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Pictured is New York City-based violinist/multi-instrumentalist/composer Laura Ortman, in the middle set of the middle concert of the Music Gallery’s 12th X Avant Festival which took place October 11 to 13 at 918 Bathurst Cultural Centre, subject of this issue’s cover story (page 14). The concert, co-presented with Indigenous music platform Revolutions Per Minute (RPM), was an evening of electronic and experimental Indigenous music featuring Native American (Cherokee/Muscogee) composer and artist Elisa Harkins and Vancouver’s Mourning Coup along with Ortman. The gig followed on the heels of the release of Ortman’s latest solo album, My Soul Remainer. Ortman was back in town the following weekend for a screening at the Horseshoe – as part of the imagiNative Film + Media Arts Festival – of filmmaker Nanobah Becker’s “My Soul Remainer” video billed as “starring New York City Ballet sensation Jock Soto (Navajo) and crazy violinist Laura Ortman (White Mountain Apache)”
The WholeNote™
VOLUME 23 NO 3 | NOVEMBER, 2017
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The theme of this month’s opener is, I confess, a bit of a happy accident; I recently noticed posters announcing the imminent arrival in town (courtesy Mirvish) of a musical based on a book I like enough that my curiosity at how the heck someone managed to make it into a stage play is locked in mortal combat with my fear of coming away feeling that they killed the book.

The book is called *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon and in it (just one of many insights into the mind of the narrator) the chapters are numbered not in the usual fashion, but as prime numbers in sequence: 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23 and so on. As the book’s narrator explains, “Prime numbers are what is left when you have taken all the patterns away. I think prime numbers are like life. They are very logical but you could never work out the rules, even if you spent all your time thinking about them.”

(One could suggest that music is endless logic sonically infused with emotion, but that would be the beginning of another essay.)

In any case, this just happens to be the 23rd November since we launched this publication in September 1995. So here for your amusement are the covers of our other eight “Prime Novembers.” You can dip into them at your leisure by going to our website, where under the “About Us” tab you will find complete flip-through editions of all 218 issues in our history to date.

Depending on the personal memories and musical interests you bring to doing so, you will find the exercise an inexhaustibly patterned experience.

Next “Prime November” won’t be till Volume 29 – our 2023/24 season – so our next “Rear View Mirror” will have to use a different excuse for dipping into the memory pool.

publisher@thewholenote.com

Rear View Mirror:
NINE PRIME NOVEMBERS

Vol 2: Doug Sanford and East York Symphony (now Orchestra Toronto);
Vol 3: Joel Quarrington and Raymond Luedecke;
Vol 5: Robert Aitken;
Vol 7: Penderecki String Quartet;
Vol 11: Jim Montgomery;
Vol 13: Anton Kuerti;
Vol 17: Richard Greenblatt and Ted Dykstra;
Vol 19: Suzie LeBlanc
In 2009 Canadian poet Suzanne Steele was appointed as the first ever Canadian war poet, and served in Afghanistan with the 1st Battalion Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry as a part of the Canadian Forces Artist Program. She documented her experiences in her poetry and on her website, warpoet.ca.

After her return home, she mentioned to the late Michael Green, a co-founder of One Yellow Rabbit theatre in Calgary, the idea of writing a requiem using the words she had written in Afghanistan. Green introduced her to Heather Slater at the Calgary Philharmonic, who in turn suggested Vancouver composer Jeffrey Ryan as a collaborator. Steele liked Ryan’s music, and soon they were working together on a project that became *Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation*. The work received its premiere in Calgary in 2012, and was also produced and recorded with the Vancouver Symphony last January.

Ryan and Steele were easy and effective collaborators. Ryan recently told me, “It was clear to me from our first meeting that for Suzanne, the poetry would be coming from a deeply personal and emotional place—of course it could be nothing else but. So I knew that, not being the one who was there, it was also my job to be the counterbalance to that. Suzanne wrote and wrote, and I gave practical feedback from the compositional side: I think this is one too many stories, this needs to be longer, this needs to be shorter, this needs to be soprano not tenor, we need to combine these two ideas, can we have an orchestra-only moment here, and so on. It helped that Suzanne has a degree in music, so she had an understanding of what I was talking about, as well as how to write words that can be effectively set and sung. In the end, I think through this process we came up with something that is a perfect marriage of words and music.

I asked Ryan what struck him most about Steele’s poetry. He said, “The most exciting thing for me is that she was there. She was writing from what she saw and experienced. She knew people there who were killed, she knew people who came home with PTSD, she knew their families. So I knew there would be a truth and authenticity in her poetry that, really, no other poet could have brought, and it gave the piece immediacy and relevance. Also, it was a perspective I never could have even imagined myself. But being able to talk with her as the words were being shaped meant that as soon as it was time to start composing the music, I knew where she was coming from and what she was wanting to express, and from that foundation I already had ideas about what the music would sound like. It’s the same when collaborating on opera; being part of the development process of the story and the libretto, discussing each draft and giving feedback, means that the music is already emerging in my head long before I put pencil to paper.

“One thing that Suzanne said in our first meeting stuck with me through the whole process. She said that she was there as a witness, and it was the artist’s job not to provide the answers, but to ask the
questions. We both agreed that it was important that the piece not takes sides in the conflict, but convey a witnessing of events to the audience: “These are some of the things that happened, what do you think about that?” As the composer, I sought to express musically the emotional and dramatic content of each scene, whether it was the triage nurse trying to hold down a sense of panic as more and more injured arrive, or the fragmented thoughts of a soldier with PTSD, or the joyful sounds of children playing a game amongst the rubble.”

The completed work, Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation, is scored for four soloists, both adult and children’s choruses, and orchestra. The piece is in nine sections, opening with an evocation of the space and calm of the North, and a prayer for healing. The program notes in the score state: “It quickly comes back to earth, and to Afghanistan, with the fractured memories of a soldier suffering from PTSD, living in the present but tortured by the past, the sound of helicopters ringing in his ears. As the work unfolds, a young soldier writes home during a cold Afghan night, the voices of parents and children echoing in his mind. In the Day of Wrath, apprehension turns to catastrophe seen first in slow motion, gradually speeding up to real time as a soldier, critically injured by an Improvised Explosive Device, is airlifted to emergency care. A lover mourns. A soldier is killed two days before the tour of duty ends. A body returns home. Two soldiers tell their story of a lamb. Children play. Voices of light evoke a flock of birds flying freely overhead. A medic is overwhelmed by mounting casualties. A soldier seeks to be made whole again. In the final movement, the choir looks to an unknown future as the soloists remember past sacrifices, all coming together in a closing appeal for rest and peace.”

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Jeffrey Ryan

“One thing that Suzanne said in our first meeting stuck with me through the whole process. She said that she was there as a witness, and it was the artist’s job not to provide the answers, but to ask the questions.” — Jeffrey Ryan

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P
hilip Chiu, acclaimed for his collaborative piano work with Jonathan Crow, Janelle Fung, James Ehnes, Andrew Wan and Raphael Wallfisch among many others, makes his Toronto recital debut for Music Toronto on November 28.

In a mid-October email exchange, the talented and personable Hong Kong-born pianist told me that he was excited to come back to Toronto, “very much my hometown and place of musical birth.” He left when he completed his studies at the Glenn Gould School in 2006 and has returned many times for concerts and recitals (most recently with Jonathan Crow at Toronto Summer Music) “but this feels like a real homecoming artistically, especially since it’s a return to form as a soloist.”

WN: Who was the first composer you fell in love with as a child? Who were the first performers you fell in love with?

PC: I like this pair of questions because I can answer them with the same story: 1) Mendelssohn 2) Jon Kimura Parker. I forget exactly how old I was, maybe 14 or 15, when I was studying Mendelssohn’s G Minor Piano Concerto. Between working feverishly on that piece (so many arpeggios!) and constant exposure to the Midsummer Night’s Dream Overture, I had completely succumbed to the infectious effervescence of Mendelssohn’s writing. Up until this point in our story, I never really listened to much classical music, so after years of taking me to classical music concerts and trying to keep me awake, my parents must’ve been totally confused to be hearing orchestral music coming from my room... I’m sure they thought I was hiding something! Suffice it to say, I was not your classic case of a young pianist dreaming of being the next Rubinstein or Horowitz.

One day I happened to catch a performance of that same concerto on CBC, and I was so thrilled to hear someone playing it the way I hoped I could play it! I caught the name of the pianist (Jackie Parker) and tried locating a recording to purchase. Sadly, his website revealed no such recording. I was totally floored when I received a reply from Jackie just a few days later. He had written an explanation of the recording (a live CBC recording that was not available for purchase) and excitedly asked about my progress with the concerto and shared his thoughts on the piece. He finished by saying that he would ask his father to search for the recording in his archives and to send me a copy (on cassette tape, of course) as soon as possible. I received the recording with another kind letter from his father within a short period.

This tiny, personal moment has stayed with me these last 15 years; among other things, it has shaped my idea of what it means to have success and to encourage those coming up (in my case, from very, very far away) behind you.

You’re known as a top collaborative pianist. What are the challenges of a solo recital?

Going solo involves an interesting mix of challenges and rewards. First and foremost, the memory component of the solo piano recital requires its own special mention: No thanks to Liszt for creating an expectation of pianists that far exceeds those of any other instrument. I am not one of those musicians with a prodigious mind that memorizes music the first time they hear it on the radio; it was one thing when I was a teenager and my brain was a soft, malleable mass, but now, trying to find the time to memorize about 85 minutes of music (for one program!) is not particularly easy nor, frankly, the most rewarding part of music-making. I am buoyed by more and more famous pianists (e.g. Alexandre Theraud, Gilbert Kalish) having scores on stage, but it’s still quite hard to shake the stigma associated with doing so.

Another challenging aspect of performing solo, as someone who has found some degree of success as a “very sociable pianist,” is convincing the established musical community that a pianist can be many things and, shockingly, even perform all roles extremely well. There is little doubt that collaborative pianism and solo pianism have some stark differences in their skillsets, but there is a surprising amount of bias (from all sides) about the ability of one to perform the other. I absolutely love the thrill of having the stage to myself; the not-inconsiderable allocation of brain power dedicated to playing with others is now freed up for... anything! Even the finest of collaborations have some limitations to how far one can stretch timing/phrasing or introduce new ideas on the fly (of course, one of the joys of chamber music is pushing that boundary and being amazed by the results), but when I’m alone on stage, I have only to answer to the composer, the audience, and myself.
What went into choosing the repertoire for your Music Toronto recital? Please give us a snapshot of each of the works you’ve chosen.

“Stories & Legends” is a program I created specially for my Music Toronto debut. I would like to add how grateful I am to be performing in this longstanding series in the city where the majority of my education took place. I have many fond memories of attending great piano and chamber music recitals hosted by Music Toronto, so I was ecstatic when I heard from my agent Andrew Kwan that they had gotten in touch. When choosing the program, it was vitally important to me to share something of myself and not only to present A Good Piano Recital Program.

Our evening starts with The Mother Goose Suite. It is a brilliantly simple work that showcases Ravel's uncanny ability to channel innocent wonder into song. It is a work I came to know intimately through my work with Janelle Fung (as part of the Fung-Chiu Duo), and is also, in a small way, my homage to our musical partnership. Fairy tale after fairy tale, Ravel gifts us beautifully rendered, first-person perspectives from these stories. I present it here in its solo arrangement by Ravel’s friend Jacques Chariot.

The companion work I’ve chosen for the first half is a personal selection of Rachmaninoff Preludes. I find they are not unlike the Mother Goose Suite; self-contained tales that evoke diverse images and emotions. I’ve chosen five for five, five preludes that loosely match, in sense and style, the five movements of the Ravel suite.

Schubert. Yikes. The Wanderer Fantasy. Double yikes. This is a beautiful, impressive (every piano program needs some fireworks) piece that strays fairly far from its source material, at least in character. Save for the second movement, which quotes the original Der Wanderer lied almost directly, the remaining three movements present this melancholic song in a more jubilant, high-spirited manner. Twenty minutes of keyboard intensity with plenty of Schubertian modulations, melodies, and mood-changes.

Our night concludes with Liszt’s Deux Légendes; epic storytelling at its very epic-est. Liszt uses all his tricks in the piano-writing book to vividly illustrate two biblical stories (St. Francis’ Sermon to the Birds, and St. Francis of Assisi Walking on the Waves). You will hear birds, you will hear undulating waves, you will hear quiet, awestruck wonder and also very loud wonder.

Two years ago you were the first recipient of the Prix Goyer, an award so covert that the performers in the running for it don’t even know they’re being considered. Now that you’ve had time to digest it, what has winning the prize meant to you?

I can’t say I’ve really taken much time to digest it, haha. I was obviously flabbergasted to know I was the first recipient of the Prix Goyer, but my next reaction was to think of all the other more-deserving musicians I know who should have received it. Honestly, I think I’ve spent most time trying to find ways to justify (to myself) having been awarded this prize.

In another way, I took winning that prize as a message that it was time to change direction. It felt really, really good to be recognized for my work as a collaborative artist, but it was also a sign to myself that it was time to take stock of what I had accomplished thus far and consider where I wanted to go next. It’s a big part of the reason I’m answering your questions today: I knew that it was time to set aside the collaborative hat for a moment and show everyone a lesser-worn, but much-beloved hat: Solo Phil.

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.
The specific concert that sparked this conversation takes place Sunday, November 19, 2017, in the Music at Metropolitan concert series at Metropolitan United Church, one of a cluster of major downtown religious edifices that gave Toronto’s Church Street its name. The Met United congregation will be celebrating its 200th anniversary in 2018. This particular concert celebrates music that goes back 200 years before that, but in an intriguingly modern way.

Titled “Jazz Standards of the Seventeenth Century,” it promises “ground basses, lute songs and madrigals sung and played with the freedom, invention and unpredictability of modern club performers” and is the brainchild of lutenist Ben Stein. Under the rubric “Musicians on the Edge,” it features Stein on lutes along with the Rezonance Baroque Ensemble (Rezan Onen-Lapointe, violin; and Dave Podgorski, harpsichord), along with co-conspirators Emily Klassen, soprano; Charles Davidson, tenor; and Erika Nielsen, cello.

A few days after our initial discussion, Stein got in touch, balking at the idea being characterized as his “brainchild.” “I hope what I’ve written doesn’t give the impression that this is a new thing I’ve come up with. If anything, I’m late to the program. There are a good number of [early music] groups building programs and ensembles around improv — but they are European for the most part. There are a few ensembles in the USA, and very little in Canada, which is why I’m pushing for it. And while places like the RCM are starting to add these elements, in my opinion they start too late. That was the key with the Neapolitans and their antecedents — it was built into early training. … Also we are being a bit liberal with the 17th century thing in the title; we’ve got a few bits of 18th- and 16th-century rep as well. It’s more about looking at the forms that musicians were aware of — ground basses, dances — that you can find in different centuries, though they evolved and changed during that time. …”

But let’s start at the beginning.

**WN:** So, how, why, when did you propose this idea to Pat Wright [Patricia Wright, music director at Met United]?

**BS:** Last year I presented a concert called “The Mystery of the Partimento” as part of the Music at Met series. It got a very good response from audience members who didn’t know quite what to expect, because no one knows what a partimento is. I didn’t until recently, even though I’d been playing early music for a number of years.

**And what is it?**

Essentially a bass line over which musicians were expected to extemporize melodies. Partimenti were a central element of Italian Baroque and galant music training, especially in the Neapolitan conservatories that produced some of the most popular performers and composers of that era. They resemble basso continuo accompaniment lines, but they weren’t just for chord harmonization. You were expected to use partimenti to create interesting melodies, and the Italians were renowned for their mastery of this skill.

Seeing how much people enjoyed having classical extemporization taking place before their eyes, I thought: if I was going to play a couple of rock or jazz sets for a club gig, I’d pick music I liked, find some musicians I was comfortable with and jam on the chord changes. Why can’t I do the same with classical repertoire I enjoy, playing melodic variations in a historically informed manner? So my colleagues and I are going to treat songs and madrigals, as well as partimenti and ground basses, as jumping-off points for improvisation, and no two renditions will be the same from rehearsal to concert.

Patricia Wright regularly programs early music at concerts and church services … The Rezonance Baroque Ensemble are actually Met’s artists-in-residence this year, playing at church services throughout the year, and also the featured ensemble for the Marg and Jim Norquay Celebration Concert in April 2018 – I’ll be joining them and other players for a collaboration jam on Baroque concertos and sonatas. I’m planning to play the Vivaldi Lute Concerto in D, improvising on the famous Adagio movement with the freedom of a player of the era.

I remember Jim Galloway, our long-time Jazz Notes columnist once remarking, in a column significantly on the topic of how to listen to jazz, saying (very loosely paraphrased), words to the effect of “If you want to find the structure and the beat listen to the bass, not the drums. It’s all built from that.” So when I saw this listing I immediately thought “Aha, the man with the lutes, especially the theorbo, must have had something central to do with this.” Is Renaissance/Baroque continuo as backline the way the word is used in a jazz context a far-fetched idea?

Jim was right! It really is “all about the bass.” Baroque and
Renaissance musicians were aware at all times of the intervallic relationship between bass and treble voices. Beginner sight-singing exercises in the Neapolitan conservatories were not one-voice melodies, but two-voice duets, with the vocal line accompanied by a maestro or more experienced students. Musicians learned to improvise in melodic counterpoint to bass lines. They even had a name for musicians who possessed this skill: contrapuntisti. But contrapuntal knowledge is not fostered effectively in modern training; it’s reserved for advanced theory class, which is the worst place for it. So yes, I agree – if you truly want to understand a melody, play the bass line first! That should be de rigueur for all instrumentalists and singers.

“Freedom, invention, unpredictability.” These are the words chosen in the Music at Metropolitan release to try to capture the jazzy essence of the concert. But often in the jazz context the platform for those things working is the strong sense the players, and at best their audiences, have of the structures that allow for the apparent spontaneity of the “improvisations.” How far would you agree – if you truly want to understand a melody, play the bass line first! That should be de rigueur for all instrumentalists and singers.

Audiences of the Baroque court were aficionados, quite similar to the denizens of the jazz club. They were very aware of the components of composition – dance forms, ground basses, structural elements that recurred from composer to composer – and they expected invention and variation. I’ve found that classical audiences really enjoy hearing a model – a ground bass, madrigal or partimento – and then having a musician vary it before their eyes, composing on the fly. It’s as fun and engaging as watching a jazz musician take a solo, and rarer than it should be in early music performance, especially in North America.

So, problems of tuning aside, do you see the potential for an ensemble like yours, which is becoming comfortable with working from charts, actually rocking out with a jazz quartet capable of reading a Pergolesi oboe concerto score so you have a text to work with?

I am very interested in any kind of stylistic interaction that gets people challenging their preconceptions about how to play and sing – and most crucially, how to listen to music. I think classical musicians have a lot to learn from the jazz approach. And harmonically and structurally, there’s a lot more connection between rock, folk and early music repertoire than people understand or acknowledge. I’ve played Bach and 12-bar blues; Cole Porter and Caccini. I see more similarities than differences in them all. And I like to think of a score as something to be adventuresome with, to alter and vary, rather than to execute like a script within strict parameters. I’m advocating an approach that is serious, but not solemn; historically informed, but not historically constrained; and respectful, but not reverent towards the written score. If I feel like interrupting a composed set of variations to add my own, I’m going to do it – and encourage others to do the same.

I’ve played Bach and 12-bar blues; Cole Porter and Caccini. I see more similarities than differences in them all.

So, all going well, what happen from here?

I’d simply like for the skill of improvisation to be more widespread among classically trained players. Why stop at the Baroque era? What if young musicians were given the tools and skills to improvise in a Classical or Romantic style? For that to happen, it’s got to be bred in the bone from the beginning of training, which means that our current approach has to be rethought. Even with various pedagogical attempts to develop creativity and stronger aural skills, we’re still very focused on correct execution of the written score as a primary goal, to the exclusion of all else. Score reading is a professional necessity, of course – but increasingly, so is improvisation. Baroque musicians could do both, and jazz musicians can do both, so it’s time for us to get with the program! The Neapolitans learned this approach from the very start of their training. Their beginner drills were simple, but the effect of them on young musicians’ ability to listen and create was profound.

This pushes your musical buttons, I see! I’m a bit evangelical about pushing this, for sure, especially in Canada. It’s happening elsewhere, and has been for a while, but it’s not at all prevalent here. Very few people know about partimenti, and I’ve met players from all over the world who struggle to improvise. Anyhow, ranting again! I could add that there’s a terrific website about Gjerdingen Partimenti and you’ll find it. The guy who did it is one of the top two researchers in this area. Better still, come on Sunday, November 19. Hopefully you’ll hear what I mean.

David Perlman can be reached at publisher@thewholenote.com.
It was October 11 when I got in touch with Daniela Nardi, newly appointed artistic and executive director of the 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture Arts Media and Education, less than a five-minute walk north of the Bathurst/Bloor subway station.

Coincidentally, October 11 was also the opening day of the 12th edition of the Music Gallery’s X Avant New Music Festival, which would, in other years, have had nothing to do with this story, because it would have been mostly presented at the Music Gallery’s usual home at the Church of St. George the Martyr on John Street, just south of Grange Park. This season, though, adjacent condo constructions are literally, shaking the Music Gallery to its foundations, leaving the gallery and its partners scrambling for alternative venues.

Now it seems that 918 Bathurst has emerged as the answer to at least some of their prayers. As David Dacks, artistic director of the Music Gallery says: “We are beyond excited to present the majority of the [XAvant] festival in the beautiful main hall of 918 Bathurst ... The Centre has been a welcome new partner in helping us to stage the festival with a similar sense of occasion as our audiences have come to expect from the [St. George the Martyr] church environment.”

I started out my conversation with Daniela Nardi by asking what she thinks the qualities of 918 are that Dacks was referring to when he said “similar sense of occasion.”

“‘There are many possible layers to that’ she replied, “the first being physical. That is, the music events presented at St. George the Martyr certainly had a vibe – not just another concert hall or club setting but a unique space. Combined with the Music Gallery’s top-notch sensibilities for presenting concerts, the musical experience was a special one, a particular one, unlike any other concert experience. And this is the same for 918 Bathurst. Our space is an ex-Buddhist temple, with its A-frame roof, all the wood, midcentury detailing. There is no other space like it in the city hence the musical experience created in this space is special, is unique. And the acoustics to boot are truly wonderful. Above all, though I think it has to do with a similar sensibility when it comes to the value in presenting quality. Both the Music Gallery and 918 Bathurst adhere to this sensibility as a mantra; coming to things from the same viewpoint allows us to be in sync, work together seamlessly in order to create the kinds of experiences we believe to be memorable and substantive.”

WN: The first time I became aware of 918 Bathurst as a venue was back in March 2012 when b current and Theatre Archipelago brought Nicole Brooks’ Obeah Opera there for its first workshop production. I don’t even know how long before that the Centre was already a going concern. Even since then, to be honest, it’s been on my radar more than my itinerary, despite the range of ensembles and presenters who feature in these pages who’ve used it, or are planning to – Ensemble Polaris, Afiara Quartet, TorQ Percussion, Opera 5, Tafelmusik, Toronto Creative Music Lab, Music Gallery, Teo Milea ...

It seems like it still remains for many (artists and audiences), one of those “best kept secret” places – a “How come I never knew about this place” kind of thing. Fair comment?

DN: Absolutely a fair comment. It is Toronto’s best kept secret, it is a gem of a space and it is pretty remarkable that not enough people know about it. I hope to change that. The space is like no other space in the city and it is the perfect size. You can seat 200, it is intimate, the acoustics are great. We have a piano thanks to the Music Gallery and hopefully going forward with our partnership, 918 will house the other piano the Music Gallery owns. It is easily accessible by subway, part of the downtown core, part of the Bloor Street Culture Corridor. And this is just the start. But to go back to the question, I believe that not enough has been done to promote this space as a performance space. It has been a great staple for the community that surrounds it and it has survived by word of mouth. Given its size and architecture, it is most suitable for most arts/music presenters in the city. Considering the programming, we would like to create, as well as to continue, our partnerships and collaborations, we hope to demonstrate the fact that 918 is a unique cultural hub, a cultural sanctuary if you will, a cultural destination.

Say more about the “sanctuary” aspect. There’s the main hall (which was literally a sanctuary in the spiritual sense). And what else?

Yes, the Great Hall was used as a Buddhist temple – and you can still feel the good vibes. But we do have two smaller skylit rooms which we call the SunRoom and StarRoom which are primarily used for gallery showings, installations, also good for smaller more intimate concerts, meetings. We also have a slew of rooms in our lower level which are great for classes and meetings, and a fully equipped kitchen suitable for catering of events.

“Artistic and executive director” is your official title and you’re just starting in that role, right? So I am wondering to what extent you were aware of the Centre yourself as an artist, prior to applying for the position?

Yes I just started in July, then went off to Edinburgh to perform at
Fringe so really I haven’t even had my first 100 days yet! But on the artist side of things, yes I did know about the space, had been in it a few times for other performances and was quite enamoured with it. Never did I think I’d end up here doing what I am doing.

Are the “executive” and “artistic” challenges ahead distinct and different from each other in your own mind at this point? Which ones wake you up in the middle of the night?

The two roles are distinct and different from one another. Executive, to me, is about managing all the moving parts which make the facility function: from day-to-day, nitty-gritty matters to more big picture items like fundraising, strategic planning and marketing. This role is about making the venue go so that the art can soar.

The artistic director role is where my artist side can be creative, where I get to play. Discovering and showcasing the creators, thought-leaders and visionaries of our city is truly inspiring and satisfying. I say satisfying because being an artist myself, I am grateful for the opportunity to give other artists a space to do their thing and as a result, contribute to Toronto’s cultural landscape.

What keeps me up at night more are the items on the executive side of the checklist. Now being in this role, I can understand how presenters would talk about their bottom line. There truly is one! I find myself, when I am talking to artists, saying things like “I still need to keep the lights on,” which shocks me at times, like a parent saying “Because I said so.” But this is the reality. I want to keep this space running, sustainable and viable so that all creators can do their thing – and how to do that? THAT keeps me up at night.

And why are you the right person for the job?

Why? Well, first I don’t see this as a job. I have been in the arts all my life. I bring love, passion and hard-earned wisdom to this role. My skills set comes from the school of hard knocks, not an MBA program (not that there’s anything wrong with that). I have a drive and truly a passion to showcase the arts. I am driven to give an audience an experience. Whether it is through my own shows or from presenting other inspiring creators, I am motivated by the desire to move an audience member, to give them a moment where they can suspend themselves, be present and have an experience like no other.

I have the impression that much of the artistic and musical programming over the years has taken the form of the Centre being available to partner organizations (so mainly as a venue). But does 918 have plans for more events/series of your own?

Yes, I do have intentions of creating our own programming. 918 has not done that for some time. I see our programming as multidisciplinary, with strong emphasis on music. But as our tagline suggests: Where It All Happens. THAT is what I would like to see.

From art to theatre, music to dance, film to literature from all cultural groups, I want to see 918 be the place where it all can happen. I want 918’s reputation to be the place where people come to find out what is happening in the Toronto cultural landscape, what artistic and cultural contributions are being made. To be life-enhancing. Tall order perhaps but I’ll try.

Planning arts and culture in the city seems to fall into two camps: there are those who talk about big plans for “making Toronto into a real music city,” and those who think it is already one, and worry about “keeping it real” in the face of forces, economic, political, social, that weaken the existing social and cultural fabric. I’m interested in your own thoughts on this. Also, where 918 Bathurst fits in.

First and foremost, Toronto is an amazing music city. We are finally coming into our own. Developing a personality, a character. Having been born and raised in this city, I have seen it grow, shape, form itself. No more are we comparing ourselves or thinking ourselves less than our American colleagues. We have it going on – and we are proud. Finally.

How I believe 918 fits into “keeping it real” is by staying committed to quality. By staying committed to giving audiences what is good and not what is expected. The moment you lose sight of that commitment is the moment it all starts to fall apart, when you do start to fall prey to the forces.

Perhaps this all sounds like new-agey rhetoric but if you ask what does it take to keep things real, you will observe that it’s about being true to what one believes. And when one is committed to that, nothing can shake it loose.
Beat by Beat | Art of Song

Barbara Hannigan
Getting Inside the Music

LYDIA PEROVIĆ

Agnès in George Benjamin’s Written on Skin, and soon to be Isabel in another world premiere by the same composer, Lessons in Love and Violence. Title character in Toshio Hosokawa’s Matsukaze. Ophelia in both Brett Dean’s Hamlet and in Hans Abrahamsen’s song cycle let me tell you. Vermeer’s model in Louis Andriessen’s Writing to Vermeer. The She character in Pascal Dusapin’s Passion. Title character in Gerald Barry’s Alice’s Adventures under Ground. Mélisande in the Katie Mitchell-directed paradigm-shifting production of Pelléas et Mélisande. Berg’s Lulu in productions by Christoph Marthaler and Krzysztof Warlikowski. Voice of Salvatore Sciarrino’s cycle La nuova Euridice secondo Rikke per soprano e orchestra.

This is just a tiny selection of the world premieres and roles brought to life by Canadian soprano of global renown, contemporary music advocate and now also conductor, Barbara Hannigan. She returns to Toronto on November 10 for a Koerner Hall recital programmed around the Second Viennese School and the preceding generation of composers. Dutch pianist, composer and conductor Reinbert de Leeuw will be at the piano. De Leeuw has been music director and conductor of the Schönberg Ensemble since its founding in the mid-1970s. The ensemble, now known as Asko/Schönberg, continues to prioritize new music and perform the works of the 20th and 21st centuries exclusively.

Hannigan is based in Paris, where she lives with her partner, actor and filmmaker Mathieu Amalric. I asked her a few questions via email about the forthcoming Toronto recital and its program consisting of songs by Schoenberg, Webern, Berg, Zemlinsky, Alma Mahler and Hugo Wolf.

WN: Schoenberg’s Four Lieder, Op.2 and Webern’s Five Lieder have poet Richard Dehmel in common. Does this also make Schoenberg and Webern musical siblings? (They sound like it to me, I could be wrong.) Both atonal and Sprechgesang, poetry-driven, rather than songs as we know them from the Romantic and post-Romantic eras?

BH: Dehmel… well, he wrote a very important book in the 1890s called Weib und Welt, for which he was put on trial for obscenity. I mean, we read those poems now and we don’t feel that at all, but in the time, just to try and express sensual feelings, and from the imagined woman’s perspective… WOW! He was using imagery like… reflections in water, a beckoning hand from a window, a kiss outside…

Barbara Hannigan
marriage, a woman pregnant from a man she did not know or love... it was shocking. Dehmel was a huge influence for Schoenberg's early vocal works (his writing was the reason we have Schoenberg's Verklärte Nacht) and Berg, Webern and many others. So... is the music related because of Dehmel? Not necessarily. There are images, reflections, a fluidity of the music which was a musical development and style at the time. If it hadn't been Dehmel it would have been Stefan Georg, who was a later influence for Schoenberg. The tonalities are not yet what I think of as atonal... that came a little bit later. Certainly the Schoenberg Op.2 are closer to Strauss than anything (but better than Strauss!). Webern's five Dehmel songs are absolutely atonal. They avoid harmonic centre, though their endings always seem to confirm some kind of tonal centre which was elusive for the entire song.

How does the singer make them dramatic, as something unfolding before the audience? We rarely get to hear songs like this in recital, and the Romantic and post-Romantic songs have spoiled us in terms of drama, contrasts, things happening, and big, legible emotions.

I don't need to make them dramatic. They already are dramatic. I just have to sing them, rather than interpret. I find the idea of “interpretation” very foreign. The emotions are deep, pure, full of instinct and that very Viennese idea of Sehnsucht... longing. It’s all there. I just need to get inside it. And with a pianist such as Reinbert de Leeuw... a huge mentor to me for over 20 years... this is a kind of musical heaven for me. An earthly heaven.

Berg’s Seven Early Songs come across as more varied. The texts are from different poets – but the songs differ musically too, for example the intense, soaring Die Nachtigall vs. the playful Im Zimmer. How do you approach this cycle? Berg is very much “your” composer, if I can put it that way – you've sung Lulu of course and your new CD is planned around the character of Lulu.

The Berg are more accessible I suppose. We have to remember that in this late-Romantic period, the song was still the centre of a composer’s expression. Every composer began with writing songs. They developed their harmonic style through the very intimate union of piano, voice and text. And from that, they expanded to larger works. Nowadays things are very different...

Intriguing that there’s Alma, but not Gustav Mahler on the program. We rarely get to hear her in recital. How would you describe her songs? (I thought Laue Sommernacht probably the most melodic song on the entire program?)

The Alma Mahler songs we chose were in part written when she was a student (and love interest) of Zemlinsky. And the songs we present of Zemlinsky were, by the way, written when he was teaching her. They seemed to be in love, before she met Mahler. Honestly, her songs are good but they are not great. They are the weakest on the recital program but we included them because she was such an important figure at that time. A muse, later a patron. She was the lover of Kokoschka and inspired his work, also Klimt, also the writing of Werfel; and the early death of her daughter Manon (with Gropius) inspired Berg’s violin concerto. She was a very, very important figure in the musical world of the early 20th century. These four songs show her potential but she did not develop it. Mahler told her before they married that she had to stop composing. So she only achieved a certain niveau in her work and then she stopped, and became Mahler’s wife. Laue Sommernacht ... is it the most melodic? I don’t think so. Die Nachtigall of Berg is more soaring, I’d say. Or Irmelin Rose, the strophic fairytale song of Zemlinsky. And really, what does melodic mean? Something with a tune? I don’t know. I think melodic means something different to everyone.

The concert ends with Wolf’s extraordinary, almost operatic Kennst du das Land. How does a singer conserve the energy, physical and dramatic, up to that point and then deliver that Mignon mini-opera at the end?

I don’t know how other people do it but for me, there is a degree of
strategy in the pacing of the recital and then... I count on adrena-line to get me through the final four songs of Hugo Wolf. I love them so much, I love Mignon and her need for secrecy. I just slip into her skin and she carries me through the music; her need to try to reveal herself, without explaining herself, is so powerful that the songs just... pour out. This recital program was devised by Reinbert de Leeuw. As I wrote earlier, my mentor. He is the guide and inspiration for me through this musical journey. And he carries me through it... every rehearsal reminding and insisting that I attempt the most delicate adherence to the composer’s wishes. Always searching for the real pianissimi of the earlier part of the 19th century. This world is one of reflection, of intimacy without explanation. And I am so thrilled to bring this program, with Reinbert, to Toronto.

Lydia Perovic is an arts journalist in Toronto. Send her your art-of-song news to artosong@thewholenote.com.
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Edward Franko (left) and Lenard Whiting

“Even after we move north we’re keeping a connection with the CBSO and TrypTyCh so we’ll be able to do at least one production a year even though we’re far away.” Whiting has renovated the basement of their Toronto base at Trinity Presbyterian Church into a combined rehearsal space and concert/performance space for 125 people, “so there will be no need to rent since we already have space and a good working relationship all round.”

The main reason for choosing Kenora for their move is that is where Whiting is from. As Franko says, “We have a home up there on an island in Lake of the Woods and Lenard has been going back every year so that we now know lots of people in the community.”

Franko makes their goal clear: “TrypTyCh for us has always been a labour of love. We’ve never made money off it. Our goal now is to develop a real thriving arts company in Kenora that can operate all year round but with a summer focus. We want to work with the community and with young people to really develop a community organization. We want to make a great impact in a small place and give them a boost. We’re thinking of it as TrypTyCh North.”

On October 28 and 29, TrypTyCh staged the rarity H.M.S. Parliament (1880), in which the Canadian William Henry Fuller wrote a new libretto for Sullivan’s H.M.S. Pinafore (1878) in order to satirize Canadian politics. “This will also be the first staged production we will do in Kenora,” Franko says. That being said, Franko and Whiting have already made plans for their next production in Toronto. “In February 2019 the CBSO and TrypTyCh will do Donizetti’s The Elixir of Love. It will be performed in English because we’ve always been ones to make opera more accessible. We love the form and we want to make people more connected with it.”

Asked what some of the highlights were for them in Toronto, they agree that it was the workshops and the world premiere of Canadian composer Andrew Ager’s opera Frankenstein (2010). “It was a wonderful journey for us to work with him and make that piece come alive.”

Franko also lists the Canadian stage premiere of Grigori Frid’s The Diary of Anne Frank (1972), starring Shoshana Friedman. The production was invited to the Three Rings Festival in Prague and was staged in the gorgeous Spanish Synagogue. “It was overwhelming for me as a producer-director to have my work performed there,” Franko says.

For Whiting, highlights include Stanford’s Stabat Mater (1906), with piano and organ reduction, which Whiting calls “just to die for” and the company’s performance of Bach’s St. John Passion where he both conducted and sang the role of the Evangelist.

A huge challenge for Franko personally was both performing and directing himself in The Tell-Tale Heart (2006) for tenor and three cellos by German-born American composer Danny Ashkenasi, based on the tale by Edgar Allen Poe.

But they are not ready to talk about highlights only in the past tense. “We have at least 15 more years of being able to contribute to the arts scene up north in a really vital way,” Whiting says. “We have the energy and the imagination and the experience from working in Toronto, and we think that it’s time to bring our abilities to the people up north.” And when asked when they plan to retire, Franko states, “The artistic soul never retires.”

Christopher Hoile is a Toronto-based writer on opera and theatre. He can be contacted at opera@thewholenote.com.
Mai Tategami began studying the violin at the age of six. As an orchestral player, she was concertmaster of the Seiji Ozawa Ongaku-juku Orchestra and became an academy student and temporary contract member of the Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin (2012–2015). During the 2015/16 season, she performed with the Beethoven Orchester Bonn as concertmaster. At 28, she won the first edition of the Orford Music Prize in 2016. She makes her Toronto debut with a free Music at St. Andrew’s noontime recital on November 24 and follows that up November 26, when she joins the Rebelheart Collective in Mooredale Concerts’ third program of the season to play the second violin part for a performance of Mendelssohn’s exuberant String Quintet in B-flat Major, Op.87.

She told me in a mid-October email conversation that she started her musical education at three with the piano. “My teacher gave me some Bach to practise,” she told me. “His music was like a magical world. I have always felt peaceful and relaxed when I play/listen to Bach. He is still one of my favourite composers.” So Bach was the first composer she fell in love with. What about musicians? “I don’t remember which one was the first violinist that I liked, but I loved Itzhak Perlman and Gil Shaham. I fell in love with their brilliant and sweet Romantic sound.”

A few years ago, she had the chance to play with Gil Shaham as a member of the orchestra. “It was one of my great memories as a musician in my life.” She was playing in the Beethoven Orchester in Bonn, Germany at the time, she told me, but winning the prize gave her opportunities to play solo and chamber music concerts in Asia and Canada, so she quit playing in the orchestra and concentrated on her music, studying again to get ready for her next step. “I think it was one of the biggest decisions I have made in the past few years,” she said.

At her St. Andrew’s recital she will be playing Mozart’s Violin Sonata K526 and Poulenc’s Violin Sonata with Canadian pianist Jean-Luc Therrien, whom she met at the Orford Music Festival a few years ago. They played an all-Mozart recital together in Salzburg last summer that included K526. The second movement of the Poulenc sonata was the encore piece that evening, but they had so much fun playing it they included it on their Canadian tour. She thinks the audience will enjoy hearing such “totally different style composers.”

She didn’t know the Mendelssohn Quintet until she was asked to play it at Moordale but she relates to “this wonderful piece” in her own unique way. She explains that Mendelssohn wrote the piece when he was 36, just two years before his death. “He was resting in Frankfurt after spending a very busy few years in Leipzig including his musical trip to England,” she said. “I think he very much enjoyed his stay in Frankfurt, because I could feel his excitement in the music. And the fact that I have been to Leipzig and Frankfurt helps me think of how he liked it there and how it influenced his music. I somehow can feel his happiness and normal everyday life.”

She added: “I’m very much looking forward to playing in Toronto. I’ve never been there but heard many good things about the city. And of course to be able to play with such wonderful musicians is a great honour for me.”

**Quartet for the End of Time**

“The most ethereally beautiful music of the twentieth century,” Alex Ross wrote in *The New Yorker* (March 22, 2004). “was first heard on a brutally cold January night in 1941, at the Stalag VIII A prisoner–of-war camp, in Górlitz, Germany.” Messiaen wrote most of the *Quartet for the End of Time*, Ross goes on to explain, after being captured as a French soldier during the German invasion of 1940. The premiere took place in an unheated space in Barrack 27 where the German officers of the camp sat in the front row “and shivered along with the prisoners.”

Ross concludes: “This is the music of one who expects paradise not only in a single awesome hereafter but also in the happenstance epiphanies of daily life. In the end, Messiaen’s apocalypse has little to do with history and catastrophe; instead, it records the rebirth of an ordinary soul in the grip of extraordinary emotion. Which is why the *Quartet* is as overpowering now as it was on that frigid night in 1941.”

Pianist Lucas Debargue discussed Messiaen’s *Quartet for the End of Time* for medici.tv in advance of his Verbier Festival performance of it earlier this year;

“It’s a very challenging piece... but most of the difficulties are musical because you can consider this is a work still impressionist in the writing — there are some effects with pedalling tonal pedal and right pedal — some writing of chords with some modal harmonies, but at the same time there is a very moderne aesthetic that Messiaen has already developed. It’s a mature work. He knows exactly what he is doing and he has found his style and how to organize it to create a peak piece. Messiaen himself was very inspired by spiritual matters. He considered himself a very, very strong Catholic and so the whole work is inspired by some mystical subjects. The piece is not the traditional four-movement chamber music piece: it’s in eight movements. And Messiaen says himself it’s like the seven symbolic figures plus another one — eight — which symbolizes eternity. And it ends very peacefully with the most melodic movement of all; just the solo violin with piano accompaniment. It’s like a scale to heaven, to the sky. It’s an incredible piece to just go out of this pragmatic, material world. Because it’s all out of here. We are somewhere else, from the first notes.”

Debargue and his cohorts, Dutch violinist Janine Jansen, Swedes
the Quartet to great acclaim in Wigmore Hall, London and the Verbier Festival, Switzerland. A concert in Quebec City takes place on December 4, the day before their Koerner Hall performance December 5. An appearance in Zankel Hall, Carnegie Hall wraps it up December 7. Jansen, incidentally, is the Perspectives Artist at Carnegie Hall this season. The North American tour’s program begins with Bartók’s Contrasts for violin, clarinet and piano, commissioned in 1938 by Joseph Szigeti and Benny Goodman. Bartók downplayed the piano part as if in deference to the skills of his commissioners but played up the three instruments’ differences in timbre. There is a 1940 recording of the three of them available on YouTube. Szymanowski’s incandescent Mythes for violin and piano completes the first half of the recital.

WCMT Career Development Award

The Women’s Musical Club of Toronto’s Career Development Award (CDA) is presented every three years to an exceptional young Canadian musician (or small ensemble) embarking on a professional performing career. The winner gets $20,000 and the opportunity to give a recital in the Music in the Afternoon concert series. The process for choosing the 2018 CDA winner is now well under way with the recent announcement of the ten candidates under consideration. Five of them are likely familiar to our readers: Toronto native, mezzo-soprano Emily D’Angelo, well-known to local audiences, took a giant international step forward in March 2016, when she was one of five winners of the 2016 Metropolitan Opera Auditions at 21. Violinists Boson Mo and Blake Pouliot and pianists Mehdi Ghazi and Tony Yike Yang are also familiar fixtures here. Now, on November 4 and 5, another of the CDA candidates gets an opportunity to make his mark in the GTA. Timothy Chooi is the soloist in Bruch’s hugely popular Violin Concerto No.1, a piece that unabashedly wears its heart on its sleeve; it promises to be a highlight of the Oakville Symphony Orchestra’s “50th Anniversary Fireworks” program.

Music Toronto gathers steam

The 46th season of Music Toronto is well under way with four concerts taking place under the umbrella of this issue of The WholeNote, beginning with pianist Benjamin Grosvenor’s highly anticipated return to the Jane Mallett stage on November 7. On November 16, Britain’s brilliant Anglo-Irish quartet, the Carducci, will fly in especially to perform a heavyweight program — Beethoven’s Quartet No.11, Shostakovich’s Quartet No.4 and Debussy’s Quartet in G Minor — following the unexpected cancellation (for medical reasons) by the Škampa Quartet. Described by The Strad as presenting “a masterclass in unanimity of musical purpose, in which severity could melt seamlessly into charm, and drama into geniality…” the internationally-known Carducci Quartet studied with members of the Amadeus, Alban Berg, Chilingirian, Takács and Vanbrugh quartets. A Toronto solo piano recital debut by Timothy Chiu, who is profiled elsewhere in this issue, follows on November 28. And finally the Gryphon Trio, now in its 23rd year, makes its annual Music Toronto visit December 7 with a typically diverse program of Haydn, Mozetich and Brahms.
QUICK PICKS

Nov 5: Nocturnes in the City presents the eminent Czech violinist Ivan Zenaty (who continues the Czech violin tradition he learned from his mentor Josef Suk) in works by Franck, Tchaikovsky and Dvořák (with pianist Dmitri Vorobiev).

Nov 5: Trio Arkel (with guest, cellist Shauna Rolston) paints a musical picture of Russia in the years before the Revolution: Taneyev’s Trio for Strings (1907), Arensky’s Cello Quartet (1894) and Cello Duos (1909) by Glèire.

Nov 9: Women’s Musical Club of Toronto presents the Zodiac Trio in a recital geared to their unusual makeup: piano, violin and clarinet. Formed in 2006 at the Manhattan School of Music under the guidance of famed clarinettist David Krakauer and Beaux Arts violinist Isidore Cohen, the trio has made a career out of their unique sound palette.

Nov 12: Pocket Concerts’ ebullient co-directors, pianist Emily Rho and violist Rory McLeod, in a rare duo recital, play music by Kenji Cohen, the trio has made a career out of their unique sound palette.

Nov 15 and 16: Peter Oundjian leads the TSO in an all-Vaughan program showcasing orchestra members Sarah Jeffrey (oboe) and Teng Li (viola) as well as Canadian superstar Louis Lortie (1909) by Glèire.

Nov 19: Nov 19: Metropolitan Choirs presents the Diaspora Choir in a performance of music of any era. "My job is to observe the language of the composer and then utter it. Every voice is unique, whether a performer’s or a composer’s. I don’t try to make my voice suit the music, I just try to hear and understand the piece and bring it out from the potential into the actual. That’s often fun for me. I love puzzles. A new piece is a puzzle to solve. I don’t think that’s the composer’s intention, it’s just part of learning music of any era.”

Nov 25, Deutsche Oper Berlin general music director Donald Runnicles leads the TSO in Mahler’s biographical Symphony No.6, a massive work the composer wrote as an answer to Strauss’ Ein Heldenleben.

QUICK PICKS

Nov 5: Nocturnes in the City presents the eminent Czech violinist Ivan Zenaty (who continues the Czech violin tradition he learned from his mentor Josef Suk) in works by Franck, Tchaikovsky and Dvořák (with pianist Dmitri Vorobiev).

Nov 5: Trio Arkel (with guest, cellist Shauna Rolston) paints a musical picture of Russia in the years before the Revolution: Taneyev’s Trio for Strings (1907), Arensky’s Cello Quartet (1894) and Cello Duos (1909) by Glèire.

Nov 9: Women’s Musical Club of Toronto presents the Zodiac Trio in a recital geared to their unusual makeup: piano, violin and clarinet. Formed in 2006 at the Manhattan School of Music under the guidance of famed clarinettist David Krakauer and Beaux Arts violinist Isidore Cohen, the trio has made a career out of their unique sound palette.

Nov 12: Pocket Concerts’ ebullient co-directors, pianist Emily Rho and violist Rory McLeod, in a rare duo recital, play music by Kenji Cohen, the trio has made a career out of their unique sound palette.

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Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.
to the challenge. “If something is difficult, I work hard to get inside the piece. I’m not so good at faking it.” Asked what he meant by “faking,” he explained. “Faking is doing things not being asked for, and most players do it. Sometimes it’s a necessary evil or skill to be able to come up with something. I once played a piece with a passage that was so hard that by the concert I realized I was never going to play it exactly right. So I composed something myself that took on the character of what was written. Not that what was written was impossible or wrong. What matters is that the character of what you’re playing reflects what the composer was after. A few years ago NMC played a concert of music by Jörg Widmann, an excellent clarinetist, composer and conductor. He realized how difficult a certain section was that had a large number of notes per second. During rehearsal, he admitted it – there was a recognition from this great musician that while we were mimicking an effect he had written out in great detail … in fact he was just asking for an effect that was similar to what was written. That’s a good composer – when they recognize that what they’ve written is beyond the possible. It stretches you towards the impossible and makes you creative enough to solve some of the issues. That kind of faking is totally legitimate.”

Currently, Christie is only performing contemporary music with New Music Concerts, an ensemble that over the years has given him many opportunities to work with some of the great composers of our era. I asked him what experiences have stood out, and even though there have been so many, he immediately mentioned Elliott Carter. He had performed Carter’s solo clarinet work, GRA, and due to this experience, he had the opportunity to record it for the Naxos label. “Carter signed my copy of the piece and thanked me for the performance. Being able to record it was me putting a stamp on a particular piece – here’s one of the standards of how the piece can go. I hope it has had some influence, because it’s a great piece.” He also mentioned working with Pierre Boulez, commenting on how clean and crisp he was as a conductor, as well as with Michel Gonneville. “Being part of NMC has meant working regularly with Bob Aitken. He has tremendous knowledge and experience and his patience with me is all part of what makes NMC great.”

The “Concertos” concert includes a performance by Eve Egoyan of Path of Uneven Stones by Linda C. Smith. Egoyan has had a busy summer schedule and has just returned from a European solo recital tour. A recent residency in Quebec City gave her the opportunity to be involved in the creation of an intuitive interface for the piano that “explores the frontiers between notes played, those heard and those transformed until they meet the imaginary.” Elliott Carter’s 2011 String Trio is also part of the program, along with Ryan Scott performing the Canadian premiere of Robin de Raaff’s Percussion Concerto.

Beyond his role as an outstanding percussionist, Scott is also the artistic director of Continuum Contemporary Music, which will be launching its new season with “Urgent Voices” on December 8 and 9. This event is Continuum’s contribution to the commemoration of Canada 150, and they are doing so with a series of compositions by Anna Höstman, James Rolfe, Anna Southam and Scott Wilson that combine stories, reflections and dreams using song, spoken word and multimedia. They are also weaving in the honouring of Glenn Gould’s 85th birthday. While film is shown of Gould performing music from Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 2, Steinway’s latest player piano innovation called the Spiro will interpret Gould’s finger depressions and releases to recreate a live rendition of the original performance.

**Additional Highlights**

**Esprit Orchestra**’s November 19 concert offers an opportunity to hear Concerto for Violin and Orchestra by French composer Marc-André Dalbavie, with a performance by Véronique Mathieu. Mathieu is another performer who has made the performance of contemporary music a priority, particularly music by Canadian and American composers. The program also features works by Icelandic composer Daniel Bjarnason, as well as by Canadians Douglas Schmidt and Ana Sokolović.

The **Thin Edge New Music Collective** presents “Sensing” with three shows at the Canadian Music Centre on November 11, featuring music by composers Höstman, Scime and Morton Feldman. Arraymusic has two events coming up – the first on November 22 is a celebration of the music of Wilhelm Killmayer, an underappreciated German composer whose surreal music is ardently supported by Array’s artistic director Martin Arnold. Then on December 2, American Sarah Hennies will perform her piece Gather & Release for vibraphone, sine waves, field recordings and bilateral stimulation. Her music is an immersive psycho-acoustic experience often realized by an endurance-based performance practice.

And finally, as we prepare to enter that ambiguous state of “holiday time,” **Soundstreams** presents a more edgy twist to the usual stream of music one hears. Their Electric Messiah returns for the third year December 4 to 6, with a special performance on November 24 by their resident artist, sci-fi turntablist SlowPitchSound. This will be part of a behind-the-scenes look by SlowPitchSound and other Messiah performers at what goes into the making of this fast-growing holiday favourite.

Wendalyn Bartley is a Toronto-based composer and electro-vocal sound artist. sounddreaming@gmail.com.
Leaps of Faith: Teaching an Old Dog New Tricks

STEVE WALLACE

 Clubs have traditionally been the lifeblood of a city’s jazz scene. It was certainly that way for this “old dog” in the early part of my career, during the heyday when Toronto boasted numerous longstanding clubs such as George’s Spaghetti House, Bourbon Street and Basin Street, the Montreal Bistro and Top O’ the Senator, which presented both international and local jazz six nights a week.

If measured by this yardstick alone the health of jazz in Toronto now, with just three major clubs presenting the music on a multi-night-per-week basis – The Rex, Jazz Bistro, and the Home Smith Bar – can be called into question. However, it’s not as bad as all that, because in recent years new ways of hearing live jazz have arrived, thanks to the persistence and ingenuity of the jazz community at large – those who play the music, those who are trying to learn to play it, those who enjoy listening to it, and those who present it. These new models include:

Student Jazz Concerts at The Rex

For the past several years, Monday nights at The Rex have been given over to sets by student ensembles from the jazz programs at U of T and Humber College. These generally begin with three different U of T ensembles starting at 6:30pm and playing for 40 minutes each, followed by the Humber groups at about 9:30pm. I began teaching (and, unusually, also playing in) a jazz ensemble at U of T last year, which brought me into direct contact with this scene, and I liked what I saw and heard right away. Playing in a real club setting, one where their teachers often perform, brings out the best in the students, and I wish this opportunity had been on offer when I was a jazz student. Mondays are not a prime night out but I urge local jazz fans to attend, not just to support the students – which is worthy in itself – but because you will hear some interesting and sincere music. Both schools are brimming with young talent; in essence you will hear the future of the music in Toronto, a future I feel confident is in good hands after hearing some of these young people play.

Big Bands Are Back

Well, sort of. Phil Nimmons retired his big band years ago and following the deaths of Rob McConnell and Dave McMurdo, it seemed the future of big-band jazz in Toronto was in peril. Starting and running a big band in these times is perhaps the ultimate jazz labour of love, but John MacLeod has persisted in doing so with his Rex Hotel Orchestra, which has performed at its namesake club on the last Monday of every month for years now. The lion’s share of the arrangements are written by MacLeod in an eclectic style reflecting both modern and traditional elements, featuring stellar ensemble work and plenty of solo room for some of Toronto’s best players carrying on in the tradition established by those mentioned above. The band has produced several recordings and its latest, The Toronto Sound, will be released at a gala concert at the Old Mill on November 6, which I will be attending. Kudos to John MacLeod for his perseverance and talent in guaranteeing that high-quality big-band jazz can still be heard around these parts.

But there’s more. Three days after the Old Mill event, November 9, the Wee Big Band will be heard in concert in the Garage at the Centre for Social Innovation, 720 Bathurst Street, starting at 7:30pm. The band has been a Toronto fixture for years and has survived the death of its founder-leader Jim Galloway and several of its key players, such as lead-alto stalwart Gordie Evans. But it continues in the capable hands of Martin Loomer, its longtime rhythm guitarist and principle arranger, or perhaps I should say transcriptionist. The band’s repertoire consists mostly of early big-band classics from masters like Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman, McKinney’s Cotton Pickers, Duke Ellington, Benny Moten, Count Basie, Jimmie Lunceford and many others, all lovingly transcribed by Loomer and played with authenticity and spirit by the musicians. It’s not possible to hear this kind of music performed live very often anymore and I for one look forward to the November 9 concert.

The House Concert

The old model of the salon concert has been revived in recent years, as an alternative to bigger clubs which can be crowded, noisy and expensive. Increasingly, dedicated fans are staging intimate concerts in their own homes, offering a unique up-close jazz experience. By necessity the audience size is small and the concerts are sporadic, which only makes them more special. Perhaps the greatest success story of these is the Jazz in the Kitchen series presented by John and Pattie Loach in their spacious Beaches home, which is uniquely equipped for musical presentation. Opposite their large open kitchen is a music room sporting a wonderful Steinway grand and perfect natural sound that encourages the non-amplified jazz on offer. The audience is generally limited to 35 or 40 paying guests who sit very close to the band – Mark Eisenman’s trio plus shifting guests including John Loach on trumpet – and simply listen, enjoying both a real jazz experience and the verbal byplay between the musicians. The series started about four years ago and is always sold out. October 22 will be the 40th concert in what looked at first to be a risky proposition. I’m sure there are others run along the same lines, such as JazzNHouse in the Ottawa area, which I’ll experience for the first time when Mike Murley’s trio plays there on October 28 (also sold out).

A New Jazz Festival

The Kensington Market Jazz Festival made its debut in September of 2016, the brainchild of star singer Molly Johnson – long a neighbourhood resident – ably abetted by her organizational partners in crime, performers Ori Dagan and Genevieve (Gigi) Marentette, plus an army of volunteers. This year’s festival, a weekend affair held September 15 to 17, significantly built on the promise and success of the first one. Well over 300 local musicians performed in various small venues in the tight streets of Kensington in a dizzying array of one-hour concerts running from solo piano and guitar to trios and larger groups in various styles, all well- and enthusiastically attended. The recipe is simple, inclusive and refreshingly non-corporate – keep it small, because small is good, present “all jazz as we know it” played with authenticity and spirit by local musicians of many generations, and use the vibe of the “hood, its unique food, local businesses and “streetness” as a feel-good backdrop. As to the finances, I have no idea how they make it work, but there are ticketed events and free events; it’s cash only and all of it goes to the musicians save for a small percentage to cover costs. I played one concert in the first festival and two this year, enjoying each immensely while being paid fairly. It was a pleasure to walk the streets and see so many musical friends all packed together so happily: this is an event which puts “festival” back into the jazz festival. Congratulations to Molly and company for their leap-of-faith vision in bringing this unique festival to Toronto at a time when the city desperatedly needed it.

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The whole note.com
**CDs Galore**

The self-financed CD is another way jazz artists can continue to reach and expand their audience, and good locally produced jazz records have spread like wildfire in recent years. One can barely keep up. These involve a leap of faith in that the outlay involved cannot often be recouped, but musicians keep making them anyway as a means of documenting their art. Even ones who have nothing left to prove, like PJ Perry. Now 75, a JUNO-winner and recent recipient of the Order of Canada, PJ has long been one of the best alto saxophonists in the world, although he doesn’t have that profile because he plies his trade in the relative isolation of Edmonton. His latest release, just out, is *Alto Gusto*, recorded live during two nights at Edmonton’s venerable Yardbird Suite. But here’s the real leap of faith on his part: while he had played with each member of the rhythm section – veteran Los Angeles pianist Jon Mayer; drummer Quincy Davis, originally from Michigan and until recently based out of Winnipeg, and yours truly on bass – the three of us had never even met before this gig. PJ just knew the chemistry would somehow work and it did, about two bars into our hasty rehearsal. The result is a very hard-swinging, inventive record, an honest portrait of musicians creating music in the moment.

As long as jazz has enough people – musicians, fans and presenters – who believe in it enough to make these leaps of faith, it will continue to evolve and flourish. Perhaps not as in the “good old days,” which are past, but by creating some good new days.

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Toronto bassist Steve Wallace writes a blog called “Steve Wallace – jazz, baseball, life and other ephemera” which can be accessed at wallacebass.com. Aside from the topics mentioned, he sometimes writes about movies and food.
Starley-Eyed in November

MATTHEW WHITFIELD

Celebrity success in classical music is a strange amalgam. In very few disciplines do we give as much focus to the medium-like, necromancing qualities that a good performer must have. Using training, taste, research and the occasional séance, an interpreter must form a personal connection with composers who are most often long-dead, and emerge with an interpretation that is ingeniously creative and original, yet faithful to the written score.

The duty of the classical performer is similar in many ways to that of an actor who takes a script, often written by someone else, and absorbs the on-page style and personality of a character while fusing it with an individual, personal energy. A play script, much like a musical score, can be read without hearing it live, but the deeper meaning that can be wrung from the page through practice and experience is what separates the “pros” from the “joes.” And, if one is lucky as well as good, he or she may be fortunate enough to be discovered and swept up through the ranks into the realm of the classical music elite, just as can happen for actors.

This link between performing as a musician and as an actor is likely the closest parallel we can find within the arts — in no other discipline is pure interpretation the primary focus and determinant of artistic achievement. Imagine, for example, if we bought a copy of There’s Gonna Be a God Damn Riot in Here!, the famous film of Charles Bukowski’s 1979 Vancouver poetry reading, only to find someone else reading his poems? In the same way, we cannot conceive of a person whose exclusive role might be to meander around art galleries, exhibits and openings to explain the works using great, erudite phrases and explanations. Certainly we have art critics, professors, curators and gallery owners, but they do not look at a Mapplethorpe photograph or Basquiat painting, stand there and tell us what to see, and expect to be thought of on the same artistic plane as the artist himself.

Since the late 19th century, when the roles of composer and performer began to exist independently, the classical musician as performing interpreter has existed in this rather paradoxical grey area. Where Beethoven, Liszt and countless others wrote the music they played, today’s batch of internationally renowned soloists with legendary technique may not have written a single note on staff paper since their student days. There are, of course, notable exceptions, including Leonard Bernstein, John Adams and Pierre Boulez, though these are often conductor-composers rather than instrumental virtuosos.

Modern academies and conservatories are compartmentalized, welcoming young, talented students to learn “more and more about less and less,” as the saying goes. When we ask “What are you studying?” they do not reply “Music,” but rather “Composition” or “Collaborative Piano” or “Conducting.” We categorize, break down and divide the encompassing art into smaller, easy-to-market bites, thereby enabling the young musician to become a rather pigeonholed, although superiorly skilled, superstar “[fill in the blank].”

This is the old-yet-new world of classical music in the 21st century, a roster consisting of a relatively small number of highly specialized, jet-setting superstars who tour the globe, guest-starring with the world’s top orchestras. Managed by a few artist agencies who book their clients in a manner reminiscent of pop music — the biggest venues in the biggest cities, for the biggest fees — the names are revered, and they need not be in good form, either. Recently Lang Lang, who is recovering from an injury to his left hand, took the stage with a teenage prodigy who literally served as his left-hand man for the performance.

Mind you, the phenomenon of the superstar performer is not a bad thing for the propagation of classical music. Superstars attract hype, and hype fills seats, which ultimately brings the music to a wider audience. Toronto is fortunate to host a spectrum of marquee artists from the international scene every year, which continues to foster interest in the revival and performance of music from long ago. This November is no exception. Here are some highlights from the early music world:

Angela Hewitt

Legendary Canadian pianist Angela Hewitt makes an extended stop in Toronto this month, playing a solo recital at Koerner Hall and two concerts with the TSO. (I wonder if her Fazioli piano will travel with her to each venue?)

On November 12, Hewitt’s Koerner Hall recital, her third such appearance, will be an all-Johann Sebastian Bach program, which is part of her three-year exploration of the composer. Works include three Partitas (No. 3 in A Minor, BWV827, No. 5 in G Major, BWV829 and No. 6 in E Minor, BWV830) and the Partita in A Major, BWV832. This concert will be preceded at 7pm by a talk by Rick Phillips. According to the RCM box office, tickets are sold out, but industrious ticket seekers may dig some up through secondhand sources such as scalpers, rush tickets or StubHub.

The Toronto Symphony then features Hewitt as director and soloist on November 18 and 19 in a concert of works by Bach and Mozart.

It will be interesting to hear how the modern grand-piano-with-orchestra instrumental approach to Bach and Mozart will come across, particularly in contrast with Hewitt’s solo recital. Will the TSO’s leader attempt to temper the Romantic tendencies of the full orchestra, or will we hear a more scaled-down, “HIP”-style performance?

Kristian Bezuidenhout

Speaking of Mozart, Tafelmusik welcomes South African-born, London-based guest director and fortepianist Kristian Bezuidenhout from November 9 to 12, as he leads the orchestra through an early Classical-era program which includes Mozart’s Concerto for Piano in A Major K.414 and symphonies by Mozart and two of his mentors, Carl Philipp Emanuel and Johann Christoph Bach.

This performance will pair exceedingly well with the Hewitt/TSO concerts, as one ensemble interprets Mozart through a modern orchestra looking back in time, the other as a Baroque ensemble looking ahead. Both orchestras have deep roots in this style of music and it will be fascinating to hear the different approaches each group takes towards very similar repertoire.
In addition to his concert appearances, Bezuidenhout (who also plays the harpsichord and modern piano) will lead a masterclass on November 11 at Jeanne Lamon Hall, which is free and open to the public.

**Ensemble Masques**

Originally formed in Montreal, the international Baroque chamber group Ensemble Masques makes their Toronto debut on November 18 at St. Thomas’s Anglican Church. A classical supergroup featuring players from Collegium Vocale Gent, Tafelmusik and the English Concert, among others, this team of experts will perform a concert of music by Telemann. (Readers west of Toronto will be interested to know that Ensemble Masques will be performing the same program on November 16 in the Music Room of the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society.)

Georg Philipp Telemann was enormously prolific, writing well over a thousand works, and was one of the most celebrated composers of his time before falling into relative obscurity. According to Ensemble Masques’ recent press release, their concert looks to “wipe clean generations of misunderstanding that kept Telemann in the shadows. Where Bach looked heavenward, Telemann’s genius was for life here on Earth. A brilliant observer of the world around him, his music translates all facets of human experience into works that are full of humour, wit and infinite invention.”

For modern audiences familiar with the contrapuntal density of Bach and the rhythmic vitality of Handel, Telemann’s music might seem rather simple and transparent. But do not be fooled. Hiding within Telemann’s massive oeuvre are works of remarkable beauty, and Ensemble Masques is undoubtedly well-equipped to put these pieces on public display. In advance of their Toronto appearance, explore their latest recording of Telemann’s *Theatrical Overture-Suites* on the Alpha label.

**QUICK PICKS**

In addition to these international headliners, there are a number of other talents, both local and foreign, playing Toronto this month. Here are a few.

**Nov 4 and 5:** Cor Unum Ensemble - “Music from the Early Italian Baroque.”

*Cor Unum Ensemble is one of Toronto’s newest groups, an orchestra and chorus comprised primarily of students and graduates from the University of Toronto’s Early Music program. This talented, home-grown group of players presented Bach’s *St. John Passion* last year and their take on music by Monteverdi, Gabrieli, Frescobaldi and other Italian composers from the early Baroque should be on point as well.*

**Nov 10:** “At the Heart of Bach – Christian Lane plays CCDP.”

*Winner of the 2011 Canadian International Organ Competition, American organist Christian Lane plays an all-Bach program on Christ Church Deer Park’s 1982 Karl Wilhelm tracker organ. This instrument, a perfect match for Bach’s inimitable organ music, should be like putty in Lane’s hands.*

**Nov 19:** “Musicians on the Edge: Jazz Standards of the Seventeenth Century.”

*Rezonance Baroque Ensemble presents a concert of 17th-century tunes with a focus on ensemble improvisation. With a continuo section of Ben Stein, whose doctoral work focuses on the ancient art of partimento and the development of improvisation, Erika Nielsen and David Podgorski, the bass lines in this concert should be tight and groovy.*

**Dec 1:** Upper Canada Choristers – “Charpentier’s Messe de Minuit.”

*While it might seem rather early to mention Christmas, another month of seasonal favourites will be upon us before we know it! To keep up to date on all the Messiahs, oratorios, concertos and other Baroque things happening in the city, check out next month’s column. Until then, drop me a line at earlymusic@thewholenote.com.*

Matthew Whitfield is a Toronto-based harpsichordist and organist.
On Sonic Remembrance and a Story of Choral Life

BRIAN CHANG

Heading into the month of November remembrance, I’ve highlighted two performances: the first is by Chorus Niagara and the Orpheus Choir, and the second by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra with guests. The major works in these two performances commemorate two very different wars separated by 100 years, World War I and the war in Afghanistan. War continues to inspire stories, and to invoke teaching, reflection and discussion. But as we head towards Remembrance Day, it is worth reflecting on the fact that sonic remembrance has the power to evoke things that words alone can not. There are many options available to listeners across the region, particularly early in the month, to experience this, in the offerings of great composers and musicians alike.

Later in the month, on November 22, Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt, an icon in the choral world, director of choral activities and professor of conducting at the University of Toronto, releases her new book I Didn’t Want To Be Boring. Apfelstadt’s book tells the story of this remarkable musician, gathered through interviews over several years. With over 200 choral works, Watson Henderson’s story is anything but boring.

Lastly, at the tail end of my “quick picks” I have included a few early holiday concerts. Make sure you check out the full listings and get your tickets early. Holiday performances often sell out and are amongst the most fun performances you can find anywhere!

Last Light Above the World: A War Litany

November 4 at 7:30pm, Chorus Niagara presents the world premiere of Last Light Above the World: A War Litany by Allan Bevan. “I scoured war diaries,” shares Bevan on the Chorus Niagara Facebook page, “looked at war art, read letters and other war correspondence, and delved into the large body of poetry written by people involved.” From these sources, Bevan created a story of a couple. “He has gone off to battle, and she is left to consider it. They become the conscience of the work, the ones who portray the human cost of the war.” Shaw Festival actors Hailey Gillis and Colin Palangio bring this couple to life.

Robert Cooper helms these performances with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and soloists Maeve Palmer, soprano; Lillian Brooks, mezzo-soprano; Anthony Varahidis, tenor; and Alexander Bowie, bass. Bevan has written the soloists as “spirits” who represent the “dead” referred to in the famous lines of John McCrae’s In Flander’s Fields “We are the dead…” Bevan continues: “Last Light does not pretend that there are easy answers, it is not a simple comforting… In the poetry of WWI, generally speaking, war is neither glorified nor vilified, it is simply recorded: all its horror, sacrifice, as well as its unexpected beauty, compassion and forgiveness.”

The Orpheus Choir of Toronto, also conducted by Robert Cooper, performs the same work in Toronto on November 5 at 3:30pm, Grace Church on the Hill.
Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation

It has been almost 16 years since the official, Parliament-sanctioned intervention by the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan began. In those days of constant war headlines and combat deaths, our country was at war on the other side of the planet. Afghanistan was a war unlike others, constantly changing and evolving, fought against an often unstructured and asymmetrical enemy. For those of us who read the news here in Canada, this war also strongly shaped our country in the last decade and a half. The war in Afghanistan has opened discussions on a great number of complex issues like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the role of the Canadian Forces in international conflicts, military investment, American imperialism, racism, child combatants, pacifism and so much more.

Art, music included, has done much to allow and facilitate some of these conversations, with its power to evoke contemplation and create change. Into this discussion, on November 9 and 11, we insert Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation, including 130 choristers from the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, 50 from the Toronto Children’s Chorus, guest musicians from the Canadian Forces, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and soloists. The first half of this concert also features Canadian Forces guests on pipes, bugle and text.

Tania Miller, music director of the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, takes the helm for these performances. Miller was the first woman to lead a major Canadian orchestra, ever, and her tenure began the year following the start of the war in Afghanistan. She is joined by Measha Brueggergosman, soprano; Allysón McHardy, mezzo-soprano; Colin Ainsworth, tenor; and Brett Polegato, baritone.

The words come via Suzanne Steele, Canada’s war poet, who served in Afghanistan. Jeffrey Ryan put the words to music, including text from the requiem mass, alongside Steele’s poignant words which are often set in repetition: “if we could give you two days, just two days...”; “My son, my daughter, can you hear me?”

In the breaking open of lives lived and lost during war, music can help bridge the experiences and provide a united focus. Ryan
describes his music as “a love letter. Not just to one person...but to each of us, to our country, and to a generation that will be paying for this war emotionally or financially (looking after the injured and next of kin) for another generation.” As Ryan concludes in the program note: “Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation marks one particular war for one particular generation, but its message is universal and timeless.”

**On a Canadian National Treasure: Ruth Watson Henderson**

Ruth Watson Henderson has had a storied career as a performer on piano and organ. Having served 29 years as the accompanist of the Toronto Children’s Chorus, with the Festival Singers under Elmer Iseler, and as a church musician, her prolific contributions to choral music have been incomparable. Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt has spent years interviewing and researching Watson Henderson for her new book *I Didn’t Want To Be Boring*.

To commemorate the book launch, the Canadian Music Centre is hosting a concert on November 22 featuring soprano Amy Dodington, accompanied by Watson Henderson herself, and joined by members of the Elmer Iseler Singers and the Exultate Chamber Singers as well as by Apfelstadt. Three days earlier at Kingsway-Lambton United Church, November 19, Dodington will sing Watson Henderson’s *Prayer of St. Francis* accompanied by the composer herself in an unofficial book launch and 85th birthday celebration.

In an excerpt, Apfelstadt describes Henderson: “Initially a highly gifted young solo pianist, Ruth became a collaborative artist whose work with choral ensembles led to her development as a composer whose music is frequently sung and respected for its craftsmanship and expressivity. And along the way, she embodied the term “working mother” as she raised a family of four, built a career as a practising musician and successful composer, and held a church music director position until the age of 80. As I write, she is 84 and still composing music. Hers is a remarkable story.” The paperback copy of the book is available in stores November 22.

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**Quick Picks**

- **Nov 4**, 7:30pm. The Guelph Chamber Choir presents “Celebration 150.” The Guelph choral community’s contribution to Canada 150 commemorations brings together five regional choirs: the Guelph Chamber Choir, Guelph Community Singers, Guelph Youth Singers, Rainbow Chorus of Waterloo Wellington and the University of Guelph Symphonic Choir.

- **Nov 10**, 8pm. The Kingston Road Village Concert Series presents “Remembrance Day Concert with Scott Good and Friends.”

- **Nov 11 and 12**, 8pm. That Choir presents their annual first concert of the season “That Choir Remembers,” featuring the music of Eric Whitacre, Eleanor Daley and more.

- **Nov 12**, 4:30pm. The Cathedral Church of St James presents “Service of Remembrance,” featuring the large choral work of Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, *Songs of Farewell*, a collection of six songs composed in accapella polyphony. These songs will be presented as part of a religious service.

- **Nov 15 and 16**, 8pm. The Toronto Symphony Orchestra presents “Oundjian Conducts Vaughan Williams.” Marking one of the signature performances of the TSO with Oundjian at the helm in his outgoing year as music director, the orchestra is joined by Louis Lortie, piano; Sarah Jeffrey, oboe; Teng Li, viola; Carla Huhtanen, soprano; Emily D’Angelo, mezzo-soprano; Lawrence Wiliford, tenor; Tyler Duncan, baritone; and the Elmer Iseler Singers.

- **Nov 29 to Dec 3**, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir presents “Four Weddings, a Funeral, and a Coronation.” Promising a Baroque-inspired soundtrack to festivities, these performances mark the first choral performances for Tafelmusik this season. Musical celebrations written by Purcell, Lully, Handel, Pachelbel, John Blow’s *Anthem for the Coronation of James II* and Charpentier’s *Messe des morts* are all on the program.

- **Dec 3**, 5pm, the Harmony Singers of Etobicoke present their holiday concert, including many pop and classics favourites. The choir is also singing *We’re in the Same Boat Now*, written by former Premier Bob Rae. The Singers also provide an annual scholarship to a student at the Etobicoke School of the Arts who performs with the choir. This year, that recipient is Martina Myskohlid.

- **Dec 5 and 6**, 7:30pm. The Guelph Community Singers presents “Festival of Carols” featuring the Salvation Army Canadian Staff Band. The often-sold-out concert is being presented over two nights to accommodate extra patrons.

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First FAMA Fall Feast Continues

ANDREW TIMAR

So far it’s been an odd fall here. Into the third week of October, it’s well past Thanksgiving, yet Toronto is still reaching daytime high temperatures we typically experience in June. There hasn’t even been a whisper of nighttime frost in town. The geraniums still bloom vigorously and peppers continue to redden on my north-facing balcony garden. Endless summer? Dire climatic implications aside, I for one am thankful for this cold weather reprieve, soon to be over, I suspect.

The GTA’s first Festival of Arabic Music and Arts (FAMA), presented by the Canadian Arabic Orchestra, will be well under way by the time you read this. The festival’s first concert was held at Koerner Hall on October 28, featuring a double bill with Iraqi guitarist, singer and composer Ilham Al-Madfai and the Toronto world music group Sultans of String. Ever since its establishment in 2014 the professional CAO has sought to connect expatriate Arabs with classical Arabic musical culture in order to maintain this heritage in the hearts and minds of the present community in Canada, as well as to safeguard it for future generations. At the same time, the orchestra also seeks to engage with non-Arab Canadian communities. FAMA shows both objectives at work.

Arabic Music in Toronto: Rob Simms and George Sawa

To gain further insight into Arabic music today, in both the Arab world and here in Canada, I called Rob Simms, associate professor at York University’s Department of Music, a Canadian ethnomusicologist and multi-instrumentalist specializing in Middle Eastern and West African traditions. Simms reminded me of the devastation to cultural life impacting large swathes of Iraq and Syria as a consequence of the recent upheaval has been the displacement of millions of Iraqis and Syrians, many finding themselves as refugees in foreign lands – including recently, Canada.

Aleppo, Syria, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, is a prime example of this cultural devastation. It is considered an important centre of Arabic traditional music, historically supporting renowned practitioners of muqawashah, qadad halabiyya and maqam (religious, secular and poetic-musical genres). Aleppo was also known for its sammi a, a cadre of influential cultivated music connoisseurs. This ancient web of music production, patronage and appreciation has been tragically disrupted as a result of the current civil war.

I then followed up on the phone with longtime Toronto resident George Sawa, a renowned scholar, qanun (Arabic zither) player and music educator who holds a doctorate in historical Arabic musicology from the University of Toronto. Born in Alexandria, Egypt, the multi-award-winning Sawa has over 50 years’ experience in Arabic music performance, history and theory. “I arrived in Toronto in 1970 to study at U of T,” he recounted. One of the draws was the university’s Robarts and Faculty of Music libraries, which according to Sawa “contain one of the best Arabic music collections in the world.”

What was the Arabic music scene like in 1970 Toronto? “At the time Arabic music was mostly encountered in cabarets and in clubs which featured belly dancing,” Sawa told me. He immediately sought to enrich the scene.

“In 1971 I founded a trio playing traditional Arabic music. Not long afterward, CBC radio recorded for broadcast a concert of Christmas carols sung by (leading contralto) Maureen Forrester, with me on qanun. The trio increased into a quintet, appearing in concert and on CBC over the next few decades. It became known as the Traditional Arabic Music Ensemble.” Sawa also served as the music director of Toronto’s Arabesque Dance Company & Orchestra from 1996 to 2005.

Today one of Sawa’s performing projects is Alpharabius, “an ensemble dedicated to exploring the musical interactions of the rich cultures of the Mediterranean. The group is named after one of the great philosophers of classical Islam, al-Farabi (d. ah 339/ 950 CE), who was renowned as both a musical theorist and a practicing musician… The ensemble is a collaboration of musicians trained in the classical Arabic and Western medieval musical traditions.”

He concluded our conversation by observing that the GTA’s “Arabic community has grown considerably in the past few decades. For example, I think it’s very significant and healthy that before securing support from Canadian Arts Councils, the Canadian Arabic Orchestra initially sought patronage from local Arabic businesses who believed in what they were doing. More power to them!”

Charbel Rouhana, oudist

November 3, FAMA in co-production with Festival du Monde Arabe de Montréal presents Charbel Rouhana, the Lebanese composer, singer and oudist accompanied by the Canadian Arabic Orchestra at the Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre. This program will be repeated November 5 at the Monument National in Montreal.

Possessing ancient roots, the oud – often placed into three general groups, Arabic, Turkish and Persian – is at the core of much of the traditional music played throughout the Middle East and in regions influenced by its people. The oud, which has numerous morphological variants highly dependent on region of origin, typically today has 11 or 13 strings grouped into five or six courses.

Its performance tradition has been particularly long-maintained in Iraq, where a popular saying honours its high value to the culture: “In the music of the oud lies the country’s soul.” The instrument was once common in Iraqi households, something like the guitar in Canada or the USA. Following the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the overthrow of the Ba’athist regime however, the increasing power of Islamist extremists who consider secular music to be harum (sinful, forbidden) has forced many oud players and teachers to cease playing publicly, or even forced them into exile in order to pursue their oud-related careers. Already a virtuoso of the instrument, several decades ago Rouhana established a new method of playing the oud. Published in seven...
volumes, it has been adopted by the National Conservatory of Music in Lebanon and by other music institutions, securing his standing among today’s leading masters of the Arabic oud. Rouhana is also a prize-winning composer: in 1990 he was awarded first prize in the Hirayama Competition for his work Hymn of Peace. He has appeared in concert with classical Hindustani bansuri (bamboo flute) virtuoso Hariprasad Chaurasia, and also with many other leading musicians.

FAMA Concerts
In addition to the November 1 FAMA concert at the Revue Cinema mentioned in my previous column, featuring the outstanding female Syrian oud player and singer Waed Bouhassoun, and the November 3 Charbel Rouhana concert referred to above, there are a several more FAMA concerts in the first half of November. Here are some highlights.

November 4, the group Golan, its members hailing from Tunisia, France and Palestine, takes the stage at the Lester B. Pearson Theatre in Brampton. Leader Hubert Dupont, Golan’s double bassist, gathered like-minded musicians from all over the Mediterranean, arranging a musical exchange between elements of contemporary European music, jazz and Arabic traditional music. Pascal Rozat wrote in France Musique that Golan is reaching for “an ideal of musical fraternity as much as a hymn to freedom, for an ‘oriental journey’ different from others.”

November 9, FAMA, in partnership with the Native Canadian Centre in Toronto and in association with the Aga Khan Museum and the Arab Community Centre of Toronto, presents the world premiere of Origins at the Aga Khan Museum. Tagged “Indigenous/Arabic,” this new production by the Canadian Arabic Orchestra in collaboration with poet and singer Hassan Tamim and S’at’imc (a.k.a. Lillooet) singer-songwriter and dancer Laura Grizzlypaws is perhaps the most ambitious of the FAMA offerings.

Origins showcases similarities as well as cultural divides between the people of two continents through dance and music, “in the spirit of truth and reconciliation and... peace and harmony through the cross-cultural medium of music.” In addition to Grizzlypaws and the Canadian Arabic Orchestra, Origins presents whirling dervish performers of Rumi Canada for part of the program, enhancing the spiritual journey theme of the work.

November 12, FAMA moves to Mississauga’s Hammerson Hall, at the Living Arts Centre. Iraqi-born Naseer Shamma, among the world’s top oud masters, headlines the concert accompanied by the Canadian Arabic Orchestra. Titled “On the Way to Baghdad,” the concert is billed as a veritable masterclass in classical Arabic music.

Born in 1963 in Iraq, Shamma received his diploma from the Baghdad Academy of Music in 1987. He has composed music for TV, films and plays since. In 1998 he established the Arabic Oud House in Cairo, as well as in Tunis and Dubai. His scholarly research collecting old manuscripts on Arabic music has aided in his reconstruction of the Al-Farabi (c. 870–951 CE) model oud, which can produce an expanded tonal range of four octaves, giving the player a vast improvisational terrain.

QUICK PICKS
The Aga Khan Museum hosts four concerts in addition to Origins: Nov 4: “Fleur Persane by Perséides” featuring Amir Amiri (santur) and Jean Félix Mailloux (double bass); Nov 18: “Haram with Gordon Grdina” is an evening of indie-rock meets jazz and electronica; Nov 25: “All Rivers at Once: The Israeli-Iranian Musical Initiative” is described as “jazz-like arrangements of traditional Israeli and Iranian folk songs.” The ensemble, directed by pianist Noam Lemish, includes Saeed Kamjoo (kamancheh), Pedram Khavarzamini (tombak) and Amos Hoffman (oud). Dec 2: “Nazar by Turkwaz,” the Toronto quartet of world music divas Maryem Hassan Tollar, Jayne Brown, Sophia Grigoriadis and Brenna MacCrimmon. Expect Arabic, Balkan and Turkish folk songs in tight arrangements with a sprinkling of new charts.

Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer. He can be contacted at worldmusic@thewholenote.com.
The heart of musical theatre in any time period is storytelling through the combination of words and music, where the whole becomes more than the sum of its parts; and when the right creative team and performers come together the results can be uniquely satisfying.

October’s musical theatre season started strongly with Britta Johnson’s Life After at Canadian Stage debuting to rave reviews, sold-out houses and an extended run (so far to October 29). Audiences were bowled over with the sophistication of the music, the humanity and wit of the book, and the potential of many more new musicals to come from such a talent. An unexpectedly welcome addition to the summer and fall was the classic Euripides drama The Bakkhai (in the recent Anne Carson adaptation) at the Stratford Festival, in which director Jillian Kelley made the radical and fascinating decision to have the chorus sing rather than speak and chose Vancouver composer Veda Hille (of the recent Onegin (a collaboration with the Toronto Symphony at Roy Thomson Hall) that will continue with a remounting of Backbone at Canadian Stage Berkeley Street November 2 to 12.

As October ends and November begins there is even more of a wide range of music theatre offerings to choose from. Personally, I have been immersed in rehearsals for Opera Atelier’s production of Mozart’s The Marriage of Figaro (October 26 to November 4 at the Elgin Theatre) which, in Marshall Pynkoski’s exquisitely detailed commedia dell’arte-inspired period staging, pulls those watching as if through a window into the 18th century, where words, music and movement are inextricably intertwined to serve the storytelling, obliterating the fourth wall and delighting in sharing the space with the audience.

The Musical Stage Company’s Uncovered concert series goes to the root of the storytelling concept, deconstructing and reconstructing the songs of popular singer-songwriters to uncover and share the stories at the heart of the songs. Artistic director Mitchell Marcus works side by side with music director Reza Jacobs and the individual performers, experimenting and exploring the material to create new uniquely theatrical arrangements that clarify and heighten the stories they discover.

November 14 to 16 they present “Uncovered: Dylan & Springsteen” at Koerner Hall with an exciting cast of leading musical theatre performers featuring Jake Epstein as Bruce Springsteen and Sara Farb as Bob Dylan.

Wanting to know more details, I approached Mitchell Marcus about how the series started and his ongoing collaboration with music director Jacobs.

Here is our conversation:

WN: What was your initial impetus or inspiration to create the concert series?

MM: The first Uncovered (in 2007) explored the musical catalogue of The Beatles. We both loved The Beatles and loved musical theatre, and wondered how the songs could be interpreted with a group of singing actors. It turned out to be revelatory as audiences started to hear the stories contained in these iconic songs in a way that they hadn’t previously. The combination of a great actor and an examination of the material from the perspective of character and narrative became something we were fiercely passionate about.

Uncovered seems to have become a cornerstone of your season. Is there a connection between your choice of singer-songwriters to feature with the mainstage show(s) that you are presenting in the season or is there instead (or as well) an arc of experimentation in the choices from year to year? How do you choose which songwriters to feature?

There is no specific connection between the Uncovered concert selections and the mainstage shows, except for the hope of always presenting exciting work of the highest quality. The choice of songwriter is a strange combination of intuition and zeitgeist. Sometimes it’s an artist that one of us loves and has been waiting to tackle. Sometimes it’s a circumstance like the death of David Bowie last year which prioritized Bowie/Queen over Dylan/Springsteen (which we had [already] been debating). I think we also try to ensure that the concert doesn’t stay too stagnant from one year to another, which has frequently resulted in alternating between rock/pop and folk music.

Has the shape of the show or your approach to the material changed since the series began?

When we first started, the concert was thrown together much more quickly, so what was onstage was really the version of the song that the artist wanted to try out. Since then, we spend a lot more time in rehearsal and really try to shape the overall evening into something whole rather than feeling like a cabaret. On the musical side, this has meant a more rigorous dramaturgical process of diving into the lyrics of the songs and making clear decisions around whose story we are telling and what story is being told. This becomes the foundation from which all musical decisions are made and the lyrics of the songwriter serve as our guide. Dramatically, we also started integrating text into the concert to serve as a bridge between numbers. We exclusively use quotes from the songwriters we are featuring and it has been a very effective way to capture their spirit alongside their music.
Could you tell us about your decision to sometimes cast female performers as male singer-songwriters, for example, Maeve Beaty as David Bowie last year, and this year, Sara Farb as Bob Dylan?

Ultimately we want to pay tribute to the spirit of the artists and share their words and music with an audience, without – in any way – trying to emulate or impersonate them. As such, the key criteria – whether it’s for delivering text from the songwriter, or singing their songs – is that the artist capture their spirit and intention, both of which transcend gender or age!

There also seems to be a core group of performers who return to take part. Is that just by chance or because they have become part of an Uncovered rep company, so to speak?

Over time we have realized that being a successful Uncovered performer is harder than it looks! Koerner Hall is spectacular, but its acoustics are so good that any imperfections are amplified tenfold. So we need fabulous singers who are also really, really good actors and who collaborate very well in the rehearsal process, since we start with a blank slate and build the arrangements together. We also need a very diverse group of performers so that we can tackle a broad spectrum of songs and styles.

So we try to find the balance between introducing new artists, showcasing returning artists who weren’t in the show the previous year, and bringing back some of the artists from the year prior. Each artist who has ever worked on Uncovered has brought something so unique and special to it. So it’s also a case of just trying to find the group who are interesting as a unit and also right for that particular songwriter.

Do either or both of you find that working regularly on the Uncovered series together has changed the way you work together, or with other collaborators, on other projects?

It has certainly built a very meaningful friendship for the two of us, and a shorthand which I think comes in handy on other shows that we do together. It’s also led to a lot of lessons when it comes to developing our new musicals. Looking at good songwriting from the perspective of narrative arc has come in handy when looking at new musical theatre songs.

Do you see the Uncovered series leading in turn to further experimentation with popular music, perhaps extending to exploring staging – or do you see it staying at the simpler level of song – words and music presented/sung live to the audience with the revelations in the new musical arrangements?

I think Uncovered is meant to stay simple in its concert format, with an emphasis on teasing out stories while just focusing on the words of the songwriter. But I think it has illuminated the power of pop music and so who knows what is possible as we continue to develop new musicals and new musical projects. We wouldn’t want to create a Mamma Mia per se, but I think it’s a very interesting exploration to examine how else pop music can be used to create contemporary and important musical works.

Elsewhere

This month there is a wide range of music theatre to choose from. Music is the medium that transforms Shakespeare’s romance of forgiveness The Winter’s Tale into one of the most effective recent story ballets, through the choreography of Christopher Wheeldon combined with the score of Joby Talbot (the same team who brought us the popular Alice in Wonderland ballet). Winter’s Tale returns to the National Ballet of Canada November 10 to 19, only two years after its debut, because of its great initial success.

On the opposite side of the spectrum the record-breaking Canadian musical based on the novel Evil Dead the Musical returns to Toronto yet again (to the Randolph Theatre November 9 to 19), proving that a cult classic musical version of a horror movie can have, perhaps, even greater staying power than the movie itself. Tickets are already selling quickly but at the time of writing there is still room in the “Splatter Zone” for the most ardent fans.

QUICK PICKS

No. 6 to Dec. 31: Young People’s Theatre presents a streamlined (85-minute) Beauty and the Beast, giving fans of one of Disney’s best musicals the chance to catch their favourite story live.

No. 10 to Dec. 18: Word has just come in about another new Canadian musical, Riding Off In All Directions... the telling of lies, about the relationship between Muzzo de la Roche and Stephen Leacock at Mississauga’s Maja Prentice Theatre. It will be directed by the well-known stage and screen star Colin Fox, who also plays the part of Leacock. The cast includes Bó Bardós as de la Roche; James McLean as Timothy Findley; and Marion Samuels-Stevens as de la Roche’s cousin and lifelong companion, Caroline Clement.

For more information—call 529-846-2552 or go online to: bit.ly/TellingLies.

No. 11 to Dec. 3: At Factory Theatre: Trace is a one-man show that follows three generations of mothers and sons from occupied Japan to 21st-century Canada combining virtuoso original piano compositions with lyrical text.

No. 20 to Dec. 8: At Crow’s Theatre (345 Carlaw) rock ’n’ roll takes centre stage in the world premiere of a new rock fable, A&R Angels, by Kevin Drew of Broken Social Scene, directed by Chris Abraham.

No. 25, at Hart House Theatre, the first of two musical offerings: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee.

No. 29 to Dec. 1: Also at Hart House Theatre, the now-classic Canadian musical inspired by the old Astaire-Rogers films, The Drowsy Chaperone, arrives in a production by the Victoria College Musical Society.

Toronto-based “lifelong theatre person” Jennifer (Jenny) Parr works as a director, fight director, stage manager and coach, and is equally crazy about movies and musicals.
What a way to kick off the fall music season. Although I had often heard of Quartetto Gelato since they first hit the Toronto music scene 25 years ago, I had never had the opportunity to hear them in person. Now, here they were almost on my doorstep, at the classic Uxbridge Music Hall, 15 minutes from home. If you have not heard of Quartetto Gelato, you have been missing out on first-rate entertainment provided by a very skilled, classically trained ensemble with the most unusual instrumentation of violin, oboe, accordion and cello. The group has had numerous personnel changes since 1992 with violinist and tenor singer Peter De Sotto being the only original member still in the group. Alexander Sebastien, who joined in 2002, was the winner of the renowned Coupe Mondiale International Accordion Competition in Washington in 2007. In 2009 they were joined by Colin Maier on a wide range of instruments including oboe, clarinet, violin, five-string banjo, electric/acoustic bass, flute, guitar and musical saw. In that year Elizabeth McEllan also joined the group on cello.

With the unique sounds of this instrumentation, and their years of classical training, the ensemble boasts an eclectic repertoire that ranges from Brahms, Bach and Weber to Argentinian tangos, gypsy music and much more. Initially, from my vantage point in the balcony, I assumed that the accordion was the fairly well-known large piano accordion. After watching the dazzling movement of the fingers of Sebastien’s right hand, I realized that this was not the instrument that I had assumed. It is a rare Bayan accordion where the right hand has an amazing array of buttons. (For those who might be curious about the Bayan accordion there is a 30-minute lecture on YouTube detailing its complexities.)

There was not a scrap of music in sight the entire evening. All of the shows musical and choreographic intricacies were performed by memory, with De Sotto switching routinely from violin to his fine tenor voice. Other than the cellist, who remained on her private podium, the others were often in movement. At one point, with De Sotto playing his violin while kneeling on centre stage, Maier put down his oboe, removed his shoes and socks and began a gymnastic routine flip-flopping back and forth over the violinist. It turns out that he is also a dancer and acrobat who spent a time in his career with Cirque du Soleil. He is also a dancer and acrobat who spent a time in his career with Cirque du Soleil. It turns out that the shows musical and choreographic intricacies were performed by memory, with De Sotto switching routinely from violin to his fine tenor voice. Other than the cellist, who remained on her private podium, the others were often in movement. At one point, with De Sotto playing his violin while kneeling on centre stage, Maier put down his oboe, removed his shoes and socks and began a gymnastic routine flip-flopping back and forth over the violinist. It turns out that he is also a dancer and acrobat who spent a time in his career with Cirque du Soleil.

How does this musical group get away with such histrionic showmanship, and what does this all have to do with this column? The answer: first and foremost, is that, for community bands there is a lesson to be learned here. Quartetto Gelato displays outstanding musicianship. With the music under complete control, then a musical group can afford to indulge in showmanship. Unfortunately, in many community bands, either showmanship takes precedence or remains completely hidden. Either way, the end result can be a lacklustre show.

**Musicianship**

What’s the best way for a community band or orchestra to achieve their musicianship goals? I’m sure there are many ways, but we just heard of an interesting procedure used by Ric Giorgi, conductor of the Strings Attached Orchestra. Here’s the kind of email message he sends to members of his group after a rehearsal: “1. Keep working to make a difference in the sound of notes according to the staccatos, tenutos, caps or accents etc they have over or under them. The rhythm was starting to sound pretty classy once you started playing these. Check your accidentals and see how far into the section after letter E you can get. 2. After letter E the arranger throws the melody around in bits to different sections, so write in (in pencil) the beat numbers and sub-beat ‘and’s with vertical lines over them so it’s clear how much you have to rest between notes as well as how you play when you have notes. Remember that an accidental affects every note in a bar after the accidental and any note that’s tied into the next bar.”

This may all sound very elementary, but it certainly doesn’t hurt to honour the basics.

While on the subject of Strings Attached, we just received word of their Young Composers Initiative (YCI). In November they will be performing Cassiopeia with the 2016 YCI winner in Orangeville. Last year’s second-place winner (now 12 years old) has said that he’s determined to outdo his previous effort. More power to him.

**A trip to London**

Next recent musical journey for me was a trip to London, Ontario. The first part of this trip was to sit in as an observer of a class reunion of music graduates from Western University. While I did not attend this university, it was interesting to observe class mates of years gone by. Having not seen each other for years, they soon coalesced into a band and a choir in the morning and performed on stage in the afternoon. Again: musicianship at play.

The other part of my journey took me to the home of Professor Henry Meredith, also known as Dr. Hank, the conductor of the noted Plumbing Factory Brass Band. Having donated some of my older instruments to his collection of old brass instruments, I was expecting to see a large array of instruments including some obscure vintage items rarely seen in public these days. Astounding would be a better to describe what I saw. On the ground floor of his house there were a few instruments. Then, in the basement I saw rows of trumpets, cornets and bugles hanging six deep on pegs in one section, with larger instruments in nearby nooks. Then it was off to the two-car garage. There were two cars in the driveway, but no room for them in the garage. Hanging all over were framed pictures of town and military bands from years gone by. How many forms of tubas, sousaphones, ophicleides and other brass instruments could there be? Then we went up to the loft over the garage. More varieties of instruments, row on row, greeted us.

More about all this later, but, in short: I’d say all that Dr. Hank wants for Christmas is a museum to display his collection of 6,000-plus musical instruments.
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Eddie Graf

It is with great sorrow that I report on the passing of Eddie Graf. Edwin John Graf was a composer, arranger, musician and band-leader. During WWII Eddie was a band leader in an army entertain-ment troop in Europe. It was there that he met his wife-to-be Bernice (Bunny), who was at his bedside when he passed away 73 years later. I first met Eddie in the late 1960s when I was acting as MC for many concerts in Toronto parks. Over the past few years Eddie had been gradually declining, but continued playing and writing music. He played in and wrote music for the Encore Band and his son Lenny’s band. He last played his clarinet at a band concert just a few days before his passing.

On my return from London I headed straight to a service to cele-brate Eddie’s life. Such services are frequently very sombre memories of a person’s life, but not this time. This was truly a celebration of Eddie by hundreds of fellow musicians and family members. Son Lenny spoke and showed a video which he had compiled about his father. This was followed by music from a small band of friends. I personally met up with many people with whom I had played as long as 50 years ago. Before we knew it, people were dancing to the band’s music. Why, I even had a dance with Resa Kochberg the founder and director of Resa’s Pieces Band. (By the way, Monday, December 4 at 7:30, Resa’s Pieces, which over the years has grown to four distinct ensembles, presents “Music from your Favourite Films” at York Mills Collegiate, 490 York Mills Rd.)

Missed

Too late to attend, we learned of an interesting evening in Richmond Hill called “Notes and Quotes” on October 22. There was a lecture and concert on the music history of York Region by professor Robin Elliott, Chalmers Chair, University of Toronto. This was a partnership with the Richmond Hill Historical Society and Richmond Hill Heritage. The Richmond Hill Concert Band performed a newly commissioned piece by Bobby Herriot.

A different kind of missed concert for me, will be the Northdale Concert band’s 50th anniversary concert which will take place on Saturday, November 4, 3pm, at the Salvation Army Citadel on Lawrence Ave. E., at Warden. Having been a member of the band for several years, I had hoped to be able to attend their special concert but a long-term prior commitment has to be given precedence. On a visit to one of their recent rehearsals, however, I did manage to hear Gary Kulesha’s new Dance Suite for Concert Band and guest trom-bone soloist Vanessa Fralick’s stunning performance of Arthur Pryor’s Thoughts of Love.

Upcoming

Nov 2 and Dec 7 at 12pm: The Encore Symphonic Concert Band presents their “Monthly Concert” of big band, swing, jazz and film scores. John Liddle, conductor. Wilmar Heights Centre, 963 Pharmacy Ave., Scarborough.

Nov 3 at 8pm: Etobicoke Community Concert Band presents “Movie Magic” featuring current and past motion picture box office hits; Hollywood blockbusters, Disney at the movies, Queen’s Bohemian Rhapsody and more. Etobicoke Collegiate Auditorium, 86 Montgomery Rd., Etobicoke.

Nov 10 at 3:30pm: The Wychwood Clarinet Choir presents “Harvest Song” featuring Claribel by Roland Cardon, The Lark in the Clear Air (arr. Roy Greaves), and many others too numerous to mention; conductor and clarinet soloist, Michele Jacot. Church of St. Michael and All Angels, 611 St. Clair Ave, W.

Nov 25 at 7:30pm: Silverthorn Symphonic Winds open their 2017/2018 season with “Fall Festival” at the Wilmar Heights Event Centre Concert Hall, 963 Pharmacy Ave, Toronto (just north of Eglinton).

Jack MacQuarrie plays several brass instruments and has performed in many community ensembles. He can be contacted at bandstand@thewholenote.com.
The WholeNote listings are arranged in five sections:

**A.** **GTA (GREAT TORONTO AREA)** covers all of Toronto plus Halton, Peel, York and Durham regions.

**B.** **BEYOND THE GTA** covers many areas of Southern Ontario outside Toronto and the GTA. Starts on page 54.

**C.** **MUSIC THEATRE** covers a wide range of music types: from opera, operetta and musicals, to non-traditional performance types where words and music are in some fashion equal partners in the drama. Starts on page 57.

**D.** **IN THE CLUBS (MOSTLY JAZZ)** is organized alphabetically by club. Starts on page 59.

**E.** **THE ETCETERAS** is for galas, fundraisers, competitions, screenings, lectures, symposia, masterclasses, workshops, singalongs and other music-related events (except performances) which may be of interest to our readers. Starts on page 60.

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

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

**LISTINGS DEADLINE.** The next issue covers the period from December 1 to February 7, 2017. All listings must be received by Midnight Wednesday November 8.

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

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

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**WholeNote LISTINGS**

**Wednesday November 1**

- **7:30:** Living Arts Centre. Patricia O’Callaghan Sings Leonard Cohen and More. RBC Theatre, Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $30-$50.
- **8:00:** Gallery 345. The Art of the Piano: Jenny Lin. Celebrating Valentín Silvestrov’s 80th birthday. Silvestrov: Benedictus; Mompou: Angelico (from Musica calida); Silvestrov: Der Bote (The Messenger); Mozart: Allegro from Piano Sonata No. 16 in C; Silvestrov: Wedding Waltz; and other works. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $25; $10(ot).
- **8:00:** Royal Conservatory. Yosim Levy and The Klezmatics. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 278 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $45-$80.

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**Thursday November 2**

- **12:00 noon:** Canadian Opera Company. Chamber Music Series: Musica Universalis. Works by Haydn, Lau, Ho and Connesson. N. d’Argento (Sibylle Marquardt, flute; Peter Stoll, clarinet; Todd Yariv, piano). Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-383-8231. Free. First-come, first-served. Late seating not available.
- **12:10:** University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: Opera Spotlights. A preview of U of T Opera’s production of *Don Giovanni*. 5390. $10. First Thursday of each month. 416-346-3910 or 647-287-5383.
- **8:10:** St. Thomas’ Anglican Church. All Souls’ Day Solemn Requiem. Faure: Requiem Op 48. Choir of St. Thomas’ Church; instrumental ensemble in the manner of the work’s first performance in the Church of the Madeleine, Paris; Matthew Larkin, organ and conductor. St. Thomas’ Anglican Church (Toronto). 383 Huron St. 416-978-2323. Free.
- **7:30:** Canadian Opera Company. The Elixir of Love. Music by Gaetano Donizetti. Andrew Haji, tenor (Nemorino); Simone Osborne, soprano (Adina); Gordon Birdner, baritone (Belcore); James Robinson, director; Yves Abel, conductor. Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-383-8231. $35-$235. Also Oct 11, 15(2pm), 21, 27, 29, Nov 4(4:30pm).

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**Friday November 3**

- **12:10:** Music at St. Andrew’s. Noontime Recital. Jordan Klappan, jazz piano; John MacMurchy, reeds; St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. 416-550-5600 x231. Free.
- **5:30:** Dinner and a Song. David Bradstreet, Guitar. Olde Stone Cottage Pub.

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**THE Elixir of love**

**DONIZETTI OCT 11 – NOV 4**

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Saturday November 4

1:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Wall-to-Wall Percussion. Soloist *Jam*: Sousa: The Washington Post; Milhaud: Excerpt from Per- cussion Concerto; Joseph Green: Xylophonia; Mussorgsky (orch. Ravel): Tielieries from Pic- tures at an Exhibition; and other works. Vern Griffiths, percussion; Earl Lee, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-595-1285, $20-$33.75. Also 2pm.

2:00: Canadian Opera Company. The Elviar of Love. See Nov 2.

4:00: Toronto Opera Atelier. The Marriage of Figaro. See Nov 3.

5:00: Maestro Music Entertainment. Four Seasons: Fall. Works by Vivaldi, Tchaikovsky, Glazunov and Piazzolla; Elvira Sivitsky: video montage. Karine Vasserman, piano; Janusz Borowic, violin; Cathrine Sulem, cello; Diana Romanova and Anita Vasserman, hostesses. Video Shoot Studio, 199-4544 Dufferin St., North York. 416-357-8345. $15. Interactive introduction to classical music for ages 3 and up. In English and Russian. Also 5pm.


10:00: Opera Atelier. The Marriage of Figaro. See Nov 3.

11:00: Academy Concert Series. Sweet For Bach. Bach: Cello Suites Nos. 2, 4, 5 BWV1008, 1010, 1011, 1012; Morris Surdin: Ari- oso for 4 cellos; Bach: Sinfonia from Ich steh mit einem Fuß im Grabe BWV156 (Aririio) arr. for 4 cellos; Bach: Lass mein Herz die Münze sein, from Cantata Nur jedem das Seine BWV163 arr. for 4 cellos. Christina Mahler, cello; Mme Brinkman, cello; Felix Deak, cello; Kerri McEcongile, piccolo cello; Ljanti Rand- segg, dancer. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. 416-629-3716. $20, $14(sen/ st); $5(under 18).

8:00: Flato Markham Theatre. A Night of Synergy: Dave Koz and Rob Tardik. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $15-$75.

8:00: Soundstruts. Musik für das Ende. See Nov 1. Also Nov 4.

11:00: Etobicoke Community Concert. Season: November. Pieces based on Kurdish tradition spanning 500 years Arranged and performed by 16th-century Italy, complemented by diverse voices. College Street United Church, 9220. PWYC.

12:00: Opera Atelier. The Marriage of Figaro. See Nov 3.

Music at St. Thomas’s Church, 383 Huron Street, Toronto

November 1 at 6.15 p.m.

All Saints’ Day Eucharist Music: Howells, Bainton, Healey Willan’s recently reconstructed anthem “In the heavenly kingdom”

November 2 at 6.15 p.m. Requiem for All Souls

Music for the liturgy: Requiem

Gabriel Fauré

With instrumental ensemble

www.stthomason.ca

November 2017 | 39
A. Concerts in the GTA

Performing Arts, 130 Navy St., Oakville. 905-815-2021. $27-$56. Also Nov 4(8pm).


* 7:00: St. Anne's Choir. The Consecration of St. Anne. Toronto. 373 Beverley St. 416-366-7724. $20. Refreshments following.

* 7:00: Toronto Operaetra Theatre. The Widow by Calixa Lavallée. Viennese Operetta and other works. Julia Nesrallah, mezzo; Diego Catala, baritone; Julie Overmeyer; Michael McLean, Rosalie Schurrer, mezzo; Gregory Finney, baritone; Guillermo Silva- Marin, stage director; Michael Rose, piano and music director; and other. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-368-7724. $18; $9. Also Nov 4.


** Monday November 6 **

* 7:00: Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. An Evening with John McDermott in Song and Verse. John McDermott, tenor; Toronto Artillery Foundation. 1565 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. $30. Fundraiser in support of the Toronto Artillery Foundation.


* 7:30: Happenstance. Réverie. Debussy. Premier rhapsodie; L’île joyeuse; Françöis: Tema con variazioni; Neuf Histoireetes; Messiaen: Regard de l’esprit de joie from Vingt Regards sur l’Enfant-Jésus; Dusapin: To Bed; and other works. Brad Cherwin, clarinet; Alice Hwong, pianist; Samuel Harris, baritone; Whitney Mather; vocalist. Temerty Theatre, 237 Bloor St. W. 416-767-8877. Free. RSVP encouraged.


** Tuesday November 7 **


* 1:00: Miles Nadal JCC/Alliance Française/ Holocaust Education Week. Music, Cinema and Memory. Theme songs featured in such films as Defiance, Exodus, Schindler’s List, Yentl, Diary of Anne Frank and Life is Beautiful. Isabelle Durin, violin; Michaela Ertzschied, pianist. Spaadia Theatre, 24 Spadina Rd. 416-924-6211 x155. PWYC, $10 suggested. Also Nov 3.

** Wednesday November 8 **


* 1:00: Miles Nadal JCC/Alliance Française/ Holocaust Education Week. Music, Cinema and Memory. Theme songs featured in such films as Defiance, Exodus, Schindler’s List, Yentl, Diary of Anne Frank and Life is Beautiful. Isabelle Durin, violin; Michaela Ertzschied, pianist. Spaadia Theatre, 24 Spadina Rd. 416-924-6211 x155. PWYC, $10 suggested. Also Nov 3.

* 5:00: Canadian Opera Company. Jazz Series: You’ll Never Know. Heather Bambrick, vocalist; Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-363-8231. Free. First-come, first-served. Late seating not available.

** Thursday November 9 **


At the Heart of Bach

Prize-winning organist Christian Lane plays masterpieces central to the genius of J.S. Bach on the famed organ of Christ Church Deer Park.

Friday November 10 • 7:30pm
Christ Church Deer Park
1570 Yonge Street

$25, $20 RCCO members, students and seniors
416-598-4521
rcco.ca/toronto-on

**Concerts in the GTA**

- **8:00: Aurora Cultural Centre. Rémi Bolduc. Jazz Ensemble: Swinging’ with Oscar. 22 Church St., Aurora. 905-733-1818. $35/$30(adv).**
- **8:00: Gallery 345. Jazz at The Gallery: Noah Franche-Nolan; Solo Piano and Saxet. Weaving elements of traditional jazz, contemporary classical music, and Christian hymns. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $20; $10(st). Cash only.**
- **8:00: Kingston Road Village Concert Series. Remembrance Day Concert with Scott Good and Friends. Full orchestra, singers, and readers. Kingston Road United Church, 975 Kingston Rd. 416-699-6091. $25; free(under 13).**
- **8:00: Royal Conservatory. Vocal Concerts: Barbara Hannigan with Reinbert de Leeuw. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $40-$95.**
- **8:00: Tafelmusik. Mozart’s Piano. See Nov 9. Also Nov 11, 12(3:30).**

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**An Evening of Edith Piaf CHANTE PIAF!**

**3rd Juno Winner**

**Patsy Gallant sings Edith Piaf**

**Fri November 10 Sat November 11**

**Jazz Bistro**

251 Victoria St.

Tickets www.ticketweb.ca

call 1-888-222-6608

- **9:00: Jazz Bistro. An Evening of Edith Piaf: Patsy Gallant Sings Piaf. 251 Victoria St. 1-888-222-6608. $35. 6pm: doors open. Dinner reservations: 416-363-5299. Also Nov 11.**
- **9:00: Snaggle. Snarky Puppy Tribute Show. Nick Maclean, keyboards; Brownman Ali, trumpet; Graeme Wallace, tenor sax; Anoop Isaac, guitar; and others. Junction City Music Hall, 290 Dundas St W. 416-389-2643. $15/$10(adv).**

**Saturday November 11**

- **2:00: National Ballet of Canada. The Winter’s Tale. See Nov 10. Runs to Nov 19.**

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**9:00: Jazz Bistro. An Evening of Edith Piaf: Patsy Gallant Sings Piaf. 251 Victoria St. 1-888-222-6608. $35. 6pm: doors open. Dinner reservations: 416-363-5299. Also Nov 11.**

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**A CONCERT OF REMEMBRANCE NOVEMBER 11TH 7:30 PM**

**SPECIAL GUEST**

David Hetherington cello

**ADMISSION FREE**

**DONATIONS WELCOME**

WWW.9SPARRAWORS.ORG

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**THAT CHOIR REMEMBERS**

**conducted by Craig Pike**

**November 11 & 12, 2017 / 7PM**

**Trinity College Chapel**

6 Roskin Avenue, Toronto ON

**VISIT US**

www.thatchoir.com

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**Orchestra. Subscription Concert #1. Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No.1 in f-sharp; Symphony No.2 in e. Robert Horvath, piano. 7:30p.m. Koerner Hall, Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, 5183 Sheppard Ave. E., Scarborough. 416-879-5566. $35 and up; $30(st/rt); free(under 12). 7:15p.m. Pre-concert talk.**

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**Jana Skarecky presents. Time Tributaries: Music and Art by Jana Skarecky. Skarecky: The Lightning Flash Endures (premiere); Uluru; What Draws Us Together; Planet Earth; Emily (excerpts); The Way You Are; and other works. Brandon Leis, tenor; Ben Bolt-Martin, cello; Ramona Carner- melly, mezzo; Joseph Ferretti, piano; Encore String Quartet; and others. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 416-922-3618. $25. Proceeds to benefit First Nations Children and Family Care Society of Canada; also in celebration of Skarecky’s 60th birthday.**

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**Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts. Dirty Dishes. Country, bluegrass, and gospel. 130 Navy St., Oakville. 905-815-2021 or 1-888-489-7784. $33-$44.**

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Monday November 13


Tuesday November 14


- 12:10: Nine Sparrows Arts Foundation/Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Lunchtime Chamber Music: David Pinzio, piano. Toronto Piano Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-241-1298. Free; donations welcomed.


- 7:30: Canzona Chamber Players. St. Michael’s Hospital Benefit Concert. Jean Couthoud: A Prayer for Elizabeth; Mahler: Rückert Lieder; Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.6 “Pathétique”; Rachel Krehm, soprano; Canzona Chamber Players Orchestra; Yusuke Kawasaki, concertmaster; Evan Mitchell, conductor. Christ Church Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St. 647-248-4048. PWYC (suggested donation $25). All proceeds benefit the Medical Surgical Intensive Care Unit of St. Michael’s Hospital.


Wednesday November 15


- 1:00pm: Noonday Organ Recital: Matthew Hora. 1586 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free.

- 2:00pm: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Overture to “The Wasps,” Louis Lor tie; piano; Sarah Jeffrey, oboe; Teng Li, viola; Carla Huthanen, soprano; Emily D’Angelo, mezzo; Lawrence Williford, tenor; Tyler Duncan, baritone; Elmer Esler Singers; Peter Dunjajan, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$148. Also Nov 15 (8pm).


November 16 at 8pm

CARDUCCI QUARTET

November 17, 2011 7 pm

RACHMANNINOFF

Piano Concerto no. 1 in F sharp minor

with pianist ROBERT HORVATH

Symphony no. 2 in E minor

SUBSCRIPTION CONCERT | TICKETS: from $33 adult, $30 senior/student | ORDER ONLINE THROUGH YOUR PHONE PAC
cathedralbluffs.com | 416.879.5566

Saturday November 12, 2011 7 pm

Carducci Quartet

Beethoven: Quartet No. 11 in F sharp minor “Serioso”; Shostakovich: Quartet No.4 in D minor.

TOO
A. Concerts in the GTA


Saturday, November 18

● 2:00: Circle of Harmony Chorus. Canadian, Eh? 4-part a cappella harmony women’s barbershop chorus. Canadian pop, traditional barbershop, gospel, Broadway and jazz. Clearview Christian Reformed Church, 2300 Sheridan Garden Dr., Oakville. 416-471-5244. $25. Also 7:30pm.


● 8:00: Acoustic Harvest. Boreale, St. Nicho-las Birch Cliff Anglican Church, 1512 Kingston Rd. 416-250-1708. $25/$21(adv).

● 8:00: Apa Khan Museum. Haram with Gordon Grdina. Indie-rock/jazz/electronic. 77 Wynford Dr. 416-646-4671. $40. Ticket incl same day museum admission.

● 8:00: Gallery 345. Look Ahead: Paul Novotny, bass and Robi Botos, piano. New jazz with an old soul and passionate melodic improvisations. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $25; $15(st), Cash only.

● 8:00: Gateway Schools of Oakville Chorus and Orchestra. Mozart’s Mass in c and Beethoven’s Choral Fantasy. Charlene Pauls, soprano; Ariel Harwood-Jones, soprano; Bud Roach, tenor; Bradley Christenson, bass; Ronald Greidanus, piano. St. Matthew’s Catholic Church, 1510 Monks Passage, Oakville. 905-399-9372. $30; $25(sr); $10(st); free(under 11). Also Nov 15.

● 8:00: Mississauga Symphony Orchestra. Shostakovich, Shostakovich. Piano Concerto No.2; Waltz from Suite for Variety Orchestra; Symphony No.10. Denis Mastromonaco, conductor; Sae Yoon Chon, piano. Hammerson Hall, Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-506-6000. $40-$65; $36-$58(sr); $30(youth); $25(under 11); $100(family).

Thornhill United Church. 25 Eglinton St., Thornhill. 905-889-2311. Freeview offering. Refreshments following.

● 8:00: Acoustic Harvest. Boreale, St. Nicho-las Birch Cliff Anglican Church, 1512 Kingston Rd. 416-250-1708. $25/$21(adv).

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10/29/2017   8:51:25 PM

10:30: Music at Metropolitan. Jazz Standards of the Seventeenth Century. Ground basses, lute songs and madrigals. Musicians on the Edge; Rezonance Baroque Ensemble: Emily Klassen, soprano; Charles Davidson, tenor; Rezan Onen-Lapointe, violin; Erika Nielsen, cello; Dave Podgorski, harpsichord; Benjamin Stein, lutes. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-363-0331 x26. $20; $10(18 and under).

1:00: National Ballet of Canada. The Winter's Tale. See Nov 10.

1:00: The Sound Post. Fall Salon Concert. Bach: Cello Suite No.8; Bottesini: Elegy; Schubert: Arpeggione Sonata. Joel Quarrington, bass; Peter Longworth, piano. 93 Grenville St. 416-971-6990. $20(incl CD); free(under 16). Limited seating; reserve at events@thesoundpost.com. Reception to follow.

5:00: Chorus York. Top Hats and Tunes: A Program of Broadway Hits. Stéphane Potvin, conductor; Christina Faye, piano. Thornhill Presbyterian Church, 271 Centre St., Thornhill. 905-884-7922. $25; $20(sr/st). Also Nov 26 (7pm, Richmond Hill).

5:00: Masterworks of Oakville Chorus and Orchestra. Mozart’s Mass in c and Beethoven’s Choral Fantasy. Charlene Pauls, soprano; Ariel Harwood-Jones, sopranos; Bud Roach, tenor; Bradley Christenson, bass; Ronald Greidanus, piano. St. Matthew’s Catholic Church, 5105 Monks Passage, Oakville. 905-359-9732. $30; $25(sr); $10(under 16). Also Nov 18 (7pm).

3:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Sunday November 19

2:00: Music at Metropolitan. Jazz Standards of the Seventeenth Century. Ground basses, lute songs and madrigals. Musicians on the Edge; Rezonance Baroque Ensemble: Emily Klassen, soprano; Charles Davidson, tenor; Rezan Onen-Lapointe, violin; Erika Nielsen, cello; Dave Podgorski, harpsichord; Benjamin Stein, lutes. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-363-0331 x26. $20; $10(18 and under).

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3:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.
**A. Concerts in the GTA**

Angela Hewitt. Bach: Keyboard Concerto No.3 in D BWV1054; Mozart: Piano Concerto No.9 in E-flat K271 “Jeunehomme”; Bach: Keyboard Concerto No.7 in g BWV1080; Mozart: Piano Concerto No.20 in d K466. Angela Hewitt, leader and piano. Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St., **North York** 416-593-1285. $33.75-$148. Also Nov 18 (8pm at Roy Thomson Hall).

- **7:00**. Victoria College Choir. Fall Concert. Works by Chatman, Patrignoli and Sled, Michael Bridge, accordion; Taylor Sullivan, conductor. Victoria College Chapel, 91 Charles St. W. 416-585-4521. Free.

**Tuesday November 21**

- **12:10**. Nine Sparrows Arts Foundation/ Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Lunchtime Chamber Music: Rising Stars Recital. Performance students from the U of T Faculty of Music. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-241-1296. Free; donations welcome.

**Wednesday November 22**


**Flute Street**

Toronto’s Professional Flute Choir

**Sunday November 19 2017**

8 pm Concert Koerner Hall

**ESPRIT ORCHESTRA**

espiritorchestra.com

- **8:00**. Esprit Orchestra. Emergence. Bjørnason: Emergence; Dalbavie: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra; D. Schmidt: Just a Stranger here myself...; Sokolović: Ringelspiel. Véronique Mathieu, violin; Alex Pauk, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $40-$60; $40-$55(sr); $22-$32(under 30); $20-$25(st). 7:15pm Pre-concert chat.

**Monday November 20**

- **12:30**. York University Department of Music. Music @ Midday: Classical Instrumental Concert. Tribute Communities Recital Hall, Accolade East Building, YU, 4700 Keele St. 647-459-0701. Free.

**GUSTAVMAHLER**

Des Knaben Wunderhorn

**November 22 @ 7:30pm**

Jeanne Lamon Hall

Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre

www.stuartgraham.ca

- **7:30**. University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Woodwind Chamber Ensembles. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.


Thursday November 23

• 12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: Instrumentals - Aces and Deuces. Graduate student instrumentalists perform solo and duo repertoire. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208.


• 5:30: York University Department of Music. York University Department of Music Jazz Festival: Jazz Choirs. Min Adams, conductor. Tribute Communities Recital Hall, Accolade East Building, YU, 4700 Keele St. 647-459-0701. Free.


• 7:00: Music at St. Andrew’s. Noontime Recital. Sonatas by Mozart and Poulenc. Jean-Luc Therrien, piano; Mai Tategami, violin. St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. 416-593-5600 x231. Free.

Friday November 24


• 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mahler Symphony 6. Stokes: Just Keep Paddling (Sesquicentennial of Canada’s 150th); Mahler: Symphony No. 6 in a. Donald Runnicles, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 80 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$148. Also Nov 25(7:30pm).

Saturday November 25

• 2:00: National Ballet of Canada. Nijn-sky. See Nov 22. Runs to Nov 26. Wed-Sat(7:30pm), Thurs/Sat/Sun(2pm).


• 8:00: Oakville Children’s Choir. Raise Your Voice and Sing! Seasonal music. Oakville Choir: Raise Her Voice, Chamber, Junior, and A Few Good Men. Clearview Church, 2300 Sheridan Garden Dr. Oakville. 905-337-7104. $25, $20(s), $15(under 13).

• 7:00: Ritesh Das/Toronto Tabla Ensemble. Parampara: Tradition and Legacy. An evening of innovative rhythm and dance of India. Chitresh Das Youth Company; Toronto Tabla Youth Ensemble. Guest: Nilan Chaudhuri. Harbourfront Centre Theatre, 239 Queens Quay W. 416-873-4000, $35.


• 7:30: National Ballet of Canada. Nijn-sky. See Nov 22. Runs to Nov 26. Wed-Sat(7:30pm), Thurs/Sat/Sun(2pm).

• 7:30: Opera by Request. Le Nozze di Figaro. Mozart. Jan Vaculik, baritone (Figaro); Gene Wu, baritone (Count Almaviva); Chelsea van Pelt, soprano (Susanna); Christina Bell, soprano (Countess Almaviva); and others; William Shookhoff, piano and conductor. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20.


• 8:00: Royal Conservatory. Tania Miller Conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0028. $25-$55.


• 8:00: Corktown Chamber Orchestra. In Concert. Beethoven: Symphony No.7; Schu- bert: Symphony No.8; Bach: Keyboard Concerto No.4. Will Callaghan, guest conductor; Paul McCallum, conductor. Little Trinity Anglican Church, 425 King St. E. 647-528-7155. PWYC, $20 suggested.

For your information:

Taliah Miller conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra

Friday, November 24, 8PM PRELUDE RECITAL 6:45PM PRE-CONCERT TALK 7:15PM KOERNER HALL

TICKETS ON SALE NOW 416.408.0208 www.PERFORMANCE.RCMUSIC.CA
A. Concerts in the GTA

Christmas food drive. Also Nov 26 (3pm, St. Aidan’s Catholic Church).

7:30: Castle Frank House of Melody. Teeming with Song: Vocal Selections from Bach to Bernstein. Lorna Young, Patricia Haldane, Cara Adams, sopranos; Martha Spence, mezzo; Michael Fitzgerald, baritone; Steven Kettlewell, piano. St. Andrew’s United Church (Bloor St.), 117 Bloor St E. 416-966-2685. By donation.


7:30: Koichi Inoue. Brampton Chamber Music Concert Series. Penny Johnson, Eileen Keown and Isabel Misquitta-Yip, pianos; Corey Gemmell, violin. St. Paul’s United Church (Brampton), 30 Main St. S., Brampton. 905-450-9220. PWYC.


7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mahler Symphony 6. Abigail Richardson-Schulte: Step Up (Sesquie for Canada’s 150th); Mahler: Symphony No.6 in e. Donald Runnicles, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$148. Also Nov 23(8pm).

7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Fall Major Opera Production: Don Orione Women’s Choir gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance ofwww.orianachoir.com info@orianachoir.com

NO REMEDY FOR LOVE - LIONA’S NEW AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND NEW ALBUM OUT NOW FROM UNIVERSAL MUSIC AND DUNDURN PRESS!
Giovanni. See Nov 23. Also Nov 28 (2:30 pm).


● 8:00: Agha Khan Museum. All Rivers at Once: The Indian-Israelti Musical Initiative. Jazz-like arrangements of traditional Indian and Israeli folk songs. Saeed Kamijo, kam-ancheh; Pedram Kharvarzamini, tombak; Amos Hoffman, oud; Neam Lamish, piano, artistic director. 77 Wynford Dr. 416-646-4617. $40. Ticket tied same day museum admission.

● 8:00: Chorus York. Top Hats and Tunes: A Program of Broadway Hits. Stéphane Potvin, conductor; Christina Faye, piano; Bells of Bonnechere Ensemble. 24 Spadina Rd. 416-922-2014.


● 8:00: York Symphony Orchestra. A Scottish Voyage. Mendelssohn: Hebrides Overture; Symphony No. 3 “Scottish” Bruch: Scottish Fantasy; Alejandro Junco, violin. Trinity St. Paul’s United Church (Oakville), 70 Silver Birch Ave. 416-827-0561. $15; $10 (sr/st); free (under 10).


Sunday November 26


● 2:00: Georgetown Bach Chorale. Music to Embrace Advent. Bach: Cantata 131; Purcell: Birthday Ode for Queen Mary II; Charpentier: Missa “Assumpta est Maria”; Vivaldi: Recorder Concerto in G. Tatsuki Shimoda, recorder; Georgetown Bach Chorale and Chamber Orchestra. St. Elias the Prophet Ukrainian Church, 10193 Heritage Rd., Brampton. 905-973-9939. $15; $10 (st).

● 2:00: National Ballet of Canada. Nijinsky. See Nov 22.

● 2:00: St. Barnabas Anglican Church. Cello Recital. Prokofiev: Sonata for Violin and Piano; Falla: Suite populaire espagnole; Haydn: Piano Trio in C. Julia Kim, cello; Konrad Harloom, host; Virginia Hatfield, soprano; Inna Perkis, piano; and others. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-466-6323. $50; $40 (sr/st); $10 (young adult); $5 (child).

● 2:00: Off Centre Music Salon. Voices & Medicine: A Cardiac Affair. Ben Carlson, actor; Steven Dann, viola; Dr. David Goldboorn, host; Virginia Hatfield, soprano; Inna Perkis, piano; and others. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-466-6323. $50; $40 (sr/st); $10 (young adult); $5 (child).


Tickets on sale now! 416.408.0208 www.PERFORMANCEROMUSIC.ca
Concerts in the GTA

A. Concerts in the GTA

**Monday November 27**


**Tuesday November 28**


**Wednesday November 29**


**November 28 at 8pm PHILIP CHIU**


**Friday November 30**


- 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. UofT Concert Orchestra—Paul Widner, conductor. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

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**Windermere String Quartet supported by A WINDSOR ARTS CHAMPIONSHIP FUND**

**Viola Mania Sunday November 26, 3:00 pm mooredaleconcerts.com**

- 7:30: York Symphony Orchestra. A Scottish Voyage. Mendelssohn: Hebrides Overture; Symphony No.3 “Scottish.” Bruch: Scottish Fantasy; Alejandro Junco, violin. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 905-787-8811. $30; $25(st); $15(st). Also Nov 25(Aurora, 8pm).
- 8:00: somewhere there/Studio Dan Vienna. New Vienna in New York. Works by George Lewis, Osawa Omelchuk, Caitlin Smith, and others. Ensemble Studio Dan Vienna. Arran Space, 155 Walnut Ave. 416-532-3019. $10 or PWYC.

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**Erika Raum, Scott St John, Sharon Wei, Tom Wiebe**

**REBELHEART Collective 3:15pm Nov 26**


- 4:00: Cathedral Church of St. James. Organ Recital. Ian Sadler, organ. 65 Church St. 416-364-7865 x234. Donations welcome.
- 4:00: Oakville Chamber Orchestra. Youth Concerto Competition Prizewinners in Concert. St. Simon’s Anglican Church (Oakville), 1460 Litchfield Rd., Oakville. 905-485-6767. $30; $25(sr); $20(st); free(12 and under).

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**50 | November 2017**

thewholenote.com
Saturday, December 2

Pax Christi Chorale presents
The Children’s Messiah
Church of the Redeemer
Pay what you can
PAXCHRISTICORALE.org

BACH CHILDREN’S CHORUS and the BACH CHAMBER YOUTH CHOIR
Charissa Bagan, Artistic Director
James Pinhorn, BCYC Conductor
Eleanor Daley, Pianist

GOOD CHEER!
SUN DaY, DECEMBER 2, 2017 AT 7:30PM
$40 and $35 at the Toronto Centre box office or TicketMaster at 1-855-985-2787 (ARTS)
Toronto Centre for the Arts 5040 Yonge Street

BACHCHILDRENSEXHURUS
facebook.com/BCCandBCYC  bachchildrenschorus.ca
A. Concerts in the GTA

Eleanor Daley, piano. Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St., North York. 1-855-685-2787. $35-$40.

Tuesday, December 5


7:30: Cantores Celestes Women’s Choir. Mystery and Wonder: Arnelsen: Magnificat; other works by Class, Halley, Gjelos and Valiak; Adanya Dunn, soprano; Stephen Tam, flute; Kate Carver, piano; Matthew Coons, organ; Emperor String Quartet; Kelly Galbraith, conductor. Runnymede United Church, 432 Runnymede Rd. 416-655-7335. $25. A $1,000 donation will be made to Stella’s Place. See Nov 30.


7:30: Oakham House Choir. The Star of Bethlehem. Rheinberger: The Star of Bethlehem; Christmas carol sing-along; orchestral and vocal seasonal favourites. Oakham House Choir; Toronto Sininfet. Allison Cecilia Arends, soprano; Jeremy Ludwig, baritone; Matthew Jaskiewicz, conductor. Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle Ave. 416-960-5551. $30; $25(stud); $15(st); free(2 and under).


7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Wind Ensemble: Music Responding to Crisis. Balmages: Fanfare Canzonique; Benson: The Leaves Are Falling; Meehan: Korn Symphony; Gillingham: Waking Angels; Sweeney: Mein junges Leben hat ein End; and other works. Gillian Mackay, conductor. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. $30; $20(st); $10(18 and under).

7:30: A Gala Khan Museum. Nazar by Turkwaz. Melodies inspired by Arabic, Balkan, and Turkish folk songs. Maryem Toller, vocals; and others. 7 Wyndrf Dr. 416-646-4877. $40. Ticket incl same day museum admission. See Dec 2. Also 1:30pm.


8:00: Royal Conservatory. Music Mix: SongBird North. Temerty Theatre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $35.

8:00: Telfed Ensemble. Four Weddings, a Funeral, and a Coronation. See Nov 30. Also Dec 3.

Sunday, December 3

10:30am: Canadian Opera Company. The Magic Violin. See Dec 2. Also 1:30pm.


2:00: Peter Marginson and Friends. Chamber Music Concert. Bridge: Blow thou Wind Winter (Shakespeare) for tenor and piano; Ireland: Sea Fever (Masefled) for tenor and piano; Sonata for violin and piano; Fricker: Serenade for flute, oboe and piano. Ryan Downie, tenor; Peter Marginson, piano; Samantha Chang, flute; Hazel Boyle, oboe; Steve Prime, violin. Canadian Music Centre, 20 St. Joseph St. 647-980-5475 (Information). Free.

2:00: Toronto Mozart Players. Brass by Eric Wilder. Steven Woomert, trumpet; James Gardiner, trumpet; Audrey Good, horn; Vanessa Fralick, trombone; Mark Tetreault, tuba; Rachael Kerr, piano. Church of the Redeemer, 162 Bloor St. W. 416-478-7532. $35; $15(st).

2:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Choirs in Concert: Sing and Rejoice! Jocelyn Hagen: How to Survive Winter for women’s voices and string quartet; and other works. UofT Men’s Chorus; Women’s Chorus; Women’s Chamber Choir; MacMillan Singers; Hilary Apfelstadt; Elaine Choe; Mark Ramsay; Tracy Wong, conductors. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. $30; $20(st); $10(18 and under).


3:00: Harmonymixers. That’s Christmas! Bob Rae: We’re in the Same Boat Now; and seasonal readings and music. Guests: The Hon. Bob Rae, reader; Martina Myshkold, vocalist; Bruce Harvey, accompanist; Harvey Patterson, conductor. Humber Valley United Church, 76 Anglesley Blvd., Etobicoke. 416-239-5821. $20.

3:00: St. Michael’s Choir School. Christmas at Massey Hall. Handel: Messiah (Part I); Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on Christmas Carols; sacred and sacred carols with audience participation. Elementary, Junior, Senior, Massed, and Alumni Choirs; Meredith Hall, soprano; Christina Stelmachovitch, alto;
Sunday Dec 3. at 4 p.m. Choral Evensong for Advent Sunday plus Christmas Tea and at 5:
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS
St. Olave’s Arts Guild presents light music and entertainment: stories, poems, carols, violin solos and some dramatic readings from A Christmas Carol
St. Olave’s Church
Bloor and Windermere
416-769-5686 stolaves.ca

ADVENT VESPERS
Sunday Dec 3, 4pm
J. S. Bach: Cantata #140 “Sleepers, Wake!”
with strings, oboe, organ, and guest solos
Melvin J. Hurst, music director
Rev. Jessica McCrae, presider
Humbercrest United Church
16 Baby Point Rd, Toronto
416-767-6122 Freewill Offering

Monday December 4
• 7:00: Choral Bonanza Team. Messiahs Sing-along. Helmond: Messiah (Christmas Portion). Dr. Richard Heinze, conductor; Sapphire Navaratananah, accompanist. Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church, 10066 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 416-568-8838. $25(participation fee); $10(suggested donation for concert). Rehearsal 2:30–5pm.
• 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Percussion Ensembles. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

Thursday December 7
• 1:00: Miles Nadal JCC. Jump & Live to the J. Classic songs from the 1950s and early 1960s. Rev-Tones rock & roll band. Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211 x0. $18.

www.tmchoir.org

Suits of String presents
A Christmas Caravan
Thursday, Dec 7, 8pm
905-713-1818

Thewholenote.com
A. Concerts in the GTA

December 7 at 8pm

GRYPHON TRIO

named later). St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-386-7723. $50-$55; $10(st, full time).

B. Concerts Beyond the GTA

Wednesday November 1

12:00 noon: Midday Music with Shipers. Cheryl Graham, Piano. Hymns from the Heart. Hi-Way Pentecostal Church, 50 Anne St. N., Barrie. 705-726-1811. $5 free(st).

12:15. St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (Kitchener). Thursday Noon-Hour Concerts. Jason White, piano; members of the Uptown School of Music. S4 Queen St. N., Kitchener. Free. 11:30am: Optional low-cost lunch available in the foyer.


Thursday November 2

12:00 noon: University of Guelph College of Arts. Thursday at Noon: Elinor Frey, cello. Bach: Cello Suite No.2 in d BWV1008; Cello Suite No.4 in E-flat BWV1010; and other works. Goldschmidt Room, 107 MacKinnon Bldg., 50 Stone Rd. E., Guelph. 519-824-4120 x25901. Free.

1:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. Lemon Bucket Orchestra. 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424. $39; $16(st).


Friday November 3


Nov 3 8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Glorious Brahms. Schubert: Song of the Spirits over the Water; Part: Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten; Brahms: Alto Rhapsody for alto, male chorus and orchestra; Symphony No.2 in D. Krisztina Szabó, alto; Estonian National Male Choir; Andrei Feher, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4717 or 1-888-745-4717. 819-$82. Also Nov 4.

Saturday November 4

1:30: Chorus Niagara. Last Light Above The World. A War Litany (premiere). Bevan. Hayley Gillis and Colin Palangio, narrators. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 1-855-515-0722 or 905-688-0722. $43; $41(ear); $28(under 30); $18(st); $15(child); $5(eyeGO).


1:30: Guelph Chamber Choir. Celebration 150. Five choirs perform individually and together as a massed choir: Gordon: new works; other works (classical, folk, spirituals, hymns, oratorio). Guelph Chamber Choir; Gerald Neufeld, conductor; Alison MacNeill, piano; Guests: James Gordon, singer-songwriter; Guelph Community Singers; Guelph Youth Singers; Rainbow Chorus of Waterloo/Wellsington: University of Guelph Symphonic Choir. River Run Centre, 35 Woolwich St., Guelph. 519-763-3000. $20; $15(group of 4 or more); $10(30 and under); $5(under 15/eyeGO). 6:30pm: Pre-concert Podium talk with Dr. Gil Stalter, including images of Guelph in 1867 through slides, history and stories.


7:30: Niagara Symphony Orchestra. Wish List. Vivaldi: The Four Seasons; Beethoven: Symphony No.1 Assilinns Nosky, conductor and violin. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722 or 1-855-515-0722. $67; $62(ear); $32(30 and under); $12(st/arts/child); $5(eyeGO). Also Nov 5(2:30pm).

Sunday November 5

- 2:00: Chamber Music Hamilton. Midr String Quartet. Haydn: String Quartet Op.71 No.3; Puts: Credo; Mozart: Viola Quartet in g, K516. Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. W., Hamilton. 905-525-7429. $35; $30(sr); $15(st). 10:15

Saturday November 11

- 7:30: Barrie Concerts. We Will Remember: Songs From the Great World Wars. U of T Choir (Scarborough Campus); Laura Loo, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-756-4711 or 1-888-745-4711. 8:30; 11:05. Also Nov 11.

Sunday November 12

- 2:00: The Gallery Players of Niagara. Going Solo... but not alone! Bach: Concerto for oboe and violin BWV1060; Giuliani: Concerto in A Op.30 for guitar and strings; Quantz: Concerto in G VQ517 No.161; Rolfe: Six Songs for voice and string quartet. Timothy Abeyta, conductor; DaCapo Chamber Choir; DaCapo String Ensemble. Tanglewood; Don Wright Faculty of Music. Teachers College, 50 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-372-2210 x02991. Free.

Monday November 13

- 7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.9; Symphony No.29.
- 7:30: Barrie Concerts. Performers From the Performing Arts of the Holocaust. Schoenberg: Five pieces for String Quartet; Korgnold: Quartet No.3; Ullmann: Quartet No.3; KWCMS Music Room, 57 Young St. W., Waterloo. 519-886-1673. $15; $20(st). 8:00
- 7:30: Viva! Chamber Music Hamilton. An Evening with Mozart: overture to Die Zauberflöte; Requiem; and other choral and orchestral works. Kingston Choral Society. Sydenham Street United Church, 82 Sydenham St., Kingston. 613-766-4345. $25; $20(sr/st);

Tuesday November 14

- 11:30am: Optional low-cost lunch available in the foyer.

Wednesday November 15

- 12:00 noon: RBC Foundation Music@Noon. Celia Linde, guitar. Great Hall, Conrad Grebel University College, 140 Westmount Rd. N., Waterloo. 519-885-8220 x24226. Free.
- 8:00 Don Wright Faculty of Music. Canadian Brass. Featuring their signature mix of entertainment, spontaneity, virtuosity and fun. Stuie Poulton, trumpet; Graeme Page, horn; Gene Watts, trombone; Charles Daellenbach, tuba; Stuart Laughton and Bill Phillips, trumpet. Caernarfon Church (Belleville), 201 Church St., Belleville. 613-542-3636. By donation.

Thursday November 16

- 3:00pm: Optional low-cost refreshments available in the foyer.

Friday November 10


Sunday November 12

- 7:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Dancin’ thru the Decades. Dance hits from the past 70 years including Elvis Presley, The Beatles, Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, Earth Wind & Fire and others. Anita Hall, vocals; Steve Moretti, drums; Matt Catingub, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-756-4711 or 1-888-745-4711. 8:30; 11:05. Also Nov 11.
- 8:00 Don Wright Faculty of Music. Canadian Brass. Featuring their signature mix of entertainment, spontaneity, virtuosity and fun. Stuie Poulton, trumpet; Graeme Page, horn; Gene Watts, trombone; Charles Daellenbach, tuba; Stuart Laughton and Bill Phillips, trumpet. Caernarfon Church (Belleville), 201 Church St., Belleville. 613-542-3636. By donation.

Monday November 13

- 7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.9; Symphony No.29. and works by P.E. Bach and J.C. Bach. Kristian Beznudienho, guest director and fortepiano; Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424. $29-$55; $15-$27(st).
B. Concerts Beyond the GTA

- **November 25**: *Westben Concerts at The Barn*. 1:00: Ensemble Vivant. Christmas Tidings. Port Hope United Church, joined by La Jeunesse Choir. Monday, November 27, 2017, 7:30 pm. The Barn, 6688 County Road 30, Cambridge. 705-653-5508 or 1-877-883-5777. $25; $15(est); $5(youth). Also Nov 26, Dec 2 (Norwood), Dec 3 (Peterborough) all 3pm.


- **November 28**: *St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Kitchener)*. Wednesday Night-Hour Concerts. Mark Lewis, singer-songwriter. 54 Queen St. N., Kitchener. Free. 11:30: Optional low-cost lunch available in the foyer.

- **November 29**: *Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony*. Christmas Concerto. Ellen McAteer, soprano; Ivars Taurins, conductor. Central Presbyterian Church (Cambridge), 7 Queens Sq., Cambridge. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $36. Also Nov 22(Waterloo), 24(Guelph).

- **November 29**: *St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Kitchener)*. Wednesday Night-Hour Concerts. Mark Lewis, singer-songwriter. 54 Queen St. N., Kitchener. Free. 11:30: Optional low-cost lunch available in the foyer.


Saturday December 2
- 2:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Youth Orchestra: Concert 1. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717; $13 (child).
- 3:00: Westben Concerts at The Barn. Upper Canada Christmas. Narrated concert. Susanna Muckle and Catharine Parr Traill, vocalists; Westben Choruses; Donna Ben nett and Brian Finley, directors. Northorith United Church, 4264 Hwy 7, Norwood. 705-653-5508 or 1-877-883-5777; $25; $15 (child); $5 (youth). Also Nov 25(Campbellford, 1pm), Nov 26(Campbellford, 3pm), Dec 3(Peterbrough, 3pm).

Sunday December 3
- 2:00: University of Waterloo Department of Music. UW Jazz Ensemble. Featuring jazz classics. Michael Wood, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717; $19 or $22 (adult). Also Dec 1.

Monday December 4
- 7:00: Barrie Concert Band. Christmas at the Beach. Lighthouse Community Church, 800 Sunnidale Rd., Wasaga Beach. 705-691-1917. Donations to the food bank welcomed. Reception following.
- 3:00: Westben Concerts at The Barn. Upper Canada Christmas. Narrated concert. Susanna Muckle and Catharine Parr Traill, vocalists; Westben Choruses; Donna Ben nett and Brian Finley, directors. Northorith United Church, 300 Sunset Blvd, Peterbrough. 705-653-5508 or 1-877-883-5777; $25; $15 (child); $5 (youth). Also Nov 25(Campbellford, 1pm), Nov 26(Campbellford, 3pm), Dec 2 (Nor wood, 3pm).
- 7:00: Barrie Band. Christmas at the Beach. Lighthouse Community Church, 800 Sunnidale Rd., Wasaga Beach. 705-691-1917. Donations to the food bank welcomed. Reception following.

Tuesday December 5

Wednesday December 6
- 12:15: St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church
- Christmas Eve Service.
- Canadian Opera Company’s The Magic Violin. Music by Gaetano Donizetti. Andrew Haji, tenor (Nemorino); Simon O’Boyle, soprano (Adina); Gordon Binette, baritone (Belcore); James Robinson, conductor; Yves Abel, conductor. Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-383-8231. $35-$55. Opens Nov 9, 7:30pm. Runs to Nov 18. Thurs-Sat (7:30pm).
- Canadian Opera Company’s The Elixir of Love. Music by Gaetano Donizetti. Andrew Haji, tenor (Nemorino); Simon O’Boyle, soprano (Adina); Gordon Binette, baritone (Belcore); James Robinson, conductor; Yves Abel, conductor. Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-383-8231. $35-$55. Opens Nov 9, 7:30pm. Runs to Nov 18. Thurs-Sat (7:30pm).
C. Music.


Irregular Entertainment. Grease — The Musical. Lyrics and music by Jim Jacobs and Jerry O’Connell. London 1947 Theatre, 189 Yonge St. 1-855-685-5000, $29-$159. Opens Nov 1, 7:30pm. Runs to Dec 10. Tues-Sat(7:30pm), Wed(7:30pm), Sun(Sat/11:30am).

Lower Ossining Theatre. Dreamgirls. Music and lyrics by Henry Krieger; music and book by Tom Eyen. Lower Ossining Theatre, 100A Ossining Ave. 416-907-0468. $64.99. Opens Sep 22, 7:30pm. Runs to Nov 26. Fri-Sat(3:30pm), Sat(3:30pm), Sun(4pm).


Opera by Request. Idomeneo. Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Fabio Arupegias, tenor (Idomeneo); Danielle Theresa, mezzo (Idamante); Brittany Stewart, soprano (Ilia); Michelle Veenuhen, soprano (Elettra); Clan Harrobir, tenor (Arbace); William Shookhoff, piano and music director; and others. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2655. $20. Nov 4, 7:30pm.

Opera by Request. La Clemenza di Tito. Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, libretto by Caterino Mazzola, after Metastasio. William Wolf, tenor (Tito); Deena Nickson, soprano (Sofronia); Valerian Teliz, mezzosoprano (Sesto); Shannon Mills, soprano (Servilia); and others; William Shookhoff, piano and conductor. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2655. $20. Nov 10, 7:30pm.


Scaborough Music Theatre. Evita. Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber; lyrics by Tim Rice. Scarborough Village Community Centre, 3650 Kingston Rd. 416-875-0929. $22-$40. Opens Nov 2, 8:00pm. Runs to Nov 18. Thurs-Sat(8pm), Sun(2pm). Note: Nov 18 show at 2pm.


Steppin’ Out Theatrical Productions. Footloose. Music by Tom Snow, lyrics by Dean Pitchford, with additional music by Eric Car- man, Sammy Haygar, Kenny Loggins & Jim Steinman. Book by Dean Pitchford and Wal- ter Bobbie, based on the screenplay by Dean Pitchford. Richmond Hill Centre For Per- forming Arts, 10288 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 905-875-8811. $30-$35. Opens Nov 23, 7:30pm. Runs to Nov 26. Thurs-Sat(7:30pm), Sat/ Sun(11:30am).


Theatre Sheridan. Trap Door. Music and lyrics by Arika Johnson and Britta Johnson, book by Kyle Macdonald-Haslip. 1430 Trafalgar Rd., Oakville. 905-815-4045. $29. Opens Nov 26, 7:30pm. Runs to Dec 10. Thurs-Sat(7:30pm), Fri-Sat(8pm), Sat/Sun(2pm). Note: no show Dec 5.


Toronto Operaetta Theatre. The Widow by Calloev Lavalava. Viennese Operetta and other works. Julie Nesrallah, mezzo; Diego Catala, baritone; Julie Obermeyer; Michael McLean; Ronalds MacArthur, mezzo; Gregory Finney, baritone; Guillerme Silva-Marr, stage dir- ector; Michael Rose, piano and music direc- tor; and others. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. $29-$49. Nov 5, 3pm.


University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon. Opera Spotlight. A preview of UofT Opera’s production of Mozart’s Don Giovanni. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free, Nov 2, 12:10pm.


Voicebox: Opera in Concert. Rodelinda. Music by George Frideric Handel, libretto by Nicolas Francois Haym. Christine Raphaelle Haldane, soprano; Charles Sy, tenor; David Trudgen, countertenor; Alexander Dobson, baritone; Voixbouche Opera in Concert; Larry Beckwith, conductor. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366- 7723. $29-$73. Nov 26, 2:30pm.

Windsor Light Music Theatre. Mamma Mia! Music and lyrics by Benny Andersson, Bjorn Ulvaeus, and some songs with Stig Anderson. Book by Catherine John- son, St. Clair College Centre for the Arts, 201 Riverside Dr. W., Windsor. 519-374-6959. $36; $21(st); $16(st). Opens Nov 17, 8:00pm. Runs to Nov 26. Thurs-Sat(8pm), Sat/ Sun(2pm).

D. In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

As we approach the goal of realizing our intention of listing club events in a searchable format, we take a step back before taking two steps forward. In this issue, while we do list regular recurring events at some clubs, we do not have detailed listings. Please visit the clubs’ websites or use the phone number provided for further information. We apologize for this temporary inconvenience.

120 Diner
120 Church St. 416-792-7725
120diner.com (full schedule)
All shows: PWYC ($10-$20 suggested)
Every Tue 6pm Leslie Heyer Group; Every Wed 6pm Madosa Murata: Discovery Through the Arts; 6pm Lisa Pentich’s Girls Night Out Jazz Jam; Nov 2 6pm Julie Michels & Kevin Barrett; Nov 3 4pm Michelle Lecce “Cruzy”; CD Celebration; Nov 4 6pm Tanaya Wils Quartet; Nov 5 6pm Richard Lom $20; 8:30pm Rob Kempton (SOLD OUT); Nov 7 8:30pm Moulan; Nov 9 5pm Indieweek: Roger Beckett Songwriting Circle; Nov 10 5pm Indieweek: Chris Kirkett Songwriter’s Showcase; Nov 11 5pm Indieweek: Mississauga Music Showcase; Nov 12 6pm David Warrack Presents $20; 8:30pm John Pugh $20; Nov 14 8:30pm La-Nai Mitchell; Nov 16 8pm Kim Dollister; Nov 17 7pm Kenyon Blythe; Nov 18 6pm Lesley Mitchell-Clarke $10; Nov 19 6pm Shakra Dickson feat. David Gall; $20; 8:30pm Bobby Hsu’s Ob-Sessions; Nov 21 8:30pm Sarah Siddiqui; Nov 23 6pm Kyley Murray; Nov 24 6pm Denisse Bassei; Nov 25 7pm Brandon James Payne and Stone Bone $15; Nov 8 Water Bear and Guests PWYC to cap; Nov 9 8pm Marcelo Puente and Guests $10; Nov 10 8pm Jennis $10; Nov 11 8pm Men of Jazz Oct $15

Alleycatz
2409 Yonge St. 416-481-6685
alleycatz.ca
All shows: $9 unless otherwise indicated. Call for cover change info.

Artword Arbar
15 Colbourne St., Hamilton. 905-543-8512
artword.net (full schedule)
Nov 2 7pm Radio Dial Band $15; Nov 3 8pm Coates Paradise $12; Nov 4 8pm Rae Billing and Friends $15; Nov 5 7pm Barry James Payne and Stone Bone $15; Nov 8 Water Bear and Guests PWYC to cap; Nov 9 8pm Marcelo Puente and Guests $10; Nov 10 8pm Jennis $10; Nov 11 8pm Men of Jazz Oct $15

Bloom
2315 Bloor St. W. 416-767-1315
bloomrestaurant.com
All shows: $19; Call for reservations.
Nov 30 7pm Sophia Pertman Trio $45 dinner and concert

Burdock
1184 Bloor St. W. 416-546-4033
burdockto.com (full schedule)

Castro’s Lounge
2116 Queen St. E. 416-699-8272
castrolounge.com (full schedule)
All shows: No cover/PWYC
Every Tue Every Fri 5:30pm The Straight Eights; 10pm I Hate You Rob. Every Sat 8pm THEOLYCUS. Every Sun 9pm Watch This Sound - Vintage Jamaican Music. Every Mon 10pm Soulmates

C’est What
67 Front St. E. (416) 867-0499
cestwhat.com (full schedule)

Emmet Ray, The
924 College Ave. 416-792-4487
themetramay.com (full schedule)
All shows: No cover/PWYC

Gate 403
403 Roncesvalles Ave. 416-588-2900
gate403.com
All shows: PWYC.
Every Mon 8pm Mondays with the Jim Hamel Trio and featured guests. Every Wed 7pm Julian Faith Blues Night. Every Sat 5pm Bill Heffernan’s Saturday Sessions.

Grossman’s Tavern
379 Spadina Ave. 416-877-7000
grossmantavern.com (full schedule)
All shows: No cover (unless otherwise noted).
Every Sat 4:30 The Happy Pals Dixieland Jam. Every Sun 4pm New Orleans Connection All Star Band; 10pm Sunday Jam with Bill Hedefin. Every Wed 10pm Action Sound Band w/ Leo Vakassori. Nov 2 10pm Mike Sedgwick; Nov 3 5pm Hold the Bus w/ Rebecca Campbell; Nov 3 10pm Rob Pearl & Pat Rush; Nov 4 10pm Mike McDonald & Pat Rush.

Hirut Cafe and Restaurant
2050 Danforth Ave. 416-551-7560
hirutcoffee.com
Every Sun 5pm Nicola Vaughan’s Hirut’s Sundays. Nov 2 8pm Franklin Ave Swingtet. PWYC. Nov 6 6pm The Tequila Mockingbirds Community Singalong. Free. Nov 7 & 21 8pm Finger Style Guitar Association. PWYC. Nov 10 8:30pm & 10pm E-Jazz and Latin Jazz with Don Dandurand. PWYC/Donation. Nov 24 8pm Hirut Hot Cabinet $5.

Home Smith Bar – See Old Mill, The
Hugh’s Room
2261 Dundas St. W. 416 533-5483
hugshroom.com
All shows: $8 unless otherwise noted.
Nov 2 & 3 Leonard Cohen Tribute $30/$25 (adv); Nov 4 Avicii/1989 - Day 1 of the Dead $30/$25 (adv); Nov 5 Kat Goldmann - CD Launch $25/$20 (adv); Nov 6 Catherine MacEwan $30/$25 (adv); Nov 9 Avery Raquel $25/$20 (adv); Nov 10 & 11 A St Raggers Tribute $35/$30 (adv); Nov 14 Arlene Bishop (CD Launch) & Fraser Anderson $30/$25 (adv); Nov 16 The Kruger Brothers $40/$35 (adv); Nov 17 Kelby Lee Evans $40/$35 (adv); Nov 18 Séan McCann - CD Release $35/$30 (adv); Nov 19 An Evening with Rebecca Codd $25; $15 (st); Nov 23 & 24 The Last Waltz – A Musical Celebration of The Band $50/$45 (adv); Nov 25 Tom Waits Tribute $30/$25 (adv); Nov 26 Ken Whiteley’s Sunday Gospel Matinée $30/$25 (adv); Nov 27 The Young’uns $30/$25 (adv).

Nov 29 The Chromatics CD Launch $25/$20 (adv); Nov 30 The Arrogant Worms $40/$35 (adv); Dec 1 John Sheard Vinyl Café Tribute $30/$25 (adv); Dec 2 Tribute to Muddy Waters & Howlin’ Wolf $30/$35 (adv); Dec 3 Coig $30/$25 (adv); Dec 6 Minor Empire – CD Launch $30/$25 (adv); Dec 7 The Bills 20th Anniversary Show $30/$25 (adv)

Jazz Bistro, The
251 Victoria St. 416-383-6299
jazzbistro.ca
Every Wed 6pm James Dunbar; Nov 2 2-4pm PJ Perry w/ Bernie Senensky Trio; Nov 8 6pm Geoff Fest – Battle of the Bands; Nov 9 7pm Mark Eisenman Quartet; Nov 10 & 11 6pm Patsey Gallant Sings Piaf; Nov 12 7pm Ross Kindler & Lynda Covelio – Jazz Sisters; Nov 14 8pm Music Can Heal; Nov 15 8pm Dave Young/Terry Promane Octet – CD release; Nov 16 8pm Johanna Silpanen & Nov 17 8pm Ahmed Michel; Nov 18 6pm John Alcorn Quintet; Nov 19 7pm Simone Morris; Nov 21 8pm Laura Marks & Bernie Senensky Trio; Nov 22 8pm Last; Nov 23 Colin Hunter & Anthony Petraglia Big Band - Mostly Frank; Nov 24 & 25 8:30pm Colin Hunter & Joe Sealy Quartet; Nov 26 7pm Mary Pitt & David Warrack; Nov 28 8pm Stevie Vallance & The Masters Of Jazz; Nov 29 8pm Arash Behzadi – Solo Piano; Nov 30 8pm Jesse Ryan & Bridges.

Jazz Room, The
Located in the Huthet Hotel, 59 King St. N., Waterloo. 226-476-1565
kwjazzroom.com (full schedule)
All shows: 9pm-11pm unless otherwise indicated. Attendees must be 19+.
Nov 3 3pm Kaitlyn Sikes; Nov 4 7pm Kevin Parent; Nov 5 7pm Cynthia Farnham; Nov 6 7pm Julian Faith Blues Night; Nov 7 8pm Ian Black; Nov 11 8pm Michael Hutton; Nov 12 9pm Bill Pugsley; Nov 13 9pm Craig Wood; Nov 14 9pm Jorian Finch; Nov 15 9pm Joe Bihorel.

Lula Lounge
1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-3037
lula.ca (full schedule)
Every Fri 7:30pm Early Jazz & World Session free before 8pm; Every Fri 10:30pm Havana Club Cuba Libre Fridays $15; Every Sat 10:30pm Salsa Saturdays $15; Nov 1 Migel de Armas CD Release (What’s to Come); Nov 8 6:30pm On A Night Like This: A Celebration of Bob Dylan with Robert Morgan and Friends $25/$23 (adv); $15 (st); 9pm Gladiator Records Presents Juliana Album Release Party; Nov 11 & 12 6:30pm WorldJazz Fridays: Chris Bottomley; 8:30pm Havana Club Friday;

Mezzetta Restaurant
681 St. Clair Ave. W. 416-658-5687
mezzette.ca (full schedule)
All shows: Same as above. Call for cover change info.
Nov 2 7pm Don Braid; Nov 6 7pm Mike Lack; Nov 7 Paul Lack; Nov 8 7pm Jim DeRogatis.

Monarch Tavern
12 Clinton St. 416-531-5833
themonarchtavern.com (full schedule)
Every Tues 7pm Vinyl Night $5; Every Thu 10pm Monarch Karaoke $5; Nov 13 7:30pm Martin Longo & His Orange Devils Orchestra $70; Nov 16 8pm The Del Palmas’ $ The Haunted Lovers.

The whole note.com
November 2017
In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

N’awlins Jazz Bar & Dining
299 King St. W. 416-595-1958
nawlinss.ca
All shows: no cover/PWYC.
Every Tue 6:30pm Stacie McGregor; Every Wed 7pm The Jim Heinerman Trio. Every Thur 8pm Nothin’ But the Blues with Joe Bowden. Every Fri & Sat 8:30pm All Stars Band; Every Sun 7pm Brooke Blackburn.

Nice Bistro, The
117 Brock St. N., Whitby. 905-668-8839
nicebistro.ca (full schedule)

Old Mill, The
21 Old Mill Rd. 416-236-2641
oldmilltoronto.com
The Home Smith Bar: No reservations. No cover. $20 food/drink minimum. All shows: 7:30pm-10:30pm
Every Tues, Thu, Fri, and Sat.

Paintbox Bistro
555 Dundas St. E. 416-747-0555
paintboxbistro.ca (full schedule)

Pilots Tavern, The
22 Cumberland Ave. 416-923-5716
thepleiot.ca
All shows: 3:30pm. No cover.
Every Sat 5pm Saturday Jazz.
Nov 4 Turn To 23 Nov 11 J. Brough Quartet; Nov 18 Kevin Turcotte Quartet; Nov 25 Dan Faulk Quartet; Dec 2 Alex Dean Quartet.

Poetry Jazz Café
224 Augusta Ave. 416-595-5299
poetryjazzcafe.com (full schedule)
Reposado Bar & Lounge
136 Ossington Ave. 416-532-6474
reposadobar.com (full schedule)
Reservoir Lounge, The
52 Wellington St. E. 416-955-0887
reservoirolounge.com (full schedule).
All shows: 9:45pm
Every Tuesday, Tuesday, every Thursday.
Every Wed The Digs. Every Thu Stacey Kaniuk. Every Fri Dee Dee and the Dirty Martians.

Rex Hotel Jazz & Blues Bar, The
194 Queen St. W. 416-598-2475
thereca.com (full schedule)
Call for cover charge info.
Every Sun noon Excelsior Dixieland Jazz; 7pm Memphis in Montreal. Every Mon 6:30pm University of Toronto Student Jazz Ensembles. Every Tue 6:30pm Chris Platt Trio. Every Thu 4:30pm Classic Jazz Jam; Every Sun 9pm Chris Platt Trio.

Galas and Fundraisers
Nov 1 15:30. Canadian Opera Company. Centre Stage. Featuring the Ensemble Studio Competition, a vocal showcase of young Canadian singers selected from national-wide auditions. Host: Ben Heppner. Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 143 Queen St. W. at University Avenue. Cocktails at 5:30pm. Competition at 6:30pm. Tickets available online at COCCentreStage.ca or 416-836-8231, $100 (cocktail reception and competition); $1,500 (Gala dinner).

Book Launches

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Toronto, 80 Queens Park. Open to the public. Free admission.

Readings
- Nov 17 7:30-10:00. Toronto Recorder Players Society Meeting. Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, 257 Mt. Pleasant Rd. at Belsize Dr. Bring your recorders and music stand. 416-779-5750. $15(non-members).
- Nov 18 10:30am-10:50am: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir: Singation Saturday. Join other enthusiastic singers for a fun Canada-150-themed choral workshop. Sing through a number of works by Canadian composers, including Ave Verum by Imant Raminsh and folk songs like Song for the Mira and We Rise Again. With guest conductor Stephanie Potvin of Musiak, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, Cameron Hall, 1585 Yonge St. (1 block north of Yonge and St. Clair). $10, includes refreshments. Register at the door. www.tmcchoir.org/singation-saturdays
- Nov 19 2:00-3:30: CAMMAC Toronto Region. Reading for Singers and String Players. Choral works by Ola Gjeilo: Northern Lights; Ubi Caritas; Across the Vast, Eternal Sky; Tundras; and Sacred Heart. Jenny Croebber, conductor. Christ Church Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St. 416-877-0671. $10; $6(members).
- Nov 25 10:00am-4:30pm International Resource Centre for Performing Artists. Branding, Marketing, Social Media. Music theatre singer Lara Harb shares her knowledge. NOTE: The first 10 artists to register can have their materials critiqued. 519 Church St. 416-362-1422. $15.
- Dec 2 10:00am-5:00pm: International Resource Centre for Performing Artists. From Rags to Reasonable! Financial Management. Register at the door.

Screenings
- Nov 21 6:30: Royal Conservatory. Conduct! Every Move Counts. Every two years, 24 young conductors travel to the Frankfurter Opernhaus to compete in the Sir Georg Solti Conductors’ Competition, the world’s leading conducting competition. Go backstage with this film as it follows five of these conductors through evaluation rounds to the finals. Conductor Tania Miller will participate in a post-screening discussion along with a performance by Royal Conservatory students. Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema or online at www.hotdocs.ca. $17.

Singsalongs, Jams, Circles
- Nov 17 7:30-10:00. Toronto Recorder Players Society Meeting. Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, 257 Mt. Pleasant Rd. at Belsize Dr. Bring your recorders and music stand. 416-779-5750. $15(non-members).
- Dec 2 2:30-5:00. Choral Bonanza Team. Messiah Sing-along. Handel: Messiah (Christmas portion). Dr. Richard Heinzle, conductor; Sapphira Nawratynska, accompanist. Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church, 10066 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 416-588-9838. Choral singers participation fee: $25. Suggested donation for concert: $10. Concert is at 7pm. Choral singers are asked to pre-register at ChoralBonanza@gmail.com if possible (required if you need a score; Watkins Shaw ed.). Soloists and orchestra musicians may, please email a short resume to ChoralBonanza@gmail.com.

Workshops
- Nov 17 7:30-10:00. Toronto Recorder Players Society Meeting. Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, 257 Mt. Pleasant Rd. at Belsize Dr. Bring your recorders and music stand. 416-779-5750. $15(non-members).
- Dec 2 2:30-5:00. Choral Bonanza Team. Messiah Sing-along. Handel: Messiah (Christmas portion). Dr. Richard Heinzle, conductor; Sapphira Nawratynska, accompanist. Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church, 10066 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 416-588-9838. Choral singers participation fee: $25. Suggested donation for concert: $10. Concert is at 7pm. Choral singers are asked to pre-register at ChoralBonanza@gmail.com if possible (required if you need a score; Watkins Shaw ed.). Soloists and orchestra musicians may, please email a short resume to ChoralBonanza@gmail.com.
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LESSONS FOR ALL! Friendly and firm - I’m an experienced musician and mom teaching piano and singing to children (and the young at heart) in my Toronto home (East Leslieville). To discuss your child’s need for music-making please contact kkwuttle@gmail.com.

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November's Child

Peter Mahon

MJ BUELL

Toronto-born countertenor Peter Mahon is both a singer and a conductor. Still a member of the Tafelmusik Chamber Choir after 36 years, he became the artistic director of the Tallis Choir of Toronto in 2003 after singing with them for many years. Mahon conducts the Vespers Choir at St Michael’s Cathedral, and for the past 11 years has worked at St. Michael’s Choir School as a rehearsal conductor and voice coach. H is currently as the interim Senior Choir director.

As a singer Mahon has also performed with La Chapelle de Québec and the Theatre of Early Music, as a soloist in concerts and on recordings with Toronto Consort, Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, Aradia Ensemble, Montreal Early Music Festival, Montreal Chamber Music Festival, Toronto Chamber Choir and the Grand River Chorus.

Mahon and his wife, soprano Katharine Pimenoff, have six children: four sopranos, one tenor and one bass. Four are professional singers and one is an organist.

Do you remember that childhood photo being taken? It was probably just before the high mass at St. Mary Magdalene’s Church. My parents joined the parish when I was about three years old and the choir was formed very shortly after coming to Canada in 1948. My mother was a soprano in the Gallery Choir and my father was the cantor in the Ritual Choir. Most Sundays we would find ourselves following Dr. David Ouchterlony’s beautiful Bentley as he chauffeured Dr. Willan to SMM. On one of those Sundays when we arrived at the same time, someone with a camera asked us to pose with Dr. Willan.

Your earliest memory of hearing music? There was never a time when I did not hear music. Hearing my parents sing every week in church, it was just a part of our life.

Peter Mahon lives in Toronto with his wife, Katharine and toy poodle, Molly. Away from music he enjoys sports, both watching (football, hockey and soccer), and as a participant (cycling, tennis and golf). He also enjoys undertaking home renovation projects. This summer, with major help from his son Andrew, he replaced all the hardwood floors in their house.

Your first memory of making music? Singing in school when the itinerant music teacher would visit the class once a week for 30 minutes: it was always something that the whole class enjoyed.

Where did you grow up, and go to school? I was born in Toronto and grew up with my four sisters in a small house in Willowdale. My dad (Albert) was a life insurance salesman and my mother (Anne) was a full-time homemaker when we were younger and then a legal secretary when we were old enough to take care of ourselves. My sisters all took up instruments in the school orchestra – I was the only one who sang on a regular basis and only because Walter MacNutt, the director of music at St. Thomas’s Church on Huron St. made a special trip over to St. Mary Magdalene one Sunday after mass to recruit me. I was not very interested until he said all the choristers got paid. Of course my next question was, “How much?”

What would you say to parents hoping their young children will grow up to love and make music? Put them into a choir. Private lessons are great but practising tends to be a solitary activity. Singing in a choir is a social activity that can be shared with friends and this will often make taking private lessons – and all the practising that goes with it – easier to take. We never pushed our children into music but we did insist that they all join the church choir when they turned six as part of their education. They were not enthusiastic but neither was I. Once they started, they really enjoyed it.

Please read Peter Mahon’s full-length interview at thewholenote.com

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS!


LISE FERGUSON and GREER ROBERTS each win a pair of tickets to “Forty! Forty! Forty!” The choir will be joined by alumni and friends for music of Thomas Tallis including the remarkable 40-part Spem in Alium and the work believed to have inspired it, Striggio’s 40-part Ecce Beatam Lucem.

GAIL MARRIOTT and CLAIRE LERICHE each win a pair of tickets for Messiah (Dec 13) with Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir, and guest soloists, conducted by Ivars Taurins. Peter Mahon will be in his usual alto section spot.

NANCY MARTIN and MARY LOUIS each win Tafelmusik’s “Sing-Along Messiah” DVD. Peter Mahon has made numerous recordings with Tafelmusik, including this one. Try it at home with all your singing friends – while savouring the magnificent soloists.

SUZANNE DE GRANDPRE wins a pair of tickets to “Christmas at Massey Hall” (Dec 2) presented by St. Michael’s Choir School, joined by the Schola Cantorum Orchestra, members of True North Brass and a stellar list of special guests. Peter Mahon conducts the Senior Choir.

NEW CONTEST

Who is December’s Child?

Autumn 1979, Truro, Nova Scotia

Equally comfortable in pants or an elegant gown, and with a nimble penchant for risky high places, she’s still sweeter than a nightingale, fun like a case of (Johann) Strauss champagne, and has the grit to simultaneously combine a busy international career with family life. She’s singing three roles, including two debuts, in the 2017/18 Canadian Opera Company season.

Know our Mystery Child’s name? WIN PRIZES!

Send your best guess by November 24 to musicschildren@thewholenote.com

Previous artist profiles and interviews can be read at thewholenote.com/musicschildren
November 24, 2017 will mark one year since the passing of Pauline Oliveros, a beautiful soul who brought to the world the practice of what she called Deep Listening.

To mark this occasion, there will be an event on November 28 at Array Space titled “Gratitude Listening for Pauline Oliveros” for people to gather to listen and sound in gratitude for what Pauline offered.

I spoke recently with Tina Pearson who has had a personal connection with Pauline since the late 1970s, and whose inspiration it was to have this event. Pearson was active in the new music community in Toronto during the 1970s and 80s, as a performer with the New Music Cooperative, a collaborator with TIDE (Toronto Independent Dance Enterprise) among others, and as the editor of Musicworks. Currently living in Victoria, Pearson was here this past summer as composer in residence with Contact Contemporary Music, offering an intensive workshop on Deep Listening at the Canadian Music Centre as well as a community-based Deep Listening workshop that I organized. She also facilitated the creation of a new work titled Root, Blood, Fractal, Breath for the Contact Ensemble performed at Allan Gardens. Pearson is a Deep Listening Certificate holder.

I began by asking about her first encounter with Pauline Oliveros and the impact Pauline had on her as a composer and performer.

I first heard of Pauline through Jim Tenney (who taught composition at York University from 1976 to 2000), but met her in person when she came to the Music Gallery in November of 1979, where she was invited to present her Sonic Meditations. Experiencing her practice was quite powerful and validating. Suddenly the world opened up. Pauline seemed untethered from the masculine contexts of contemporary Western European art music and jazz-based free improvisation. She was a brilliant, strong, compassionate and attentive woman presenting an opportunity to everyone to listen in a complete and deep way.

One of the remarkable things about Pauline was that she could be in the same moment so absolutely connecting personally as well as globally.

During her visit, I recorded and transcribed the interview that Andrew Timar conducted with Pauline for Musicworks. In those days [when I transcribed] I transcribed everything – every pause, nuance and emphasis. Listening so deeply to her voice and her expression while transcribing that interview was quite significant and I think some resonance of that stayed with me.

Afterwards, I kept in touch with her. Pauline was incredibly encouraging and generous with her time and support, especially of women. I started working with her Sonic Meditations, and incorporated her ideas about listening and attention in collaborations with the New Music Cooperative, with TIDE and in a project with David Mott titled Oxygen Tonic. I also started teaching Sound Studies at OCAD in 1983, and used the Sonic Meditations in those classes each year. Looking back now, I’m aware that there was an opening up in the thinking that many of us had about our approach to music which were in part influenced by Pauline’s ideas of embodied listening as performers and creators.

I was already considering the separation between audience and performer in concert music, for example, so one of the welcome revelations, among many, about Pauline’s approach was her absolute commitment to taking into account the experience of everyone: the witnesses, the audience, the participants, and the performers.”

I then asked Tina to relate these earlier experiences to her recent experiences in Toronto this past summer facilitating Deep Listening Workshops.

“Facilitating the Deep Listening intensives this summer was heartening. The participants were very open and able to quickly understand and take in this practice. The capacity for listening was there, and as Pauline believed would happen it is continually growing and deepening. The more listening there is, the more listening there will be.

I then asked her to say more about the focus and intention for the upcoming “Gratitude Listening for Pauline Oliveros” event happening on November 28 at Array Space:

The idea for this free event is to acknowledge the one-year anniversary of Pauline’s passing and to give gratitude to her. The quality, depth and acuity of Pauline’s sensibility about listening is rare. There’s nobody else who has embodied a listening practice like she has. Her courageous approach to listening and attention, and letting that guide where one goes and how one approaches life and one’s work, is something that’s so essential, and quite a beacon. The deep compassion that comes when one is attending to listening is important right now - the notion that listening can be a response to anything.

There will be a performance by several local performers of Pauline Oliveros’ work Arctic Air, which includes the text The Earth Worm Also Sings, written originally for the 1992 Glenn Gould Technology and Music Symposium held in Toronto. In addition, everyone will be able to participate in two of her Sonic Meditations, and there will be an opportunity for people to speak about their memories and Pauline’s impact. And of course, everyone is welcome.

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

S he will always remember those moments of perfection during her best performances. Eyes half closed, she sways to the beat, blonde mane swinging back and forth. Her fingers dance effortlessly over the frets of her guitar. Time and space shrink to a pinpoint and only the music is real.

It didn’t happen at every concert. But when she got in the zone, nothing else could beat that rush. “It’s an out-of-body experience – it’s like being in love,” says 68-year-old Canadian guitar legend Liona Boyd.

But in 2000, these moments of bliss stuttered to a stop. While her technique once flowed almost effortlessly, Boyd began struggling to control the movements of her right middle finger. For the first time in her career, her smooth tremolos, once deemed the best in her business, became jagged. Her arpeggios followed suit. At first Boyd was hopeful that the mysterious ailment could be fixed. She quit playing and trudged from one health practitioner to the next, enduring hypnotherapy, botox injections, and even an immersion into Scientology. “Every therapy you think will work, then your hopes are dashed.” Eventually Boyd was diagnosed with musician’s focal dystonia, an overuse condition caused by mindless and frequent repetition of movements, which burn out the brain signals controlling muscle function. The diagnosis forced her to confront the bitter edge of reality: “I would never be the guitar virtuoso I once was – it was heartbreaking.”

Boyd is not alone. Eighty-four per cent of musicians will face a significant injury during their lifetimes, says physician Dr. John Chong, medical director of the Musicians’ Clinics of Canada. Musicians make extreme demands on their bodies, practising the same notes up to six hours without a break. “There is no off switch in the excellence-driven process,” says Chong. Chronic stress also plays a role in generating injuries. Workplace conditions, including job insecurity, ramp up muscle tension amongst performers, making them more prone to strains.

The emotional fallout can be disastrous. Musicians’ injuries are devastating because music is not just a livelihood, it’s their identity, says Lynda Mainwaring, registered psychologist and associate professor of kinesiology and physical education at the University of Toronto. Injuries also deprive performers of the joy brought about by the flow state, a transcendent experience where they lose themselves in concentration. “Flow can be a way of coping and forgetting problems – if musicians can’t get there, they’ll be frustrated.”

For some musicians, injuries rupture the harmonious relationships with their instruments, says osteopath Jennie Morton, well-known professor at the Colburn School in Los Angeles. Many view their violins and oboes as almost human, even going so far as to name them. “But when things go wrong, their former friends can turn into enemies,” says Morton.

Boyd was devastated by her condition, shedding tears every time she tried to coax her guitar to cooperate. “The joy was robbed – that was the worst thing.” It was almost as if her beloved guitar had turned against her. “You feel your best friend has let you down.”

Denial compounds injuries. Half of injured musicians play hurt, says Chong. From a young age, musicians are trained to sacrifice their well-being for the greater good of the audience. They are also reluctant to draw attention to their health issues because they fear losing solos as well as job opportunities. But playing through pain worsens the problem.

For a while Boyd too tried to combat her wayward finger. She ramped up her practising, but that only worsened the dystonia. Later, after her diagnosis, Boyd kept it under wraps. “I didn’t want people feeling sorry for me.”

Fortunately, there are constructive ways to deal with injuries. Rapid diagnosis and treatment by a physician trained in musicians’ health will resolve many conditions, says Chong. But in one study, 50 per cent of injured musicians felt they had never fully recovered, says Morton.

When injuries impact their careers, musicians need to allow themselves to grieve, says Mainwaring. “The loss of that part of life is like a death.” Some benefit from expressing their feelings through writing, while others prefer talking to a therapist. Deep breathing, mindfulness meditation, yoga and exercise can all help to relax tense muscles, says Morton. Reaching out for support, especially from other musicians who have gone through similar crises can be reassuring, says Mainwaring. “It helps them feel they’re not alone.”

As injured musicians begin to reconstruct their lives, it’s important for them to dig down deep and figure out why they picked up their instruments in the first place, says Dr. Chase McMurren, MD, medical director and psychotherapist at the AI & Malka Green Artists’ Health Centre at the Toronto Western Hospital. Most just wanted to make beautiful music, not caring if they made mistakes. But over the course of their careers, many have internalized the expectations of their teachers and families, and absorbed the competition for fame and money. Injured musicians need to discard the weight of these burdens and try to recoup the pure thrill of their artistry.

Even if they’ve stopped playing, musicians can still participate in their craft, says Mainwaring. Sideline artists can contribute to their profession by sharing how they dealt with their own setbacks. Teaching music can be another fulfilling option.

But injured performers can also find solace outside their métier. If music has always been the driving purpose in their lives, they need to unearth new sources of meaning, says Mainwaring. This could mean spending more time with family, or possibly switching to a new vocation. “They will be more fulfilled if they have other satisfying outlets.”

Toronto Symphony Orchestra viola player, Daniel Blackman, had to reconstruct his life after a career-threatening injury. In the summer of 2010 he was struck by a car while cycling and left for dead. He woke up in St. Joseph’s Hospital with a collapsed lung, a concussion and multiple fractures. But the worst problem for his career was nerve damage and reduced flexibility in his left, instrument-holding arm.

It wasn’t until he was home that the impact of his accident sank in. He feared he might never regain his top form. “If you have a career and it’s taken away, you feel like your life as you knew it has come to a close.” Blackman lay in bed, day after day, riddled with self-pity.

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Fortunately, his partner didn’t allow him to wallow in despair. After a few weeks rest, she pried him outside for a walk. Although he barely managed one block, by autumn he was doing four-hour hikes. Walking in natural settings became his salvation. “The air is amazing, I don’t feel closed in, and my mind expands.”

Blackman’s physiotherapist also helped to pull him out of his funk. She had overcome her own medical issues, and shared her struggles with her client. “If you see someone else who had a major situation and is thriving, it’s really motivating.”

Just over a year after his accident, Blackman returned to work. But although he was capable of performing in the orchestra, he had to quit his quartet and no longer plays solos. “In chamber music you’re exposed, and everything you do is high stakes.” Blackman made his peace with his new circumstance. “Luckily I’d had a full career already - I didn’t feel that I had to prove anything.”

Instead of dwelling on his own losses, Blackman shifted his focus to young, up-and-coming performers, supporting them financially. But he gets back as much as he gives. “Watching these young careers succeed is a pleasure.”

Today Blackman is thriving. Though he still sometimes misses the spotlight, he sees his life overall as a blessing. Having almost died three times after his accident, he’s just happy to be kicking around. “I was given a gift of life.”

Boyd too has successfully reinvented herself, a process she describes in her newly released memoir, No Remedy for Love. She simplified her technique and expanded her repertoire, blending the purely classical with more forgiving folk and new age elements. “When you play classical music and you make a slip, you almost stop breathing, but in folk style, a little squeak is not the end of the world.” Performing as a duo [with Andrew Dolson] allows her to share the responsibility for the tricky parts and gives her companionship on stage. “It’s more collaborative and fun than being on my own.”

Boyd also fashioned herself into a singer-songwriter. Although a childhood teacher had once squelched her confidence in singing, the instructor was no match for Boyd’s tenacity. “I’m a very determined person – I don’t know any classical instrumentalists who become singers.” And though she says her voice isn’t trained, it has a natural quality which suits the type of music she composes.

Songwriting brings Boyd a whole new means of self-expression. “I’m able to say things both melodically and with lyrics, so it’s added another level of creativity.” She finds inspiration everywhere, singing about love, her adopted land of Canada, and even a prayer for planet Earth.

Best of all, composing has restored to Boyd the fulfillment of flow. As she racks her brain for the perfect word, she loses track of time. Hours can whizz by. Sometimes a whole night when she’s on a roll. And when the lyrics and the melody speak her truth, it’s ecstasy. “This whole other world opens up. I get shivers.”

Boyd hopes her own triumph over trauma will inspire musicians with focal dystonia and other injuries, who are still in the closet. Her advice is simple. “Life throws you curve balls. You can get dragged down. But it’s never too late to turn your life around.”

Audiences today are as moved as ever by this new Liona Boyd. Fans say that her songs have delighted wedding guests, soothed the sick and inspired children to learn the guitar. (Even her late cat, Muffin, curled up by her side and fell asleep when she played). These testimonials are Boyd’s most valuable rewards. “It’s amazing when people tell me how much my music means to them. That makes all the struggles worthwhile.”

Vivien Fellegi is a former family physician now working as a freelance medical journalist.

Several months ago in this column, in reference to Harry Freedman’s orchestral works, I noted that “I grew up understanding that what [identified] Canadian music as Canadian [were] aural landscapes reminiscent of the north, stark and angular, crisp and rugged, but at the same time lush and evocative.” I had that feeling again listening to The Shaman / Arctic Symphony – Orchestral Music of Vincent Ho (Centre des Arts). CMCCD 24317 featuring the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, of which Ho was the composer-in-residence between 2007 and 2014. The WSO performs both works under the direction of Alexander Mickelthwate. The Shaman is a percussion concerto written for Dame Evelyn Glennie who premiered it during the WSO’s New Music Festival in 2011, the performance recorded here. It is a stunning work, in the words of John Corigliano who wrote the Foreword to the booklet notes: “a work that set an atmosphere of magical stillness, with the soloist evoking unearthly sounds – wolf calls, shimmering colours, and the lightest of orchestral textures. [...] In the second movement [Vincent has written a heavenly theme with almost no accompaniment by the orchestra. It goes to the heart, and is simple without ever being simple-minded. [...] The final movement grows into a primitive drum-led dance that is wild and relentless [...] The Shaman should be played often!” Glowing praise indeed from one of the most significant mainstream American composers of our time.

Although he is now an accomplished mid-career composer as his residencies (he is currently the artistic director of Calgary’s Land’s End Ensemble) and accolades testify, I can’t help thinking of Ho (b.1975) as a young composer. I first encountered his music in the summer of 1999 at the Strings of the Future workshop in Ottawa, where the iconic Arditti Quartet was reading through a number of fledgling works. Ho’s String Quartet No.1 made a lasting impression on me and went on to win a SOCAN Award. It was premiered during the November 2000 Massey Hall New Music Festival by the Composers Quartet. You can check it out on Soundcloud and judge for yourself.

At nearly 40 minutes, Ho’s Arctic Symphony is a mammoth, fully mature work. Written after a residency with the Circumpolar Flaw Lead System Study aboard the arctic research vessel CGGS Amundsen in 2008, the five-movement work is a dramatic depiction of Canada’s North and its Northern peoples. Ho writes of witnessing the interaction of scientists and Inuit elders as they shared valuable information about climate change and how it is affecting the culture and way of life in Indigenous communities. It opens with the haunting Prelude – Lamentations which starts with the eerie sounds of tundra winds and an Inuit welcome song performed by Nunavut Sivuniksavut Performers. As the song fades, the orchestra enters with a quiet shimmering cymbal and dark string textures reminiscent of that wind. Among the dramatic effects is an extended unison melody in the double basses juxtaposed with pointillist piano and interpolations from an extensive percussion battery. Three short, descriptively titled movements follow – Meditation, Aboard the Amundsen and Nightfall – during which Ho’s brilliant orchestration creates vivid pictures drawing on the full resources of the modern orchestra. Towards the end of the fourth movement however, all grows calm and a muted, vibrato-less solo strings chorale is heard, in the distance as it were, somewhat like the fleeting appearance of a theme from Death and the Maiden in George Crumb’s Black Angels for electric string quartet. The extended final movement O Glorious Arctics – Postlude begins with quiet strings again but builds gradually to a rousing middle section, kind of a Northern take on Copland’s Rodeo or Weinzweig’s
One of the perks of working at (my day job) New Music Concerts – beyond the privilege of daily contact with one of this nation’s foremost artists, Robert Aitken – is getting to meet some of the most brilliant minds in the field of contemporary music from around the world. Among my most cherished memories is the time spent with the late Elliott Carter (1908-2012) during several of his visits to Toronto, the last of which took place on the occasion of his 97th birthday. Arrangements were in place to bring him back five years later for a concert celebrating his 102nd, but a major snow storm in New York City curtailed his travel plans and we had to present the historic concert in Carter’s absence. On that occasion Carter’s associate Virgil Blackwell gave the very first performance of Concertino for bass clarinet and ensemble and Aitken gave the Canadian premiere of his Flute Concerto. Carter died in November 2012, just a month before his 104th birthday, and since that time New Music Concerts has presented one of his late works each December in honour of the iconic composer who took part in our concerts on seven occasions over the years.

And this brings me to a new Ondine release, Elliott Carter – Late Works (ODE 1296-2), which features among its titles several pieces presented by New Music Concerts in the past decade. Dialogues (2003) for piano and ensemble is here performed by pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard with the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, along with Epigrams (2012) for piano trio, which features Aimard with Isabelle Faust and Jean-Guihen Queyras. Aimard, a frequent Carter collaborator, is also featured with the Birmingham group in Dialogues II (2010) and, with percussionist Colin Currie, on Two Controversies and a Conversation (2011) for piano, percussion and chamber ensemble, plus Interventions (2007) and Soundings (2005) with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Oliver Knussen’s direction. The brief orchestral work, Instances, from Carter’s final year, completes the disc.

In his later years, Carter’s music became a bit less craggy and unapproachable, although he never joined the ranks of “friendly music” composers. As Robert Aitken likes to say, good music “must challenge someone – the composer, the performer, the listener; preferably all three” and Carter’s music certainly continued to do that to the end. Back in 1990, before I joined the New Music Concerts team, I had the privilege of attending two rehearsals and a performance of the Canadian premiere of the String Quartet No.4 (1986) by Accordes. I was amazed that at each listening the work sounded unfamiliar, as if I had never heard it before. There were simply no touchstones for my relatively unsophisticated ears to grasp onto in the complexity of the score where seemingly each of the four parts moved independently.

As I say, there is no compromise in the late works, but somehow they do not seem as daunting. Perhaps it is my own development over the past two and a half decades, but I do think that the music itself also changed, becoming more genial and perhaps warmer. A case in point is the Two Controversies and a Conversation, which began as a single-movement concerto for piano and percussion, to which the two brief introductory movements were added at the invitation of Knussen. There is both playfulness and tension, harmony and discord. As the comprehensive notes by John Link tell us, “…from the final movement’s opening chords, the soloists quickly separate to engage in rapid fire exchanges with the orchestra and each other. The pianist proposes slow music, but is diverted by auto-horn-like blasts in the orchestra, which lead to a pianistic scherzando. Undaunted the piano returns to its rhapsodic music, speeding up and slowing down in long phrases that enact a would-be reconciliation […] The final gesture leaves the two conversationalists both far apart and exactly together.” This also happens time and again in my favourite piece on this disc, Epigrams, in 12 brief movements lasting just 14 minutes. I wonder if my comfort level is a result of having heard Stephen Sitarski, David Hetherington and Gregory Oh play it on a New Music Concert back in December 2014. Is it possible that Carter’s music can sound familiar after all? This new disc is a wonderful way to find out for yourself.

Concert note: On December 3, members of Accordes will perform Carter’s String Trio from 2011, one of his very last works, on our “Concertos” concert at Betty Oliphant Theatre.

One of the loveliest World/pop-inflected discs to cross my desk in recent memory is Golpes y Flores by singer-songwriter Eliana Cuevas, who has made her home in Toronto for the last two decades. Released by Alma Records (ACD98172 almarecords.com), the disc is dedicated to her two daughters and her native country, Venezuela. Afro-Venezuelan rhythms permeate the entire project, which...
comprises seven Cuevas original tunes and three she co-wrote with producer/keyboardsit Jeremy Ledbetter who also did the arrangements. Central to the recording is Jonathan “Moroco” Gavidia and several percussionist colleagues who Cuevas met through Aquiles Báez, a Venezuelan guitar-and-quatroist who performed in Toronto last year and who is also featured here on several tracks.

I confess I am at a disadvantage in that, although lyrics are included in the booklet, there are no translations and I don’t have much of a Spanish vocabulary. Fortunately the press release that accompanied my copy of the disc includes an explanation of the title. Cuevas says “‘Golpes’ means hit, often referring to rhythms, while ‘flores’ means flowers. To me, the title suggests a combination of the sophistication, beauty and gentleness of flowers and the strength and force of the Afro-Venezuelan rhythms.” There is one song in English, A Tear on the Ground, inspired by a visit to India, where Cuevas “spent a few days doing yoga at an ashram that was right by a lake that had a sign warning people to be careful of the crocodiles.” The song includes the lyric “crocodiles will swim in our tears / and our hearts will pound together without fear,” giving a new take on the phrase “crocodile tears.”

In addition to a number of Venezuelan musicians there are several familiar names from the local jazz scene including Mark Kelso, Rich Brown, George Koller and Daniel Stone. As mentioned, infectious rhythms abound and it’s hard to sit still while listening. One exception is the lush and lovely Mi Linda Maria inspired by Cuevas’ grandmother. With rich string sonorities and Cuevas’ pure voice it is breathtaking, but even here we end up swaying to the beat that builds as the song develops. Golpes y Flores, her fifth release, will further cement Cuevas’ place in Toronto’s World Music firmament and, I expect, will go a long way in bolstering her international career. It is a dandy!

Concert Note: The Eliana Cuevas Ensemble performs at the Rex, 198 Queen St. W. on January 4 and 5 at 9:30pm and at the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts on January 10 (one set only at 3:30pm; free).

I will briefly mention one more pop-inspired disc that I’ve been enjoying this month. Let’s Groove: The Music of Earth, Wind & Fire. Cory Weeds’ latest venture on his Cellar Live label (Cl.O.41017 cellarlive.com). First off, I love the cover. I don’t know if it will come through in the miniature version shown here, but it’s worth a trip to the website just to check it out. I’m not sure it would be safe to “groove” in those oversized shoes, but it’s a great picture! The project was the brainchild of pianist and organist Mike LeDonne who did the arrangements of the iconic R&B band’s tunes and plays soulful and funky Hammond organ throughout. I was always a sucker for EWF vocal gymnastics, missed here, but the saxophones of Weeds (alto) and colleague Steve Kaldestad (tenor) are a satisfying substitute, especially their tight harmonies in unison passages and the flights of fancy in their solos. The excellent rhythm section includes LeDonne’s longtime associate drummer Jason Tiemann, percussionist Liam MacDonald and guitarist Dave Sikula. My favourites are the title track, Getaway and Shining Star. If you’re in the mood to Groove, you can’t top this.

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 enhanced reviews in the Listening Room with audio samples, upcoming performance details and direct links to performers, composers and record labels.

David Olds, DISCoveries Editor discoveries@thewholenote.com

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**STRINGS ATTACHED**

TERRY ROBBINS

There seem to have been several CDs lately featuring outstanding Canadian classical guitarists, and you can add another one to the list with Verdi’s Guitar – Fantasies for Solo Guitar by J. K. Mertz based on operas by Giuseppe Verdi, performed by British Columbia guitarist Alan Rinehart (Ravello RR7979).

Operatic transcriptions were very popular throughout the 19th century in the days before recordings and radio, and were usually made with home performance in mind. These Mertz transcriptions, though, were clearly not aimed at amateurs, gifted or otherwise. The technical challenges of reproducing operatic scores within the limitations of the guitar must have been daunting, but Mertz – an important figure in the development of the Romantic guitar style – produced an Op.8 Opern-Revue that consisted of 34(!) transcriptions of operas by composers from Adam to Wagner.

The six Verdi transcriptions – all included here – are from Ernani, Rigoletto, Nabucco, II Trovatore, La Traviata and I Vespri Siciliani. They are delightful fantasy-style works, with familiar arias popping out from time to time: Ernani, involami; Caro nome; Questa o quella; and La donna e mobile.

Rinheit’s playing is clean and stylish throughout, especially in the tremolo passages in Ernani and I Vespri Siciliani, a technique later used to great effect by Francisco Tárrega.

Now, if we could only hear Wagner’s Flying Dutchman...

Another very interesting Canadian guitar CD is Transcendencia, the debut disc from Alberta flamenco guitarist, Holly Blazina (iTunes; Spotify; hollyblazina.com).

Originally trained as a classical guitarist Blazina has a solid grounding in the traditional flamenco technique and has been composing her own pieces in the genre for more than a decade, workshopping them with noted flamenco masters Paco Fernandez in Seville and Ricardo Diaz in San Francisco. They are in traditional flamenco forms – Alegria, Buleria, Abandolao and Farruca, for instance – and mostly with the traditional accompaniment of male and female voices, palmas and percussion, but often introduce instruments from other musical worlds, such as violin (on three tracks), and saxophone, piano and Persian santur dulcimer (on different single tracks). The result is not so much a mixing of genres as an extension of the flamenco musical style with an added dimension, and it’s very effective.

Blazina’s playing is clean, crisp and idiomatic – especially in Inocucion, the solo final track with its excellent tremolo – and the contributions from the nine other musicians fit in seamlessly. A lovely recorded sound adds to a highly entertaining disc.

Transcriptions form the entire program of another Canadian CD this month, as bassist Joel Quarrening is back with another recital disc of transcriptions for double bass and piano (his Brothers in Brahms was reviewed here in September 2013), this time in Schubert “AN DIE MUSIK” with pianist David Jalbert (joelquarrington.com).
Although transcriptions served a specific purpose in the pre-gramophone days, making otherwise unavailable music available for home performance, in many instances since then they have served primarily to enlarge the repertoire for certain instruments, not always with complete success. Any misgivings you may have in that respect are simply blown away by Quarrington’s playing, however, with his astonishing agility, his sensitivity and delicacy and the warmth and richness of his tonal colour dispelling any lingering doubts. Granted, part of the attraction is listening to him do the impossible on what is usually considered a large and unwieldy instrument, but his performances go way beyond the novelty attraction – this is pure music-making of the highest order.

The title track is one of seven short pieces here, but the two major works are the “Arpeggione” Sonata in A Minor D821 and the Violin Sonata in D Major D984. Both are completely satisfying in all respects, with the final Allegro vivace movement of the latter providing a simply dazzling end to the disc.

With the sensitive accompaniment of David Jalbert the CD is an absolute delight, as well as an absolute wonder, from beginning to end.

**Concert Note:** Pianists David Jalbert and Wonny Song perform music inspired by dance, theatre and visual art on January 14 for Mooredale Concerts and Music & Truffles at Walter Hall.

The American Euclid Quartet presents two works separated by almost exactly 100 years on American Quartets, featuring works by Antonín Dvořák and Wynton Marsalis (Afinat Records AR1701).

The Dvořák is the String Quartet No.12 in F Major Op.96, “American,” written during the composer’s three years as director of the National Conservatory of Music of America in New York and first performed in 1894. The performance here is warm, effusive, vibrant and dynamic.

It seems a long journey from such a completely familiar and frequently heard work to the Marsalis String Quartet No.1 “At the Octet of Balls,” written at the request of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in 1995, but what a fascinating contrast it presents.

The quartet is named for the legendary 18th- and 19th-century balls in the composer’s native New Orleans, described in the booklet notes as being “…given as a way to facilitate long-term relationships between wealthy White men and usually fair-skinned women of colour.” The work has been called Marsalis’ conscious exploration of the American Creole contradictions and compromises – cultural, social and political – exemplified by life in New Orleans.

It’s a long (almost 45 minutes) but utterly engrossing work of seven sections, the longest of which – at ten minutes – is the astonishing opening Come Long Fiddler for solo violin, recalling, in dazzling fashion, the old Black country dance fiddle tradition. Blues, jazz, African, folk, spiritual and ragtime influences abound in the remaining sections, with simply terrific writing and playing: Mating Calls and Delta Rhythms; Creole Contradanzas; Many Gone; Hellbound Highball; Blue Lights on the Bayou.

Finally, with Rampart St. Roux’ House Rag, here are what Dvořák envisioned and encouraged – the use of New World musical material as the basis for classical composition. It makes perfect sense of an apparently diverse program on an outstanding CD.

There are another two excellent sets of the cello suites by Johann Sebastian Bach to add to the already extensive list: Six Cello Suites BWV 1007-1012 by the Australian cellist Richard Narroway (Sono Luminus SLE-70010); and Suiten für Violoncello by the Swiss cellist Thomas Demenga (ECM New Series 2530/31).

There are several immediate differences: at the time of the recordings (2015 and 2014 respectively) Narroway was 24, Demenga 59; it’s the first recording of the suites for Narroway; the second for Demenga; Narroway uses a modern cello and bow, Demenga a Baroque bow and gut strings on 18th-century instruments; Narroway plays at modern pitch, Demenga down a full tone.

There are also similarities though: both players are fully aware of early performance issues and have made extensive study of contemporary sources; and both see these works as essentially dance suites, with lively – but not necessarily fast – tempos.

Narroway has a lovely rich sound that never overwhelms, with beautiful phrasing and a fine rhythmic sense that is given room to breathe and expand. It’s all bursting with life and sounds quite effortless.

Demenga’s tone can sound a bit tight at times, but again there is freedom in the phrasing and rhythms. On the down side, there is a fair amount of noise from the left-hand fingers hitting the fingerboard. You may or may not find that to be distracting, but it does mean that with Demenga you are frequently aware of the presence of the performer; with Narroway, however, rarely if ever are you aware of anything but the music, and it’s his recordings that I will keep returning to.

There’s more immensely satisfying quartet playing on Last Leaf, a recital of Nordic folk tunes all arranged by the Danish String Quartet (ECM New Series 2530). There’s a wide range of sources for the 16 short pieces here, from ancient hymn tunes and medieval ballads to...
boat songs and traditional dance music. In addition, there are original compositions by two members of the quartet – three by cellist Fredrik Schönberg Sjölin and one by violinist Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen – as well as a polska by Swedish fiddler Eva Sæther. Sjölin and Sørensen also add the occasional harmonium, piano and glockenspiel and double bass contributions to enrich the sound.

It’s a really lovely collection, beautifully arranged and played. The quartet members say that they “gathered a bunch of amazing tunes and hope you will enjoy what we have done to them.”

Well, consider it job done.

Dmitri Shostakovich wrote four string quartets in the period 1946–56, years in which his standing with the Soviet regime was still uncertain, so I’m not sure I agree with the statement by the Altius Quartet, on their new CD of Shostakovich String Quartets 7, 8 & 9 (Navona Records NV 6125) that these three works, from 1960–64, were written “directly after World War II when art was often oppressed.” By 1960 Stalin had been dead for seven years and the composer’s rehabilitation was well under way.

There is, however, no doubting the quartet’s assertion that these three highly personal works form a triptych, dedicated as they are to the composer’s first (No.7) and third (No.9) wives and ostensibly to the victims of fascism (No.8) including Shostakovich – indeed, his rehabilitation was well under way.

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A superb pianist equally appreciated as a soloist as well as half of the Goldstone and Clemmow Duo, his final recording, The Piano at the Ballet Volume II - The French Connection (Divine Art dda 25148) is dedicated to his memory.

Goldstone delighted in transcriptions and recorded several featuring music from opera and ballet. This disc is the conclusion of the latter project and uses French composers as the thematic link. Most of the pieces are world premiere recordings, transcribed by various others, although the notes admit that Goldstone made a few improvements along the way.

Goldstone’s playing at age 72 is simply incredible. Speed, reach, accuracy and, above all, unerring musicality mark every transcription he performs. The music tends, understandably, to be extremely athletic and Goldstone’s level of sustained energy is impressive. The finales of Poulenc’s Les Biches and Maurice Thiriet’s L’Oeuf à la coque are fine examples of this. He also captures the grandness of the orchestral score in these transcriptions. Claude Debussy’s Printemps and Maurice Thiriet’s Les Biches are fine examples of this, with its great washes of sound that conclude the second movement.

Reicha Rediscovered Vol.1 (Chandos CHAN 10950) is the promising launch of a series that will see pianist Ivan Ilić record the largely unheard solo piano works of a composer better known for his wind ensemble pieces. A contemporary of Beethoven, Reicha was highly educated and musically intelligent. A number of his later theoretical and philosophical treatises were translated for major European music circles.

The challenge for Ilić is to find and integrate the unique features of Reicha’s language into his playing. The modern ear hears Reicha and understandably recognizes some Haydn, some Mozart and occasional tempestuous bursts of a young firebrand named Beethoven. But the new ground Reicha was breaking was harmonic. The disc contains three pieces from Reicha’s collection titled Practische Beispiele. Ilić encounters each of the composer’s adventurous modulations and plays through them with confidence that pianists of Reicha’s day might well have lacked.

Other tracks include a wonderful set of variations on a theme from Mozart’s The Magic Flute and a substantial mid-career Grande Sonate in C Major that reveals a composer struggling to be free of classical forms. The following volumes by Ilić look promising indeed.

Transcendencia
Holly Blazina
The debut album from Flamenco guitarist, Holly Blazina, features her original compositions with a traditional foundation, spiced with modern harmonies and instrumentation.

Everything is a Translation
Fil Free
Influences from free jazz, contemporary classical music and Scandinavian folk-songs blend together on this release by seven of the most interesting improvisers from Northern Europe.

Root Structure
Mike Downes
Mike Downes (JUNO winner 2014) leads this group of four of Canada’s top jazz musicians, exploring lyrical compositions with a deep underlying structural integrity.

Thoughtful Fun
Heliog Manoeuvre
The Heilig Manoeuvre repertoire is a songbook. It turns into jazz in the hands of these four musicians who share an exceptional rapport!

Brazilian pianist Eliane Rodrigues has recorded the 21 Nocturnes by Chopin on her newest disc Frédéric Chopin – Nocturno (Navona Records NV6123). The two-disc set also includes the Ballades No.1 in G Minor, Op.23 and No.4 in F Minor, Op.52. Rodrigues teaches at the Royal Conservatoire in Antwerp, performs frequently and has more than 25 recordings in her discography. She traces her Chopin connection to her earliest years at the keyboard playing the Waltzes and Mazurkas. But her affection for the Nocturnes is more than wistful nostalgia. A passing reference in her notes suggests a very deep and personal experience made the sadness and melancholy of the Nocturnes profoundly meaningful to her. As if to underscore this, she uses quotations from a fictitious Chopin diary to capture the mood of each Nocturne.

The playing, however, is the proof of her ownership. Entirely consistent and sustained throughout both discs, her interpretations never stray from the beauty and tenderness that Chopin poured into these pieces. Rodrigues never rushes anything. Arching phrases, ornaments and grace notes are all critical to completing the composer’s every utterance, and she gives each one the time it needs to unfold. It’s an arresting and beautiful performance.

Ketevan Kartvelishvili is a power pianist. The title of her new recording The Chase – Liszt, Bartók, Prokofiev (Blue Griffin BGR 437) says it all. Using the title of the final movement from Bartók’s Out of Doors Sz.81 BB89, Kartvelishvili establishes an ethos for this remarkable disc by demonstrating her formidable technique through this relentless onslaught of musical passion. It’s not surprising that Bartók used this piece in his rather dark ballet The Miraculous Mandarin.

Kartvelishvili opens her CD with Liszt’s Mephisto Waltz No.1 S314. She takes this at a blistering speed without ever losing momentum or intensity. Her performance of the Liszt Sonata in B Minor S178 is marvellous. By this point her technical skills are beyond question and what emerges is the tenderness Liszt requires to withdraw into his crucial moments of repose. Even at the sonata’s conclusion, those final measures are powerfully hesitant and highly effective. Prokofiev’s Sonata No.7 in B Flat Major, Op.83 concludes the disc. It’s the second of his three “War Sonatas” and is sometimes called the “Stalingrad.” The outer movements are violent and destructive and leave no doubt about the work’s origin in 1942 Soviet Russia. The
middle movement offers Kartvelishvili another opportunity to reveal the depth of her musicality. With an allusion to a Schumann lied, the movement is fairly withdrawn until she builds it to a near climax in the second half before returning to a quiet ending.

Kartvelishvili plays with both impressive might and tender conviction. Florian Wittenburg is a German-born contemporary composer. He is active throughout Europe but his academic and early career years were spent in the Netherlands. Don’t Push the Piano Around (NurNichtNur 117 01 26) is his latest disc and it adds to an already substantial discography and body of works. Pianist Sebastiaan Oosthout performs on this disc and reveals a strong affinity for Wittenberg’s music. Wittenberg is highly creative and takes his artistic inspiration from everything around him. As a composer, he revels in playing with patterns and sequences. Whether animal sounds, words, or the spelling of a name, Wittenberg is quick to place his subject into changing structures where he plays with progressions and variants.

Oosthout’s grasp of Wittenberg’s language gives him access to the deep emotion of the music, especially in several of the progressions and variants. It’s based on the call of an African fish eagle, notated and harmonized in a highly engaging way. This is an intriguing recording worth hearing.

Rossini – William Tell
Gerald Finley; Malin Byström; John Osborn; Royal Opera House; Antonio Pappano
Opus Arte OA 1205 D

I first heard William Tell in the spring of 1972, in Florence. That production was billed as the first complete performance since the 1830s. It was clear where a major problem lay. The principal tenor role is long, loud and high. Nicolai Gedda, who was Arnoldo in 1972, had totally lost his voice by the last act. Since then performances have become more frequent (in Toronto we recently heard a concert performance by the Turin opera) and singers are more able to cope with the demands that their roles impose. It is also notable that, whereas the 1972 performance had been in Italian, companies are now giving it in French, the language in which William Tell was composed.

John Osborn has no trouble with the notorious tenor part, while Gerald Finley is magnificent in the title role. A blot on the 1972 performance was the soprano who sang Mathilde, the Habsburg princess. Malin Byström is much better but her high notes are shrill and unpleasant. There are good performances from Eric Hallvarsson as the patriarch Melchthal, from Sofia Fominia in the travesti role of Tell’s son and from “our own” Michael Colvin as a very unpleasant army commander.

The DVDs come with a booklet and an interesting essay by Jonathan White, who argues convincingly that the opera is primarily about the occupation of the land and the enslavement of its citizens. That emphasis finds physical expression in a prominently displayed uprooted tree, an emphasis that is reinforced by the excellent chorus.

Lori Laitman – The Scarlet Letter
Claycomb: Armstrong; MacKenzie; Belcher; Knapp; Gawrysiak; Opera Colorado; Ari Peltola
Naxos 8.669034-35

Nathaniel Hawthorne’s classic American novel, abridged into libretto form by David Mason, premiered in 2016 as a two-act opera composed by Lori Laitman. Strict and stilling moral codes in a c.1600 Puritan community result in the punishment of young Hester Prynne and torment the secret father of her child, Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, as well as her long-lost husband (now returned under an assumed name). Operatic fodder indeed, but strangely juxtaposed with a rather dismal and restrictive setting.

Laitman’s challenge as a composer to reconcile the two is an interesting conundrum. She does indeed provide highly dramatic moments, such as the crowd’s raging at Prynne and the taunting of Dimmesdale by Mistress Hibbons, the town witch (sung by the formidable mezzo Margaret Gawrysiak). As Dimmesdale, tenor Dominic Armstrong’s talents are showcased with long, dramatic episodes of hysteria and guilt. Also remarkable is baritone Malcolm MacKenzie, as the husband bent on revenge. Prynne, on the other hand, proving to be much more stalwart of character, is given a much calmer, gentler musical portrayal. Soprano Laura Claycomb shines in the lullaby sung to daughter Pearl; as a singer, she manages some amazingly high notes without ever sacrificing Prynne’s aura of tenderness. The Opera Colorado Chorus does an excellent job standing in judgement of all. An interesting project indeed and well executed.
In addition to Gregorian chant, books of petit motets were also brought to New France. Composed for solists (or for no more than three voices) with chamber instrumentation, this proved much easier to realize in the colonies than the grand motet, which required large forces. Composers of the form such as Nicolas Lebègue and André Campra are represented on this recording, highlighting the divinely sweet persuasion of the small ensemble. Two of the pieces, Inviolata and Ego sum panis vivus, are examples of the petit motet translated into the Algonquin Abenaki dialect to abet religious conversion of the Native population. The choir and solists’ exquisite renderings throughout the CD bring the history to life, enhanced by organist Réjean Poirier’s performances of pieces from Livre d’orgue de Montréal.

Dianne Wells

Donizetti – La Favorite
Elina Garanča; Bayerische Staatsoper; Karel Mark Chichon
Deutsche Grammophon 073 5358

This is indeed a superlative performance from Munich, to be remembered for a long time to come. It brings out all the glory that lay partly dormant in past performances, although the opera did well for the last 177 years since first performed in Paris with great success. This new production perhaps wouldn’t have happened without Elina Garanča’s keen interest in the project; the role seems written for her and she even brought along her husband Karel Mark Chichon to conduct as if the score was written for him. A happy situation, as there is a symbiotic relationship here; the two inspire each other and it sparks like electricity in the air.

The great mezzo towers over everything, vocally, artistically and even physically with tremendous vocal and emotional range and an incredible commitment to the character she plays. Léonor de Guzman is a beautiful woman literally enslaved by the King of Castile in 14th-century Spain, trying to break out by finding true love with a young man, only to be outlawed by the King, losing everything including her life. No less memorable are the men: American lyric tenor Matthew Polenzani, as Fernand the hapless lover, is glorious in his passionate rendition” played so rockingly gentle by Philcox that one is easily lulled and thus bewildered, but happily so.

Dianne Wells

Robert Tomas

Musique Sacrée en Nouvelle-France
Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal; Christopher Jackson; Réjean Poirier
ATMA ACD2 2764 (atmaclasique.com)

This recording is a re-issue of a 1995 album originally titled Le Chant de la Jerusalem des terres froides on the French label K617. At the time, founding member Christopher Jackson (1948-2015) directed Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal. The program represents sacred music from the daily life of 17th-century French settlements in the New World. Books of plainchant brought to New France were utilized in church services, but also formed the basis of a new style, adapted in both new and old worlds, which added ornamentation borrowed from secular repertoire. Mass excerpts by Henry du Mont, based in Paris, serve as excellent examples of this practice.

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Talented director Amélie Niermeyer has a well-thought-out concept definitely centring on the woman. Sets are minimal but powerful and create intimacy as well as religious fervour, not to mention space and grandeur that works so well that it even invokes the Grand Opera in Paris.

Dianne Wells

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Kurt Weill may be correctly described as a misunderstood genius. He was very serious about his music, yet was (and still is by many) dismissed as a “cabaret composer.” Despite the success of his collaborations with Bertolt Brecht, these works were banned in Nazi Germany and took the better part of the 1970s to reclaim their place in the repertoire. Similarly, his American works (One Touch of Venus, Street Scene, Lost in the Stars) were judged to be “not American enough” and not sufficiently “jazzy.” Here is a pairing of two artists to put both of these myths to well-deserved rest.

Kate Lindsey, a classically trained mezzo, takes on Weill as if his works were more traditional German and Austrian lieder. In fact, when intermingled with songs by Alma Zemlinsky, the interpretative point is beautifully made. On the other hand, jazz pianist Baptiste Trotignon eschews often sketchy and reliably non-Weill arrangements and reductions and instead interprets the melodies in the best jazz tradition. The result is as fresh and surprising as you would expect: Weill the classical composer, and Weill the Gershwin rival! Although for many of us it may be hard to get the voice of Lotte Lenya out of our heads, the genius of Weill demands no less than that.

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Serenade
Thomas Hampson; Maciej Pikulski
Pentatone PTC 5186 681
(pentatonenmusic.com)

Dominick Argento – The Adriee Expedition
Brian Mulligan; Timothy Long
Naxos 8.559828 (brian-mulligan.com)

The king of voices (in my small universe) proves again its power and beauty, showcased by both a seasoned and a novice singer, delivering the most satisfying vocal music of the past and the present and leaving the listener with an urgent need to hear more. Now, about those violas...

Robert Aldridge – Sister Carrie
Zabala; Phares; Morgan; Jordehim; Cunningham; Florentine Opera Chorus; Florentine Opera Company; Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra; William Boggs
Naxos 8.669039-40

Moby-Dick, The Grapes of Wrath, Little Women, The Scarlet Letter... The list of new operas based on classic American novels keeps growing. In 2012, the Naxos recording of Robert Aldridge’s Elmer Gantry, with a libretto by Herschel Garfein, won the Grammy for Best Contemporary Classical Composition. That same year, Aldridge and Garfein completed Sister Carrie, based on Theodore Dreiser’s novel. It was premiered and recorded in 2016 by Milwaukee’s Florentine Opera Company.

It’s 1900. Carrie (mezzo-soprano Adriana Zabala) leaves her job in a Chicago shoe factory, becoming the mistress of salesman Charlie Drouet (tenor Matt Morgan). Besotted with her, restaurant manager George Hurstwood (baritone Keith Phares) steals $10,000 from the restaurant safe, abandons his wife and children, and tricks Carrie into joining him on a train to New York.

Tracked down, Hurstwood avoids prosecution by returning $7,000, promising to repay the balance. Suddenly impoverished, he becomes depressed and reclusive. Carrie leaves him, finding work as an operetta chorister (the dress rehearsal scene is hilarious). Hurstwood, unemployed and homeless, is severely beaten leaving homeless replacement-workers during a labour strike. The opera ends with a chorus of homeless men, Hurstwood’s suicide and Carrie, now a star, singing in the operetta production-number, Why I’m Single.

Naxos describes Aldridge’s two-and-a-half-hour score as “richly melodic and unapologetically tonal.” Drawing upon the energy and bright colours of Broadway musicals (although a darker palette would have been more appropriate), Sister Carrie succeeds as very accessible, highly theatrical entertainment.

Michael Schulman

Robert Tomas

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The Yeats Project
Sarah Jerrom
Independent SJ2016CD (sarahjerrom.com)

Love Songs of James Joyce
Donna Greenberg
Independent (donnagreenberg.com)

Lots of poetry to music here. Sarah Jerrom sets her sights on William Butler Yeats in The Yeats Project, while Donna Greenberg sets James Joyce’s words to music in Love Songs of James Joyce. Though both similarly use established poetry, each collection is original in setting, style and length. Sarah Jerrom has an almost otherworldly approach to her ethereal compositions, combining jazz, improvised, contemporary and classical music. These are detailed, well-thought-out settings to ten ‘Yeats’ poems, which fit her vocal stylings with complex melodies, wide pitch jumps and subtle tonal colours. She has arranged her work for an all-star nine member chamber band of strings, woodwinds, brass and rhythm section, each member an improvising star in their own right. By treating her instrumentalists as equals, Jerrom creates perfect poetic musical settings. The opening of He wishes for the Cloths of Heaven is a heart-throbbing introduction to an exploration of love through words and sound. In sharp contrast, A Coat / That Reed-Throated Whisper features a more wide-ranging vocal line effectively matched by a very low pitched clarinet. I love the exciting free improvisation atonal section at the beginning of Meru leading to an almost spooky melody with shots and held-note bass back-up. The Lake Isle of Innisfree/ Stream and Sun at Glendalough is as epic as its poetry in length, meandering improvisations and moods. Sailing to Byzantium is a more traditional jazz tonal tune with bouncy drum and piano groove, clarinet solo and vocal line swells and scat. So much reflection, talent and respect for music, words and performers make The Yeats Project a memorable concentrated listening experience.

Donna Greenberg has chosen 13 unrelated poems from James Joyce’s Chamber Music (1907) to compose a song cycle that tells the story of unrequited love. She too touches many styles from classical to jazz to folk to tell her musical story, creating interesting accessible music. Her songs complement her voice perfectly, while superstar jazz pianist Mark Kieswetter performs and arranges for piano, voice, strings, winds and harp. The vocal and piano performances...
are extremely musical, especially in My Love is a Light Attire where the subtle piano introduction leads to straightforward singing about the splendours of love, setting the stage for an emotional wash of strings and shifting harmonies. Greenberg seems to be the most in her element in the jazzy O Cool, which features an extended piano solo and nice doubling of voice and clarinet against the bass line. It is great to hear Greenberg vocalize at low pitches against low instrumental timbres in Sleep Now, about insomnia and betrayal. Though not as dense as Jerrom’s, Greenberg’s song cycle is moving, smart and lyrical.

**Tiina Kiik**

**CLASSICAL AND BEYOND**

Beethoven: Piano Trios Vol.5 – “Archduke”

Tripiano, Kadaku Variations

Xyrion Trio

Naxos 8.572343

> Just like the Emperor Concerto, Beethoven’s Piano Trio in B-flat, Op.97 is also aptly named. Apart from Archduke Rudolf, Crown Prince of Austria to whom it was dedicated, it is also the grandest, most noble of the six works in this genre, a real Archduke of trios. It has an unforgettable beautiful opening theme that Beethoven breaks down into small fragments with ever-changing instrumental combinations and moods so they become sources of further surprises. My love affair with it began in my youth after hearing the legendary Cortot/Thibaud/Casals recording on EMI; it reverberated in me so much that I resisted listening to any later version. Until now that is, when I came across this new recording by three young women from Germany who have recorded all of Beethoven’s trios as their debut with Naxos, winning some prestigious prizes and world acclaim thereafter. I was immediately surprised by the upbeat tempo, a bit faster than I remembered, and quite taken by the youthful, exuberant and fresh spirit, where the strong personalities and virtuosity of the individual artists add a new insight, achieving a “vibrant and glowing” (Fono Forum) and intense performance.

The Archduke Trio is flanked by two lesser works. First is the earlier (1803) Kadaku Variations, where Beethoven’s sense of humour is evident with its long, gloomy slow G-minor introduction that abruptly bursts into a popular ditty and a set of bravura variations. At one point one can even hear the kadaku (cockato) shrieking on the violin. The even earlier Trio in E-flat Major, WoO 38 from 1790 closes and adds further richness to this delightful recording.

**Janos Gardonyi**

Programs 13 & 14; Programs 15 & 16

All-Star Orchestra; Gerard Schwarz

Naxos 2.110561 and 2.110562

> It’s been three years now since the American conductor Gerard Schwarz embarking on an ambitious project: assemble 95 leading musicians from top orchestras across 22 states and record an annual series of concerts without an audience over a brief four-day period using high-definition video cameras. The undertaking has garnered considerable critical acclaim, and since 2014, the All-Star Orchestra has made a significant name for itself both through television performances on PBS and WNET and by means of a series of DVDs on the Naxos label. The recording sessions made during the third season have been captured on two DVDs – programs 15 & 16 respectively – and together they present eclectic programs of music from the late Romantic period to the 20th century.

The first of these, subtitled “Russian Treasures” and “Northern Lights,” features Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition, excerpts from Prokofiev’s ballet Romeo and Juliet and the Symphony No.2 by Jean Sibelius. Prior to each performance, Schwarz provides an informal commentary, while various members of the orchestra offer their thoughts on the music as well, all of which makes for an engaging personal touch – and the myriad of effective camera angles throughout gives the ensemble a strong sense of presence. The performances of all three works are uniformly excellent. The individual movements from Pictures are finely crafted, while the familiar segments from the ballet – Capuletts and Montagues, Portrait of the Young Juliet, Minuet and Death of Tybalt, are in no small way aided by the warm strings, a full and well-rounded brass section and woodwinds with impeccable clarity. Sibelius’ grand and expansive symphony from 1902 is treated with much aplomb, from the gentle opening movement to the jubilant finale.

Programs 15 and 16 take the viewer from Northern Europe to England and America of the 19th and 20th centuries. “British Enigmas” presents Elgar’s noble and dignified Enigma Variations and Britten’s Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra. Less well known are the ethereal Symphony No.2 “Mysterious Mountain” by American composer Alan Hovhaness and the Jubilee Variations, a collaborative work by English composer Eugene Goossens and ten American composer friends. The final movement of the variations, written by Goossens himself, is a true tour de force requiring the ensemble to pull out all the stops, thus bringing the work – and the

**Roger Knox**

The Tchaikovsky Project – Manfred Symphony

Czech Philharmonic; Semyon Bychkov

Decca 483 2320

> This CD is the second release in Decca Classics’ orch-estrat Tchaikovsky Project that features the Czech Philharmonic and conductor Semyon Bychkov. For a lonely Romantic symphony needing advocacy, this loving version of the much-criticized Manfred Symphony (1886) is the answer. An hour long and very difficult, the work here receives extraordinary endorsesments in both performance and program notes. In the Lento lugubre movement, action begins with Manfred’s gloomy descending theme in B-minor, a key associated with tragedy (as in Swan Lake). The drama is well-paced, with the orchestra holding nothing back. The music of Manfred’s beloved Astarte is an abrupt contrast, delicate strings in delightful interplay with enticing woodwinds. But the mood is temporary; through a controlled build-up, brass forceful but not blaring, Bychkov ushers in her climactic death.

In the accompanying booklet, Bychkov’s rebuttals to criticisms of repetitiveness and episodic structure emphasize the work as drama. While he compares it to opera I think of ballet, for example in the light-on-its-feet second movement where grieving Manfred spots a water spirit; tremendously fast woodwind runs precede strings of supernatural virtuosity. In the following movement the Ländler’s dance rhythm along with instrumental drones portray the Alpine people’s rustic life, Manfred looking on sadly. The Czechs’ idiomatic playing makes me want to get up and dance! The orchestra’s energy and aplomb through the bacchanal and ensuing fugue are remarkable, though only in heaven are the lovers reunited. Strongly recommended.

**Richard Haskell**
MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

Shostakovich – The Golden Age
BelAir BAC443

▶ A friend and I watched this video of, as we used to call it, The Age of Gold, with neither of us knowing the story nor what they were dancing about. Nevertheless, it was so brilliant that we watched it with delight for quite some time, simply revelling in the joyous and boisterous music while captivated by the goings-on onstage.

Shostakovich had a gift for musical satire, as his opera The Nose exemplifies. This story plays out on the floor of the Golden Age, a restaurant in the south of Russia and a favorite haunt of petty criminals in the 1920s. Interlaced with a floor show in progress at the restaurant, a young girl, Rita, now known as Mademoiselle Margot, is desired both by Boris, a young fisherman and aspiring actor and Jacques, Rita’s dance partner, in reality Yashka, the leader of a local gang of bandits. Inevitably, as in any good melodrama, eventually someone is stabbed to death. The librettist and choreographer is the legendary Yuri Grigorovich, well known and adored by those in the know, the principal dancers and Grigorovich the action is vibrant and non-stop. There are a few familiar tunes, including the Polka and Tea for Two. For those in the know, the principal dancers are Nina Kaptsova (Rita), Ruslan Skvortsov (Boris), Mikhail Lobukhin (Yashka), Ekaterina Krysanova (Lyuska, Yashka’s accomplice) and Vyacheslav Lopatin (variety show compere at the Golden Age). The high-definition video is, as expected, breathtakingly real, as is the usual astonishing virtuosity of the Bolshoi orchestra as heard in earlier releases. For fans of Shostakovich and/or Grigorovich this is a self-recommending must-have.

As we are getting to that time of year, here are two apropos serious gift suggestions: The Great Bolshoi Ballets: four Blu-ray discs in one package – Nutcracker, Sleeping Beauty, Giselle and The Flames of Paris (BelAir BAC001), breathtaking in every respect; and Shostakovich: The Complete Symphonies & Concertos with Valery Gergiev and the Orchestra and Chorus of the Mariinsky Theatre & six soloists (Arthaus Musik 107552, four Blu-ray discs plus hardbound book). These are definitive live performances recorded over the span of a year in the Salle Pleyel in Paris. Unique. Bruce Surtees

George Antheil – Symphonies 4 and 5
BBC Philharmonic; John Storgårds
Chandos CHAN 10941

▶ Best remembered for his futuristic Ballet mécanique of 1926, the New Jersey-born pianist and composer George Antheil (1900–1959) was in his youth the darling of the Parisian avant-garde and a rising star of American music. Alas, his attempt to replicate his Parisian acclaim with an ambitious, high-profile American remounting of this work at Carnegie Hall in 1929 was a disaster from which the self-proclaimed “Bad Boy of Music” was slow to recover. His scandalous score (originally conceived for an orchestra of player pianos, percussionists and airplane propeller) was not to be heard again for 60 years. Dejected, the pugnacious, pistol-packing composer eventually found work in Hollywood, where he scored films and worked as a journalist. The patriotic fervour of wartime 1940s America brought him back into the spotlight with a catalogue of works radically more conventional than those of his youth. Antheil’s Symphonies No. 4 (subtitled “1942”) was broadcast nationwide by Stokowski in 1944 to great acclaim and received numerous subsequent performances. Later Eugene Ormandy would come calling to commission his “Joyous” Symphony No. 5 (1948) for the Philadelphia Orchestra. Throughout the 1950s however, the quest for the “Great American Symphony” faded along with Antheil’s career. He died suddenly in 1959 of a heart attack.

The numerous tempo changes noted in the track details to the movements of these two symphonies hint at Antheil’s problematic sectional approach to composition. It is a challenge for any conductor to tie so many mood swings together coherently, a task that Storgårds for the most part achieves, though to my mind Hugh Wolff’s 1982 recording of the same symphonies with the Frankfurt RSO from the year 2000 is superior in this regard. Despite the patchwork nature of Antheil’s music there is never a dull moment; the listener, though perhaps a tad confused, will find the music consistently engaging and effectively orchestrated. Surprisingly, despite the self-consciously upbeat all-American profile of these works, both symphonies exhibit strong influences from the leading Soviet composers of the era, notably the obsessive dactylic rhythms of Shostakovich and the harmonic twists of Prokofiev. A bonus track brings us the first recording of Antheil’s Over the Plains (1945), a cinematic evocation of the landscape of Texas. All told, an intriguing and enjoyable album, quite plausibly recorded and very keenly played. Daniel Foley

Facets
Cline/Cuestas Duo
Independent (clicnecuestasduo.com)

▶ There are many fine flutists in the world these days, and Jenny Cline of the Cline/Cuestas Duo is definitely one of them. She and guitarist Carlos Cuestas have put together a terrific program which combines four substantial contemporary compositions balanced by music from the late 19th and the early- and the mid-20th centuries.

At 15 minutes, Maximo Diego Pujol’s Suite Buenos Aires is the longest of the four contemporary pieces. Composed in 1995, its four movements depict different parts of the city after which it is named. The slow second movement is particularly exquisite, opening with a guitar solo beautifully played by Cuestas, setting up Cline for the heartrending solo which follows. The last movement too, is particularly noteworthy, bristling with excitement and precise teamwork.

Among the earlier compositions are six of Bartók’s Romanian Dances and Enrique Granados’ Danza Española No. 5: Andaluza, from which the duo draws haunting nostalgia for times past in pre-cataclysm Eastern Europe and Spain respectively.

Daniel Dorff’s Serenade to Eve. After Rodin (1999), beginning passionately lyrical and moving to an astonishing virtuosic conclusion, is yet another great addition to the contemporary repertoire for flute and guitar. So too is Gary Schocker’s Silk Worms, music of great refinement commissioned by the duo in 2013 and interpreted here with warmth and conviction.

Credit also goes to Oscar Zambrano, who mastered the recording, for really getting the balance between the two instruments just right. Congratulations to all who were involved for an excellent first CD.

Allan Pulker

Klezmier Dreams
André Moisan; Quatuor Molinari; Jean Saulnier
ATMA ACD 2738 (atmaclassique.com)

▶ Originating hundreds of years ago, the roots of klezmer, the instrumental party music of Ashkenazi Jewish communities, were enriched by contact with the music of the people of Central and Eastern Europe and beginning in the early 20th century, with jazz. The performance of klezmer music generally
declined as the last century progressed. Beginning in the 1970s a grassroots revival spread out from its North American base, today’s klezmer scene (re)embraces the globe. Arab, Indian, Celtic and Korean musicians are getting in on the act. Earlier this year Amalia Rubin’s performance of a 1927 Yiddish song on Mongolian TV’s version of American Idol, accompanied by six Mongolian instrumentalists, garnered thousands of likes on social media.

Despite its transnational appeal, there are, however, essential features which distinguish klezmer music. Glissandi and syncopation that evoke laughter or sob, ornamentation of the melody reflecting the inflections of the human voice, and melodies moving within the tonal modes of Central/Eastern Europe are just three. Emotional mood is also often sharply delineated, ranging from deep melancholy to dancing exuberance.

Classical concert composers have been attracted by klezmer’s vibrancy too. Five are represented in the very satisfying album Klezmer Dreams, including two Canadians, Srul Irving Glick (1934–2002) and Airat Ichmouratov (b.1972). Sergei Prokofiev’s Overture on Hebrew Themes (1919) for clarinet, piano and string quartet is the oldest composition on this disc. Prokofiev retains the folkloric flavour of the Jewish melodies he borrowed while maintaining his idiosyncratic composer voice, this time rendered in a light tone. At over 35 minutes The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind (1994) for Klezmer clarinet and string quartet, by Argentinean-American composer Osvaldo Golijov (b.1960), is by far the longest and stylistically most adventurous score here. It features the brilliant and stylistically spot-on Klezmorim clarinet soloists of Montrealer André莫isan. Starting and ending with a prayer, “Thou pass and record, count and visit, every living soul, appointing the measure of every creature’s life and decreeing its destiny,” this substantial work definitively demonstrates the reach of klezmer—once considered folk party music—deep into the concert hall.

Andrew Timar

Toy Piano Composers
Toy Piano Composers Ensemble; Pratik Gandhi
Redshift Records TK452
(toypianocomposers.com)

There can be few more reliable guarantors of contemporary music that is both thoughtful and entertaining than when the name Toy Piano Composers (TPC) appears on the tin. Founded by pianists and composers Monica Pearce and Chris Thornborrow, and now with a decade of growth in performance that has included over 120 new works in various formats from chamber orchestra to operatic, TPC, fronted by its ensemble, has grown exponentially in performance and in creativity.

Fuelled as much by Reich, Riley, Glass and Pärt as by the unfettered creativity of young questing minds, the composers in the collective as well as its performing ensemble have continually pushed the proverbial envelope and the ceaselessly receding horizon, with music that has swelled with classical elegance and avant-garde subversion. This album—simply bearing the collective’s name—appears to be the first by a group that has focused so far solely on performance.

In keeping with the mission to create something new and remain in the continuum of the classical tradition, these seven works, written by various composers from 2010 to 2014, are performed by the TPC Ensemble, a group of nine instruments of contrasting character. Together they are famously at ease with the most testing new music for traditional acoustic instruments plus toy piano. From Clangor (Pearce) to Hermes’ Lure (Ruth Guechtal) and Modus Operandi (Nancy Tam), the TPC Ensemble may seem stretched to the limit but are equal to the challenge.

Raul da Gama

Charles Wuorinen Vol. 3
loadbang; Anne-Marie McDermott; Group for Contemporary Music; Charles Wuorinen
Bridge Records 9490 (bridgerecords.com)

Among the most prolific of contemporary composers, the 79-year-old Charles Wuorinen’s catalogue of 260-plus compositions includes works for opera, orchestra and chamber music, as well as solo instruments and voice. He has received many awards, including the Pulitzer Prize and the MacArthur Fellowship. The 2014 Madrid premiere of Wuorinen’s opera, set on Annie Proulx’s Brokeback Mountain, was covered by international media and has had several subsequent European productions.

Anthony Tommasini in his 2014 New York Times review characterized Wuorinen as an “unabashedly complex Modernist.” And while in 2008 Wuorinen called the term serialism “almost without meaning,” nevertheless his career-long commitment to 12-tone composition is clear, with Schoenberg, Berg, late Stravinsky and Babbitt cited among primary influences. Fractals and Mandelbrot mathematical sets are also central to Wuorinen’s recent compositional procedures.

Much of Wuorinen’s music makes great technical demands on musicians, including tonal leaps, extreme dynamic contrasts, and rapid exchange of pitches, all requiring extreme precision and virtuosity. This is all on ample display in the three works on Charles Wuorinen, Vol. 3. The album opens with Alphabetical Ashbery (2013) a song cycle/motet marked by the free-flowing, playful and often disjointive poems by the American poet John Ashbery performed by the unique forces of loadbang: Jeffrey Gawett, baritone, Carlos Cordeiro, bass clarinet, Andy Kozar, trumpet and William Lang, trombone. The muscular and substantial Fourth Piano Sonata (2007), the latest and most traditionally structured of Wuorinen’s works in this genre, is definitively rendered by the brilliant pianist Anne-Marie McDermott. It Happens Like This (2010) closes the CD. At just over 39 minutes in seven bite-sized movements, this four-voice cantata is set to American modernist James Tate’s surrealistic poems, providing a charming close to our musical visit with one of America’s enduring elder statesmen of composition.

Andrew Timar

Rhaptodies Around the World
Guy Yehuda; Deborah Moriarty
Blue Griffin Records BGR441 (bluegriffin.com)

An ambitious project launched by clarinetist Guy Yehuda resulted in six new works for clarinet and piano, all somehow influenced by Claude Debussy’s Enigma Variations. Clangor. Rhaptodies Around the World is a fair description of the contents, as all the continents are represented by the diverse set of composers Yehuda chose to commission.

The disc opens with his performance of the model work, and Yehuda demonstrates a decent finesse with this always-difficult piece. His reading is marked by certain injections of personality, if that’s the right word. Over time a well-worn piece might seem to beg for reinterpretation, and one is always free to provide one, just as a listener is free to like or dislike the layering of liberties pasted on the original.

I’m grateful nonetheless to the performer for this collection. The various spinsoffs most resemble the original only in duration, each between eight and ten minutes in length. The composers provide an accounting of their approach to the project’s requirements, some more prolix than others. The essay by Michel Petrossian describing his Song bears so much analysis on its own that one might forget the fine piece of music it describes. American violinist/composer Piotr Szewczyk’s Luminous Rhapody reminds me of the music of Joan Tower. Yao Chen almost literally recalls the original Rhapody at the outset of Through Waters, By Mountains. Clare Loveday of South Africa wrote Heatwave during a real heat wave, gave up

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on trying to find a connection to the model work, and came up with a brilliant, jazzy number. It, Parish Ode (attention anagram lovers), by Líduino Pitomba of Brazil, and The Three Alcids by Melody Eotvos are my favourites.

Max Christie

New Discoveries: Cavell Trio
Blue Griffin Records BGR447 (bluegriffin.com)

A trio named for a heroic WW1 nurse, or for the mountain named for Edith Cavell, I'm not sure which, has compiled more than their share of recordings of new works and released them on this disc. Sharing five reeds between them, they also share a deft rhythmic sense and more-than-decent pitch; nor is this surprising, as they work together as section mates of the Tuscaloosa Symphony.

The material is charming and spunky, matched by solid and able instrumental performances by Shelly Myers (oboe), Osiris Molina (clarinet) and Jenny Mann (bassoon). They are at their best in the more challenging works, the opening track Devil Winds by Greg Simon, Ron Wray's Trail Mix and Trois Pieces by Jeanine Rueff. Much of the other material suffers from an amiable sameness, exacerbated by unremitting reediness. The virtue of blend becomes somewhat a cloying sin over the course of this remarkably large collection. It is as though the composers who interest the group all choose similar movement durations, and stick to conventional sequences of mood and tempi. Or perhaps the group has developed a sort of signature set of sequences of mood and tempi. Or maybe there is simply too ample a range of pieces featuring this same group and too narrow a stylistic range of composers presented for it to be something to listen to straight through.

Carping aside, the playing is consistently good; their blend, pitch and rhythmic unity serve the composers well. The disc provides a resource for other trios who might want to pick and choose among the material presented.

Max Christie

Antique Violences: Music of John Mackey
Michigan State University Wind Symphony; Kevin Sedatole
Blue Griffin Records BGR449 (bluegriffin.com)

John Mackey (b.1973) is a much-commissoned American composer. On this disc the vocal writing and instrumentation of Songs for the End of the World (2015), written for the outstanding soprano Lindsay Kesselman, is appealing. It vividly re-imagines part of the Odyssey from the point of view of Kalypso on her island. Mackey's setting of A.E. Jacques's text reflects her weariness from isolation, leaving room for Kesselman's rich voice to grow vocally throughout the performance. In the second movement Kalypso recalls Odysseus washing up on shore after his shipwreck and, in Lydian mode phrases extending into Kesselman's radiant top range, her healing of him and the love they developed. Bright harp, vibraphone and piano tones add lustre. But after seven years Odysseus leaves for Ithaca where Penelope awaits. The third movement's title At Sea indicates Kalypso's memory-haunted despair, captured in Kesselman's mournful tone backed by an evanescent harp.

Antique Violences (2017), a four-movement trumpet concerto premiered with panache by Justin Emerich, evokes and questions mass violence throughout history. While admiring the composer's wind symphony mastery and idiomatic trumpet part, I question whether the work realizes its stated musical ideas. According to program notes for the second movement "The music begins in a decadent French Baroque style, then unravels its shimmering mask to reveal the barbarism beneath." But to me it is poor musical pastiche, lacking compensating artistic value. Asphalt Cocktail (2008) is a high-class car chase, with the Michigan State University Wind Symphony conducted by Kevin L. Sedatole attaining peak form.

Roger Knox

JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

The Brightest Minute
Andrew Scott Quartet
Cellar Live CL022817 (cellarlive.com)

Skilled guitarist, composer, arranger and highly respected jazz educator Andrew Scott has just released his new Quartet CD under the fine auspices of the internationally noted jazz label Cellar Live. Co-produced by Scott and pianist Jake Wilkinson (who also engineered), the CD features eight tasty original, contemporary jazz compositions by Scott, as well as a fine lineup of players including Scott on guitar, Wilkinson on piano, Jon Meyer on bass and Jeff Halischuk on drums.

Kicking things off is My Ears Can’t Hear Your Voice. Scott’s swinging, soulful, full-bodied guitar sound brings to mind elements of Tal Farlow, Herb Ellis and Grant Green. Combine that with a tight, groovey, acoustic quartet, propelled by the jaunty, well-written material and Scott’s facile soloing, and you have a dynamic jazz track. Wilkinson’s rhythmic and emotional piano style is clearly featured here, and is reminiscent of a young Hampton Hawes.

A highlight of the recording (and in contrast to the rest of the high-octane tracks) is the thoroughly gorgeous ballad For Marilyn, dedicated to Scott’s late mother, Marilyn Elizabeth Scott, who died in 2016. Scott is capable of such direct communication through his music that one can easily feel the love that inspired this piece. Also of note is the title tune – a high-intensity, New Y ork-ish cooker that features not only the musical tightness of the ensemble, but also the high level of unspoken communication between the band members. A final favourite is Dreamin’ – rendered with an almost Basie-like simplicity and Scott’s perfect, rhythmic comping and in-the-pocket soloing. Easily one of the best small jazz group recordings of the year.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Grey Mirror
Jamie Reynolds
Fresh Sound New Talent FSNT 528 (freshsoundrecords.com)

Canadian-born and New York City-based jazz pianist Jamie Reynolds has just released a challenging and deeply moving recording, featuring himself on acoustic piano and Wurlitzer as well as special guests Matthew Stevens on guitar (who also served as co-producer), Orlando LeFleming on acoustic and electric bass and Eric Doob on drums. Other key players on this project are the noted brass quartet, the Westerlies, featuring Andy Clauson and Willem de Koch on trombones, and Zubin Hensler and Riley Mulherkar on trumpets.

In the planning stages Reynolds determined that in order to achieve the artistic expression, depth and meaning that he was looking for, he would arrange most of his 14 original compositions on the CD to be played in two diverse ways – by his trio plus Stevens and also by a brass quartet... thereby illustrating in a very real way, the constant, and often distorted and contradictory mirror images of nature.

The opening track, The Earliest Ending, is first expressed as a brief intro of stunning, warm and moving brass lines, and later as an almost Satie-like piano solo which seamlessly melds into sensual, lush guitar lines. The same juxtaposition occurs with Small Worlds, a hard-driving, face-melting guitar-centric...
quartet take, followed later in the program by a smooth and beautiful brass arrangement of the same composition. Other superb tracks include the evocative title track, which features excellent solos from the quartet and the stirring Good Help, replete with the distinctive, percussive sound of the Wurlitzer electric piano as well as concise and solid bass work from LeFleming.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Slightly Higher in Canada
Kite Trio
Sunset Hill Music SHM-021703
(kitetroio.com)

Sometimes Y
Lina Allemano Four
Lumo Records 2017-7

Squish It!
Lina Allemano’s Titanium Riot
Lumo Records 2017-8 (linaallemano.com)

> With their third release, this fine Montreal-based jazz trio has pushed past the boundaries of contemporary jazz and into a zone of pure expression and freedom. Produced by Dave King (The Bad Plus), the recording is both raw and experimental. Of the 12 explorations here, half are composed by the trio, and half by the talented individual members of the ensemble, which include Eric Couture-Telmosse on guitar, Paul Van Dyk on bass and Eric Dew on drums, synthesizer and banjo.

On the opening track, Pidgin, the ensemble creeps in with a subtle, and then an insistent, guitar-defined rhythm and melody. The seemingly simple becomes complex as the composition dis-assembles into molecular form and re-assembles into kinesthetic harmonic and percussive exultation. The next track up is Paul Van Dyk’s Estranged – a solemn solo journey to the netherworld of the acoustic bass, where dark double-stops transport the listener deep into the chasm of the bass clef. The appealing That Good Old Feeling features the trio in an energetic and joyous light. Bombastic and masterful drum and guitar work as well as solid, innovative bass lines (arco and pizzicato) and some well-placed banjo embellishments define this fine arrangement.

The dynamic title track establishes a complex pulse of opposition and contrast, while lyrical sections seductively lure the listener into a thrilling guitar-infused realm of vibrancy, rife with the goose-bump raising excitement of possible danger. Another standout is Milkman, which represents the perfect integration of rock and free jazz sensibilities, and also features more superb Richter-scale musicianship from the trio as well as intriguing synthesizer sequences.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

> Trumpeter Lina Allemano has been playing in Toronto for two decades, becoming a central figure among the city’s more creative musicians and developing enduring musical associations that tip over into a variety of bands. In recent years, Allemano has been splitting her time between Toronto and Berlin, where her musical life includes work with improvising ensembles from duos to the Berlin Improvisers Orchestra as well as studies with Axel Dörner, whose exploration of extended techniques has given the trumpet new life. On the home front, Allemano is releasing work by her two ongoing Toronto bands, each CD testifying to the virtues of longstanding partnerships combined with questing musical minds.

The Lina Allemano Four first recorded in 2003 and the current lineup has been in place since 2006, with alto saxophonist Brodie West, bassist Andrew Downning and drummer Nick Fraser. The group has apparent roots in classic free jazz ensembles like the Ornette Coleman Quartet, with similar emphasis on the leader’s compositions and an almost stark principle of dialogue consistently informing the music. There’s a frequent emphasis on speech patterns in Allemano’s compositions, sometimes consisting of short, emphatic truncated phrases, and their realizations here are just as conversational, with West consistently adding supportive counterlines to Allemano’s solos and the trumpeter returning the favour. Kamado, a high point, ends with an extended group dialogue that grows naturally from Downning’s arco lead.

Allemano first assembled Titanium Riot in 2013 and released the group’s debut Kiss the Brain a year later. Including Ryan Driver on analogue synthesizer, Rob Clutton on electric bass and Nick Fraser on drums, the group, devoted to free collective improvisation, undoubtedly benefits from the years working together in different contexts. The 2017 recording Squish It! is a dramatic continuation of the process. In this context, Allemano combines a distilled and pointed lyricism with striking timbral explorations to provide the music with an essential focus. It’s evident in the opening moments of the title track as she concentrates on long tones and a sound that’s a striking combination of subtle muting and the light buzz of air through the horn, the effect suggesting more than one trumpet. The quartet’s close listening and attention to texture consistently create an almost orchestral feel. Allemano’s focused concentration on sonority dovetails with Clutton’s rich sustained bass tones and mobile lines, Fraser’s shifting, energizing patterns and Driver’s creative mix of environmental, vintage cartoon and sci-fi sounds. The results range from the playful to the genuinely mysterious.

While the methodologies of Allemano’s two quartets differ, the groups share a collective passion for creative interaction as well as admirable results.

Stuart Broomer

Concert Note: The official double release party takes place at the Tranzac on Tuesday, November 28.

Thoughtful Fun
Heillig Manoeuvre
Independent HM2017 (heilligman.com)

> Canada’s one-time boy wonder of neo-mainstream, Henry Heillig, has now, unbelievably, spent over 30 years ploughing his fertile furrow across the continent and elsewhere with the Heillig Manoeuvre, among other well-known ensembles. With Thoughtful Fun, the Manoeuvre’s sixth album, the bassist continues to entertain and dazzle in his virtuoso playing together with the extraordinary musicianship of other members of this ensemble.

Every piece here is played by Heillig with a languid ease, each rhythm variation following the other, quietly inexorable, his sumptuous bass sound brilliantly caught in this recording. There is an unhurried quality to his approach, a lived-in character to his phrase-making that is very engaging; and while it might lack the fire and brimstone of youth, it is more than compensated for by the well-honed values of experience.

Stacie McGregor on piano and organ, Charlie Cooley on drums and Alison Young on saxophones also bring their own exceptional musicianship to the eight songs on this disc. Their own playing puts a special spotlight on these beautifully crafted arrangements of beguiling variety and sensuousness, each informed by lovingly caressed phrases at every turn.

Vocalist Alex Tait not only sings on Extreme Strolling and El Niño, but has also written poetic lyrics for the latter song. She too is completely attuned to the vision of the Heillig Manoeuvre. Hers is a voice whose mellifluous timbre beguiles and swings in the spacious arrangements of both songs.

Raul da Gama
Volume Two
Collective Order
Independent (collectiveorderjazz.com)

What separates Volume Two from the 2016 album Volume One by Collective Order is the fact that on this second edition the music comprises original charts written by members of the ensemble, a “community,” as it is referred to in the notes to this package. While it is impossible to imagine a group without at least a musical director, Collective Order prefers to keep that function anonymous in its determination to maintain the communal spirit of these large-ensemble works, no doubt. So far this strategy appears to be working to the group’s advantage, as these 12 charts prove yet again and with good reason.

Incredibly the work of composition too is well-spread, including contributions from Andrew McNab, Liam Stanley, Ethan Tilbury, Ewen Farncombe, Jocelyn Barth, Connor Newton, Chris Adriaanse, Laura Swankey, Jon Foster, Connor Walsh, Belinda Corpuz, Andrew Miller and Joel Visentin. This represents a total of 13 members from the 19-member ensemble; something unusually democratic in any configuration of a music group. Even more remarkable is the fact that despite coming from so many different pens, there appears to be a wonderful uniformity of sound suggesting a kind of rare musical intimacy between the members of the band.

Whether evocative of rarefied realms, such as in Lamiakoe, or for a deep attachment to terra firma, as in Outside My Window, each chart takes us into some wild or wonderful place with trusted and inspiring musical friends.

Raul da Gama

The Tide Turns
Brad Cheeseman
Independent BCM1701
(bradcheeseman.com)

This exploratory borehole into the atmospheric stratum of contemporary music is only the second in the career of bassist Brad Cheeseman. Unlike other early recordings made by musicians of his generation, The Tide Turns redeems itself from self-indulgence by being original (all but one of the compositions is by Cheeseman) and moreover, each is accessible enough to not require any decoding on the part of the listener. Secondly, this is a musical snapshot captured in the process of – as the bassist puts it – “change, self-discovery and reinvention.” To those who feel more than just a hint of ennui, Cheeseman will provide that much needed jolt.

On this disc Cheeseman shows that a musician can set out to find his own voice; and coming ever closer to doing so, might still retain the early echoes of his idols and those who influenced his playing. Happily the accolade of winning the 2016 Montreal Jazz Festival’s Grand Prix de Jazz has not made Cheeseman either wool-headed or a musical stuffed shirt. This is immediately recognisable in the music, which is all born of a questing quality combined with a rhythmically rock-solid yet splendidly discursive style designed to create music that seems to be contemplative rather than chatty. Despite moments which are unnecessarily garrulous and interrupted by frequent solos, this is energetic music exemplified in the swinging of Falling Forward.

Raul da Gama

Float Upstream
Tom Rainey Obligato
Intakt Records CD292 (intaktrec.ch)

There’s a special relationship between jazz and the American Songbook, that collection of old popular songs, Broadway show tunes and movie themes largely assembled from the 1920s to the 1950s. Whether approached casually, romantically, harmonically or ironically, that songbook links performers from Louis Armstrong to Anthony Braxton and almost everyone in between. Drummer Tom Rainey has explored it in depth in association with pianists Fred Hersch and Kenny Werner; with his band Obligato, he has found a distinctive path, combining standards with collective improvisation.

Obligato includes frequent Rainey collaborators, saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock and the emigré Canadian pianist Kris Davis, along with the similarly distinguished trumpeter Ralph Alessi and bassist Drew Gress. They establish an identity immediately, the collectivist Stella by Starlight extending the theme’s moody haze with the horns’ exchanges until Davis initiates a bright, fluid approach, animating the piece along with sparkling eruptions from Gress and Rainey as well.

The advanced harmonic language suggests composer George Russell at times, but Laubrock and Alessi also thrive on the original melodies, developing pointillist moments on Sam Rivers’ Beatrice and a pensive luminosity on I Fall In Love Too Easily. The counterpoint and sheer rhythmic energy of What Is This Thing Called Love?

Another Time – The Hilversum Concert
Bill Evans Trio
Resonance Records HCD-2031 (resonancerecords.org)

In 2016, Resonance released Some Other Time, an unknown studio recording by the Bill Evans Trio from 1968, only the second recording issued by the group that included drummer Jack DeJohnette as well as Evans’ longstanding bassist Eddie Gomez. The label has now released this live radio studio broadcast from the Netherlands, recorded just two days later. The recording quality is every bit as good and the presence of an audience adds to the performance’s vitality.

Evans was a master of ballad reveries that extended the harmonic language of jazz with a Scriabin-like passion for modes and chromaticism. On his greatest recordings, however, he thrived on the most aggressively creative supporting musicians that jazz ever had to offer, the bassist Scott LaFaro and the drummer Philly Joe Jones, who never appeared together in Evans’ recorded legacy. This trio with the relentlessly busy Gomez and DeJohnette, a highly inventive drummer between appointments with Charles Lloyd’s quartet and Miles Davis’ band, is as close as we’re liable to hear.

The complex dynamic exchange adds to You’re Gonna Hear from Me, Evans’ dense chords subtly ambiguating the song’s determined self-confidence, and it only develops from there, whether it’s illuminating the contemporary Who Can I Turn To? or animating the superior ballad Emily. The concert unfolds beautifully, through DeJohnette’s feature Nardis to superb renditions of Evans’ own Turn Out the Stars and a brief, explosive version of Five. It’s an essential recording for Evans enthusiasts.

Vein plays Ravel
Vein (featuring Andy Sheppard)
Challenge Records Int. DMCHR 71179 (vein.ch)

Claude Debussy was at the head of the re-emergence of a complete French school in music that began as a reaction against Wagnerism. His most famous lieutenant was Maurice Ravel who, however, never completely followed Debussy’s lead into the
world of extreme formal and tonal ambiguity. It was Ravel who cultivated a style that combined the Classical with the contemporary and famously – especially in Le Tombeau de Couperin – fostered a more complex hybrid that included Romani music, jazz, Spanish culture and the music of the Far East. It is with that iconic suite composed originally for solo piano that Vein begin their unusual tribute to Ravel.

On Le Tombeau de Couperin Vein employs the jazz trio format to re-imagine Ravel’s suite, adding to the subtle colours and evanescent textures of the music. In the hands of pianist Michael Arbenz, bassist Thomas Lähns and drummer Florian Arbenz, the listener is not merely dazzled by sound, but rather introduced to Ravel’s marvellous sense of melody and structure. This tribute to the dead, written during World War I, is brought back to life by Vein with unconventional and progressive harmonies. A horn section on Bolero finds saxophonist Andy Sheppard its most skilful advocate. Florian Arbenz never loses concentration either, adopting a well-judged pulse and joining the full group in moulding a wonderfully rich orchestral texture. Vein plays Ravel is classic jazz.

Raul da Gama

Despite his compositions and improvisations being shaped by the Romani community, Vein finds saxophonist Andy Sheppard its most skilful advocate. Florian Arbenz never loses concentration either, adopting a well-judged pulse and joining the full group in moulding a wonderfully rich orchestral texture. Vein plays Ravel is classic jazz.

Ken Waxman

Golan Volume 2
Hubert Dupont
Ultrarack UT 1005 (ultrabolic.com)

Although Neither of Either is the second album released by Jordana Talsky, it feels a little like a debut, since this one is almost exclusively original songs. The Toronto-based singer-songwriter (and lawyer) teamed up with JUNO Award-winning producer, Justin Abedin. It’s a happy collaboration, for although the songs are harmonically and rhythmically straightforward at their heart, the textures added by the arrangements and production lend complexity and richness.

The predominant style of the album is indie-pop but there are touches of jazz and soul throughout, making it an interesting listen. It’s even a little bit country on Ways, which has a hook worthy of any Nashville hitmaker. Sick veers into fist-pumping rock-sound territory except it’s done almost all a cappella, which gives it an unusual twist. The techno-tinged Bitter Sweet Heart (co-written with J. Gray) is another standout with its pretty chorus.

Talsky’s voice is warm and appealing – powerful when needed, at times pure and sweet – and her style is refreshingly free of artifice. Her singing and arranging skills really shine on the unaccompanied pieces (like her take on Alanis Morissette’s You Oughta Know, the only cover) where it’s all her – no other singers, no band – and it’s impressive.

Cathy Riches

Tea for Three
The Willows
Flatcar Records FCR-005 (flatcarrecords.com)

There is a plethora of upbeat happy performances in the debut release by the vocal trio The Willows – Krista Deady (contralto), Lauren Pederson (mezzo-soprano, composer/arranger) and Andrea Gregorio (soprano). Their website bio states that they were involved in dance together from childhood, both in their hometown of Edmonton and here in Toronto at Ryerson University’s dance program. A chance public Ryerson music class vocal performance encouraged them to further explore the music world together. They are definitely dancers who can confidently sing with clear diction, colour, pitch, love of life and tight harmonies.

Ken Waxman

Concert Note: Hubert Dupont’s Golan is in concert at Brampton’s Rose Theatre on November 4.
somthing in the air
An Added Ingredient for Integrated Improvisation

K E N  W A X M A N

Sympathetic dynamics and mutual compatibility are attributes ascribed to notable musical groupings. That’s why so many are made up of players from the same country or even the same region: think of the Budapest String Quartet, Liverpool’s The Beatles or the New York Jazz Quartet. But as music becomes more global this nationalism is increasingly rare. Here are CDs whose direction is depicted as being by a foreign player to an existing local combo, by creating a new entity with one expatriate element, or when players from various national backgrounds root themselves in one place.

Judging from the results on Ghost Lights (Songlines 1621–2 songlines.com), French pianist Benoit Delbecq joining the Vancouver-based trio of clarinetist François Houle, guitar and oud player Gordon Grdina and percussionist Kenton Loewen was more like mixing two complementary compounds than introducing an unstable element to a scientific formula. That’s because the Houle/Grdina/Loewen trio has been together since 2014, while the clarinetist and keyboardist have worked as a duo since 1996. Delbecq’s familiarity with non-Western scales coupled with Loewen’s skill on the Arabic lute give pieces such as Ley Land and especially Soft Shadows an Eastern cast. Ley Land’s moody and crepuscule feel is further advanced by slurred string fingering and Houle’s chalumeau slurps. Meantime Soft Shadows’ Eurasian tinge is intertwined with minimalist tones as organ-like drones from processed loops create a continuum. Placing a wispy reed narrative atop sharp guitar lines, percussion shuffles and restrained pianism as on Ghost Lights only works for so long. Like aainty tiara perched on a massive head of hair the wrong movement can upset the balance. Luckily equilibrium is maintained due to contralto clarinet cries matched with modulated piano tones. The CD’s most jazz-like piece is Gold Spheres which evolves into a suite of multicoloured, almost Africanized tinctures. Ghostly and atmospheric via reed snarls and plucked inner piano strings, the swirling theme is both percussive and succoring. Underlying harshness is relieved with slurred guitar fingering while the quartet demonstrates perfect control of the material, since neither this timbral softening nor the preceding firmness prevents the tune from attaining a notable finale.

A similar situation is delineated on the aptly-titled Everything is a Translation (Fiil Free Records FFR0916 farsfiil.dk): a suite composed by Danish pianist Lars Fiil and interpreted by the Fiil Free septet of five Danes, Swedish guitarist Henrik Olsson and Polish trumpeter Tomasz Dąbrowski. Composed so that each subsequent track blends into the next, the five sequences go through sections of speed and static, Arcadian lulls and aggressive outbursts. Symbolically the session also marks how completely Dąbrowski has integrated Scandinavian ethos. Unlike some cases where the soloist seems to be jammed on top of the ensemble, the trumpeter’s muted grace notes are present from the first track Why Search for Common Ground, with textures reflecting back onto Fill’s low-frequency, Lisztian chording and offhanded cracks and swats by drummer Bjørn Heebøll and vibraphonist Martin Fabricius. There’s such bonding that the tempo speeding up and becoming more swinging almost passes unnoticed. Later instances such as a blustering brass call plus piano pumps show how to fearlessly inhabit the groove between hard bop and cool. That piece fades seamlessly into the neo-pastoral title tune, where sour brass whistles in counterpoint to smeared reed lines also don’t upset the narrative flow or detract from the overall beauty. At the same time, since the suite is sturdy and organically constructed to highlight beautiful colours, it never lapses into mere landscaping. To demonstrate its modernity
and the versatility of the players, a track like Is It Doubt includes brass shakes and mouthpiece kisses from the trumpeter that keep the relaxed piano and decorative vibraphone narrative from sounding too comfortable.

A distinct variation of this add-a-foreign-player appears on Live in Moscow (Leo Records CD LR 781 leorecords.com) where the 15-year-old Berlin-based Clarinet Trio – consisting of Jurgen Kupcke (clarinet), Michael Thieke (clarinet, alto clarinet) and Gebhard Ullmann (bass clarinet) was joined by Russian alto saxophonist Alexey Kruglov. Recorded in real time, the CD initially showcases four instances of the trio’s near-telepathic interactions as the members build a collection of layered sonic edifices. In low- or high-frequency elaborations, the sense of perpetual discovery is obvious with Kupcke’s bugle-call timbre-stretching, Thieke decorating the themes with jagged glissandi and Ullmann puffing along freight-train-like preserving the bottom. Adding the saxophonist turns the interface more dissonant, but without losing the connective thread. Collective No.9 (Part 1-4) intensifies the reveille-like yaps, squeaking bent notes and foghorn-pitched smears from the clarinets with the saxophonist contributing tongue slaps, reed bites, then builds to a cacophonous crescendo where all four explore the deepest regions of their horns. Yet not only do the four on Kleine Figuren No.2 immediately unite high-pitched glissandi to create peppy, yet comforting harmonies that are almost as tonal as a Christmas carol, the preceding sounds are prelude to the concluding 14-minute-plus Neu#? No Neu! Perfectly harmonized as a Baroque chamber ensemble, but with finger-snapping energy, they take turns propelling the theme, taking it apart and reconstituting it. Furry slurs from linked alto and bass clarinets suggest a Romantic tone poem, while Kruglov’s jagged and jiggling bass clarinet obbligatos from the saxophonist sound almost moderato. This aural shock to control arrhythmias, and although Brötzmann’s reed blasts have usually been linked to power from the guts, it’s mostly the trio’s electronic boosts which pump out a blitzkrieg of themes so that obligatos from the saxophonist sound almost moderate. This aural landscape of industrial noise also gains traction from the trombonist’s extended plunger forays. With the processed oscillations arriving as unexpected as a prolonged power outage in a city’s downtown core, on pieces such as The Man with One Ball and Fuckbr Brötzmann’s doggedly straightforward improvising, trombone siren calls and drum bumps cut a path through the swishing wave forms like a bowling ball scattering pins. Asserting the primacy of human lung power through a combination of multiphonic growls and altissimo screams is further proof of the saxophonist’s skill. In fact, by the climactic Cellofite Guru finale, many of the underlying drones and signal-processed timbral distortions have become so regularized and damped that Brötzmann’s usual overwrought reed narratives seem as mellow as Sonny Rollins elaborating a tune backed by a conventional rhythm section.

Kruglov’s potential disruptive forces were actually melodiously linked to the Trio’s long-time sound strategy. But an additional element can also push an already dissonant game plan to a strident peak. Consider Conversations About Not Eating Meat (Border of Silence BOS 001 borderofsilence.com). Here the Basel-based Defibrillator trio, made up of Polish brothers Sebastian Smolyn on electronically processed trombone and Artur Smolyn on electronics, plus Berlin-based drummer Oliver Steidle, invite powerful German multi-reedist Peter Brötzmann to record with them. The result could be likened to an aural record of North Korea’s nuclear tests. While a true defibrillator uses electrical shocks to control arrhythmias, and although Brötzmann’s reed blasts have usually been linked to power from the guts, it’s mostly the trio’s electronic boosts which pump out a blitzkrieg of themes so that obligatos from the saxophonist sound almost moderate. This aural landscape of industrial noise also gains traction from the trombonist’s extended plunger forays. With the processed oscillations arriving as unexpected as a prolonged power outage in a city’s downtown core, on pieces such as The Man with One Ball and Fuckbr Brötzmann’s doggedly straightforward improvising, trombone siren calls and drum bumps cut a path through the swishing wave forms like a bowling ball scattering pins. Asserting the primacy of human lung power through a combination of multiphonic growls and altissimo screams is further proof of the saxophonist’s skill. In fact, by the climactic Cellofite Guru finale, many of the underlying drones and signal-processed timbral distortions have become so regularized and damped that Brötzmann’s usual overwrought reed narratives seem as mellow as Sonny Rollins elaborating a tune backed by a conventional rhythm section.

The final variant of our theme involves trombone, saxophone, bass and drums. That’s the configuration of Danish-born Anne Mette Iversen’s Berlin-based Ternion Quartet (Brooklyn Jazz Underground Records BJUR 062 bjurecords.com). Iversen organized the group in 2015 with alto saxophonist Silke Eberhard, percussionist Roland Schneider (both German) and trombonist Geoffroy De Masure (French). Working in classic contemporary fashion with round-robin solos from the frontline firmly grounded by Iversen’s bass pulse and rattling drum beats, the four never stray far from swing. This emphasis on foot-tapping also means that except for the odd cymbal slap and snare clunks on tunes such as Trio One Schneider stays in the background, with the bassist. Overall, the quartet’s most notable work occurs on a trio of tunes placed in the CD’s centre. Debacled Debate gives the trombonist space for vocalized cries, which evolve to bel canto grace notes decorated with twisted trills from Eberhard and a squirming bottom from the rhythm section. Reversing pitch roles, the saxophonist and trombonist extend A Cygnet’s Eunola by moving brass tones upwards and reed timbres downwards. Slippery smears from Eberhard and bottom burrs from De Masure result in harmonies that join to produce skipping swing. The trombone tone remains in the basement during Escapade #7, but before De Masure and Eberhard engage in some jaunty tune-ending call-and-response she constructs a Dolphysesque solo that’s harsher and more dissonant, but doesn’t upset the tune’s forward motion. Such coherent playing is an indication not only of the band’s mutual musical understanding, but also marks an instance in which individual nationality is an invisible part of the performance. It’s this connection to which all these ensembles aspire.
Old Wine, New Bottles
Fine Old Recordings Re-Released

BRUCE SURTEES

Carl Schuricht was an esteemed German conductor in the first half of the 20th century. He was born in Danzig into a dynasty of organ builders in 1880 and studied at the Berlin Hochschule from 1901 to 1903. During his first years as a conductor he was to be heard in Mainz, Kreuznach, Dortmund, Goslar and Zwickau. From 1909 he conducted the Rühl Oratorio Society in Frankfurt-am-Main. From 1912 to 1944 he was the chief conductor and general music director of Wiesbaden and was also active as a guest conductor. He was a guest of the St. Louis Symphony in 1927. After 1944 he conducted and recorded with the finest orchestras, the Vienna, Berlin and London Philharmonics, the Swiss Romande Orchestra, etc. In 1956 he returned to North America with the Vienna Philharmonic on a 12-city tour, appearing in Washington, New York, Cleveland, Cincinnati and elsewhere on the East Coast, and including Toronto's Massey Hall on November 28, winding up before the General Assembly of the UN in New York on December 10. He continued to conduct concerts and record in Europe over the next decade. He died in 1967.

Today, as time and technology march on, his name is really familiar only to collectors such as those who support the long list of his recordings at amazon.com (far fewer at amazon.ca and elsewhere). Newer editions appear from time to time, the most recent from Audite and Decca which contain interesting and engaging performances reflecting his sensitivity and understanding of the composer's intentions.

Decca’s CDs are in a compact box, Carl Schuricht: The Complete Decca Recordings (4831643, 10 CDs). Part of this set is contained in Decca’s Original Masters five-CD set from 2004 with some interesting additions. There is a Beethoven Second taken from the 1947 78s with the Swiss Romande, produced by the renowned Victor Oloff, who produced just about all Schuricht’s recordings at Decca.

The (then) state-of-the-art recordings in this collection, all of which, barring this one, sound very clean and dynamic. Another 1947 Swiss Romande recording features violinist Georg Kulenkampff and cellist Enrico Mainardi in the Brahms Double Concerto. There are many others worthy of attention leading to the tenth disc, an all-Wagner program played by the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra, France’s leading orchestra at the time consisting of professors from the Conservatoire and their pupils. Heard are the Prelude and Liebestod from Tristan and Siegfried’s Rhine Journey leading into Siegfried’s Death and Funeral March from Götterdämmerung. Heaven only knows how many times I’ve heard these but I do not recall being so affected by the poignancy of the Tristan and the sweep of the Siegfried. There is a wealth of superior performances here, sounding clean and dynamic, so do check them out at arkivmusic.com for complete details, except recording dates.

The Audite CD (Lucerne Festival Historic Performances, Vol. 11: Carl Schuricht Conducts Mozart & Brahms, Audite 95645) finds Schuricht joined by pianist Robert Casadesus with the Swiss Festival Orchestra playing Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.27 in B-flat Major, K595 on August 19, 1961. Schuricht had been appearing at the Lucerne Festival since the end of 1944 when he conducted Beethoven’s Missa Solemnis. He was welcomed there as “the only representative, apart from Otto Klemperer, of the generation of old German conductors still remaining active.” The Neue Zürcher Zeitung later reported that “Even if the 81-year-old has difficulty walking to his podium, his music making has remained astonishingly young. His economical, precise beat and the security and suppleness with which he effects modifications of the basic tempo give no hint of fatigue or decline of mental or emotional faculties.” The second item of concerts from Lucerne is the Brahms Second Symphony from September 8, 1962 with the Vienna Philharmonic. A listener might care to compare this performance with the 1953 version also with the Vienna Philharmonic in the above Decca set. It certainly shows what this 82-year “old German conductor” could draw from an orchestra.

I remember years ago collecting the recordings of Walter Gieseking, including the various Schubert shorter pieces that he played with such élan and affection that one would think that they were personal friends. Appian has released a four-CD set of Gieseking’s complete solo recordings of Brahms, Schubert and Schumann that he made for English Columbia in the 1950s (APR 7402, 4 CDs). After looking over the list of contents, I put disc two into my player to hear again Gieseking playing the eight Klavierstücke, Op.76; the Seven Fantasies, Op.116; the Three Intermezzi Op.117 and the six Klavierstücke Op.118. There were some disappointments but many more were just as I remembered. Perhaps the overload of hearing one piece and then another and another is not really an ideal way to judge a work, nor fair to the artists. An overload.

Of interest is that the above four works were recorded over three days, June 20 to June 22, 1950. Unlike many of his colleagues Gieseking enjoyed making recordings. He just sat there and played, so this must have been a treat for him. Also he claimed that he never practised as giving recitals was practise enough. He had the score clearly in his head. The third disc contains the two sets of Impromptus Op.90 and 142. The fourth and last disc with Schubert’s Six Moments musicaux Op.94 and Three Pieces D946 concludes with two Chopin pieces, the Berceuse Op.57 and the Barcarolle Op.60 and two Scriabin pieces, Poème Op.32 No.1 and Prelude Op.15 No.4.

A better way to clear one’s musical taste buds would be to return to disc one for Brahms’ Klavierstücke Op.119 and the Two Rhapsodies Op.79 followed by some music by Brahms’ close friend, Schumann. Here is a gentle reading of Kinderzonen Op.15 and an enthusiastic, at times passionate version of Carnaval Op.9; then a farewell with Schlummerlied, No.16 of Albümblätter Op.124 and some parting notes from the enigmatic Vogel als Prophet, No.7 of Waldszenen Op.82.

There was nothing pretentious about Gieseking’s playing. One gets the distinct feeling that he is sharing his thoughts. Simply, the art that conceals the art.
Oundjian Conducts Vaughan Williams

Peter Oundjian, conductor
Louis Lortie, piano
Sarah Jeffrey, oboe
Teng Li, viola
Carla Huhtanen, soprano
Emily D’Angelo, mezzo-soprano
Lawrence Wiliford, tenor
Tyler Duncan, baritone
Elmer Iseler Singers

Performed by an all-Canadian cast of soloists, this must-see program explores works by the great English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams.

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To commemorate Remembrance Day this year, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and guest conductor Tania Miller will give the Toronto premiere of Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation. The TSO production features soprano Measha Brueggergosman, mezzo-soprano Allyson McHardy, tenor Colin Ainsworth and baritone Brett Polegato with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and the Toronto Children's Chorus. TSO music director Peter Oundjian has written: “Of course, Jeffrey Ryan is one of the country’s most distinguished composers, and his work as our affiliate composer some years ago was outstanding. I am always keen to hear the most recent works by our former affiliates, and when our creative team brought this Requiem to me, I knew that we should program it. It is truly an epic work. Suzanne Steele’s moving poetry and Jeff’s powerful music make for an unforgettable experience.”

The performances take place in 8pm concerts on November 9 and 11 at Roy Thomson Hall. The concert also contains music by Vaughan Williams, the Scottish piper G.S. McLennan and a short so-called “Sesquie for Canada’s 150th” by Julien Bilodeau. Jeffrey Ryan will attend both Toronto performances, as well as a November 10 Calgary Philharmonic performance, in Calgary.

Steele and Ryan’s Requiem adds to the ever-growing repertoire of musical works honouring the sacrifices of Canada’s soldiers over the course of our history and makes for a poignant reminder of the reasons behind their creation. Ever since Canadian poet, doctor and soldier, Lt. Col. John McCrae (1872–1918) wrote In Flanders Fields, composers have been drawing inspiration from it and setting it to music. In 2006, Kingston, Ontario composer John Burge composed his Flanders Fields Reflections. Burge called McCrae’s work, “Perhaps the most famous poem ever written by a Canadian.” The recording of Burge’s work by Sinfonia Toronto on Marquis Classics won the 2009 JUNO for best classical composition. McCrae’s poem has been set numerous times by composers around the world. Interestingly, the very first setting was by American Charles Ives, in 1917. More recently, Canadians Stephen Chatman, Eleanor Daley and Alexander Tilley have also used the poem. In Chatman’s case, it was a setting commissioned by the Vancouver men’s choir, Chor Leoni.

McCrae’s poem is of course not the only literary source for music of remembrance by Canadian composers. Chatman has also made Remembrance Day settings using poetry by Walt Whitman (Reconciliation) and by Christina Rossetti (Songs of Remembrance). (Music by Chatman, Daley and Tilley will be sung in a concert titled “Acquired Taste: Music for Remembrance,” at 7:30pm on Sunday, November 12 at St. Martin-in-the-Fields Anglican Church in Toronto’s west end.)

Born in England, Healey Willan (1880–1968) came to Canada in 1913 and lived and worked through both world wars. He wrote An Apostrophe to the Heavenly Hosts in 1921 for the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. It’s a work that was dedicated to the memory of those members of the choir who had been killed in WWI. Then, in 1939, as Canada entered WWII, Willan composed A Responsory for Use in the Time of War, while serving as precentor of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Toronto.

Near the end of his life, Harry Somers (1925–1999) composed A Thousand Ages, a major work for boy soprano, men’s choir, orchestra and electronics. The title comes from a line in the hymn, Our God, Our Help in Ages Past. Somers’ father had served in WWI and was haunted by severe nightmares throughout his remaining life. Somers recalled how as a youth he had often awoken in the middle of the night to the sound of his father’s screams. A Thousand Ages is one of Somers’ most personal works, and it received its premiere during the Winnipeg Symphony’s New Music Festival in 2000, with Bramwell Tovey conducting. Tovey was so impressed with the work that he made a version that replaced the orchestra with silver band. This is the version that I recorded with my production team, for a CD featuring the Hannaford Street Silver Band and the men of the Amadeus Choir at St. Patrick’s Catholic Church in Toronto. It’s a powerful, visceral work that conveys the horrors that soldiers experience. Personally, I feel it’s an impactful work that should be performed more often at Remembrance Day observances.

The same CD, on the Opening Day label, also contained an important work by Tovey. This was his Requiem for a Charred Skull, written as Tovey’s reaction to the war in Kosovo. It was this recording that won Tovey the 2003 JUNO for best classical composition.

David Jaeger is a composer, producer and broadcaster based in Toronto.
Barbara Hannigan with Reinbert de Leeuw
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 8PM
KOERNER HALL
Tickets start at only $40
Soprano Barbara Hannigan, in her Koerner Hall debut with pianist Reinbert de Leeuw, will perform a curated look at the Second Viennese School. The program features works by Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Alma Mahler, and Hugo Wolf.

Taylor Academy Showcase Concert
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 4:30PM
MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
Free tickets can be reserved starting Fri., Oct. 20
The Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists presents leading young classical musicians in Canada. Hear the stars of tomorrow!

Tania Miller conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2017 8PM
KOERNER HALL
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Maestra Tania Miller conducts the Glenn Gould School’s Royal Conservatory Orchestra in a program that includes the world premiere of Michael Oesterle’s Home alongside works by Prokofiev and Stravinsky. Part of the Temerty Orchestral Program.

Engelbert Humperdinck’s Hansel and Gretel The GGS Fall Opera
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 7:30PM
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 18, 7:30PM
PRE-CONCERT TALK 7PM BOTH NIGHTS
MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
Tickets: $15
Students from The Glenn Gould School’s vocal program present their annual autumn opera. Peter Tiefenbach returns as Music Director for the production, directed by Brent Krysa.

Danilo Pérez Trio and Alfredo Rodríguez Trio
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 8PM
KOERNER HALL
Tickets start at only $40
Two of the best Latin jazz pianists and band leaders in the world bring their trios to Koerner Hall for an unforgettable double bill.

Victor Danchenko
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2017 4PM
MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
Tickets $25
Internationally renowned violinist Victor Danchenko, known for his “unabashedly old-fashioned, romantic style,” (The Baltimore Sun) celebrates his 40th anniversary of arriving in Toronto and the 50th anniversary of his musical collaboration with his sister, pianist Vera Danchenko.

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