination that manages to also be refreshingly uplifting as well. Eight of the nine songs are based on funny and bittersweet memories of when Minemoto and Taggart were partners. The Vancouver-based pianist emerges from this recital with great credit – imaginative and lyrical as a composer, with pianistic technique in spades.

This recording will not only be remembered for its elegiac reconstruction of the larger-than-life personality that Taggart was, especially among Canada’s West Coast musical community. Rather it will also draw accolades for its gorgeous, cinematic quality. Song after song brings to life the interplay between the two characters – Taggart and Minemoto. And if the listener reads the notes along with the music, moving pictures almost come to life before the eyes. The wittily chipper 15 for 2 depicts a charming episode between the characters at play. Safe Travels is a wistful rhapsody. Perhaps the best aspect of the music is that it suggests characters enjoying themselves, playing at life. All credit to performances by Minemoto and saxophonist Jon Bentley, bassist Adam Thomas and drummer Bernie Ariai for making this come alive.

Raul da Gama

Time/Life
Charlie Haden Liberation Music Orchestra
Impulse 4798480

► The great bassist Charlie Haden (1937-2014) launched his recording career as a leader in 1969 with the Liberation Music Orchestra, a big band devoted to political protest, its repertoire of international folk songs and contemporary compositions all orchestrated by Carla Bley and featuring stellar associates like Don Cherry and Gato Barbieri. Haden and Bley returned to the project intermittently and were in the midst of this environment-focused work when Haden became too ill to continue in 2012. On Time/Life, two pieces recorded with Haden in Norway in 2011 bracket three from 2015, with Steve Swallow playing bass in Haden’s stead in the same 12-piece band, with trombonist Curtis Fowlkes and saxophonists Tony Malaby and Loren Stillman among the soloists.

The music possesses the same quality that Haden and Bley first developed nearly 50 years ago, a combination of anthemic determination, pastoral reflection and moments of intense, wailing expressionism. The environmental focus arises in new arrangements of older compositions, opening with a serenely beautiful treatment of Miles Davis’ and Bill Evans’ Blue in Green. Bley’s Silent Spring, inspired by Rachel Carson, dates from the 60s; her Utvinklingssang, written to protest the impact of Norwegian dams, from the 70s. Only the warm, wailing, richly-voiced Time/Life, her elegy for Haden, is recent.

The final track is Haden’s Song for the Whales, first composed in 1978 and recorded by the group Old and New Dreams. The work inscribes an arc, bracketed by Haden’s wispy arco passages emulating whale song. Its plaintive theme serves as a springboard to Tony Malaby’s admirably constructed solo, moving from lyric reflection to sounds that suggest the whale voices to be found in the reaches of his tenor saxophone solo.

Stuart Broomer

Convallaria
Thumbscrew
Cuneiform Records Rune 415 (cuneiformrecords.com)

► Probably improvised music’s most celebrated guitarist at present, Mary Halvorson has attained the position because of her individuality as well as her ability. Like an actor who moves effortlessly between comedy and drama, Halvorson is equally proficient playing solo or in large ensembles, but her best work is done in intimate circumstances. While her dynamic strokes often define a tune’s parameters, her styling is particularly notable during Convallaria’s 11 selections when her light-fingered invention is complemented by bassist Michael Formanek’s chunky thumps. She’s like
a painter preparing a pencil sketch with the bassist there to add colour and depth. Drummer Tomas Fujiwara provides a backbeat when needed, but generally uses his rolls and cymbal clicks as if he were a high-class publicist: making the others look good without drawing attention to himself.

The key to the ripened interaction displayed here is how most tunes retain an undercurrent of cultured swing in any circumstance. This doesn’t make the session smooth jazz by any stretch of the imagination though. Since the CD is named for the scientific label of the sweetly scented but also poisonous woodland plant also known as Lily of the Valley, hidden – and sometimes not-so-hidden – prickliness galvanizes the date.

Although she uses the same six-string throughout, Halvorson can sound folksy and almost acoustic, as on Sampsonian Rhythms or spew opaque chording and flanges on Screaming Piha, where her electronically enhanced judders are such that her pumped-up chords appear to be searching for a heavy-metal connection. Despite this and Fujiwara’s busy resounds, the bassist’s sophisticated downward string sluces move everyone’s output into overlapping interaction. Throughout, Formanek’s intertwining motions provide the perfect backdrop for the guitarist, with her timbres freely resembling those of a saxophone (on Tail of the Sad Dog) or a mandolin (as on Trigger). With composing credits divided almost equally among the three, it seems obvious that this Thumbscree project warrants two thumbs up.

Ken Waxman

**Concert Note:** The Secret Keeper duo of guitarist Mary Halvorson and bassist Stephen Crump perform at Ratio, 283 College St. on Saturday, December 10

**POT POURRI**

**So Many Things**

Anne Sofie von Otter

Naive V5436

> The eloquent and versatile Anne Sofie von Otter is much admired for her ability to cross over genres effortlessly in a manner far more hip than many of the classical persuasion. Teaming up with the equally fluid string quartet Brooklyn Rider, well-known for collaborations with artists in genres from jazz to world music, they explore on this recording an eclectic collection of repertoire from John Adams to Björk to Elvis Costello with great affinity and intelligent interpretation. As well as the performers' favourite selections, there are pieces included that were created specifically for them: Nico Muhly’s So Many Things and For Sixty Cents, an amusing New York vignette by the quartet’s violinist Colin Jacobsen. Pulitzer Prize-winner Caroline Shaw offered her Cant voi l’aube, a modern reworking of a 12th-century trouvère song.

Songs of unconventional love affairs such as Kate Bush’s Pi and Sting’s Practical Arrangement are remedies to the common love song, providing the listener with another insightful glimpse into urban life. Ending with a nod to the fusion of opera and popular music, they perform Les jeux d’artifice t’appellent, the closing aria from Rufus Wainwright’s début opera, Prima Donna.

Dianne Wells

**Silence On Joue Take 2**

Angèle Dubeau & La Pietà

Analekta AN 2 8743-4

> Quebec violin star Angèle Dubeau has chosen diverse movie music to perform with her ensemble La Pietà in this double-CD release which marks a number of personal milestones and is dedicated to her audience. CD 1, named Sweet, features 15 tracks of a laid-back variety, while CD 2 named Salty, has 12 more toe-tapping tracks. The clever arrangements are true to their soundtrack roots and highlight the strengths of Dubeau and the strings, harp and piano performers.

Initially I questioned the separation of Sweet and Salty styles but then I was never bored listening. Highlights from Sweet include Unchained Melody – Orchestral from Ghost with a soaring opening violin line leading to a colourful instrumental trading off of the famous earworm melody. And what is movie music without the familiar, strings-friendly music like Suite Harry Potter and John Williams’ Across the Stars from Star Wars – Episode II: Attack of the Clones. The minimalistic harmonic and broken chord changes driving Edwin’s Sotto falso nome succeed independently even without its closely linked visuals. From Salty, Tubular Bells from The Exorcist actually works without the original percussion, while If I Were a Rich Man from Fiddler on the Roof is a natural choice with Dubeau’s great violin playing of the famous melody against an upbeat backdrop.

The diverse, easy listening music never feels lost without the visuals, which is a great reminder of the talents of film composers, performers, arrangers and producers. Listen and celebrate Angèle Dubeau’s exceptional musicality, phrasing and technique across the styles!

Tilina Kilk

**New Shoes**

The Bombadils

Borealis Records BCD243

(borealisrecords.com)

> While the roots music duo The Bombadils live in Montreal they do get around, recording this, their third album, New Shoes, in a Bowen Island, BC, studio. Canadian Maritime Luke Fraser and self-described “prairie girl” Sarah Frank share an abiding affinity for North American and Celtic folk songs, fiddle tunes as well as European classical music. The resonance of those traditions permeates the album.

Frank’s supple soft voice is featured on most tracks accompanied by her idiomatically expressive fiddle and claw-hammer banjo. Fraser sings and plays incisive guitar and mandolin. Not that long ago both studied classical music at Montreal’s McGill University, their various affiliations coming through clearly in the clever La fille aux cheveux de lin. It borrows its melody from Claude Debussy’s piano piece of the same title, neatly adapted by Frank and set to a French poem by Parnassian poet Charles Marie René Lecointe de Lisle.

They also pay respects to the late American singer-guitarist Doc Watson and Rosa Lee Watson’s classic Bluegrass song Lone [Long] Journey in a classically tinged arrangement enriched with cello, their two voices neatly paired.

Fraser and Frank’s own songs are marked by originality. Even their arrangements are not allowed to fall into banality, but are rather infused with an old-timey feel while given the tang of the new. It’s a winning combination that’s quite satisfying musically: Twelve guest musicians – including Canadian banjoist extraordinare layne Stone, cellist Kaitlyn Raith and the expressive jazz flute of Anh Phung – lend the album additional texture and musical polish.

I find New Shoes a wistful, charming and musically sure-handed outing, and look to the further evolution of this abundantly talented duo.

Andrew Timar

**Parallels…to South Asian music from around the world**

Vandana Vishwas

Independent VV003

(vandanavishwas.com)

> While the Indo-Canadian singer and songwriter Vandana Vishwas was trained in the rigours of North Indian classical vocal music, her own songs and singing style inhabit the lighter world of contemporary sugam sangeet. Vishwas’ website translates the term as “Easy Listening Music,” though more generally sugam sangeet refers to songs which employ readily understood lyrics and
the compelling, acoustic arrangements by Swinghammer also involve an array of diverse instrumental contributions, including finely crafted enhancements on trumpet, trombone, oboe, clarinet, vibraphone, marimba, English horn, recorder and more.

Cullen’s angelic voice wraps itself around each sumptuous melodic line and every composition has been constructed to highlight her superb, crystalline vocal instrument and intuitive knack for delivering frank emotional content and a quirky lyric. Memorable tracks include the gently swinging “New Love,” which features a lush vocal arrangement, and the groovy, lighter-than-air bossa nova, “Off Somewhere.”

This thoroughly pleasing and unabashedly romantic recording is a triumph for all three of these gifted artists and a stunning example of creative, musical symbiosis.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Concert note: On December 2, Lori Cullen and David Matheson perform jazz covers, pop hits, original tunes and selections from the album Sexsmith Swinghammer Songs at Sharon-Hope United Church, East Gwillimbury.

DoVira
DoVira
Independent (doviraband.com)

▶ One of the many great aspects of living as a musician in Toronto is being exposed to music from diverse cultures without ever really leaving home, and subsequently being influenced by it in one’s own music. Listening to DoVira’s music is proof of this. Eight of the 16 tracks are arrangements of traditional Ukrainian material. The tunes’ melodies and lyrics are still Ukrainian, but the rest of the music world surfaces with a blast.

Opening track ‘Yest’Na Svit opens with a more traditional rendition by vocalist/keyboards/keyboardist Stacey Yerofeyeva which builds to a bigger rhythmic sound. A stadium rock setting is established in Dyjki Hasy with a busy drum groove (Derek Gray), bass (Mark Rynkun), guitars (Patrick O’Reilly) and sopilka (Mike Romanik). A slower brief interchange between Yerofeyeva’s wailing vocals and guest Ernie Tollar’s saxophone lyric riffs is followed by a fast sax solo and a big instrumental blast ending. Folk music meets the avant garde in Oj Zigdy Ziron’ko as guest accordionist Emilyn Stam matches the vocal line and holds notes against repetitive rhythms, space-age effects and washes, leading to melodic folk material. Kolo, the closing original tune, is a toe-tapping fast get-up- and-boogie tune featuring virtuosic sopilka (Ukrainian wooden flute) playing and guest vocalist harmonies.

All the performers are great, with special kudos to Yerofeyeva’s colourful, wide-ranging vocal stylings. An English translation of the titles would add to the listening experience. This is world fusion music at its best!

Tina Kilk

Shadow & Light – The Rumi Experience
duoJal
Bridge Records 9469 (bridgerecords.com)

▶ Formed some seven years ago, duoJal reflects the musical marriage of the classically trained virtuosa violinist Kathryn Lockwood and ace percussionist Youcef Sheronick. In their gifted hands and ecumenical spirit, the unusual combination of viola and world percussion are elegantly married. Moreover, duoJal’s eclectic repertoire mines a deep motherlode of multiple cultural traditions and musical styles.

One of the motivic throughlines in Shadow & Light is that each of the six compositions is paired with a philosophical poem by the 13th-century Persian poet Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī. Taking inspiration from the poet’s vision of a world where diverse religions, cultures and races are bridged and even mysterically conjoined, duoJal has chosen works by an international cast of composers: Giovanni Sollima, Evan Ziporyn, Shirish Korde, Sosei Satoh, Ljova and Zhao Jiping. The liner notes further echo Rumi’s core tenets, arguing that they are as “relevant today as they were 800 years ago.” From East Asia to the Middle East, the United States to Eastern Europe, the ‘Rumi Experience’ seeks to foster peaceful coexistence on a world-wide basis.

Two of the works on the CD were commissioned for the project, Honey From Alast by Evan Ziporyn and Lev “Ljova” Zhurbin’s Shadow and Light. The latter work aims, in the composer’s turn of phrase, to shine “a different thickness of light into [the] space” of each of its four movements. On the other hand Ziporyn’s two-movement work explores notions of music as a “sign from the spiritual world,” but also as a physical object and a generative force.

Taken as a whole, this collection of works makes a strong case for the duo’s mission of cultural inclusion expressed in music. And it is musicking of a high order, well-conceived, brilliantly played and lovingly presented on this CD.

Andrew Timar
With its second release, Rhythm Express has once again created a joyous musical outpouring, drenched in the potent, irresistible rhythms of both traditional and contemporary reggae with an added big dollop of urban funk. Drummer and percussionist Everton “Pablo” Paul acts as executive producer here, with legendary, versatile, international keyboardist and arranger Bill King producing. This thoroughly engaging project features 12 tasty tracks, including both covers of classic hits and original compositions—all gorgeously presented, sung and performed with the deepest of grooves and purest of intent.

In addition to Paul and King, the CD features talented guest artists Julian Taylor on vocals, guitarist Jon Knight of Soulstack, as well as skilled, soulful, sweet and funky singers Maliko Watson, Michael Dunston and Ammoye Evans. Also onboard is guitarist/engineer Shane “Shaky J” Forrest, bassist Jesse “Dubmatix” King, percussionist Magdelys Savigne and a first-rate horn section off Alexander Brown on trumpet, Michael Arthurs on tenor sax, Bobby Hsu on alto sax and Christopher Butcher on trombone.

Sizzling tracks include the dynamic cooker Welcome to Funkastan—a high-octane instrumental defined by King’s blazing horn-driven arrangement, propelling us all down the groove highway; the ridiculously funky Soul Nation featuring Watson and Dunston on volcanic vocals and Hercules, Dunston’s take on Aaron Neville’s glorious, authentic celebration of reggae style. Also outstanding are Jimmy Cliff’s Many Rivers to Cross, perfectly rendered by Julian Taylor and Hard Driver—Vivian Lee’s underground hit featuring electrifying chanteuse Ammoye Evans as well as a nostalgic, timeless, monaural sound. Put on your dancing shoes and enjoy!

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Something in the Air

K en w axman

Question: What’s the best way to become famous in Canada? Answer: Leave the country. Unfortunately that hoary jape still has currency in 2016, especially if you want to be a renowned actor. Music is less aggressive and plenty of first-class musicians make their home in the Dominion; some foreigners even relocate here. Still for many improvisers, concerns, both personal and professional, cause them to abandon their native land. Expatriation often means interaction with a wider crew of players than if they had stayed put and these recent discs capture the results of those challenges.

One change from years past is that instead of setting up shop in the US, determined musicians range further afield. Advances and Delays (SOFA A551 sofamusic.no) by the Circadia quartet, for instance, includes Vancouver-raised, Stockholm-based, bassist Joe Williamson along with Australian drummer Tony Buck, plus guitarists David Stackenås from Sweden and Kim Myhr from Norway. More an impressionistic journey than a realized destination, the folksy trappings of Advances and Delays are like a lace comforter wrapped around a steel pole: tempered steel shoves up what seems to be flimsy. Much of this buttressing can be attributed to Williamson’s chunky pulsations, particularly prominent on The Human Volunteers Were Kept in Isolation. Besides that, with 16 and sometimes 22 strings in use—Myhr also plays 12-string—the effect is somewhat like hearing a string quartet, country string band and gagaku ensemble trade licks. On The Animal Enters and Travurses the Light, reflections of guitar-centric ensembles exist, but unlike flamenco faceoffs or rock-band guitar challenges, there’s no audible timbre swaggering. While the string stokers knit themes out of multiple crossovers and tremolo intersections, Buck subtly rumbles parts of the kit with gong resonance, rim rubs and castanet-like clicks. Machine-like rotations result when the four meet critical mass and each track is resolved satisfactorily. And due to the intermediate length of the two performances, unlike other drone-ambient bands defeated by stasis, Circadia never wears out its welcome.

A more convoluted path is followed by Montreal drummer Franklin Kiermyer, who lives in Oslo, unless he’s gigging in New York or meditating in Asian retreats. Someone whose spiritual pursuits parallel those of jazz avatar John Coltrane, the drummer’s Closer to the Sun (Mobility Music MM016 franklinkiermyer.com) proves that he could have been the perfect accompanist to the influential saxophonist if he hadn’t died before Kiermyer was ten. Nevertheless in its intensity and make-up this CD resembles a missing Trane session with personnel modelled on Coltrane’s classic quartet, featuring tenor saxophonist Lawrence Clark, pianist Davis Whitfield and bassist Otto Gardner. Not that Kiermyer is an imitator though. Like a painter whose canvases fall within the school of an established master but are distinct, so is the drummer’s work. All 13 tunes are originals, with Kiermyer’s polyrhythmic command the guiding force. Using every part of his kit the way a painter mixes particular colours to reflect varied visions, the drummer’s focused clatter is distinctive on calm ballads just as the drummer’s work. All 13 tunes are originals, with Kiermyer’s polyrhythmic command the guiding force. Using every part of his kit the way a painter mixes particular colours to reflect varied visions, the drummer’s focused clatter is distinctive on calm ballads just as the drummer’s work. All 13 tunes are originals, with Kiermyer’s polyrhythmic command the guiding force. Using every part of his kit the way a painter mixes particular colours to reflect varied visions, the drummer’s focused clatter is distinctive on calm ballads just as the drummer’s work. All 13 tunes are originals, with Kiermyer’s polyrhythmic command the guiding force. Using every part of his kit the way a painter mixes particular colours to reflect varied visions, the drummer’s focused clatter is distinctive on calm ballads just as the drummer’s work. All 13 tunes are originals, with Kiermyer’s polyrhythmic command the guiding force. Using every part of his kit the way a painter mixes particular colours to reflect varied visions, the drummer’s focused clatter is distinctive on calm ballads just as

Catching Up with Canadian Expats

Ken Waxman

Listening to tracks from these 24 newly reviewed recordings online at TheWholeNote.com/Listening

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke
of Pharoah Sanders, who played with both Trane and Kiermyer. *Heliocentric* is characterized by a snapping, slapping guitar-like solo from Gardner; while Whittfield’s keyboard architecture extends from maintaining the theme with spreading glissandos to crashing through clotted polyphony with arvīl-like jabs as on *Mixed Blood*. This date ends with the low key *Humanity* which, despite tempered cymbal splashes and upward reed slurs, sounds more like *Ain’t No Sunshine* than *Ascension*. It confirms that Kiermyer has extended his Trane ride so that his own music is the destination.

► A more common expatriate path is that of Burlington-born trumpeter Darren Johnston who now lives in California’s Bay area. On *Shipwreck 4* (NoBusiness Records NBCD 67 nobusinessrecords.com), he’s united with three other local, but not native players – tenor saxophonist Aaron Bennett, bassist Lisa Mezzacappa and drummer Frank Rosaly – for a contemporary lesson in advanced improvisation. Like a poised high-wire act, the quartet’s talents are carefully balanced on the six tracks. Counted *Like Flies* for instance, mates a bluesy honk from Bennett with Johnston’s plunger snorts that colour the theme even as both players’ lines snake around one another. Meanwhile Rosaly’s snare bumps and Mezzacappa’s upward string sluces allow the trumpeter to whisk brass kisses from his mouthpiece by the finale. This adaptability is further highlighted on a track like *Bloom* whose final sequence involves the trumpeter playing hide-and-seek with himself with one chorus gently muted and one open horn. With the bassist spinning out a sympathetic ostinato underneath, the polyphonic piece evolves from an out-of-the-gate challenge from the saxophonist to a mellower response from Johnston plus a brisk mid-section devoted to the bassist scratching sul ponticello tones and the drummer clattering cymbals and rim shots. This sets up brass role-playing at the end. Bennett’s muscular but tempered tone plus Johnston’s slurry grace notes also allow the band to bring the proper dignity to the set’s ballads. Overall, any tension engendered by outside techniques such as tongue slaps, key percussion or freak notes is resolved with an application of sympathetic harmony.

► Vancouver Island-born tenor saxophonist/flutist Anna Webber now lives in Brooklyn and the hard wiring of her trio, filled out by New York pianist Matt Mitchell and Montreal-based drummer John Hollenbeck, riffs on Internet memes. Uniquely, the dozen selections composed by Webber for *Binary* (Skirl Records 033 skirllrecords.com) were inspired by YouTube, a random binary digit generator and her own IP address. Don’t fear weird sci-fi timbres, however. The *Simple Trio* has been together long enough to translate technical cyberspace into textural cadences. *Disintegratiate*, for instance, turns out to have a blues-based theme propelled by Webber’s yearning reed tones, broken apart into particles then reassembled via cymbal claps and keyboard pulsations. With repeated piano clusters creating a melancholy exposition, the title tune may be as dolorous and isolated as some binary coders, but the saxophonist’s subsequent slurs that appear to be stripping the reed to its core, coupled with a shuffle rhythm, can be heard as celebration when the coding creates instructions. Additionally this CD’s *Meme* passes its information via saucy piano lines that slowly get speedier until the tune finishes at a gallop. More conventionally, the contest of strength celebrated on *Tug o’ War* is between equine-like hoof beats produced by Hollenbeck and stac-cato, continuous flute pitches created in profusion by Webber. This (wo)man-imaginary beast match is resolved as Mitchell’s sobe chording pushes the other two into tandem motion. Like a single integer in binary code, six brief tracks, labelled with Rectangles and a number designate one idea each, with the most notable, the concluding Rectangles 1a, which dramatically contrasts reed split tones and pauses. *Underwhelmed* ends up being the most ludicrously named tune since sweeping piano motions, jumping pops from Hollenbeck and Webber’s buoyantly coiled pitch variations combine into a cheerful romp.

► Sometimes the Canadian expatriate anec-dote gets tuned on its head when artists from other countries establish themselves here. One example is American David Mott, a long-time York University professor whose bravura baritone saxophone command is featured on many records. California trombonist Michael Vlatkovich’s *Myrhoant’s Kiss* (pfMENTUM CD 095 pfmentum.com) is one. Not only was the disc recorded and produced in Toronto, but Jonathan Golove, who plays electric cello on the date, teaches at the University at Buffalo. Another Californian, Christopher Garcia, is the drummer. Working through eight of Vlatkovich’s quirkily titled compositions, emphasis is placed on the contrapuntal interaction of the low pitches from trombone and saxophone with the overlapping suggesting a rhino and an elephant trumpeting as they leapfrog. These timbres are displayed on tracks such as *Hold on to Your Chair Watch Out for Snakes* where Vlatkovich’s spluttering spectral glides and Mott’s bagpipe-like tremolo bellows provide a unison pitch shattering of the ambulatory theme. Here, as in many other instances, Golove’s spicato roughens the narrative as he contributes to the march time propelled by Garcia. Vlatkovich’s slide command is such that he can express Dixieland-styled gutbucket slurs to challenge Mott’s tongue spaying and Golove’s string winnowing on *Stop Scaring the Toddlers and Farm Animals* as comfortably as he extends the range of his instrument into vocalized multiphonics alongside the saxophonist’s agitated whines that eventually slow down the piece. Pitchsliding their way through tunes that wed pseudo-waltz time to pseudo-martial music to pile-driver themes as frantic as any bop line, the quartet members come up with music that’s both sinewy and hummable. With melodies recapped for familiarity even as they indulge in instrumental bravura, tracks are experimental without being off-putting. Vlatkovich’s and the others’ philosophy can be summed up in his penultimate song title: *Leave the Worrying to the Professionals*. This musical professionalism thrives among Canadian improvisers, although many have to leave home to get a proper hearing.

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**Old Wine, New Bottles**

*Fine Old Recordings Re-Released*

**BRUCE SURTEES**

William Shakespeare, who died 400 years ago, remains the best known and most illustrious playwright in the English language. Depending on how they are counted, he had a vocabulary in excess of 20,000 different words which is remarkable, considering that today a well-educated university graduate is presumed to know some 30,000 words. Shakespeare had a written vocabulary of 17,000 to 20,000 words, a tenth of which he coined himself. He could very well be the first English-language metonymist with new words such as bubbles. The first English dictionary was published in 1604 as Robert Cawdrey’s *A Table Alphabetical*, a book of some 2,500 words, many of Shakespeare’s invention.

► For this 400th anniversary Decca has re-mastered and re-issued the celebrated Argo recordings as *Shakespeare – The Complete Works*, performed by the Marlowe Dramatic Society and Professional Players (4783506). The Marlowe Society was formed in 1907 as a student drama society of Cambridge University. For these Argo recordings made...
under the auspices of the British Council between 1951 and 1964, many familiar voices appear in both leading roles and lesser parts in the full cast recordings of 37 plays, also 154 sonnets and four narrative poems. Recognized voices include John Gielgud, Ian McKellen, Peggy Ashcroft, Derek Jacobi, Michael Hordern, Peter Pears, Ian Holm, Margaretta Scott, Prunella Scales, George Rylands, Toby Robertson, Clive Swift, Roy Dotrice, Geraldine McEwan, Miles Malleson, Richard Marquand and scores of others in roles of various importance. It is clear that correct enunciation and inflection are of predominant importance and sometimes dramatic tension may suffer in the pursuit of flawless articulation. However, the prime reason for assembling these enactments and recitations is to have all Shakespeare’s timeless words and his uses of those words at your fingertips. The impressive, luxury-boxed set of 100 CDs and an illustrated eight and a half inch ten inch 224-page book that includes full cast listing, analysis of each work and fascinating engravings uniquely fills the bill. Could be a very nice seasonal present for the family.

**José Iturbi** was born in Valencia, Spain, on November 28, 1895, and died, world famous, in Los Angeles, California, on June 28, 1980. He studied piano at the Valencia Conservatory, graduating at the age of 13 with the highest honours. He continued his studies in Barcelona and then at the Paris Conservatoire, where he was awarded first prize for piano. He studied harpsichord technique with Wanda Landowska. From 1919 to 1923 he was head of the piano department at the Geneva Conservatory where he was such a strict teacher that he was referred to by his pupils as “The Spanish Inquisition.” He made his American debut in 1929 in a Carnegie Hall recital and from 1936 to 1944 he was music director of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1943 he was discovered by MGM for whom he appeared as “Mister Iturbi” in nine major feature films in addition to recording the piano solos for Cornel Wilde to mime as Chopin in the 1945 Columbia Picture, A Song to Remember. He toured extensively in his later years (I heard his Mozart in Stratford). His colleagues regarded him most highly. Julius Katchen called him “the greatest Mozart pianist of his time” and William Kapell revered Iturbi’s Mozart, describing it as “the evenest playing I know.” Iturbi’s recordings for RCA began in 1933 with Scarlatti and concluded in 1952 with Granados, via Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, Debussy, Liszt, Rachmaninoff, de Falla, Albéniz and Morton Gould, etc. The transfers from original sources to digital by Mark Obert-Thorn are full-bodied and convincing. **José Iturbi – The Victor and HMV solo Recordings** (Appian APR 7307, 3 CDs, 11 page biographical booklet).

Iturbi’s distinctive, articulate playing, admired by Toscanini, is instantly recognizable. I wouldn’t claim that every track here is definitive but all 53 performances, a cross-section of popular classical works, are congenial and played with authority, without any eccentricities that could be tiring upon repeated hearings. Very fitting to have “Mister Iturbi” back in the stores (as we used to say).

**On June 16, 1966**, the year after she won the International Chopin Piano Competition at the age of 25, **Martha Argerich** played the Mozart Piano Concerto No.20 in Hamburg with the NDR Symphony Orchestra conducted by Reinhard Peters. Of course many pianists of that age can and do perform this concerto but as we know, technique is only the first essential and as is immediately demonstrated, Argerich exuded such profound sensitivity and inner beauty to offer an extraordinary realization of this deservedly well-loved concerto. On Martha Argerich Volume 5 (DHR-8048), DOREMI has issued this dream performance in excellent sound. From a recital three months earlier, on March 14 in Milan, she inspires us with Bach’s Toccata in C Minor BWV911, Schumann’s Fantasie in C Major Op17 and Chopin’s Three Mazurkas Op.59. Meticulous engineering throughout makes this very a desirable release for collectors.

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New Year Brings New Music Festival Season

DAVID JAEGER

As the year 2016 winds down and gives way to 2017, our usual nostalgic sentiments of the festive season give way to excitement for the festival season in the world of contemporary music across Canada. Beginning on January 28 in Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra’s New Music Festival signals the start of a series of new music festivals across the country, including the Toronto Symphony’s New Creations Festival, Open Ears in Kitchener, the 21C Festival at the Royal Conservatory of Music and Montréal Nouvelles Musiques, among many others.

Winnipeg’s NMF, as they like to call it, is the festival that started it all. In 1992 the WSO became the first major Canadian symphony orchestra to commit considerable resources to a full exploration of contemporary composition. And it also proved that contemporary music could draw large audiences. Winnipeg’s 2,300-seat Centennial Concert Hall was often filled close to capacity, and even sold out for some concerts. Last January, the WSO’s 2016 festival celebrated its 25-year milestone.

CBC Radio Music was a partner with the WSO in its new music experiment from the very beginning, broadcasting the majority of festival concerts for the first 16 years. Many of the concerts were heard live on programs such as the national CBC Radio Two network series Two New Hours, which I had created in 1978. A highlight of our partnership with the WSO’s festival was our annual live to air broadcast. Every Sunday night concert of the festival, from 1992 to 2007, was broadcast live to the nation on Two New Hours. Our programming of those live concert broadcasts was always designed collaboratively with the WSO artistic team, and aimed to create affinities with the overall programming themes of the year in question. For example, in 1998, when the two featured guest composers were British phenom Mark Anthony Turnage and emerging Canadian Omar Daniel, we designed a program of chamber works by Turnage and Daniel. In 1996 the distinguished international guest composer was American Joan Tower. She was eager for us to include younger Canadian composers, and especially Canadian women. We designed a concert with chamber works by Canadian women Linda Bouchard and Lesley Barber, along with James Rolfe and WSO composer-in-residence, Glenn Buhr.

In fact, women figure prominently among the composers at the upcoming Winnipeg New Music Festival, which runs from January 28 to February 5, 2017. American Meredith Monk is featured in three of the concerts and Canadians Fjóla Evans, Emilie LeBel, Nicole Lizée, Cassandra Miller and Ana Sokolović all have works programmed. Alexina Louie’s new Piano Quintet will have its world premiere as will Jessica Moss’ Glaciers 1 & 2.

CBC Radio Music, generally (and Two New Hours, specifically) played a role in the history of a somewhat lesser known but important festival, the U of T New Music Festival, presented by the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto. (The 2017 U of T festival runs from January 29 to February 5, and includes a co-presented concert with Toronto’s New Music Concerts, titled “Four Views of Salvatore Sciarrino,” as its closing event. Sciarrino is the Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor in Composition, and the featured composer at the festival.) The connection with the CBC is revealed in the opening event, the Karen Kieser Prize Concert, which takes place at Waller Hall at 7:30pm on Sunday, January 29.

Karen Kieser was deputy head of CBC Radio Music from 1982 to 1986, and then head from 1986 to 1992. She was the youngest person ever to lead the Radio Music department, and also the first woman to do so. She held three degrees from the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto: a bachelor of music and a masters of music, both in piano performance, and a master of music in musicology. She could have had a career as a concert pianist, but she chose broadcasting as her life’s work, serving as a gifted CBC host, producer, executive producer, and eventually as a leader in CBC’s senior management. Friends and colleagues endowed the Karen Kieser Prize in Canadian Music upon her death in 2002, too soon a loss at age 53. It is a tribute to her life, her work and her passionate devotion to the cause of Canadian music and musicians.

Her official biography states that “Karen’s nearly 30-year tenure at CBC Radio Music had many highlights, including a renewed emphasis on live broadcasts and documentaries, numerous prestigious special events and international awards, and expanded audiences. She championed the cause of Canadian music and musicians through the creation of Canadian content policies for classical music broadcasting on CBC, an ambitious commissioning program, and the establishment of CBC Records as a high-profile label with a reputation for excellence both at home and abroad. She was equally committed to finding and developing new broadcasting talent, and many of the leading lights of the music department today (both on and off the air) were recruited and nurtured under Karen’s watchful eye. Throughout her career, Karen was a trailblazer for women in senior positions at the CBC. Her tireless work ethic, her ability to master countless details while keeping an eye on the big picture, and her unique combination of unfailing good manners and steely determination, made her both an inspiration and a role model.”

It was fitting, then, that a woman would be the very first composer to win the Karen Kieser Prize. In 2002, Abigail Richardson won for her composition Dissolve, a trio for harp, piano and percussion. In addition to the cash prize, Richardson won a performance of the work, which was broadcast live on Two New Hours. Following that, we submitted the recording of the broadcast to the 2003 edition of the International Rostrum of Composers, a gathering of public radio contemporary music producers in Vienna, where it was selected as the best work by a composer under the age of 30. Radio France commissioned Richardson as a result of her selection, and her string quartet, Scintilla, was subsequently premiered in Paris by the Quatuor Castagneri in 2006. It’s reasonable to say, based on this account, that the impact of the Kieser Prize on Richardson’s emerging career was tangible and immediate. She has developed into one of our most active composers and is now composer-in-residence with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra and serves as artistic director of the HPO’s What Next Festival, yet another new music festival, held in the spring...
Richardson recently told me that winning the Kieser Prize literally changed the direction of her career. Karen Kieser would have been immensely proud of her!

In the ensuing 15 years, five women have won the Karen Kieser Prize in Canadian Music, including the last two winners, Shelley Marwood, in 2015 and Sophie Dupuis, in 2016. I spoke with Marwood and Dupuis, and both of them acknowledge that Kieser’s accomplishments are an inspiration. As Dupuis put it, she has not felt gender bias in her creative career “because Karen paved the way.” Her winning piece, Perceptions de La Fontaine, commissioned by the Thin Edge New Music Collective, will be performed on the January 29 opening festival concert, together with the Cecilia String Quartet’s performances of Glass by Patrick McGraw, the 2014 Kieser Prize winner, and String Quartet No.7 by Salvatore Sciarrino.

Dupuis’ Perceptions de La Fontaine is based on three texts from Fables de La Fontaine, a collection of short tales written from 1668 to 1694 by French writer Jean de La Fontaine. She says that “these tales were meant to teach good moral values to children. They feature whimsical characters, often animals or Gods from the Greek mythology. The three tales selected for this piece have to do with perception, more specifically, how one’s own perception of events, things or people might not reflect the truth.” The performance of Perceptions de La Fontaine will feature soprano Stacie Dunlop.

The Karen Kieser Prize in Canadian Music was, for its first 15 years, the only prize available specifically intended for composers at the U of T Faculty of Music. More recently, Ann Atkinson has provided an additional prize at the U of T Faculty of Music, the Ann H. Atkinson Prize in Composition. This is a prize that invites U of T composers to submit electroacoustic compositions for consideration. The inaugural Atkinson prize was awarded in 2015 to co-winners Parisa Sabet and Xintong Wang, and their winning compositions were heard during last year’s U of T festival. The 2016 Atkinson prize competition will be adjudicated in December, with plans for the winning composition to be heard during this season’s U of T festival on February 3.

Another notable feature of the 2017 U of T festival will be a concert performance of The Killing Flower (Luci mie tradici) by distinguished guest composer Salvatore Sciarrino, on February 1. It’s a one-act opera based on the tragedy of Count Carlo Gesualdo, the murdering composer of the Italian Renaissance. The cast includes soprano Shannon Mercer, countertenor Scott Belluz and baritone Geoffrey Sirett.

Who could have predicted that the festival format that began in Winnipeg in the 1990s would set the Canadian new music community on a new course, one that’s still evolving! CBC Radio was there from the beginning to contribute programming and to bring the excitement to listeners across Canada. That early participation will always remain part of the fabric of the story.

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