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Nicole Lizée

Q & A
Richard Rose on Hamlet (the musical)

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The 2013 Lachine Canal Sessions - Reel-to-Real Photography

The photo session took place in mid November 2013. Murray Lightburn – whose day job is fronting indie rock band The Dears – is also a great photographer and we share a love of analogue. He brought three or four of his vintage film cameras, including a Rolleiflex. I brought a few of my vintage machines in a large suitcase, including an AKAI reel-to-reel and an oscillator robot. Over the course of four hours we shot near the iconic lighthouse on the pier in the heart of Old Lachine. It was brutally cold and the wind was like a knife. I was standing directly on the rocks on the water’s edge wearing heels. The tape from the reels began blowing off the reel into the camera (making for some great shots), and then eventually all over Lachine. We got a few looks from passersby. And there are some outtakes of the session that capture my emotional state as I casually froze to death. – Nicky Lizée

FEATURES

7 OPENER | Back to the Future | DAVID PERLMAN

8 FEATURE | Artful Glitching: Nicole Lizée | WENDALYN BARTLEY

12 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS | Rock and Rage: director Richard Rose | JENNIFER PARR

14 FEATURE | Seminal Schoenberg: the Second Viennese School | DAVID JAEGAR

16 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS | Finding the Balance: pianist George Li | PAUL ENNIS

70 REMEMBERING | Celebrating Cathy Elliott | JENNIFER PARR

71 WE ARE ALL MUSIC’S CHILDREN | MJ BUELL

91 DISCOVERIES | Old Wine: Bernstein Remastered | BRUCE SURTEES

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Beat by Beat

18 Classical & Beyond | Paul Ennis
21 Music Theatre | Jennifer Parr
22 In with the New | Wendalyn Bartley
23 Early Music | Matthew Whitfield
25 On Opera | Christopher Hoile
27 Art of Song | Lydia Perović
30 Choral Scene | Brian Chang
33 World View | Andrew Timar
35 Jazz Notes | Steve Wallace
36 Bandstand | Jack MacQuarrie

Discoveries: Recordings Reviewed

72 Editor’s Corner: David Olds
74 Strings Attached: Terry Robbins
76 Keyed In: Alex Baran
78 Vocal
80 Classical and Beyond
82 Modern and Contemporary
83 Jazz and Improvised Music
88 Pot Pourri
89 Something in the Air | Ken Waxman
91 Old Wine, New Bottles | Bruce Surtees

Listings

39 A | Concerts in the GTA
58 B | Concerts Beyond the GTA
63 C | Music Theatre
56 D | In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)
67 E | The ETCeteras

More

6 Contact Information
7 Upcoming dates and deadlines
69 Classified Ads
o the Future

Sometimes the way I can tell that things are going well around here is by noticing how small, in the overall scheme of things, the things I am fretting about actually are. Like two days ago when I found myself agonizing about whether it would be more accurate, on the cover, to describe this two-month issue as “combined” or “double.” “Double,” I told myself, is how I think we have usually done it. But with the concert scene being significantly put on hold in the latter part of December, for Festivus or whatever you choose to call it, and the first couple of weeks of January significantly dedicated to recovery, there isn’t double the amount of activity. “Combined” would be more accurate. I went searching for answers in our “rear view mirror” – the complete 23-year flip-through archive of this publication on our website – to see what we’ve done in the past, all the way back to Vol 1 No 4 in December 1995. (Click on Previous Issues under the “About” tab.)

The results: “double” takes the prize by a long way, with “nothing in particular” a respectable second (as in the cover of Vol 1 No 4 illustrated here). “Combined” is almost nowhere to be found, except this time last year. (Things must have been going well for even longer than I thought!)

There were three other things that I particularly noticed, as I flipped my way through the archive.

First was how often the subjects of the covers of past Dec/Jan issues, especially the early ones, still crop up in our current coverage: Tafelmusik’s Ivrs Taurins in his “Herr Handel” Massey Hall “Sing-Along Messiah” outfit (Vol 2); Val Kuinka, who will be stage-directing Highlands Opera Studio’s production of Andrew Balfour’s new opera Míshkaabooz’s Realm this December (Vol 3); the Toronto Children’s Chorus (Vol 5) and mezzo Kristzina Szabó (Vol 7) who will appear together in the TCC’s concert “The Fire Within” December 16 at Roy Thomson Hall; Barbara Hannigan (Vol 6), just here in November for a Koerner art song recital, who dropped into her hometown in Thomson Hall; Barbara Hannigan (Vol 6), just here in November for a Koerner art song recital, who dropped into her hometown in

Second, amusingly, was noticing the different ways the cover copy on these various issues riffs on the contrast, performance-wise, between December and January: “The Holiday Season and Its (Not-So) Flip Side”; “December Glitter, January Gold”; “To the Holidays and Beyond!”; and (my favourite), “Mid-Season Blip.”

Third, and this is for you, whomever you may be: in analyzing the pattern of when we did and didn’t make an effort on the cover to call attention to the fact that it was a double issue, it seems that the years we made an extra effort (like the words DOUBLE ISSUE in 30-point type around a medallion of two-headed Janus) were right after years when we had made no effort at all. And that is because those were the years when you phoned me up to complain that it was already January 8 and your January WholeNote had still not arrived.

It won’t this year either!

The Rear View Mirror: The context for the headline on Vol 1 No 4, pictured here (still one of my favourites), is that it coincided with a time when funders of the arts (in particular the Ontario Arts Council) were reeling under the impact of the politics of the time. The “Common Sense Revolution” it was called. This year, for the first time in many years, we are seeing significant increases in funding to the OAC (increases that are being passed along). If it’s a sign that the value of the contribution that artists make to the wellbeing of Ontario, economically and in every other way, has been recognized, it’s a welcome sign indeed.

publisher@thewholenote.com

Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

Volume 23 No 5 “FEBRUARY”

Volume 23 No 5 “FEBRUARY” covers February 1, 2018 – February 28, 2018

Printed in Canada
Couto Printing & Publishing Services

Circulation Statement
November 2017: 30,000 printed & distributed

Canadian Publication Product Sales Agreement 1263846
ISSN 14888-8785 WHOLENOTE
Publications Mail Agreement #40028682

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
WholeNote Media Inc.
Centre for Social Innovation
503-720 Bathurst Street
Toronto ON M5S 2R4

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Each year at the University of Toronto’s New Music Festival, a composer is invited to be the Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor in Composition. This year the festival, which runs from January 21 to 28, will host Canadian composer, sound artist and keyboardist Nicole Lizée. I’ve been fascinated by Lizée’s unique approach to working with technology and instruments, so this felt like a perfect opportunity to learn more.

One of the key features of her work is the use of what she calls “glitch.” In our recent interview she offered an inspiring description of her unique relationship to working with media-based technologies and what it is that fascinates her about malfunctioning machines.

“I was born into that world. My father is an electronics repairman, salesman and collector who was always repairing or beta testing new technologies and devices. During the 1960s, 70s and 80s there was a lot of experimentation, and many of the machines didn’t always work at first. I grew to love these machines – the way they looked and smelled, as well as the sounds and visuals they would produce.”

Lizée’s parents were huge fans of music, including classical, soundtracks and easy listening, and had an extensive LP collection. Old films were also a favourite, and she grew up watching films on video by Hitchcock, Kubrick and Bergman. “We would watch on repeat, repeat, repeat, and inevitably the tapes would melt or malfunction. This is when those movies became the most interesting to me. The version of The Sound of Music that I know is not the version most people know.”

Lizée’s passion for both music and film led to a desire to merge these worlds. This, in combination with her strong emotional connection to the malfunctioning analogue technologies of her childhood, inspired her vision to bring this world into the concert hall and to mix it with live instrumental performers.

The main source of fascination was the glitch – machines malfunctioning and not behaving as planned. “Analogue devices have a life beyond what they’re intended to do. They continue to live. The tapes would become chewed or worn down, but would still play back. Their material would then become altered and new rhythms would emerge.” She gives the example of a video game machine that would play, “but if you pushed a certain button in a particular way, something else that wasn’t supposed to happen would start happening. It was crazy – and like going into a portal. I wanted to capture those sounds and those visuals, and compose with that in mind. Capturing glitch means capturing the malfunction, the stuttering, the rhythms and sounds that would be produced.”
Many of her works also use video, but not as accompaniment to the music – rather, the video becomes an instrument itself that the performer engages with in a synced-up dialogue. Even the glitches themselves become instruments.

On the stage, Lizée uses both malfunctioning technologies such as reel to reel tape recorders and old synths, as well as “behaving ones” – usually performed on by others. The glitching devices are unpredictable, so she needs to perform with that in mind and often she has no idea what will happen with them. It requires keeping an open mind and working with whatever happens. Using such devices gives new colours such as hums and hisses, and even when they don’t work properly, other things will be present. Despite the glitches, the analogue machines will always offer her something to work with. They won’t shut off or fail to function – unlike digital devices. “I have never come across an analogue device that completely shuts down. It may go crazy and be unpredictable in a concert, and sometimes there will be a malfunctioning cable, but it will never shut down. It just keeps going.”

“I have never come across an analogue device that completely shuts down. It may go crazy ... but it just keeps going.”

What enables Lizée to use these glitch features in the composing process is the notation system she has devised. And she doesn’t just approximate the sound, but rather employs great precision to accurately translate what is occurring within the glitch. Using changing time signatures for example, rather than adjusting everything to regular 4/4 time, is one outcome of her approach. Spending years developing her transcription process was essential to developing her perspective on composing music.

And yes, she admits, it is labour intensive, but “ultimately it has pushed me in many ways, and performers tell me repeatedly how it has made them play differently. They all have their stories and it’s extremely interesting to hear how their relationship to this element has pushed them. It taps into different emotions and requires a spot-on precision. The stops and starts, changing tempos, metres, volume extremes, this all requires a player to completely commit to delving into this world.”

Working with glitch brings up emotions in players that are of a different order than usual. The glitch often creates a “forlorn and...
plangent sound which gets into the ears and head of the player. People
tell me how they’ve gone through shock, fear and sadness, and that’s
because of the source material and the way it is dealt with. It is being
torn apart, hacked and taken into a different direction than originally
intended."

At the U of T New Music Festival, Montreal’s Architek Percussion
will be joining forces with Lizée’s ensemble SaskPwr on the evening
of January 25 to perform selections from Lizée’s The Criterion
Collection. These short works are an homage to both glitch and to her
favourite film directors, Alfred Hitchcock and Stanley Kubrick. While
watching these films growing up, “I was getting into the language
and techniques of the director, but also while watching it, the tape
was deteriorating and this whole other world was being created by
the glitch and malfunction. The sound and image are completely
synonymous and intertwined. When the glitch happens, it happens
to both. The performance will be one hour long, nonstop. Everything
will be live and synced, with heavily glitched scenes.”

Another of her works, Malfunctionlieder, will be performed
during the festival’s noon concert on January 25. This piece was
commissioned as a test piece for voice and piano for the 2017
Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition, which is designed to encourage
the performance of Canadian and contemporary music. Lizée’s piece
includes an accompanying soundtrack and video and represents the
first time in the history of the competition (which began in 1976)
that the repertoire has included the worlds of both acoustic music
and technology. This work also represents a more recent direction
for Lizée – to write works for voice. Writing for the voice “opens up
the possibility of a whole other world where the live human voice
engages with the glitched characters on the screen as well as with the
audience.”

And finally, her work Isabella Blow at Somerset House will be
performed on January 24 by the Cecilia String Quartet, who played the
work earlier this year at the 21C Festival in May. Lizée wrote the piece
as an acoustic representation of fashion designer Isabella Blow and
what her impact on the fashion industry might sound like. If you are
intrigued to experience more of Lizée’s fascinating work, I encourage
you to attend not only the concerts, but also her composition
masterclasses on January 24 and 26, and the composers’ forum on
January 23.

The festival will also feature concerts from the Faculty of
Music’s opera, chamber music and orchestra series, a night of
improvising music from the jazz department and a concert devoted
to electroacoustic music. In addition to Lizée’s Isabella Blow, the
Karen Kieser Prize Concert on January 24 features Tyler Vershuis’
2017 prizewinning work 3 Unuttered Miracles for accordion and
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“M”usic Theatre” as we use the term in The WholeNote is a large tent, covering a wide range of productions and performances in which music pervades the drama rather than simply decorating it. It’s this interweaving that I will be hoping for in a new version of a Shakespearean classic opening at the Tarragon Theatre in Toronto on January 2. Artistic director Richard Rose is making a foray into new and uncharted (pun intended) territory with a rock and roll Hamlet, with music and music direction by his longtime collaborator Thomas Ryder Payne.

As a longtime devotee of both Shakespeare and musicals, with a particular fascination for when the two become blended into one, I contacted Rose to find out more about the inspiration behind this idea and what we might expect.

The show isn’t even in rehearsal yet, so it is early for the director to speak about what we will see in January – but in some ways it was even more interesting to have that conversation now, as the concept and its development are currently still in flux. Here is some of what we spoke about (edited for length):

WN: What was the initial inspiration to turn Hamlet into a rock and roll musical?
RR: I’ve always wanted to do Hamlet, and you want to find a great time to do it. It’s not really a rock and roll musical. It’s part concert, part radio play, part performance. I’m not sure where it will eventually land. I had an idea that it would be interesting to do Hamlet accompanied by a rock and roll concert. I didn’t really know what that would lead to except that the play always seemed to be about a young person’s despair and rage against the system, about trying to find out who they are. Hamlet is struggling between being a hero who can take action and his conscience: how do you act in the world when the world is actually politically corrupt?

But why rock and roll particularly?
Because of the rage. Marshall McLuhan talks about how young people have turned to rock and roll to push out all this information of the electronic age that is coming at them, and they’re shrieking, trying to express their identity – and that’s why it is so loud – to somehow express their anger – and that’s Hamlet, isn’t it? He is asking “Am I man of action or conscience? Can I kill someone, can I commit an act of revenge knowing that the society and the world around me is filled with lies? I have to do absolutely the right thing, but I don’t know what the right thing is.”

If we have a world full of lies it is very hard to know who we are; here the music, the rock and roll, will be a fundamental way of showing the anger at the hypocrisy of the world and it goes further than that.

You and Thomas Ryder Payne are longtime collaborators. But every show is different. How did it work this time?
He was part of the project from the beginning and we both felt that Hamlet was the right fit for a rock and roll take, and rock and roll was the way to connect to young audiences today. In a preliminary workshop a rough concept emerged, of speaking the text against a musical background. Hamlet’s soliloquies, for example, got bashed against the progression of a rock and roll guitar accompaniment [capturing] a feeling of what Hamlet is going through as he speaks. Then we started to find and develop a sonic experience.
Sonic experience?
An environmental mood creating the overall time and space of the play, as well as for specific scenes and effects such as the appearance of the ghost – or the chaos of the Danish Court through a mashup of Tchaikovsky’s 1812 Overture with jazz and martial music. So, while this is not at all a traditional rock musical, music is essential and dictated the working method. We would jam like a rock band: someone comes up with a riff, someone starts to work with that riff, someone starts to sing a song to that riff or we speak to that riff.

Where do the actors fit into the process?
Call it ongoing experimentation – the company is not yet officially in rehearsal at this point. It’s things like the actors taking a different approach to the text, looking at the words as song lyrics from different genres such as punk, or from the points of view of singers as different as Mick Jagger, Frank Sinatra or Peggy Lee, to see what effect this has on the speaking or thinking of the lines.

“If we have a world full of lies it is very hard to know who we are.”

And actual songs?
There will be at least some songs as well as the underscoring and background music. Hamlet will have a song of his own, though most of the soliloquies are spoken. The Gravedigger has a song as he actually does in the play. Hamlet and Ophelia’s relationship will be explored through music with Ophelia possibly singing snatches of her later “mad songs” as happy innocent pop songs early in the play, then distorted versions of those songs after the death of her father... And we’re seeing the play within the play, when Hamlet tries to prove Claudius’ guilt, as a kind of mini-operetta, a heightened moment of performance for the other characters to watch... Most of it though will be spoken against music rather than sung – [and while] there will be some elements of staging the performers will mostly be acting the play at microphones like a radio play, but supported by the sound behind that evokes the world, the inner life, and works with them.

And the musicians?
The actors themselves. Only two will not be singing or playing instruments: Nigel Shawn Williams as Claudius, and Tantoo Cardinal as Gertrude. All the others will be singing and playing instruments, with no additional musicians to back them up other than [composer and music director] Thomas Ryder Payne as live mixer and sound man.

As Rose went on to explain, the company is comprised of actors who are almost all musicians as well. Noah Reid, whose album Songs from a Broken Chair is available on iTunes, stars as Hamlet. Brandon McGibbon of the ElastoCitizens, and many musical theatre credits including Once and The Producers, will play Laertes as a teenager so obsessed with his guitar that he never puts it down until his world falls apart with the death of his father and madness of his sister. Jack Nicholson, Greg Gale, Jesse LaVercombe, Beau Dixon, Cliff Saunders, Rachel Cairns (the one piece of cross-gender casting as Rosencrantz) all have strong musical backgrounds, and Tiffany Ayakil, who plays Ophelia, has special vocal techniques from the discipline of throat singing “to go to places other people don’t go.”

“To go to places other people don’t go” sounds like a fitting mission statement for this latest outing by an always adventurous theatrical team.

Hamlet runs January 2 to February 11 in the Tarragon Main Space at 30 Bridgman Ave., Toronto.

Jennifer Parr’s regular Music Theatre column appears elsewhere in this issue of The WholeNote.

It was a comprehensive series of programs, and in the course of those ten episodes a great deal of Schoenberg’s music was heard, including the early Romantic works, the middle period, freely atonal pieces and the serial, 12-tone works of his late period. The inclusion of much of the Austrian/American composer’s piano music, as recorded by Gould himself, was a unique feature of the series. Gould’s script was written carefully and in a conversational style, for shared delivery between the CBC Radio staff announcer (or “sidekick,” as Gould at times called him), Ken Haslam (1930-2016) and Gould, the series host. The writing was clear, precise, with typical Gouldian exactitude. Every word was meant to count, even those words that appeared to express the personal opinions of Haslam, but which had clearly been placed in the script by Gould. And the point of all these words and music was to share as much of the Schoenberg legacy with CBC listeners as was possible within the allotted air time, and along the way, to demonstrate Gould’s devotion to it.

In the tenth and final chapter of that series of broadcasts, and at precisely the right moment for summative comments about the ten programs, Gould says, “Even now, 23 years after his death, it’s extraordinarily difficult to effect any really balanced judgment about Schoenberg’s contribution. Though it’s not particularly difficult to find an axe to grind and with which one can whack away with.” And despite Gould’s own personal admiration for Schoenberg’s music, he doubted that the composer would ever become, as he termed it, “a household word.”

Notwithstanding this assessment of the prospects for a wider acceptance of the music of Schoenberg and his students and disciples—the so-called Second Viennese School—people like flutist/composer Robert Aitken, the founder and artistic director of Toronto’s New Music Concerts (NMC), value it as an essential foundation of today’s music. And in fact, within the first eight weeks of 2018, New Music Concerts’ programming will include Schoenberg’s *Phantasy Op.47*; his *String Trio Op.45*; the *Chamber Symphony Op.9*, in a quintet setting by Anton Webern (1883-1943); and Alban Berg’s (1885-1935) *Chamber Concerto*. A newly commissioned *Chamber Concerto* by Montreal composer Michael Oesterle (b. 1968), which uses the identical chamber orchestra as Berg’s concerto, will reflect the entire collection in the light of the present.

I asked Aitken what prompted him to create, in effect, a mini-revival of the Second Viennese School in New Music Concerts’ programming for 2018. He told me that the desire to include this repertoire is always a factor in his thinking, and that it has been so ever since he studied composition with John Weinzweig in the early 1960s. Weinzweig taught the 12-tone, or serial, technique of composing that Schoenberg had devised and introduced in 1921. Aitken told me that one of the aspects of Schoenberg’s music he admires is that, even given the
frequent complexity of the counterpoint, the clarity of the music is never an issue. Aitken says that clarity and attention to every minute detail are also important values in his own compositions, musing that such attention to detail is a Virgo trait. (He and Schoenberg are both Virgos, as was Schoenberg’s student, John Cage (1912-1992).)

New Music Concerts’ three-concert Schoenbergian revival kicks off at the Betty Oliphant Theatre at 8pm on Sunday, January 14, with a program featuring the Chicago-based Duo Diorama, violinist MingHuan Xu and Winston Choi, piano, performing the Schoenberg Phantasy Op. 47, and as the soloists in the chamber concertos of Alban Berg and Michael Oesterle. In that tenth and final centennial broadcast in the CBC’s 1974 Gould/Schoenberg series, Gould said of the Phantasy, composed in 1949, and one of Schoenberg’s last completed works: “I still think it’s full of uneasy mixtures of Brahms and Wagner— you know, expressionistic violin lines, soaring, diving, equally expressionistic harmonics within a relatively four-squarish sentence structure.” Gould himself recorded the Phantasy with violinist Israel Baker in 1964 for Columbia Records.

The idea to commission the Chamber Concerto by Oesterle sprang from the shared enthusiasm by Aitken, Oesterle and Daniel Cooper, an enthusiastic NMC supporter, for the Berg Chamber Concerto for piano, violin and 13 winds (1923-1925). Oesterle’s concerto has the same instrumental forces as the Berg, and it will receive its world premiere on the January 14 concert. The Berg Chamber Concerto will complete the program. Aitken will conduct the NMC ensemble, with Duo Diorama as soloists.

Three weeks later, on February 4, at Gallery 345, NMC will present a 1923 Anton Webern arrangement of Schoenberg’s Chamber Symphony No. 1 Op. 9 (1906). The Calgary-based Land’s End Ensemble will be joined by Aitken on flute and clarinetist James Campbell for this quintet version of one of Schoenberg’s more frequently arranged works. Schoenberg himself arranged the piece twice, for both smaller and larger forces. Berg made an arrangement for two pianos, and Webern’s arrangement itself exists in two versions. Land’s End Ensemble will also perform trios by Canadians Sean Clarke (b. 1983), Hope Lee (b. 1953) and Matthew Ricketts (b. 1986).

It’s extraordinarily difficult to effect any really balanced judgment about Schoenberg’s contribution... It’s not particularly difficult to find an axe to grind. — Glenn Gould

Finally, three weeks later on February 25, at 8pm at Gallery 345, NMC will present another late work by Schoenberg: his String Trio Op. 45 (1946), in a performance by Trio Arkel, along with a program of trios by Krzysztof Penderecki (b. 1933), Kaija Saariaho (b. 1952) and James Rolé (b. 1961). The concert will be preceded at 6:30pm by a screening of the Larry Weinstein film, My War Years: Arnold Schoenberg.

Perhaps by the end of this sequence of three concerts, it will be revealed that any doubts about the value of Schoenberg’s contribution have, by now, diminished or even vanished altogether – and that, if not yet in Gould’s phrase “a household word,” Schoenberg is at very least a welcome and engaging house guest.

David Jaeger is a composer, producer and broadcaster based in Toronto.
Q & A

FINDING THE BALANCE

PIANIST

GEORGE LI

PAUL ENNIS

The 2015 International Tchaikovsky Competition produced a motherlode of talent, sparking concert careers by each of its top four prizewinners. This past March, Show One Productions brought gold medallist Dmitry Masleev to Koerner Hall; on February 4 they will complete the Koerner circle with George Li’s recital there. Boston-born Li – the son of Chinese immigrants – shared second place with Lithuanian-Russian pianist Lukas Geniušas, whom Show One presented in a memorable 2016 Koerner Hall concert with fourth-place winner Lucas Debargue of France.

A student of English Literature at Harvard now in his fourth year, Li explained in an email exchange with me in mid-November that his non-musical studies have affected his approach and led to a deeper understanding of the music he plays, echoing what he told the Harvard Gazette in September 2016: “With music, there’s a balancing of different qualities and you have to have control and finesse and technique. There’s always a fine line between too much control and technique with being overly emotional, overindulgent. With literature, it’s not always an outpouring of emotion. It never goes overboard. It’s on the cusp of going overboard, but it never does.”

Elsewhere in this issue in his Editor’s Corner, DISCoveries editor David Olds calls Li a “fabulous young performer” in his review of Li’s debut CD, Live at the Mariinsky.

WN: How important a role did music play in your home growing up?

GL: It was definitely a big part of my life ever since I was little. I was always surrounded by music, whether it be listening to the classical...
radio station, going to concerts to hear the BSO, or recitals in Boston, or listening to my sister practise.

How did you come to start playing the piano? How old were you?

I started when I was about four years old, and much of how and why I started was due to the things that I mentioned above. Because music played such a big part in my life from a young age, it almost became inevitable that I would try it out, and I haven’t stopped since!

Who was the first composer you fell in love with as a child?

I remember becoming obsessed with the Moonlight Sonata for a period of time, as well as Prokofiev’s Concerto No. 3, so I suppose Beethoven and Prokofiev.

Who were your musical heroes in your formative years?

When I was in my teens, I listened quite a bit to pianists in the Golden Age of playing, so I really idolized Cortot, Horowitz, Gilels and Richter. I also started listening to a lot of orchestral music, so conductors like Abbado and Kleiber gave me great inspiration as well.

“I connect especially with Horowitz, because of his magical abilities with the piano; the amount of colour and character in his playing is astounding, and he’s also unafraid of taking risks.”

Do you feel a particular kinship to any pianist (or musician) living or dead?

I connect especially with Horowitz, because of his magical abilities with the piano; the amount of colour and character in his playing is astounding, and he’s also unafraid of taking risks.

When did you feel that you would devote your life to music?

I think I started realizing that I would fully immerse myself in music when I was 12 or 13. It was actually at a concert I was playing then when I realized how powerful music is, and what a transformative experience it was to be able to perform onstage. Since that concert, I decided I would fully dedicate myself to music.

Your upcoming Toronto recital mirrors your first CD, Live at the Mariinsky. What went into choosing the repertoire for it?

There were several reasons, but the most important for me was that I felt that there was a strong arc throughout the program. Although each piece is of a totally different style and from a different period, there is also a fluidity throughout; each piece flows naturally into the next in terms of tone and character. For example, in the first half of the CD, the Haydn sonata – which contains a nuanced tinge of darkness and tragedy – flows quite naturally into the turbulent, dramatic tragedy that is the Chopin Sonata No.2.

You concluded the program of your Toronto debut with Music Toronto in December 2012 with the Liszt Consolation No.3 and Hungarian Rhapsody No.2, both of which also conclude your first CD and Koerner Hall concert. What is the attraction these pieces have for you and how has your approach to them evolved over the years?

Liszt has been a favourite composer of mine throughout the years, and these two pieces especially have been a part of me for a long time. I especially appreciate that Wagnerian drama and the operatic references that he often implements, and while we don’t exactly hear Wagner in the Rhapsody, I nonetheless try to highlight the drama and the variety of colours that I do hear throughout the piece.

Are there any particular pieces, orchestral or chamber, that never grow stale for you?

Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony, Mahler’s Second Symphony and quite recently Debussy’s Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune have been a few of the orchestral pieces that I’ve been listening to incessantly.

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.

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is refreshing without any affect — a Haydn sonata, a Poulenc Villaggioise, Debussy’s Arabesque No.1, the two Chopin Waltzes Op.64 and a Bartók Romanian Dance. An excursion to North York may be a New Year’s resolution worth keeping. Two days later, January 6, Wang is the soloist in Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No.2 with the Toronto Festival Orchestra conducted by Dongxiao Xu in the Li Delun Music Foundation’s “New Year’s Concert 2018” at the George Weston Recital Hall.

**January 7, Rachel Barton Pine:** She began learning the violin at three; at five she “self-identified as a violinist.” At ten, she performed with her hometown band, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; at 17, she won the Bach International Competition in Leipzig, Germany. At 20, her violin case straps caught in the closing doors of a Chicago commuter train; the accident cost her part of a leg and mangled a foot. Her determination and discipline from her years of violin study brought her all the way back. Oddly. On January 7, she performs the first Sunday Interludes concert of the year in Mazzoleni Hall.

**January 10 to 21, Mozart @ 262:** I’m back on Bloor again for some of this next part of my private winter festival. I am about to come face to face with the TSO’s Mozart @ 262 Festival that begins January 10; it will be the TSO’s 14th annual celebration of that prodigy’s genius, and the final one with Peter Oundjian (the festival’s creator) as TSO music director. Roy Thomson Hall (three performances), Koerner Hall (two) and the George Weston Recital Hall (one) will all be involved. On January 17 and 18 concertmaster Jonathan Crow and principal violinist Teng Li will be the soloists in Mozart’s Sinfonia Concertante for violin and viola K364/320d in what might very well be the single highlight of the festival. Oundjian’s sole conducting gig, however (January 19 to 21), is the one program I’m most focused on, though (and the only one that’s in all three venues). Anchored by Mozart’s exhilarating final symphony, the concert showcases two talented young Canadian artists. Charles Richard-Hamelin will weave his colouristic alchemy in the Piano Concerto No.23 in A Major K488 — the under-stated grandeur of its Adagio served as the main theme of Terrence Malick’s film The New World, underscoring the pristine beauty of its first act. And Adrian Anantawan will be the soloist in the Rondo for violin and orchestra K250/248b “Haffner,” and the Adagio for violin and orchestra K261. Anantawan, who grew up in Toronto, was born with no right hand, only a stunted appendage with tiny stubs instead of fingers. At nine he took up the violin, which proved to be a great equalizer for him. Needless to say, it changed his life. Now in his early 30s, he works with cutting-edge technology to help others; he’s also given a TED Talk. He told CNN in 2013 that “it’s never about the technique or technology that is important, but the desire to live authentically and creatively. We often forget even ‘traditional’ musical instruments are technological adaptations in their own right – they are tools to manipulate sound in a way that we couldn’t do with our bodies alone.”

**January 11, Brentano and Dawn Upshaw:** I plan on abandoning Mozart to take advantage of a rare opportunity to hear Schoenberg’s pivotal String Quartet No.2 when Music Toronto presents the Brentano String Quartet and soprano Dawn Upshaw in the Jane Mallett Theatre. Completed in 1908, the quartet’s extreme late-Romanticism loses its harmonic bearings by its final movement, a change that can be considered the beginning of atonal music. The third and fourth movements are settings of poems by the symbolist poet Stefan George. Alex Ross in The Rest Is Noise talks about the extraordinary moment
in the fourth movement when the soprano sings the line *I feel the wind of another planet* and then the “transformation,” *I dissolve in tones, circling, weaving…* The Schoenberg is preceded by Respighi’s intimate, lyrical setting of Shelley’s *Il Tramonto*. Before intermission, the Brentano (without Upshaw) will interweave Webern *Bagatelles* with Schubert *Minuets* before performing Argentine-American Mario Davidovsky’s *String Quartet No. 4* (1980), a piece I look forward to hearing for the first time.

The next morning, January 12 at 10am, Upshaw will give a master-class in Mazzoleni Hall. I’ve marked my calendar. Maybe I should just move to Bloor Street!

**Sunday, January 14, David Jalbert and Wonny Song:** these two top-rank Canadian pianists return to U of T’s Walter Hall and Mooredale Concerts following their acclaimed 2014 appearance there, for “Piano Dialogue,” a program inspired by dance, theatre and visual art. Rachmaninoff’s *Suite No. 1 for Two Pianos* and his four-hand arrangement of Tchaikovsky’s *Sleeping Beauty* share the stage with Milhaud’s *Scaramouche Suite for Two Pianos* and Stravinsky’s kinetic *Petruchka*, also for two pianos. Elsewhere in this issue Alex Baran writes in his DISCoveries Keyed In column about Jalbert’s latest CD of music connected to what Jalbert and Song are playing in their recital: “[The CD] shows why he’s considered one of the younger generation’s finest pianists. His performance of *Dance russe* from *Petruchka* explodes into being with astonishing speed and alacrity. Jalbert possesses a sweeping technique that exudes ease and persuasive conviction.”

**January 29, 2018, 7:30 p.m.**

**Evoking the Elegiac**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Jurgis Juozapaitis, Maurice Ravel, Bedrich Smetana

**February 26, 2018, 7:30 p.m.**

**La Malinconia – Reflections on Solitude and Loss**

Ludwig van Beethoven, Dmitri Shostakovich, Johannes Brahms

**March 26, 2018, 7:30 p.m.**

**The Companion’s Guide to Rome**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, François Devienne, Andrew Norman

**April 23, 2018, 7:30 p.m.**

**Taste of Dark Chocolate**

Franz Schubert, Johannes Brahms

**May 28, 2018, 7:30 p.m.**

**Brahms: 20/40**

Johannes Brahms

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**January 29, 2018, 7:30 p.m.**

**Evoking the Elegiac**

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Johannes Brahms
January 23, Stephen Hough: In October 2016 the brilliant British pianist Stephen Hough revealed on BBC Radio 4’s Desert Island Discs that he discovered he liked playing the piano when he went to visit his aunt’s house and could pick out more than one hundred nursery rhymes on her piano. After much pestering, his parents bought him a cheap second-hand piano from an antique shop. So began the storied career of this polymath, whose first novel, The Final Retreat, is to be published in March 2018. On January 23, he makes his fourth appearance for Music Toronto since 1996 with a program mixing four Debussy works (two of which, Images Bk 1 and II, appear on his latest Hyperion CD, anticipating the centenary of the composer’s death in 1918) with Schumann’s rapturous Fantasie Op.17 and Beethoven’s colossal Sonata in F Minor, Op.67, “Appassionata.” The next morning, Hough will make the trek north to Mazzoleni Hall for a public masterclass. Having been to two of these, I have no doubt it will be an insightful and inspirational experience.

January 27, the Dover Quartet: The Dovers came to wide attention in 2013 when they won the Banff International String Quartet Competition. I wrote about their memorable Beethoven concert at Toronto Summer Music in 2016: “Musically mature, vibrant and uncannily unified in purpose and execution, the youthful players brought passion and grace to the first two movements [of Op.132], took a decisive approach to the fourth and emphasized the rhapsodic character of the finale.” Chamber Music Hamilton, a top-flight regional series, is presenting the young Americans in a recital of Schumann’s Second, Ullmann’s Third and Zemlinsky’s Second String Quartets, Sunday January 27 at 2pm at the Art Gallery of Hamilton.

January 30, RCM and Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema (although the name has changed, the address remains Bloor Street) present Stefan Avalos’ compulsively watchable Strad Style, a film I saw at Hot Docs 2017. The documentary chronicles the improbable but triumphant story of a reclusive Ohio violin maker, Daniel Houck, whose confidence that he can produce a copy of “Il Canone,” the Guarneri violin built in 1742 that Paganini played, carries him through an eight-month journey that threatens to be derailed more than once. A violin aficionado who loves listening to old masters like Oistrakh and Heifetz and idolizes violin makers Amati, Guarneri and Stradivari – all from Cremona, Italy – Houck suffers from bipolar disorder but functions with medication. He befriends Razvan Stoica on Facebook when he discovers the Romanian-born violinist has won the Strad Prize at a Salzburg festival and offers to make him the Canone replica. There is magic stuff here.

After the screening Jonathan Crow will bring out his own Guarneri for what promises to be a fascinating show-and-tell Q&A. And that’s why I’ll be there.

And on into February: The astounding young pianist Daniil Trifonov continues his homage-to-Chopin tour February 1, with a sold-out concert at Koerner Hall. I’m lucky to have a ticket but unlucky to miss the St. Lawrence String Quartet’s annual Music Toronto visit the same evening. Fortunately I can attend the SLSQ’s masterclass in Mazzoleni Hall the next day at 10am.

In 2008, clarinetist Dionysis Grammenos became the first wind player ever to be named European Young Musician of the Year. Two years later at 21, having been guided by Bernard Haitink, Christoph Eschenbach and Robert Spano, he made his conducting debut with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra. Johannes Debus hired him as assistant conductor for the COC’s 2018 production of Mozart’s Abduction from the Seraglio February 7 to 24. “You find in him a musician who exudes an enthusiasm for music from every single pore and who equally has the talent to communicate and share his enthusiasm and euphoria with others – no matter if it’s about an audience or fellow musicians,” Debus says. Grammenos’ appearance at noon on February 7 in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre with Ensemble Made in Canada (they will perform Brahms’ late masterpiece, the sublime Clarinet Quintet in B Minor Op.115) is the last stop in my winter festival.

Given the abundance of live music available to all of us in the Toronto area, there’s an ad hoc personal winter festival out there for the making for every musical taste. How? JustASK.

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.
Beat by Beat | Music Theatre

Multi-Layered Homecoming for Tale of a Town

JENNIFER PARR

November is almost over and two shows stood out for me recently: The Musical Stage Company’s Uncovered: Dylan & Springsteen with its brilliant storytelling through song, and the wild and wacky low-budget silliness of Christopher Bond’s Evil Dead, the Musical – an incredibly clever tribute to and parody of musicals, low-budget horror movies and Sam Raimi’s Evil Dead franchise in particular. (Good news is that the latter show’s run has just been extended to January 7.)

Looking ahead to December there is a wealth of music theatre on offer. With the holiday season approaching, there are many family-oriented shows, including at least three versions of A Christmas Carol in which music is integral to the story and production. Ross Petty Productions gives us its usual anarchic take on a classic through the prism of the traditional English panto. At the Grand Theatre in London, new artistic director Dennis Garnhum is introducing himself to audiences through his own acclaimed version of Dickens’ classic, described as “brimming with music, dance, and ... all of your favourite carols.” And the Shaw Festival is joining the fray, with what I believe is their first Christmas season, in a production adapted and directed by new artistic director Tim Carroll with music direction by Paul Sportelli, movement and puppetry by Alexis Milligan, and as Scrooge. Michael Therriault, star of last season’s Me and My Girl.

The Tale of a Town

In and among Toronto’s rich smorgasbord of music theatre offerings to choose from, many of them not tied specifically to the season, two in particular (one in December, one in January) caught my eye because of their unusual – in different ways – weaving of music with text-based elements.

The second of the two, chronologically, is the Tarragon Theatre’s rock-and-roll Hamlet commencing January 2. (You can read my interview with director Richard Rose elsewhere in the issue.)

The other is Fixt Point’s production of The Tale of a Town, the creation of husband-and-wife duo Charles Ketchabaw and Lisa Marie DiLiberto which returns to its starting place at Theatre Passe Muraille, December 14 to 17. Since the show’s beginnings, Ketchabaw and DiLiberto have spent three years touring the country in their Storymobile (recording studio on wheels) gathering the stories and songs of communities from the Arctic to the East Coast and creating local performance installations. They also built a national story map that not only forms part of each local show but remains in place in each community, as well as online and as a ten-part series on TVO – a kind of national story archive.

I spoke with DiLiberto as well as with the show’s current music director Lisa Marie DiLiberto and Charles Ketchabaw, with their Storymobile on PEI, July 2013

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director, Sophia Perlman, to find out some more details of the musical side of this project. What makes it “a musical”? was our starting point, and here is the essence of the conversation that followed:

DiLiberto: I wouldn’t call it a musical per se, but music is an essential part of the process and the show, which features songs and audio and performance moments which are underscored live.

Perlman: You’re right. It’s not a musical, entirely. I am coming at this production from an early background in opera and music theatre, but with the last decade or so of my career being rooted mostly in jazz, blues and improvised music. Part of what I love about this piece is the process that has gone into preparing each show, and the insight that I get from place to place. I’m so excited to share this epic story here in Toronto where it all began, partly because of how far it has travelled and territory in Canada gathering stories. To return back home to the theatre feels like the project is coming full circle. The music is such a huge part of the show. It reveals the essence of where we are, how we feel throughout the journey of the show. It lifts everything up into a heightened space – like in a musical – but in the case of this show it lifts up the audio, the verbatim performances, and helps us get from place to place. I’m so excited to share this epic story here in Toronto where it all began, partly because of how far it has travelled in the meantime. This production is a culmination of several years of touring, story gathering and local installation performances. During the process, we worked with these archives and adapted a lot of the score from the ideas and music created by the musicians who collaborated on these performances locally.

Perlman: And for me, personally, Queen West was one of the first communities that The Tale of a Town gathered stories from, and several places (like the coffee shop I used to go to in Parkdale and the Cameron House) are featured in the story. I lived in Toronto’s downtown most of my life – and only left a few years ago. … After the amazing adventure I’ve had on the first part of this season’s tour, it feels especially wonderful to have the chance to bring this story so close to home.

The WholeNote: So the version of the show we will see at Passe Muraille is still in development?

Perlman: We created a score that was an overall shape for the piece back in August and September, Lisa Marie [DiLiberto] is an actor, performer and musician, and there are songs that are sung by her and guest artists. She also plays cello and guitar! Charles Ketchabaw has a background in radio and audio tech and sometimes in terms of live music my role feels a bit more like leading a silent movie orchestra! But part of what drew me to this piece, creatively, was the fact that while the score has been “set” since August, the time we took in the rehearsal room to understand those choices has meant that everywhere we go the score can be adapted to fit different instrumentation, special guests or new local content.

DiLiberto: Each place we go there will be a new band, featured local guests and some kind of a choir … Perlman: An amazing ad-hoc of musical collaborators and volunteers, you might say … And that becomes part of the story.

After the Toronto run, The Tale of a Town will hit the road again in January for dates in St. Catharines, Burlington, Milton and Kingston. See their website (thetaleofatown.com) for details or call 416-504-7259.

QUICK PICKS

To Dec 31: VPT’s streamlined production of Disney’s Beauty and the Beast, which started November 6, is aimed particularly at families and younger children and features a young, diverse cast including Celine Tsai, one of The Musical Stage Company’s 2017 Banks Prize winners, as Belle.

Nov 23 to Dec 2: Two productions of the operetta Candide have popped up at the same time. Talk is Free Theatre present theirs at the Mady Centre for the Performing Arts in Barrie. Dec 28, 30, 31 and Jan 5, 6, 7, Toronto Operetta Theatre presents their take on the Bernstein/Sondheim classic at the Jane Mallet Theatre. Will the Barrie version have a more “musical theatre” approach?

Nov 28 to Dec 2: Randolph Academy presents the rarely seen musical Moll, with music and lyrics by Canadian composer Leslie Arden and book by Arden and Cathy Elliott, at the Annex Theatre. This is must-see for fans of Arden and Elliott.

Nov 30 to Dec 23: For fans of the comedy side of musical comedy, Theatre Orangeville presents a new Christmas musical, The Last Christmas Turkey, with book by Dan Needle, creator of the Wingfield plays, and music and lyrics by Clive VanderBurgh.

Dec 9 to Jan 21: For fans of the large-scale musical and for families over the holidays, Mirvish Productions offers a musical version of Dr. Seuss’s The Lorax – music and lyrics by Charlie Fink, adapted for the stage by David Greig – at the Royal Alex; while Dec 12 to Jan 7, also from Mirvish, Million Dollar Quartet (which always seems to be playing somewhere) moves into the Panasonic Theatre.

Jan 12 and 13: There are only two days to catch triple-threat and Stratford star Juan Chioran, starring in Podium Concert Productions’ concert version of Nine, the Maury Yeston and Arthur Kopit musical based on Fellini’s film 8½, at Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre.

Feb 4 to 25: Coal Mine Theatre, known for its riveting and dark-edged theatre productions, moves into musical territory with Rumours By Fleetwood Mac: A Coal Mine Concert. It will be interesting to see where this falls on the music theatre spectrum, particularly because artistic director Ted Dykstra is also well known for his accomplished work on musicals as both performer and director.

And more: for a more comprehensive overview of musical theatre listings over December and January, visit our music theatre listings on page 63 in this issue.
On Bothering and the Baroque

MATTHEW WHITFIELD

This sentence notwithstanding, I try not to use too many personal pronouns when writing. Call it a parasympathetic reflex from my student days writing prosaic, academically sourced theses, but words like “I” and “my” seem too personal and isolating to use even in a communal column and publication such as The WholeNote, and I don’t write editorials (although I do express the occasional opinion or two!). This month is an exception, however, for we begin our two-month survey of the Toronto early music scene with two personal anecdotes – disparate occurrences that, although entirely independent in time and place, share a common, relevant and important theme.

A few weeks ago, I gave a recital at Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre. The program for this little concert contained a blend of jazz, minimalist and avant-garde music, including György Ligeti’s Harmonies for organ. After the performance one audience member approached and asked, “Why bother with such music? You could have played that piece (Harmonies) forwards or backwards and we wouldn’t have known the difference!” It was ultimately a worthwhile question and one that many performers face, particularly in the realm of music written in the 20th century and onwards: why bother playing music that people won’t understand, music that is not necessarily tuneful, pretty, or accessible to the masses?

Days after my recital experience, I saw the new film Loving Vincent, an artistically oriented speculative recreation of the last days of Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh, incorporating elements of documentary and murder mystery. This film was screened at TIFF Bell Lightbox and is notable because of the way it was made. Each frame – 65,000 of them altogether – was hand-painted in the style of Van Gogh by an international team of artists, then photographed and digitized using animation software, thereby creating a literal motion picture. Before viewing Loving Vincent, I read a synopsis in The Guardian in which the reviewer questioned the painstaking process of producing the film, arguing that an equally visually satisfying production could have been generated using purely digital means without the trouble of hand-painting anything at all. In our digital age, the review queried, why bother with all the unnecessarily painstaking manual labour?

In early music circles, the question “Why bother?” is a relevant one, too. When we look at the frequency with which certain individual works are performed, there are inevitably moments where we question the rationale behind established conventions that have become normalized. For example, now that December is here, why bother playing Handel’s Messiah again across the city – haven’t we been up to our eyeballs in it every year for the past decade? Why bother with another performance of Bach’s Christmas Oratorio or Corelli’s Christmas Concerto? Reprising these works year after year seems to be the bad end of a Faustian pact, the lure of a full auditorium paid off with the ceaseless repetition of the same stuff, taxing our ears with all-too familiar strains of “Hallelujah!,” “Jauchzet, frohlocket!” or some other predictable and overdone work – a festive and wintry Groundhog Day, if you will.

These are thought-provoking queries, many of which are difficult to answer. The questions of “Why?” and “Why bother?” will always be applicable to the arts, particularly when something new and unfamiliar (in the case of Ligeti’s Harmonies) or unusual and idiosyncratic (as we see in Loving Vincent) is put on display, but another little anecdote recounted to me by a former teacher may help answer why we always seem to return to the time-tested Baroque classics in December:

Once a conductor was in a dress rehearsal of Messiah – everyone involved had performed the work many times. One singer was rather lackadaisical about his part and seemed lazy and lacklustre throughout, irking the conductor enough that he confronted him about it afterwards.

“Listen,” the conductor said, “I know you have sung this many times, if you will. Rather lackadaisical about his part and seemed lazy and lacklustre throughout, irking the conductor enough that he confronted him about it afterwards.

“Listen,” the conductor said, “I know you have sung this many times, as I’ve conducted it many times, but you have a great responsibility as a performer. Tonight’s concert may be the first time that
someone in that audience hears Messiah. And this performance may also be the last Messiah someone in that audience hears."

**My Grown-Up Christmas List**

For many, Messiah is as much a quintessential seasonal favourite as mulled wine and a ten-pound fruitcake. With dozens of performers presenting various Messiah adaptations and interpretations across Toronto and its surrounding areas, it can be a tricky task to pick only one! Fortunately, The WholeNote is here to help: read my recent blog post on notable performances, or search for the word “Messiah” in our online listings to get a list of most of this year’s shows. Whether full-length or condensed, HIP or modern, symphonic or sing-along, we have the Messiah for you.

Johann Sebastian Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio* is another classic Christmas composition from the Baroque era, compiled and composed between 1733 and 1734 to celebrate the Christmas season in Leipzig. Although catalogued as BWV248 and now considered a single, freestanding work, this “oratorio” is in actuality a series of six individual cantatas that were performed during the time between Christmas and Epiphany (what we now call the Twelve Days of Christmas) and divided between the Thomaskirche and Nikolaikirche, Leipzig’s two main churches.

Monumental in scope and brilliant in its musical expression of Bach’s beliefs and theology, the *Christmas Oratorio* is, along with the Passions, the closest Bach came to writing a narrative opera. Geoffrey Butler and the Toronto Choral Society perform the *Christmas Oratorio* at Koerner Hall on December 6, in what promises to be a welcome break from the hurly-burly of the commercially over.Loaded Christmas season.

Continuing their trend of melding old and new, the Toronto Masque Theatre presents their seasonal salon “Peace on Earth” on December 17 and 18. Featuring the performance of baroque Noëls and the Mes de Minuit by Marc-Antoine Charpentier, these Francophavoured evenings will explore the simplicity, beauty and joy of the French Baroque Christmas, different in many ways from the immense and intricate forms we find in English and German oratorio.

To complement these French Baroque favourites, TMT also leaps forward into the 20th century with excerpts from *The Birth of Christ*, a cantata written in 1901 by Canadian composer Clarence Lucas (1866-1947) as well as seasonal readings by T.S. Eliot’s *The Journey of the Magi*. With this medley of music and word on display only one week before Christmas, these performances will surely banish the last “Bah humbug!” from even the Scroogiest of curmudgeonly misers.

**But Wait, There’s More! A Taste of 2018**

Fast forward to January 2018: Belts are loosened an extra notch (or two); turkey leftovers, eggnog and rum hangovers, and the last few sweet treats all linger longer than expected. New Year’s resolutions are resolutely made and broken, and we start looking ahead to the inevitable wintry weather that is to come. If we somehow ignore the temptation to snuggle up with a cup of cocoa and hibernate until March, there are many exciting events taking place across Toronto in January, including two promising projects by Tafelmusik (who might quite reasonably go into hibernation themselves after their busy December).

The first is the Tafelmusik Winter Institute, a terrific opportunity for those with a passion for Historically Informed Performance. A one-week intensive for advanced students and young professionals, this year’s TWI culminates in a free public performance at Jeanne Lamon Hall on January 10. Featuring music by French composers Lully, Campra, Marais and Rameau, and this performance presents a rare opportunity to hear top-notch music from the height of the French tradition for an unbeatable price.

Over the last few years, Tafelmusik has pushed the boundaries of the early music concert experience with Alison Mackay’s creative multimedia conceptions and collaborations. This positive trend towards HIP-infused modernism continues with Safe Haven, a program exploring the musical ideas of Baroque Europe’s refugee artists, drawing parallels between 18th-century Europe and present-day Canada. At that time of year when the Christmas chestnuts have come and gone, this concert looks to provide a palate-cleansing leap forward in a genre that occasionally seems to specialize in bland repetition.

**Scaramella** While Tafelmusik peers into the future with Safe Haven, period performance group Scaramella looks back in time with their “Ode to Music” on January 27. Featuring Scaramella’s Joëlle Morton and guest virtuoso viol players Elizabeth Rumsey and Caroline Ritchie from Basel, Switzerland, this program uses a variety of 17th-century music for viol consort to explore the impact of the muses on Renaissance composers. This concert provides a wonderful opportunity for viol enthusiasts and novices alike to acquaint themselves with the spectrum of sound these antiquated instruments can produce, living musical relics linking our ears to past centuries.

As winter-themed advertising flashes across our smartphone screens and store windows are redecorated with miniaturized villages and resplendent hues of red, green and gold, it can be overwhelming and daunting to find time to attend a concert; despite the seasonal hustle and bustle, I encourage you to explore the vibrant musical offerings that are on display this December and January. Whether you prefer Handel’s Messiah, Tafelmusik’s Safe Haven, a traditional Festival of Lessons and Carols, or any of the other listings in this double issue of The WholeNote, the richness and depth of Toronto’s classical music scene ensures that no concertgoer ever has to ask, “Why bother?”

Happy Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Festivus and New Year, everyone. See you in February! Until then, keep in touch at earlymusic@thewholenote.com.

Matthew Whitfield is a Toronto-based harpsichordist and organist.
Reviving the Unrevivable and Ringing in the New

CHRISTOPHER HOILE

Candide runs for six performances from December 28 to January 7. Derek Bate conducts and Guillermo Silva-Marin directs.

Talk Is Free Theatre: This is likely the first time ever that a person can see two different productions of Candide in Ontario in the same month. The second takes place at a non-traditional operatic showcase, Talk Is Free Theatre in Barrie, which is in the process of presenting the Bernstein work in a run from November 23 to December 2.

The cast includes Thom Allison, Holly Chaplin, Gabi Epstein, Mike Nadajewski and Michael Toronto; Richard Ouzounian directs and Lily Ling conducts.

Tarragon Theatre, another non-traditional showcase for opera, is presenting Mr. Shi and His Lover, a one-act work by Njo Kong Kie that runs in Toronto until December 17. In the new year it plays at the NAC in Ottawa from January 3 to 13. Mr. Shi is made up of seven scenes in which two characters, Mr. Shi and Bernard Boursicot, reflect on the strange but true story of their relationship. Boursicot, a young French diplomat stationed in China in 1964, fell in love with Shi Pei Pu, a male performer of the Peking Opera specializing in female roles, believing that Shi was actually a woman. Amazingly, Boursicot and Shi’s relationship continued for 20 years without Boursicot ever realizing Shi was a man, much less a spy recruited to entrap him. This story is the basis for David Henry Hwang’s 1988 play M. Butterfly. Jordan Cheng sings the role of Mr. Shi and Derek Kwan sings Boursicot. Njo Kong Kie conducts the singers and percussionist Yukie Lai from the piano in an eclectic score that ranges from Peking opera to traditional folk song, music hall, pop music, Western opera and the art song. Tam Chi Chun, the artistic director of Macau Experimental Theatre, directs.

Tryptich: Continuing its exploration of standard repertory with

Upstaged by West Side Story but never obscure, CANDIDE has become the darling of opera companies and Broadway through the sheer power of its drama, music and imaginative splendour. Voltaire’s irresistible – and censored! – masterwork becomes great music theatre.
large orchestra. Tryptych Concert & Opera presents its final opera in Toronto before its co-artistic directors, Edward Franko and Lenard Whiting, move to Kenora to restart the company there. On December 9 and 10, Tryptych presents a fully-staged production of Engelbert Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel* in English at the P.C. Ho Theatre in Scarborough, with the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra and the Toronto Beaches Children’s Chorus. The cast features Meghan Synmon as Hansel, Marion Samuel-Stevens as Gretel, Douglas Tranquada as the Father, Milla Ionkova as the Mother, Kimi Braun as the Dew Fairy and Sandman and Whiting himself as the Witch. Franko directs and Norman Reintammm conducts. Despite Franko and Whiting’s move, the two plan to stage at least one opera with the CBSO in Toronto every year. Donizetti’s *The Elixir of Love* is already planned for next year.

**Tapestry:** In the realm of new music is the welcome return of Tapestry Opera’s popular Opera Briefs. This year’s “Winter Shorts” consists of ten opera scenes developed during Tapestry’s 2016 Composer-Librettist Laboratory. Creators of the shorts have drawn inspiration from current events and contemporary concerns including the Syrian refugee crisis, robot warfare, the 1984 Quebec National Assembly shooting, voyeurism, fairy tales and dysfunctional millennial relationships. This year’s operas include three composed by Afarin Mansouri, three from Iman Habibi, three from Norbert Palej and one from Kit Soden. The librettists are Bobby Theodore, Marcia Johnson, Phoebe Tsang and Jessica Murphy Moo. The performers are Alexander Dobson, Erica Iris, Keith Klasssen and Jacqueline Woodley.

“Winter Shorts” runs from November 30 to December 3.

**Against the Grain:** In contrast to Tapestry’s “bite-size” offerings, from December 14 to 16 Toronto’s indomitable Against the Grain Theatre presents a “new” full-length Handel opera in the form of *Bound* – A Handel Mash-up. AGT’s artistic director Joel Ivany and music director Topher Mokrzewski have collaborated with award-winning composer Kevin Lau to create a pastiche of music from Handel’s operas and oratorios that will focus on current world events. According to the ATG website, “In the wake of the world’s refugee crisis, this workshop will explore the current state of those displaced, dehumanized and mistreated, with texts and stories drawn from real-life news articles and world events.” When I asked Ivany in November what drew him to Handel instead of, say, Verdi, who also wrote about so many dispossessed people, he responded, “There is something in the form in which Handel wrote most of his music which is interesting. His draw to a formula, a repetition of text and simplicity in how he set it, is profound. Yes, Verdi is a master composer, but his music takes on a much more propelling aspect to the storytelling. Handel allows you to reflect, assess and move forward.”

Some of the pieces that *Bound* draws upon are *Acis and Galatea, Alcina, Alexander’s Feast, Ariodante, Orlando, Floridante, Giulio Cesare in Egitto, Jephtha, Rinaldo, Rodelinda, Semele, Serse and Tolomeo*. For the assembled score Ivany has written a new English libretto. The cast includes soprano Danika Loren, tenor Asitha Tennekoon, countertenor David Trudgen, baritone Justin Welsh and bass Michael Ullo. Ivany will direct and Mokrzewski will conduct.

**Highlands Opera premiere:** Meanwhile, there is an important premiere outside Toronto. Opera lovers may know that the Highlands Opera Studio, based in Haliburton with Richard Margison as artistic director, presents opera in the summer. This year HOS will present a new work December 21 and 22, *Mishaabooz’s Realm (Le Royaume de Michabou)*, with music and libretto by Cree composer Andrew Balfour. The opera, a co-production with L’Atelier Lyrique de L’Opéra de Montréal, will have its world premiere performances in Montreal on December 15 and 16 before moving to Haliburton.

The opera’s central figure is Mishaabooz, an important character in Anishinaabe storytelling. Mishaabooz is another name for Nanabozho, the great trickster spirit and shape-shifter, one of whose favourite forms is as a giant rabbit, who is often sent to earth by Gitche Manitou (the Creator) to teach the Ojibwe peoples. (Mishaabooz, in fact, means “Great Hare.”) In his composer’s statement, Balfour describes the opera as “a multi-media and multi-directional work, incorporating classical styles, unique choral and vocal perspectives, Indigenous musical and oral traditions, with a libretto in First Nations dialect, French and English, exploring contemporary issues concerning Canada’s relationship with our First People and the land of Turtle Island, past, present and future.”

Singers include soprano Lauren Margison and baritone Nathan Keoughan. Balfour and Cory Campbell will contribute vocals and play percussion while music director Louise-Andrée Baril will conduct from the piano. The chorus will be drawn from both Montreal and Haliburton. Valerie Kuinka is the stage director.

We clearly no longer have to wait until spring for variety in operatic activity in Ontario.

Christopher Hoile is a Toronto-based writer on opera and theatre. He can be contacted at opera@thewholenote.com.
Beat by Beat | Art of Song

Some Southern Comfort

LYDIA PEROVIĆ

If anything’s desperately needed in Toronto in December, it’s a dash of the south. The Vesuvius Ensemble to the rescue: the trio that specializes in Southern Italian music (mostly from Naples and Campania but also Calabria and Puglia) is preparing a pastoral Christmas program for mid-December, just as the Toronto winter is about to take over.

Vesuvius is a three-lad enterprise: Francesco Pellegrino is the voice of the group, while Marco Cera and Lucas Harris play a variety of plucked string instruments, and are most likely to be found manning Baroque guitar and theorbo respectively. Various other period instruments are added depending on the songs chosen, like tammorra, a large tambourine with bells, or ciaramella, an early oboe with an ear-trumpet-like shape. This instrumentarium is there to accompany the songs both folk and composed, roughly from the same period, the 1500s and 1600s. The most interesting part of the Vesuvius mission is this mix of the popular and the authored material. There have always been song composers open to the influence of the folk, and among those who have used either folk music or folk lyrics you are likely to hear in Vesuvius concerts are Andrea Falconieri (d. 1656), Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (1580-1651), Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), Leonardo Vinci (1690-1730), and Francesco Provenzale (1624-1704).

The study of Italian folk song got a significant boost in the 20th century thanks to recording technology. In the mid-1950s, Alan Lomax and Diego Carpitella travelled to villages up and down Italy to record traditional peasant songs sung in dialect. Some of the songs were work songs, some were dances like the tarantella (which, myth has it, cures poisonous spider bites and bilious moods of other kinds), and others were laments, or love songs, or wedding songs. Commercially released recordings of some of the Carpitella-Lomax treasures still exist – the Italian Treasury series of CDs divided into regions is not exactly easy to buy (an Amazon search will yield second-hand, vinyl or MP3 offers) and is best sought out in large and university libraries. Puglia: the Salento (2002), Calabria and Folk Music and Song of Italy: A Sampler (1999). for example, are available at the Toronto Reference Library and each includes booklets with lyrics and translations.

Another important figure of the Italian folk revival of the 20th century is the musicologist, theatre artist and composer Roberto de Simone (b. 1933). In addition to the research and archiving of the popular chant, de Simone incorporated folk practices into his own writing and stage directing and is probably best known internationally for the opera La gatta Cenerentola. (Look for Secondo coro delle lavandaie – The Second Chorus of the Washerwomen – on YouTube.)

Which of the Italian traditional and composed treasures will Vesuvius perform in their Christmas concert? We’ll find out on December 17 or 19 in Heliconian Hall, though a few days earlier is also a possibility since the group will perform a similar program at the Four Seasons Centre’s Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre on December 12 at noon. When I spoke with Francesco Pellegrino for this article in mid-October, the program had not yet been finalized. What is certain is that Tommaso Sollazzo, a connoisseur of the Italian bagpipes called zampogne, will be joining in. The trio performed with him in Italy a few years back and now he’s making the trip to wintry Toronto.

And since the tarantellas and the tammurriatas are so danceable, the Vesuvius Ensemble will have some great dancing to do.
will Vesuvius let the audience dance during their concerts, maybe preceded by some dance instruction? “Not yet,” says Pellegrino, “but we are expanding this program and in the next couple of years our concerts may also have dancers from Italy who are well versed in tarantella or tammurriata. We’re working on it.”

Outside Toronto, you can hear (though not yet dance to) Vesuvius’ Christmas concert on December 18 in Hamilton and December 20 in Montreal.

January

Twenty-five years after its world premiere, the song cycle *Honey and Rue* is still regularly performed by symphony orchestras and coloratura sopranos in the US. Carnegie Hall commissioned it and André Previn composed it for Kathleen Battle, who was a keen reader of Toni Morrison and wanted her as a lyricist. We don’t hear the cycle that often in Canada, and it’s St. Catharines, not Toronto, that got lucky this season, with two *Honey and Rue* performances with the Niagara Symphony Orchestra in January. Morrison’s poems are a rich and intense read and should be relished without the music first (keep those programs, concertgoers: the poems are not easy to find).

Young soprano Claire de Sévigné will sing. Last time I heard de Sévigné was in the COC’s [Arabella](https://www.coc.ca/), where she effortlessly produced the coloratura for the Viennese ball ingenue, Fiakermilli. There probably isn’t another Canadian soprano whose timbre more resembles Battle’s. I caught up with the travelling soprano via email to learn more about her take on the piece.

> When I ask her what it is that she likes about *Honey and Rue*, she starts with the orchestration. “Singing with an orchestra is always thrilling but singing a piece that’s in the style of ‘classical-jazz-blues fusion’ feels like a real jam. The fourth song is a huge contrast to the rest of the cycle in that it is *a cappella*, and this moment can be magic. I also adore the lyrics. Very strong text with stunning imagery.”

> I tell her that my first impression of it was that it was extremely high. Her answer doesn’t surprise me: “I don’t notice it being all that high actually – but that’s coming from a coloratura soprano and my voice lives in the clouds, hahaha. I think that Previn knew how to write for the voice, since the performer doesn’t notice it being all that high! I actually find the set quite lyric – the highest note is only a B flat, a whole fourth lower than my high notes, and the set sits in quite a nice place for a light soprano’s voice to spin and shimmer while still being able to sing the text... It’s quite a pleasure to sing.”

> The cycle was written by an African-American writer for an African-American singer originally, and although it’s still frequently sung by African-American singers, it’s become a cycle for any talented soprano who can meet its challenge. I ask de Sévigné what she thinks of the recent rise in discussions about what cultural material can be performed by who, and in what context. “It’s true, the cycle was...”

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**The Toronto Consort | 45**

**Navidad: A Spanish Christmas**

*December 8 & 9 at 8pm | December 10 at 3:30pm*

We like to say this is the liveliest Christmas concert in town! With flashing rhythms and sensuous melodies, we bring you a fiesta of early music from Spanish-speaking nations on both sides of the Atlantic, with harp, guitars, percussion, winds, keyboards and voices.

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originally commissioned after Battle read *The Bluest Eyes* by Toni Morrison. The poems of *Honey and Rue* are different however – they don’t explicitly or exclusively portray the same themes from the book, with the exception of the sixth song, which I would say is outwardly about slavery and abuse.” The final poem is based on the African-American spiritual *Take My Mother Home*, though with added lyrics and musical material. “The cycle as a whole,” writes de Sévigné, “explores questions around equality, suffering, freedom and acceptance, which are themes that humanity as a whole has experienced and can appreciate.”

This will not be the young singer’s first encounter with the piece. “It’s the second time I’ve been asked to sing it. I first performed it with piano in the Aspen Music Festival concert series in 2012 and have performed excerpts over the past years in several recitals. I find something new every time I perform it. I have found that my best way to interpret the songs is by switching between the first person and the narrator.”

And what is next on her schedule? “I’m currently doing a concert tour in China with the Hantang International Music Festival in collaboration with the Salzburg Festival (writing to you from Beijing right now!). I’m back to Canada in December for the Messiah with the Edmonton Symphony and in February, I’ll be at the Canadian Opera Company singing the role of Blonde in Mozart’s *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. There’s also a Mozart C Minor Mass this season, and a *Carmina Burana* with the Grant Park Festival in Chicago.”

But as the first thing in the new year, *Honey and Rue*: January 20 and 21, 7:30pm, with the Niagara Symphony Orchestra. Also on the program: Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll* and Ravel’s *Mother Goose* (complete ballet). Bradley Thachuck, conductor. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, St. Catharines. ✪

*Lydia Perović is an arts journalist in Toronto. Send her your art-of-song news to artofsong@thewholenote.com.*
The Dreaded Cough

BRIAN CHANG

Welcome to this double edition of Choral Scene! By the time you get your hands on this magazine the holiday season will be well under way. Carols will get in your ear, festive sounds will echo out and bells will be a-ringing throughout the region. I hope you’ve got your concert tickets in hand. If not, hurry up and reserve your place in these amazing concerts before you’re disappointed. Balancing out the holiday season, I’m also going to highlight some interesting performances you should check out in the choral world into the new year. We’ll be back in February, just in time for Chinese New Year on February 16, 2018 – the Year of the Dog! But I’m going to highlight a few performances well beyond the date that you might want to circle in one of the seasonal calendars you will doubtless be acquiring in the coming weeks.

Stage Coughs

But first, from a chorister’s perspective, some thoughts on the dreaded cough and wintry illness for singers!

In November’s WholeNote, Vivien Fellegi wrote about major injuries and musicians and noted that 84 percent of musicians will have to deal with a significant injury affecting their ability to make music. If you ask any vocalist to name their performance terror, it usually involves being sick around performance time. Four years ago, during an especially illness-fraught Messiah run at the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the flu and cold hit our soprano and bass soloists. Eventually, a sub for the bass needed to be called in to finish the run. Members of the choir were hit as well. Good performers put on a good show even when adverse conditions exist, but even then, there’s only so much one can do when your body is under bacterial or viral attack. This past October, I got a pretty bad viral throat infection. It cleared, but the residual cough and throat irritation continued for a few weeks. The result was a lot of rehearsals spent sitting in the back, humming along as we began going through Suzanne Steele and Jeffrey Ryan’s Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation. My voice returned in time for the Remembrance Day performances but there was coughing during the performance I just couldn’t control. A persistently irritated throat, diminished lung capacity, wonky musculature around the vibrating air and sudden bursts of coughing made it hard to rehearse and perform. It’s quite upsetting to find your instrument unreliable. Something is physically making your voice not work and it is quite distressing, because when it is your body, nothing can really make the healing process go faster than it takes.

And Audience Echoes

Let’s be clear though, illness sucks even if you aren’t a performer. If you’re in the audience, sometimes the tension of trying not to make a sound makes you uncomfortable to the point where you’re no longer enjoying the music and instead just trying to be silent. I know many of my colleagues feel very strongly about audience noises. Some barely notice, but some take great issue with coughs and shuffles and the noises that crowds of hundreds of people make just by existing. For me, any good performer can do their job, even when there is noise; the aural presence of the audience adds an ambience to the overall process of performing. Performing without an audience is just glorified rehearsal. Real audiences are made of real people and they make noises. They react to the music and they respond in kind. Think about how the energy in the room changes when everyone stands for the “Hallelujah Chorus” in Messiah – there is a visceral, physical and emotional change in the room. You don’t have to be a music aficionado to notice it, or more importantly, to feel changed by it. I like when there’s an audience, especially a big one, and I think most performing arts organizations would prefer you’re there, even if a bit noisy.

So, into this season of coughs, hacks, sneezes and other wintry ailments we go. Be healthy and get your flu shot! And be kind to the singers in your life, especially if we Purell ourselves religiously and take precautions to stay away from potential illness. We’re worried sick about losing our voices!

The Governor General’s Messiah

The newly installed Governor General, Julie Payette, once sang in the Tafelmusik Chamber Choir. She famously carried a recording of Tafelmusik’s Messiah with her into space. Her Excellency’s love of music will surely serve her well in her position as a grand patron of the arts in Canada. Tafelmusik’s annual Messiah continues to provide a period interpretation in the inimitable Koerner Hall, December 12 to 16. Ivars Taurins leads the ensembles. Presenting one of the smaller Messiah performances annually, Tafelmusik also presents the largest Messiah in town with its annual “Sing-Along Messiah” at Massey Hall, where 2,700 fans join the orchestra and choir in a grand tradition under the baton of the great maestro himself, Herr Handel (aka. Ivars Taurins), December 17 at 2pm.
A Solid Choral Holiday at the TSO

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) has an exceptionally choir-filled holiday season.

*Home Alone* in concert is being performed live with the Etobicoke School of the Arts Concert Choir, conducted by Constantine Kitsopoulos, November 30 to December 2. This beloved movie is very much a holiday favourite and one of John Williams’ most magical scores. “Somewhere in my Memory,” nominated for an Academy Award for Best Original Song, has become a choral classic for the season.

Then, joining the TSO for the first time, Resonance Youth Choir from Mississauga makes its debut in Roy Thomson Hall on December 10 at 3pm. Only in its second season, Bob Anderson’s choir will join Tha Spot Holiday Dancers and TSYO Concerto Competition winner, cellist Dale Yoon Ho Jeong. Sing-along classics *Jingle Bells, Joy to the World, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* and more are part of the program, as well as an excerpt from Saint-Saëns *Cello Concerto No.1*. David Amado, music director of the Delaware Symphony and the Atlantic Music Festival, leads the groups. The main performance will be live accompaniment of Howard Blake’s score to the holiday favourite film *The Snowman*.

No holiday season is complete without the TSO Pops Concert, featuring the Canadian Brass and the Etobicoke School of the Arts Holiday Chorus. Lucas Waldin conducts. The program December 12 and 13 looks magical, including bits from *The Polar Express* film, unique Canadian Brass arrangements like *White Christmas, Go Tell it On the Mountain, The First Noel* and carols arranged by TSO Pops conductor Stephen Reineke. (Waldin, who works with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, was most recently in Toronto conducting the hugely popular and totally-sold-out TSO Carly Rae Jepsen performance.)

Last but not least, the TSO and Toronto Mendelssohn Choir presentation of *Messiah* promises to be as grand as ever. Matthew Halls, British early music specialist, takes the helm. This performance has an impeccable set of soloists: Karina Gauvin, soprano; Kristztina Szabó, mezzo-soprano; Frédéric Antoun, tenor; and Joshua Hopkins, baritone. December 18 to 23 in Roy Thomson Hall. (Barring an uncontrolable relapse into viral coughing, I’ll be there in my usual place in the Mendelssohn tenor section.)

**The New Year**

With most musical programming seasons running to the end of
June, I’ve decided to highlight one performance from each of the next few months. They might make great gifts if you’re thinking ahead, and there are some you’ll surely want to secure seats to before they sell out.

**January:** Annually, at the end of January, the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir hosts one of the most important training intensives for emerging conductors anywhere in North America. Under the supervision of Noel Edison, five symposium participants are exposed to a rigorous schedule of about 20 diverse songs from global choral repertoire and tested by the chamber-sized Elora Festival Singers and the symphonic, full Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. The week culminates with a free concert and a chance to see these conductors in action on January 27 at 3pm, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, Toronto.

**February:** The Orpheus Choir presents “Nordic Light.” The Northern Lights, also known as the Aurora Borealis, have long captured the imagination and spirit of peoples in the far North. Indigenous peoples in Canada have an especially strong connection to their presence. Ēriks Ešenvalds, Latvian composer, has written *Nordic Light Symphony*. He will be in Toronto to introduce the work prior to the performance. This is the Canadian premiere of the work and a chance to experience Ešenvalds’ ethereal, atmospheric and deeply satisfying work, February 24 at 7:30pm, Metropolitan United Church, Toronto.

**March:** Soundstreams presents Tan Dun’s *Water Passion*. Choir 21, soloists and instruments are conducted by David Fallis. I’m deeply intrigued by the program. Billed as a reimagination of the Bach *St. Matthew Passion*. Dun’s East Asian musicality will weave a blending of the words of Christ through the theme of water, guided by Eastern musical traditions. From Mongolian overtone singing to Peking Opera to the sound of water, this promises to be an experience, March 9 at 8pm, Trinity-St. Pauls Centre, Toronto.

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

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**CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 4:30PM**

A traditional candlelight choral presentation featuring choirs and musicians of Yorkminster Park.

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**NINE LESSONS & CAROLS**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 4:30PM**

Following the historic tradition of King’s College in Cambridge.

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In Ways That Words Alone Can Not

Andrew Timar

Christmas, and the liminal juncture between old and new years that follows, is for many of us a prime occasion for gifting and for helping those less fortunate. It’s also a time when daylight hours are at their shortest and even our waking hours are dominated by darkness. As such it’s a time which amply rewards introspection of the personal kind, when we can profitably reflect back on the past year and also look forward, hopefully, to a brighter new one.

At the heart of all this is observance of the winter solstice. The period around the year’s shortest day has been marked in the Northern Hemisphere with rituals of rebirth, celebrated in holidays, festivals and community gatherings, reaching back perhaps to the Neolithic period. Ancient Romans, Persians, Chinese, Theravada Buddhists, Northern European peoples – pagan and neo-pagan – as well as the Zuni of the American Southwest all celebrated the winter solstice. Some still do. Sensitivity to natural cycles seems to be hardwired in our human DNA.

It’s no coincidence that Christians of the Western tradition chose the winter solstice to celebrate the Longest Night (aka Blue Christmas). Falling at the end of the Advent season, these long and cold nights underscore believers’ own struggle with darkness and grief as they face the end of the growing season, and loss of many kinds. Christmas, the joyous celebration of Christ’s birth, was strategically placed within the Roman annual calendar by the early Church to coincide with this period.

Timar family Christmas

My own family has celebrated Christmas for many generations but in recent decades the focus has increasingly shifted from long-time religious to secular rituals performed by our immediate Toronto family. In our ever-morphing clan new partners are added, names change, babies are born, people move away and some return; they grow up, grow old and yes, our elders ultimately enter the realm of the ancestors.

All dressed up, each year the extended Timar clan gathers at one of our homes to celebrate our seasonal traditions, ancient and new. We feast extravagantly into the night with special rich food and drink that speaks to our multiple ethnic and religious roots, identities and values. Helping refresh family bonds is the spirit of generosity, mutual care and the hospitality that permeates that late December evening.

65 Million Refugee Realities

Things aren’t so rosy however for everyone at this time of year. It’s a particularly sad time for families torn apart geographically, whom some are compelled to flee their homelands. So it was too with my family when I was six. We were refugees from post-revolution occupied Hungary. Our first generation is forever grateful to Canada for giving five of us sanctuary, a fertile place to put down roots, make a home, to flourish.

Today, the plight of refugees of many kinds continues to confront every global citizen. Many millions of our fellow humans need aid or asylum at any given time. Celebrated Chinese multimedia artist and activist Ai Weiwei estimates the number at “about 65 million people.”

In October 2017 he opened a vast new installation Good Fences Make Good Neighbours at some 300 sites around New York City, aiming ultimately to draw attention to the world’s refugee crisis. Good Fences criticizes “the global trend of trying to separate us by colour, race, religion, nationality ... against freedom, against humanity,” as Ai said at his October Manhattan press conference.

Reunite the Moneka Family

The mind-boggling numbers of displaced humanity around the world can be overwhelming in the absence of being able to put a human face on suffering. The dilemma of refugees, so passionately articulated by Ai in his art, is reflected in many ways here in Toronto. Not surprisingly, within our musical communities, it shows up particularly keenly among world musicians who have recently made Canada their home.

Early in November I received an email from Jaclyn Tam, manager of concerts and special projects – including New Canadian Global Music Orchestra (NCGMO) – at the Royal Conservatory and TELUS Centre. “I wanted to tell you about a fundraiser I’m
organizing on Monday, December 11 at Lula Lounge.” Tam’s email began. JUNO winners and nominee musicians Quicke Escamilla, David Buchbinder, Maryem and Ernie Tollar, and many special guests will perform. They’re coming together to support Ahmed Moneka, an incredibly special musician and actor who now calls Toronto home, in his bid to bring his family here. I first met him last year when he auditioned for NCGMO.”

I was immediately gripped. Here was a story with parallels to that of my own family of origin, as well as to ancient semi-mythic narratives of asylum, hopes of peace, reconciliation and gift-giving generosity. I called Tam at her Royal Conservatory of Music Toronto office and said, “I met him a few times, heard his music, and since there was a personal connection I felt compelled to act. It was simple really: here’s my bid to bring his family here. I first met him last year when he auditioned for NCGMO.”

Moneka’s family, of African Sufi descent, was well established in Baghdad’s artist community. His father was a well-known Iraqi actor and comedian, and his sister Isra was one of the founders of the Cinema Department at the University of Basra. His younger sister Tara has an international career as a singer. She has performed on Iraqi TV and at festivals at a young age. Having faced months of violent threats from the increasingly powerful militias in Iraq, however, the family was forced to flee to Turkey in 2016. Ahmed’s family has been torn apart and they are now “in a critical situation.” Moneka speaks powerfully of their present danger in his fundraising YouTube video. Moneka hopes to reunite his family in Canada “so that they may live together in peace.” All proceeds from the December 11 Lula concert will support his goal.

“With Ahmed, it’s all personal,” Tam says. “I met him a few times, heard his music, and since there was a personal connection I felt compelled to act. It was simple really: here’s one person I could help reconnect with his family.”

At his NCGMO audition, “Ahmed radiated pure musical joy.” But as Tam explains, by the time the final roster was decided, he had already made a commitment to tour with another band. The NCGMO moved on without him, but he made abiding connections with artistic director David Buchbinder, who has hired Ahmed for other projects.

After hearing Ahmed’s story, Tam felt personally compelled to help. “I don’t have a lot of money to donate,” she says, “but I do have a large network built up over the years and also the producing skills to put together such an event.” So she reached out to Tracey Jenkins at Lula Lounge and to musicians who have worked with Ahmed. “I was touched by the response of Lula and of the musicians and artists. They didn’t hesitate to donate their talents.”

This is our community at work big time (and it promises to be a fine musical evening as well) Ahmed plays cajon and sings maqam in a wonderful trio called Moskitto Bar, which will play at the fundraiser. (One of his bandmates, Tangi Ropars, is formerly of Lemon Bucket Orkestra.) Additionally, a group dubbed Orquesta of Love has been organized for the fundraiser, bringing together Toronto world music A-listers such as trumpeter David Buchbinder, singers Maryem Tollar and Roula Said, percussionist Nagmeh Farahmand, multi-instrumentalist and vocalist Waleed Abdulhamid and wind player extraordinaire Ernie Tollar.

In addition to pure music, NAMAS will recite poetry to guitar accompaniment and Zeena Sileem, an Iraqi painter, will paint a canvas live during the evening. The completed canvas will be auctioned with proceeds benefitting the Moneka family reunification fund.

All in all, this promises to be a terrific community event guaranteed to put all who come out to support the Moneka family’s desire for reunification in a proper holiday spirit.

**New Canadian Global Music Orchestra (NCGMO): update**

I promised in my summer 2017 column story about NCGMO that I would follow up on the ensemble’s progress. Since I was speaking with Jaclyn Tam about the Moneka story I asked her for an update on the orchestra as well. As it turns out, the Orchestra had a Banff Centre residency in September and October, recording its first album (which is being edited and mixed for concert release on April 7, 2018). Shortly after the Banff residency, in November, the NCGMO performed a showcase at “North America’s World Music Summit,” Mundial Montréal. And on February 4, deeper and no doubt whiter into winter, NCGMO will appear on the Isabel Bader Centre stage in Kingston, in what the Isabel’s listings describe as a concert of “transcultural music which connects and communicates in ways that words, politicians, and spiritual leaders cannot. Together, we all find a common language.”

**Lula Music and Arts Centre**

In its own words, Lula “nourishes a thriving Canadian world music scene ... with a focus on local artists performing music of the Americas.” It fosters the Canadian world music scene “through concerts, festivals, cultural exchanges, education, outreach, audience and professional development.”

Lula’s Dundas West space appears to be in particularly heavy rotation this December. I counted 31 concerts and salsa classes on the site. That averages out to an astounding one scheduled event for each day of the month! In January the action announced so far settles down to eight music events, plus another six booked to date in February. It’s entirely possible more gigs will be booked in the interim, but in any case that is much too many to talk about here. I encourage readers to visit TheWholeNote’s listings or Lula’s site calendar for updates.

**Aga Khan Museum: concert picks for January and February 2018**

Another premier Toronto venue for culturally diverse music performance is the Aga Khan Museum. It continues its programs of concerts and more casual pop-ups.

**January 18** the AKM presents “Yemen Blues,” a truly transcultural band delivering “an explosive combination of Yemeni song and poetry, Jewish music, West African groove and funk.” With musicians from New York City, Uruguay and Tel Aviv, leader Ravid Kahalani’s charts set a high musical standard and have roused international audiences.

**February 1** “Musical Inventions” by Paolo Angeli featuring Dr. Draw takes the AKM’s auditorium stage.

Angeli, playing a unique 18-string hybrid of guitar, violoncello and drums, performs music rooted in the Sardinian tradition blended with avant-garde aesthetics. He’s joined by electric violinist Dr. Draw.

**February 16** the AKM presents “Under the Indian Musical Sky,” with Montréal group Constantinople and Grammy Award-nominated Carnatic venu (flute) virtuoso Shashank Subramanyam. Constantinople’s collaboration with Subramanyam “bridges not only East and West but [also] musical traditions ... from across the globe,” much like the group’s namesake city.

**Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer. He can be contacted at worldmusic@thewholenote.com.**
Jazz musicians earn part of what is laughingly referred to as their “living” by doing what they call “jobbing gigs,” on which they provide all-purpose music for various functions. Guido Basso calls what is generally required on these gigs “jolly jazz”: a variety of familiar songs – standards, bossa novas, maybe even the odd jazz tune – well-played at tempos which are danceable, or at least listenable. Not that anyone at these dos actually listens – the music is generally intended as background to deafening chatter – but just in case. The time-honoured m.o. of these gigs is “faking” – that is, playing unprinted songs without using any written music. Even when all of the musicians involved know a lot of tunes, there is a certain amount of repertorial Russian roulette involved. Nobody knows every song – well, Reg Schwager maybe – but even if you know the given song, it may not come to you until after it’s over and it’s too late. Generally though, faking works and it cuts down on schlepping music and music stands.

But a couple of bullets are added to the faking Russian roulette pistol every December, when seasonal music is thrown into the jobbing mix. Both the risks and stakes suddenly go up as musicians who spend the rest of the year negotiating the fiendish complexities of songs such as Lush Life or Round Midnight, and are naturally expected to play Christmas standards – familiar and dear to all – but which they haven’t played for a whole year. (By “Christmas standards” I mean more modern seasonal songs with some of the riskier jazz elements such as White Christmas, The Christmas Song, or perhaps even the odd jazz tune which has all the same notes save for the all-important root. Notice the roots are a semitone apart, and there’s the rub. As the bridge arrives, a bassist has to make a split-second decision about which root to play, with a 50/50 chance of being dead wrong and sounding like an idiot. If he or she chooses the A and the pianist plays the A-flat chord it sounds awful and vice versa: it’s a game of chord-change chicken. If I had a dollar for every time I zigged when I should have zagged in this situation, I’d be a rich man. The smart solution would be for the pianist to omit the root altogether and leave the choice up to the bassist. But no, that would be too easy, and not many pianists think this way. This may seem like a small detail and it is, but the trouble with these clashes is that they leave you frazzled and gar, your concentration, which can lead to further clunkers along the way.

The big problem is that these seasonal faking mishaps occur in a context riddled with expectation, memory and the potential to spoil the seasonal mood. It’s an important time of year and the people at a seasonal gig know all these tunes intimately from years of hearing them on records and in movies, usually in more deluxe versions with strings, choirs, Bing Crosby, etc. Messing up a Christmas tune leaves the band with egg nog on its face and is like messing up a national anthem – everybody hears it right away and sometimes offence is taken. As in, “Who hired these bums and how much are they being paid? They can’t even play White Christmas, for crying out loud!”

But not all the disasters of seasonal gigs come from faking tunes; some of them have to do with the merrymaking of the audience. Here are a couple of Christmas party stories to illustrate this. About 15 years ago guitarist Ted Quinlan hired saxophonist Mike Murley, drummer Ted Warren and me to play a Christmas party, held on the third floor of The Senator, for a small company. Ted is prized for his musical versatility and his wacky sense of humour, both of which came in sailing up until the beginning of the bridge, which can start on one of two chords fraught with conflict for a bassist and a pianist. Again in E-flat, the first chord of the bridge could be A-flat Major 7, or the “hipper” option – an A Minor 7 flat-five chord which has all the same notes save for the all-important root. Notice the roots are a semitone apart, and there’s the rub. As the bridge arrives, a bassist has to make a split-second decision about which root to play, with a 50/50 chance of being dead wrong and sounding like an idiot. If he or she chooses the A and the pianist plays the A-flat chord it sounds awful and vice versa: it’s a game of chord-change chicken. If I had a dollar for every time I zigged when I should have zagged in this situation, I’d be a rich man. The smart solution would be for the pianist to omit the root altogether and leave the choice up to the bassist. But no, that would be too easy, and not many pianists think this way. This may seem like a small detail and it is, but the trouble with these clashes is that they leave you frazzled and jar, your concentration, which can lead to further clunkers along the way.

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There are two harmonically complex seasonal standards though: The Christmas Song, and Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas, each of them a must-play. Both are ballads and their slow tempos exacerbate the chord change clashes which lurk around every corner. Taken in the key of E-flat, The Christmas Song has two quick and tricky modulations in its first eight bars alone: to the key of G-Major and then immediately to G-flat Major. These key changes come as something of a surprise if you haven’t played it in 12 months, but even if you do remember them there are all sorts of chord-change options to trip over before the modulations. Altogether this makes faking Mel Torme’s classic for the first time in a year a sweaty experience. Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas may be the best of the lot and is somewhat easier, but still has its scary moments. It’s smooth
handy on this gig. After no time at all it became clear that the people weren’t going to pay any attention to the music; all was din. We were playing God Rest Ye, Merry Gentleman when, thinking of the lyrics, I glanced over at Ted, who had a typically manic grin on his face. Somehow I knew this meant that he was going to yell out “Satan!” from the carol’s fifth line and when the time came we both bellowed “Satan!” at the top of our lungs. Nobody noticed except the other two guys in the band, who proceeded to join us with “Satan!” in the next choruses. I still don’t know how we managed to get through the tune with all the laughing, but we had to take a break afterwards from sheer exhaustion.

A few years later, singer John Alcorn hired guitarist Reg Schwager and me - his regular band - to play a Christmas party for a small law firm, held in a private banquet facility in a downtown restaurant. It was a fairly intimate party with the people close at hand, some of them even listening to the music. All was going well until we came back from our second break and noticed that suddenly everybody was drunk. Particularly a large East Indian gentleman who obviously had the lamp shade on, like Peter Sellers in The Party, only louder. Alcorn called Route 66 - not a seasonal song, but a good party tune. As he began singing it, the Indian guy bellowed out “Oh goody, it’s Route 67!” and began dancing a ridiculous teetering boogie only he understood. Reg and I both doubled over laughing, but still somehow managed to keep playing. Alcorn didn’t bat an eye though; his face was a mask of composure and he kept singing as if nothing had happened. That, ladies and gentlemen, is professionalism.

So these are a couple of examples of musicians getting their own back amid the minefield of Christmas gigs. A few years ago some of us found a new way of having fun with seasonal music: a mashup game in which we combined the names of Christmas carols/songs with jazz tunes and standards to form wacky new titles. “Hark the Herald Angels Sing Sing Sing,” “Joy Spring to the World,” “Sippin’ at Jingle Bells,” “Silent Night in Tunisia,” “What Child Is This Thing Called Love?” and “O Little Rootie Tootie Town of Bethlehem” were among the first of these; later I expanded the game to include readers and writers about movies and food.

Beat by Beat | Bandstand

Pride of Performance and Canadian Connections

JACK MACQUARRIE

Here we are, it’s December already, but with many community ensembles still more focused on sesquicentennial projects as the year draws to a close than on events that could be described as special for the Christmas season. Let’s start with two band projects we have recently learned of that warrant mention, both of which have significant historical aspects.

Cobourg: The first of these is the announcement of a CD by the Cobourg Concert Band. Although this CD, Pride of Performance, was officially released on Canada Day at the band’s concert in the Cobourg Victoria Park Bandshell, it did not come to our attention until a few days ago. There are a number of ways in which this CD is special. Not only is it a sesquicentennial project, but it marks the 175th year that there has been a town band in Cobourg. That’s 25 years longer than Canada has been a country. Whether that sets a record for the establishment of a town band in Canada will be left for this Cobourg band to dispute with the Newmarket Citizens’ Band and any others that might claim such a title. Every track on this recording is either a new arrangement of an established work or a completely new composition. All are by local musicians, including some band members. Even the cover artwork was created by contest winners from the local St. Mary’s High School. I hope to see a review of this CD in a future issue of The WholeNote.

(A side note: this band also bears the title The Band of Her Majesty’s Royal Marines Association – Ontario, and is allowed, by royal assent, to wear the uniform of the Royal Marines. How could this be, you might ask. Some years ago a man named Roland White moved from England and took up residence in Cobourg. He just happened to have been an assistant bandmaster in the Royal Marines working under the renowned conductor Sir Vivian Dunn, and had studied conducting under Sir John Barbirolli. When the town band needed a new conductor, there was White to take over, get that royal assent and change the image of the town band to its present pride of Cobourg.)

London: Where else might we look for a sesquicentennial band project? The first place that comes to mind, of course, is Henry Meredith’s Plumbing Factory Brass Band in London. On Wednesday, December 13, 7:30pm at Byron United Church – 420 Boler Rd., London, Ontario – the PFBB will celebrate Canada’s 150th birthday with “The Golden Age of Brass,” featuring music from the 1800s on period instruments. Since Confederation-era music will be highlighted, von Suppe’s exuberant Jolly Robbers Overture, written exactly 150 years ago in 1867, will open the program. Then, band music by big name composers will include Beethoven’s Marsch des Vörck’schen Korps and Mendelssohn’s War March of the Priests. The centrepiece of the program will be the challenging Raymond Overture by Ambrose Thomas.

Last month I mentioned the importance of musicianship for ensembles to really tell their story. Well, in this program, Dr. Hank has selected a set of four up-tempo compositions to test the skill of his band’s musicians. One highly regarded composer of the 1800s, famed for his toe-tapping pieces based on popular dance forms of the mid-19th century, was Claudio Grafulla. To demonstrate their skills, the band will play a set of four of his works: Cape May Polka, Freischutz Quick Step, Skyrocket March, and Harrah Storm Galop. Another seasonal favourite, Johann Strauss Sr.’s famous Radetzky March from 1848, will bring the concert to a rousing close. I’m sure that many instruments from Dr. Hank’s vast collection will be front and centre at this concert.

(Another sidenote: While brass bands have many loyal followers,
particularly in England and much of North America, that has not always been the case. With the origin of the brass band movement coming largely from company “works bands” in England, there were often considerable derisive comments about them. Sir Thomas Beecham was famous (or infamous) for two of these comments. “The British Brass Band has its place – outdoors, and several miles away” is perhaps his most often quoted. But the one that drew the most ire was when he referred to the brass band as “that superannuated, obsolete, beastly, disgusting, horrid method of making music.” However, attitudes gradually changed, and in 1947 Beecham even guest-conducted a mass band concert at Belle Vue.

**Ukraine:** Speaking of brass bands, recent Salvation Army news caught my attention. The Salvation Army is represented and active in 127 countries around the world. In many of these countries, Salvation Army groups have brass bands. Ukraine, in particular, is a country where there is a will but not the required leadership to develop the brass band movement. Several attempts have been made over the last 25 years to stimulate interest. While some attempts have been successful, with the political unrest of recent years, these have been difficult to sustain.

Enter Bob Gray, a Toronto high school music teacher, trumpet player and conductor with whom I play regularly, who has been active in the Salvation Army for many years. About six years ago, at the Salvation Army’s music camp at Jackson’s Point, he met two young men from Kiev, a cornet player and a euphonium player. After they had returned to Kiev, Bob decided to look into the SA band situation in Ukraine. After the revolution of 2014, Salvation Army churches throughout Ukraine closed, and now there are only two remaining in Kiev. Having learned of the demise of that Salvation Army movement, Gray decided to try to do something to rectify the situation. Item one on his agenda was language study. For over a year he actively studied in preparation for visits to Ukraine for Salvation Army activities. He went to Kiev for the first time in June 2016, then in May 2017, and again in October 2017. Gray, along with the people he met at Jackson’s Point years ago, are trying to resurrect the brass band movement in the Ukraine and, in particular, Kiev. A survey showed that there were 25 instruments in working order and a few players who were willing to commit time and effort to form what would be a divisional band base in Kiev.

The Salvation Army will be celebrating their 25th anniversary of operations in Ukraine this coming June. It is hoped that the divisional band in Kiev will have its debut during that weekend of activities. The Winton Citadel Band from Bournemouth in the United Kingdom will be the featured band for the festivities. The city of Kiev hosted the Eastern block countries Eurovision Song Festival this past June. During the event many groups entertained in local parks and squares. The Salvation Army provided a musical presentation in Victory Park. Bob Gray was a featured cornet soloist as part of these outreach concerts.

**A trip to Belgium:** A couple of months ago I heard from longtime friend Colin Rowe that he would be travelling to Belgium. I first met Colin some time around 1984 when we were both playing in a swing band at the Newmarket Jazz Appreciation Society. After that, he played trombone in the Governor General’s Horse Guards Band and subsequently became their drum major. Having moved East some years ago, Colin now has the same duties with the Cobourg Concert Band.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the battle of Passchendaele, Veterans Affairs Canada decided to mount a very different form of memorial. Specifically they identified nine recipients of the Victoria Cross from that era and the nine regiments in which they served. Then they selected a living representative of each regiment to go to Belgium, but that person could not be a currently serving member of the regiment. One of those VC recipients was Private Tommy Holmes VC from the 48th Canadian Mounted Rifles. At some time after WWI that unit’s name was changed to the Governor General’s Horse Guards. As the representative from the GGHG, Veterans Affairs selected Colin Rowe. All of regimental representatives, along with the band of the Royal 22nd Regiment, embarked on an
RCAF transport for their trip to Belgium on November 5.

Another formerly local musician was Kevin Fleming, who was originally introduced to the GGHG by Colin as a trombone player. Later, like Colin, he continued to play trombone, but became Drum Major of the GGHG. Some time later Fleming transferred to the Regular Force, and a while ago to the Royal 22nd Regiment, nicknamed the Van Doos. Their band was selected as the lead band because Passchendaele was one of that regiment’s battle honours.

While there were many ceremonies, the highlight for Fleming was at Passchendaele, with a torchlight parade from the WW1 monument to the town square followed by a concert.

Those who went on that trip commented that it had been meticulously organized by Veterans Affairs, and that on the flight over, they were presented with a six-page detailed itinerary for their ten-day visit to memorials and cemeteries, informing them of the time and place of their every move.

(Aside, again: speaking of Belgium, one significant recent event I attended was a concert by Toronto’s Wychwood Clarinet Choir on November 19. While most of the works performed at their concerts are special arrangements, the opening work, Claribel, was written by Belgian composer Guido Six specifically for his Claribel Clarinet Choir in Ostend. This was a wonderful rousing opening. The arranging talent of choir member Roy Greaves was certainly on display as the choir’s moods traversed from the Irish folk song The Lark in the Clear Air and a Mozart Serenade to three tangos by Astor Piazzolla. Harmonically the choir sounded better than I had ever heard it. Their harmonies were so well blended that one might think that their sounds were coming from a single source.)

Greenbank, Ontario: From the tiny Ontario hamlet of Greenbank, conductor and composer Stuart Beaudoin brought his Orpheus Symphonietta to the small town of Uxbridge for another memorable recent event – a concert featuring his new composition Elegy II: Lament and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5. This was the first performance of his composition which conveys, in musical terms, some of the spectrum of the composer’s emotions arising from world events during his lifetime. It’s an interesting work which bears more listening. This same man will be back two weeks later with his Greenbank Cantorei sine Nomine choir and the same orchestra for a three-hour performance of Bach’s Christmas Oratorio in English.

Flute Street: That other local same-instrument-family group, Flute Street, unfortunately had their most recent concert on the same date as the aforementioned Wychwood Clarinet Choir. Their featured soloist was Christine Beard playing alto flute and piccolo. Those types of same-instrument ensembles would seem to be competing for the same audiences, and it is unfortunate that there is not a central registry to avoid such overlaps. Flute Street’s Nancy Nourse had hoped to have her new contra alto flute, but it wasn’t available on time. She says that it will be the first of its kind in Canada. She intends to unveil it in time for their next concert, possibly in March. It’s an unusual instrument made in Holland. She may even travel there to get it and bring it home.

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

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**Toronto Mozart Festival**

**Friday, January 26 2018**
5:45 pm
Cocktail hour concert with arias and duets to open Mozart’s birthday weekend celebrations. The bar opens at 5:00 pm.
Natalya Gennadi, soprano
Lyndsay Promane, mezzo soprano
Helen Becqué, piano
$25

**Saturday, January 27 2018**
8:00 pm
Happy birthday Wolfgang! Celebrate with the Toronto Mozart Players and guest artist Adam Sherkin. Sacher Torte to follow.
Adam Sherkin, composer & pianist
Toronto Mozart Players
$35 adults | $15 students

**Sunday, January 28 2018**
2:00 pm
Celebrating the master. Symphony No. 40 in G minor, Regina Coeli K.276, “Coronation” Mass in C
Toronto Mozart Players
Pax Christi Chamber Choir
Singers from the Toronto Mozart Vocal Competition & Masterclass Series
$35 adults | $15 students

Join us in celebrating Mozart’s Birthday
www.mozartproject.ca

Attend all 3 events with a Festival Pass for $75
The WholeNote LISTINGS

The WholeNote listings are arranged in five sections:

A. GTA (GREATER 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 58.

C. MUSIC THEATRE covers a wide range of music types: from opera, oratorio and musicals, to non-traditional performance types where words and music are in some fashion equal partners in the drama. Starts on page 63.

D. IN THE CLUBS (MOSTLY JAZZ) is organized alphabetically by club. Starts on page 65.

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 67.

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 February 1 to March 7, 2017. All listings must be received by Monday, December 1, 2016.

LISTINGS can be sent by email to listings@thewholenote.com or by using the online form on our website. We do not receive listings by phone, but you can call 416-523-2322 x27 for further information.

LISTINGS ZONE MAP. Visit our website to search for concerts by the zones on this map: thewholenote.com.

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**The WholeNote CULTURAL LISTS**

**Friday, December 1**

**Concerts in the GTA**

- **10:30am and 1:00: Canadian Opera Company. The Magic Victrola. Libretto by David Kersnar and Jacqueline Russell. Works by Bizet, Mozart, Puccini and others. Members of the COC’s Ensemble Studio; Ashley Cusack, director. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-363-8231. $30 free(children under 12). Maximum of 2 free children’s tickets for each adult ticket sold. Additional children’s tickets $10. Also Dec 1(11pm), Dec 2(11am and 130pm), Dec 3(10am and 130pm).**

- **12:30: York University Department of Music. Music @ Midday: Brass Ensemble. Tribute Communities Recital Hall, Accadale East Building, YU, 7400 Keele St. 647-459-0701. Free.**

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**Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir**

**Tafelmusik. Four Weddings, a Funeral, and a Coronation. Handel: Ouverture from Il parnasso in festa; Purcell: Symphonies from the ode “From Hardy Climes”; Blow: Coronation Anthem “God Spake Sometimes in Visions”; Lully: Ballet from Xerxes; Pachelbel Canon & Gigue; and other works. Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir directed by Elisa Citterio and Ivars Taurins. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-364-6337. $15-$37. Also Nov 29, 30, Dec 2, 3.**

- **7:00: Brampton Folk Club. Friday Folk Night. Frost and Fire: A Celtic Christmas with Rant Maggie Rant. St. Paul’s United Church (Brampton), 30 Main St. S., Brampton, 905-874-2800. $18; $15(sr/st).**

- **7:30: Living Arts Centre. Alysia Brilla, soprano. 4414 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-8200. $30-$35.**

- **7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Home Alone in Concert. John Williams: Home Alone (film with live orchestra). Etobicoke School of the Arts Concert Choir; Constantine Kit-sopoulos, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-363-8231. $25-$88. Also Nov 20(3:00pm), Dec 2(2pm and 7:30pm).**

- **8:00: Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto/Elmer Iseler Singers. J.S. Bach’s Christmas Oratorio. Bach: Christmas Oratorio; Cantatas I,III, Monica Whitcher, soprano; Maureen Maltai, mezzo; Christopher Mayell, tenor; Dion Mazerolle, baritone; Lyda Adams, conductor; Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-446-0188 or 416-217-0537. $55; $50(sr); $20(under 10).**

- **8:00: Flato Markham Theatre. Eddie Palmieri. Eddie at 80. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-305-7469. $15-$40.**

- **8:00: Let There Be Music Community Choir. Songs of the Season Christmas Concert. Susan Chopp, director; Dave Parsons, director; Eric Medhurst, accompanist. Salvation Army Temple (Rexdale), 2512 Kipling Ave. 416-745-0392. $15; free(children under 12).**

- **8:00: Living Arts Centre. A Singing’ Christmas with the Toronto All Star Big Band. 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $20-$35.**

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**Saturday, December 2**

- **11:00am and 1:30: Canadian Opera Company. The Magic Victrola. See Dec 1 for details. Also Dec 21(10am and 1:30pm).**


- **2:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Home Alone in Concert. John Williams: Home Alone (film with live orchestra). Etobicoke School of the Arts Concert Choir; Constantine Kit-sopoulos, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-592-1005. $25-$88. Also Nov 30, Dec 1(12 all at 2:00pm).**

- **2:00: Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Carol Sing. Guests: Jim Cordoning, Fiona Reid, Kevin Frankish. True North Brass; Canadian Children’s Opera Company; That Choir; The Hedgerow Singers; Yorkminster Park Baptist Church Choir; 1585 Yonge St. 416-241-1286. Free. A collection will be taken. In support of the Churches-on-the-Hill Food Bank.**

- **2:30: Be Canto Singers. Songs for a Winter’s Night. Linda Meyer, conductor; Jacqueline Mokrzewski, piano, Scarborother Bluffs United Church, 3739 Kingston Rd., Scarborough. 416-286-8260. $20. Also 7:30pm.**

- **3:00: Singing Out. A Sky Full of Stars! Jane Mallett Theatre, 250 Front St. W.**

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**LISTINGS ZONE MAP. Visit our website to search for concerts by the zones on this map: thewholenote.com.**
Concerts in the GTA

416-585-4498, $30(doorn, cash only); $25/$20(adv/delay before Nov 17); $20(st/child) $15(st/child before Nov 17). Also 7:30 pm. Proceeds benefit Singing Out, a registered charity.

1:00: St. Michael’s Choir School. Christmas at Massey Hall. Handel: Messiah (Part II); Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on Christmas Carols; secular and sacred carols with audience participation. Elementary, Junior, Senior, Massed, and Alumni Choirs; Meredith Hall, soprano; Christina Stelmackovich, alto; Lawrence Wiliford, tenor; Stephen Hegedus, bass; chamber orchestra; Marla Conkey, Teri Dunn, Peter Mahon, and Vincent Cheng, conductors. Massey Hall, 178 Victoria St. 416-572-4555. $20-$80. Also Dec 3. Saturday, December 2

**Pax Christi Chorale presents**

**The Children’s Messiah**

Church of the Redeemer
Pay what you can

PAXCHRISTICHORALE.ORG

- 4:00: Pax Christi Chorale. Children’s Messiah. Handel: Messiah (excerpts). Church of the Redeemer, 162 Bloor St. W. boxoffice@wholeno.png. PWWC.
- 4:00: Tapestry Opera. Tapestry Briefs: Winter Shorts. See Dec 1 for details. Also Dec 2(8pm), 3(4pm).
- 7:00: Liana Boyd. In Concert: A Winter Fantasy. Andrew Dolson, guitar; Ron Korb, flute. December 2: 7:00 pm.
- 7:00: 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 Sinfonietta; Allison Cecilia Arends, soprano; Jeremy Ludwig, baritone; Matthew Jaskiewicz, conductor. Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle Ave. 416-585-5551. $30/$25(adv); $15(st/child) before Nov 17). Also 5pm. Proceeds benefit Singing Out, a registered charity.

**Sunday December 3**

- 10:30am and 1:00: Canadian Opera Company. The Magic Violinists. See Dec 6 for details.
- 6:00: Tafelmusik. Four Weddings, a Funeral, and a Coronation. Handel: Duettire from Il Parnasso in festa; Purcell: Symphonies from the ode “From Hardy Climes” 2325; Blow: Coronation Anthem “God Spake Some times in Visions”; Lully: Ballet from Xerxes; Pachelbel Canon & Gigue; and other works. Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir directed by Elisa Citterio and Ivars Taurins. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 472 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $25.$30.
- 7:00: University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Choir directed by Elisa Citterio and Ivars Taurins. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 472 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $25.$30.
- 8:00: Tafelmusik. Four Weddings, a Funeral, and a Coronation. Handel: Duettire from Il Parnasso in festa; Purcell: Symphonies from the ode “From Hardy Climes” 2325; Blow: Coronation Anthem “God Spake Some times in Visions”; Lully: Ballet from Xerxes; Pachelbel Canon & Gigue; and other works. Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir directed by Elisa Citterio and Ivars Taurins. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 472 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $25.$30.
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Sunday, December 3 @ 404 Jarvis St.
www.NewMusicConcerts.com


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.

8:00: Symphony Orchestra at the Zoo. Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

9:30: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. Fes-
tival of Carols. Tchaikovsky’s The Great Hymn to Christ, Verdi’s Ave Maria, and other works. Koerner Hall, 65 Church St. 416-364-7885 x234. Donations welcomed.

Monday, December 4


sica Linnebach, violin; Shane Kim, violin; Ash-
ley Vandiver, violin; Theresa Rudolph, violin; Ivan Ivanovitch, violin; Joseph Johnson, cello; Alexia Eng, cello; St. George the Martyr Church, 197 John St. 647-248-4048. $25. Also Dec 3(2pm), at Andrew by-the-Lake Church, Toronto Island.


8:30: Soundstreams. Electric Messiah. Music by Handel. Adanya Dunn, vocals; Eliza-
beth Shepherd, vocals; Jonathan MacArthur, vocals; Justin Welsh, vocals; Adam Scime, music director; and others. The Drake Under-
ground, 1150 Queen’s St. W. 416-531-5042. $20. Also Dec 5, 6.

Sunday, December 3

7:00: Messiah Sing-Along. Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

8:00: Electric Messiah. Music by Handel. Adanya Dunn, vocals; Eliza-
beth Shepherd, vocals; Jonathan MacArthur, vocals; Justin Welsh, vocals; Adam Scime, music director; and others. The Drake Under-
ground, 1150 Queen’s St. W. 416-531-5042. $20. Also Dec 4, 5.

8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Best of Tchaikovsky. Laura Pettigrew: Dóchas (Susieq for Canada’s 150th); Tchaikovsky's

Tuesday, December 5

12:00 noon: Canadian Opera Company. Vocal Series: Wirth Vocal Prize Showcase. Simone McIntosh, mezzo. Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-363-
8231. Free. First-come, first-served. Late seat-
ing not available.

12:10: Nine Sparrows Arts Foundation/ Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Lunch-
time Chamber Music: Tristan Savelia, Piano. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1565 York St. 416-241-1298. Free; donations welcomed.

1:00: Cathedral Church of St. James. Organ Recital: Thomas Gonder. 65 Church St. 416-364-7885 x234. Donations welcomed.

Tuesday, December 5


1:00: Cathedral Church of St. James. Organ Recital: Thomas Gonder. 65 Church St. 416-364-7885 x234. Donations welcomed.
Concerts in the GTA

Romeo and Juliet Fantasy-Overture; Variations on a Rococo Theme Op.33 (original version), Symphony No.5 in E.64. Joseph Johnson, cello; Keri-Lynn Wilson, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$148. Also Dec 6, 7. 7:30. Free. First-come, first-served. Late seating not available.

Wednesday December 6

- 12:00 noon: Canadian Opera Company Jazz Series: Jazz@McGill. McGill Jazz Quintet; Kevin Dean, trumpet. 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.
- 12:00 noon: Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, Noonday Organ Recitals: Imre Olah. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 750 Spadina Ave. 416-924-6211 x0. Free. First-come, first-served. Late seating not available.
- 7:00: Royal Conservatory, Taylor Academy Orchestra. Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. Free.
- 7:30: Living Arts Centre. Tartan Terrors Christmas. 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $30-$50. Also Dec 7.
- 7:30: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. Festival of Carols. Guests: The Canadian Staff. Ottawa. 613-747-4673. $20 (general admission) or $15 (students) (all at 7:30pm).
- 7:00: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. Festival of Carols. Guests: The Canadian Staff. Ottawa. 613-747-4673. $20 (general admission) or $15 (students) (all at 7:30pm).
- 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. PianoFest. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Also Dec 7, 9(2:30pm).
- 8:00: Soundstreams. Electric Messiah. Music by Handel. Adanya Dunn, vocals; Elizabeth Shepherd, vocals; Jonathan MacArthur, vocals; Justin Welsh, vocals; Adam Scime, music director; and others. The Drake Underground, 1150 Queen St. W. 416-531-5042. $20. Also Dec 4, 5.
- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Best of Tchaikovsky. Andrew Agnew, The Talk of the Town. Four contemporary song cycles. 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. $12; $8 (members).

Thursday December 7

- 7:00: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. Festival of Carols. Guests: The Canadian Staff. Ottawa. 613-747-4673. $20 (general admission) or $15 (students) (all at 7:30pm).
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- 7:00: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. Festival of Carols. Guests: The Canadian Staff. Ottawa. 613-747-4673. $20 (general admission) or $15 (students) (all at 7:30pm).
- 7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. PianoFest. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Also Dec 7, 9(2:30pm).
- 8:00: Soundstreams. Electric Messiah. Music by Handel. Adanya Dunn, vocals; Elizabeth Shepherd, vocals; Jonathan MacArthur, vocals; Justin Welsh, vocals; Adam Scime, music director; and others. The Drake Underground, 1150 Queen St. W. 416-531-5042. $20. Also Dec 4, 5.
- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Best of Tchaikovsky. Andrew Agnew, The Talk of the Town. Four contemporary song cycles. 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. $12; $8 (members).


Sultans of String
A Christmas Caravan

Thurs. December 7, 8pm
auroraculturalcentre.ca
905 713-1818

- 8:00: Aurora Cultural Centre. Sultans of String: A Christmas Caravan. Guest: Rebecca Campbell, vocals. 22 Church St., Aurora. 905-713-1818. $30-$35.
- 8:00: Burlington Performing Arts Centre. Canadian Brass: Christmas Concert. Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Main Theatre, 440 Locust St., Burlington. 905-681-6000. $69.50. Series discount available.
- 8:00: Music Gallery. Emergents I: Sounds of Silence Initiative. Four contemporary song cycles. 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. $12; $8 (members).

The Christmas Story

Friday December 8

- 1:00: Spadina Road Library, 601 Spadina Rd. Alex Toskov and others. 10 Spadina Rd. 416-393-7865. Free.
- 7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. Nativity pageant. Professional musicians and volunteer cast. 19 Trinity Sq. 416-598-4521 x001. $20; $17 (under and under). A collection will be taken. Also Dec 15, 16, 21, 22, 23(all at 7:30pm); Dec 9, 10, 16, 17, 22, 24(all at 4:30pm).

6:00: Continuum Contemporary Music. Urgent Voices. Hostman: The Invisible Forest; Rolfe: Clinical Notes of the Biophar-39

30; $20(sr); $10(st). Pre-performance chat.

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A. Concerts in the GTA

Philharmonic Women’s Choir: Salvation Army Scarborough Citadel, 2021 Lawrence Ave. E., Scarborough. www.spa.ca; $30; $25(sr); $15(st); $10(child).

Saturday December 9, 2017

8:00: Continental Contemporary Music. Urgent Voices. Hostman: The Invisible Forest; Rolfe: Clinical Notes of the Bipolar Therapist; Southam: Glass Houses; Wilson: From the Diaries of William Lyon Mackenzie King. Guests: Alex Dobson, baritone; Pascal Charbonneau, tenor; Laurent Philippe, piano. Aki Studio, Daniels Spectrum, 585 Dundas St. E. 416-531-1402. $35; $25(s/rarts workers); $15(st); free(under 12).

8:00: Flute Markham Theatre. Lynn Harrell: J.S. Bach - Six Suites for Solo Cello. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-905-7463. $15-$25.

8:00: North York Concert Orchestra. In Concert. Seasonal holiday favourites; Royer: Fantasia on Canadian Christmas Carols; Goldstein: Hannahuk Medley. Youth Concert Competition Winners; Rafael Luz, conductor. Yorkminster Citadel, 1 Lord Seaton Dr., North York. 416-628-9165. $25; $20(s/r); $10(st).

8:00: Payadara Tango Ensemble. Album Release Concert. Original tangos; arrangements of traditional tangos and Argentine folk music; improvisation: Rebekah Wolkstein, violin; Branka Džinović, accordion and ban- donone; Robert Horvath, piano; Joe Phillips, guest; Ebio Fernandez, vocals. Gallery 345, 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-882-9781. $25(st); $15(reserve on the phone and tickets available at the door.

8:00: Royal Conservatory. TD Jazz: Dianne Reeves Quintet. Great American Songbook. 100 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. $50-$100.

8:00: Toronto Concert. Navidad: A Spanish Christmas. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, Jeanne Lamon Hall, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-964-6337. $35-$75.


Sunday December 10


2:00: Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra. Subscription Concert e2. Humperdinck: Hansel and Gretel. Tryptych Concert & Opera; Norman Reintamm, conductor. P.G. Ho Theatre, Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, 5183 Sheppard Ave. E., Scarborough. 416-879-5565. $35 and up; $30(s/r/st); free(under 12). Also Dec 6(3:00pm).

2:00: Festival Wind Orchestra. Holiday Salute. Hannaford Overture; Rikudim; Bond…James Bond; Copacabana; Autumn Soliloquy; Christmas carol sing-along. Justin Bartlett, oboe; Keith Reid, conductor. Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W. 416-302-1875. $15-$25(s/r); $10(st); free(under 10). Gift Basket Raffle.

2:00: Living Arts Centre. The Nutcracker. 4141 Living Arts Dr. Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $35-$85. Also 7:30pm.

3:00: Annex Singers. December Diaries: A Choral Drama. Roger Honeywell, tenor; Cheryl MacNinis, actor; Anne Lindsay, violin; Alejandro Cespedes, percussion. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 21 Front St. E. 416-868-7747. $35; $25(s/r/st). Also Dec 6(3:00pm).

3:00: Durham Chamber Orchestra. It’s Christmas. Symphonic works by Schubert and Rossini; Ave Verum Corpus; O Holy Night; Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas; The Nutcracker. Guests: Martina Ortiz-Luis and The Durham Girls’ Choir; Forest Brook Community Church, 60 Keary Dr., Ajax. 905-852-1141. $20; free(under 12).


3:00: Royal Conservatory. TD Jazz: Dianne Reeves Quintet. Great American Songbook. 100 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. $50-$100.


3:00: Stouffville United Church. Sing Along Messiah. Handel: Messiah; Anna Bateman, soprano; Susan Black-McAuliffe, alto; Bruce Nasmith, conductor, and others. 34 Church St. S., Stouffville. 905-640-7107. $20, $10 (sr/st). Scores provided or bring your own.

3:00: Symphony on the Bay. A Double-Redreed Christmas. Vivádi: Christmas Concertos; Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on Christmas Carols; and other works. Fraser Jackson, bassoon; Claudio Vieni, conductor. Burlington Performing Arts Centre, 440 Locust St. Burlington. 905-881-6000. $43, $35(s/r); $24(12) (sr/st); $12(under 16).

Sofya Guliyak

Winner 16th Leeds Piano Competition
Sunday December 3, 2017

Heliconian Hall

Syrinx Concerts


CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT
SUN., DEC. 10, 4:30pm

NINE LESSONS & CAROLS
SUN., DEC. 17, 4:30pm

Yorkminster Park Baptist Church
www.yorkminsterpark.com


CAROLS IN PARADISE
Yorkminster Park Baptist Church
www.yorkminsterpark.com


Monday December 11

7:00: Lula Music and Arts Centre. Reunite the Moneka Family. In support of Ahmed Moneka’s dream of reuniting his family. Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307. $15.

Tuesday December 12


SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 - 1:30PM
Deck the Halls: Downtown Carol Sing with the Metropolitan Silver Band and Organ
Sing favourite carols • Freewill donation helps Metropolitan’s community work in the downtown core

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 - 7:00PM
Annual Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols with the Metropolitan Choirs • Freewill offering

www.metunited.org • 416-363-0331, ext. 26
56 Queen Street East, Toronto

THE WHOLE NOTE
THE WHOLE NOTE

2017–2018
CONCERT SERIES

All Bells in Paradise
SUNDAY, DEC 10TH
AT 4 P.M.

ESG CHOIR AND TRILLIUM BRASS
An ESG Christmas with Brass, Carols, Choir and Organ

SHAWN GRENKE, CONDUCTOR
ANDREW ADAIR, ORGAN

Eglinton St. George’s United Church
35 Lytton Blvd.
TORONTO
416.481.1141

www.esgunited.org

ToroNoTo CaLssicaL sinGers
FRENCH CHRISTMAS CONCERT


CHARPENTIER
Messe de minuit
SAINT-SAËNS
Oratorio de Noël

Sunday, December 10, 2017
1570 Yonge Street at Heath
www.esgunited.org • 416-363-8231, ext. 26
Concerts in the GTA

**Christmas Cheer**

**Hannaford Street Silver Band**

Ben Heppner, Host and Tenor Soloist
Elmer Iseler Singers

**TUES. DEC. 12 - 7:30 PM**
1-800-708-6754 or 416-916-7878.

- **7:30**: Hannaford Street Silver Band: Christmas Cheer. Ben Heppner, tenor and host; Elmer Iseler Singers. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-366-1723 or 1-800-708-6754. $45; $35(st); $15(child).
- **8:00**: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Canadian Brass Christmas. Tzigik: Christmas Overture; Silvestri (arr. Pope): The Spirit of Christmas from The Polar Express; Traditional: Ar Hyd y Nos (All through the Night) (arr. C. Dragon); Williams: Merry Christmas from Home Alone 2; and other works. Canadian Brass; brass quintet; Etoibcoke School of the Arts Senior Chorus; Lucas Wal’din, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$107. Also Dec 15 (1pm and 8pm).
- **8:00**: Art of Time Ensemble. To All A Good Night 3: The Different Holiday Concert. Harbourfront Centre Theatre, 235 Queens Quay W. 416-977-4000. $25-$64; $15rush tickets, 30 and under). Also Dec 15, 16.
- **8:00**: Blythewood Winds. Blythewood Strikes Back: A Darth Vader Holiday. Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back (arr. Vander Hyden); holiday favourites. Tim Crouch, flute; Elizabeth Eccleston, oboe; Anthony Thompson, clarinet; Curtis Vander Hyden, french horn; Kevin Harris, bassoon. Free. Times Cafe, 320 College St. 416-999-6097. PWYC. Come early for dinner! Shows sell out.
- **8:00**: Polyphonic Ground. Slim Flex and Success A/Evolution/Los Poetas. Revival Bar, 783 College St. 416-536-5439. $35.

**Friday December 15**

- **7:00**: New Music Ensemble. From Home Alone 2; and other works. Canadian Brass; brass quintet; Etoibcoke School of the Arts Senior Chorus; Lucas Wal’din, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$107. Also Dec 12 and 13 (both 8pm).
- **7:00**: O Nata Lux: 5th Anniversary Concert. Autumn Brass Ensemble; Lucas Wal’din, conductor. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-366-1723 or 1-800-708-6754. $45; $35(st); $15(child). Proceeds will help support Toronto Youth Choir’s tour to New York City.
- **8:00**: Sony Centre for the Performing Arts. The Tenors: Christmas Together. 1 Front St. E. 1-855-872-7669 or 416-916-7878. $50-$125.
- **8:00**: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Canadian Brass Christmas. McPherson: In Excel-sis Gloria (After the Huron Carol) - Gesuque for Canada’s 150th; Tzigik: Christmas Over-ture; Silvestri (arr. Pope): The Spirit of Christ-mas from The Polar Express; Traditional: Ar Hyd y Nos (All through the Night) (arr. C. Dragon); Williams: Merry Christmas from Home Alone 2; and other works. Canadian Brass, brass quintet; Etoibcoke School of the Arts Senior Chorus; Lucas Wal’din, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$107. Also Dec 12 (1pm and 8pm).
TCC Alumni Choir, Toronto Youth Choir; friends from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra; Michael Blosso, organ. 60 Simcoe St. 416-872-4255. $35.50-$45.50.

● ●

3:30: York Symphony Orchestra. YSO Holiday Spectacular. Seasonal favourites and audience sing-along. Trinity Anglican Church (Aurora), 79 Victoria St., Aurora. 416-410-0860. $26; $22(sr/st); $15(st). Also 8pm, Dec 17(7:30pm, Richmond Hill).

● ●

3:30: Young Voices Toronto. This Christmastide: Fraser: This Christmastide; Engelhardt: Gaudete; Ojello: Tundra; Brymer: Happy Xmas (War Is Over); Fjelheim: Winter's Night. Maria Conkey, conductor; Brenda O’Connor; conductor; Sheldon Rose, pianist. Trinity-St. Paul’s United Church, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-762-0657. $25; $20(st); free(under 12).

● ●

4:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 8 for details.

● ●

6:00: Against the Grain Theatre. Bound. See Dec 15. Also Dec 16(6pm).

● ●


● ●

7:00: St. Elizabeth of Hungary Roman Catholic Church. Christmas Concert. See Dec 15. Also Dec 16(6pm).

● ●


● ●


● ●

7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 8 for details.

● ●

7:30: Cirque Musica Holiday. Believe. Incredible feats of strength, skill and grace to great holiday music favourites performed by a live symphony. Tribute Communities Centre, 99 Athol St. E., Oshawa. ev12.evenue.net. $49.99-$75.

● ●


● ●
A. Concerts in the GTA

carols. Andrea Núñez, soprano; Daniel Norman, organ; David Bowser, conductor. Grace Church on-the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Rd. n/a. $45; $40(sr); $25(st). Also Dec 17(3pm).

7:30: Royal Conservatory. Taylor Academy. Chamber Choir; Elizabeth Anderson, conductor. Massey Hall, Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Dr., Toronto. $40-$65; $36-$58(sr); $30(youth); tenor; Brett Polegato, baritone; Ivars Taurins, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre., 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $25; $20(sr); $15(st). Also 3:30pm, Dec 17(30pm), Richmond Hill.

5:00: Against the Grain Theatre. Bounded. See Dec 14 for details.

Sunday December 17


2:00: Gallery 454. Christmas Concert Beau Noel. Bosco/Humphrey: Noëls de Lourmarin; D’ou viens-tu bergère (arr. Murphy); Entre le boeuf et l’âne gris (arr. Murphy); Büsser: Le sommeil de L’Enfant Jésus; Widor: Ave Maria; Del. Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Tafelmusik Choir; Kamper, mezzo; Caroline Léonardelli, harp; Patricia Conklin, mezzo-soprano; Lucas: traditional carols; and other works. Julie Nesvold, mezzo; Caroline Léonardelli, harp; Matthew Larkin, piano. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $25; $10(st). Cash only.


7:30: Voices Chamber Choir. Handel: Messiah. Antonio Ermolenko, soprano; Monica-Zerbe, alto; Michael Taylor, tenor; Steven Henriksen, bass, John Stephenson, organ; chamber orchestra; Ron Ka Ming Cheung, conductor. Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields., 151 Glenlake Ave. 416-519-0528. $35; $25(sr); $15(st).

8:00: A Peter and the Wolf Christmas concert. Hillcrest United Church, 300 Lonsdale Rd. n/a. $25 (under 12 free). Also Dec 16(7:30pm).

8:00: Kindred Spirits Orchestra. Russian Romance. Shostakovich: Festive Overture; Violin Concerto No.1; Rachmaninoff: SymphONY No. 2 Op.27. Kristen Alexander, conductor; Marc Djokic, violin. Flato Markham Theatre., 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 905-604-8329. $30-$40; $25(sr); $15(youth). 7:15pm pre-concert recital; 7:30pm pre-concert talk; intermission discussion with Marc Djokic.

8:00: Mississauga Symphony Orchestra. Highlights from Messiah. Handel (excerpts). Sara Schabas, soprano; Beste Kalivaz, mezzo; Zachary Roux, tenor; Christopher Dunham, baritone; Mississauga Festival Chamber Choir; David Ambrose, guest conductor. Humber River Theatre, Living Arts Centre., 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $40-$65; $36-$58(sr); $30(youth); $25(15 and under); $100(family).

8:00: Toronto Chamber Choir. Christmas in San Marco. Celebrating the 450th anniversary of Claudio Monteverdi. Monteverdi: Magnificat, Psalm settings and hymns. Guests: Toronto Continuo Collective. Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle Ave. 416-783-1695. $30; $25(sr); $15(under 30). Pre-concert chat at 7:15pm.

8:00: York Symphony Orchestra. YSO Holiday Spectacular. Seasonal favorites and audience sing-along. Toronto Anglican Church (Aurora), 79 Victoria St., Aurora. 416-410-0860. $28; $23(s); $15(st). Also 3:30pm, Dec 17(30pm), Richmond Hill.

9:00: Against the Grain Theatre. Bounded. See Dec 14 for details.

Peace on Earth

Carol songs, and stories, and seasonal music, served up with holiday food and TFM’s famous Renaissance Punch.

17 & 18 December 2017


7:30: York Symphony Orchestra. YSO Holiday Spectacular. Seasonal favorites and audience sing-along. St. Mary’s Anglican Church, 10030 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 416-410-0860. $28; $23(s); $15(st). Also Dec 16(3630pm and 8pm, Aurora).

8:00: Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Toronto. Vesuvius Ensemble: Christmas Concert. Traditional Christmas folk songs from the Italian countryside. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 416-556-5016. $25; $10(sr, st); free(children under 12), Also Dec 19.

8:00: Music Gallery/Kith & Kin. Kith & Kin Holiday Wassail. 918 Bathurst Centre.
for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. $18; $16(adv); $12(st/member/arts worker); free(ages 12 and under).

THAT CHOIR CAROLS
featuring Resonance & our family carol sing-a-long
Dec 17, 2017 | 8PM
thatchoir.com

- 8:00: That Choir: That Choir Carols. Whitacre: Lux Nova; Gjeilo: Serenity; Tvarodowski: Alleluia; K. Allan: Angels’ Daley; Huron Carol; M. Emery: new work. Guests: Resonance Youth Choir. St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. 416-419-1756. $30; $20(sr/arts worker); $10(st); free(children under 18). Also Dec 19, 20, 22(all at 8pm). See Dec 18 for details. Also Dec 20, 22(all at 8pm), 23(3pm).

ROY THOMSON HALL
19TH ANNUAL NOON HOUR CHOIR & ORGAN CONCERTS
ELMER ISELER SINGERS
Season of Joy
Lydia Adams, conductor
Shawn Grevink, organ
ROYTHOMSONHALL.COM 416-872-1255

- 1:00: Cathedral Church of St. James. Organ Recital: Manuel Piazza. 65 Church St. 416-384-7855 x24. Donations welcomed.
- 7:00: Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. Joy and Wishes. Folk songs and carols from around the world. Youth Choristers; piano; percussion. Eden United Church, 3051 Battlefield Rd., Mississauga. 905-287-1101. $10; $5(child under 10).
- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Messiah. Sea Dec 18 for details. Also Dec 20, 22(all at 8pm), 23(3pm).

CARDINAL CARTER ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS
FAITH AMOUR & FRIENDS
JAZZ FOR CHRISTMAS
Wednesday Dec 20, 7pm
THU DEC 21
That Choir Carols Academy for the Arts 10th Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols

- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Messiah. See Dec 18 for details. Also Dec 10, 22(both at 8pm), 23(3pm).

ROY THOMSON HALL
THU DEC 21
The Barra MacNelligan: An East Coast Christmas. 60 Simcoe St. 416-872-4255. $29.50-$199.50.

CARDINAL CARTER ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS
10th ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

- 7:00: Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. John McDermott: Family Christmas. Guests: Dala. 1555 Yonge St. 416-341-1298 or eventbrite.com. $30/$25(adv).
- 7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 8 for details.
- 8:00: Roy Thomson Hall. The Barra MacNelligan: An East Coast Christmas. 60 Simcoe St. 416-872-4255. $29.50-$199.50.

December 1, 2017 - February 7, 2018 | 49
QUARTETTO GELATO

presents
THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS

December 21, 8pm

An exciting holiday show of well-known Christmas songs and carols, virtuosic showpieces, gypsy tunes and original compositions

Trinity-St. Paul United Church, Jeanne Lamon Hall,
427 Bloor St West, Toronto
Tickets start at $25 • eventbrite.ca
quartettogelato.ca • 416-738-6390

A. Concerts in the GTA

Friday December 22

- 7:30: Burlington Performing Arts Centre/Orillia Opera House. Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol. Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Main Theatre, 440 Locust St., Burlington. 905-681-6000. $47; $25(child); $124(family 4-pack). Also Dec 23(7:30pm) and 7:30pm.
- 7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 8 for details.
- 8:00: Dr. Draw and the Strange Parade. Holiday Extravaganza. Royal Cinema, 608 College St. www.drdraw.ca. $35/$25(adv).
- 8:00: Living Arts Centre. My Home Land. Sarazmin Mov; Davood Sarkerhoosh Ensemble. 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $60-$75.
- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Messiah. See Dec 16 for details. Also Dec 19, 20(both at 8pm), 22(8pm).

Saturday December 23

- 2:00: Burlington Performing Arts Centre/Orillia Opera House. Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol. Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Main Theatre, 440 Locust St., Burlington. 905-681-6000. $47; $25(child); $124(family 4-pack). Also Dec 22(2pm and 7:30pm).
- 3:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Messiah. See Dec 16 for details. Also Dec 19, 20(both at 8pm).
- 4:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 8 for details.
- 7:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Messiah. See Dec 16 for details. Also Dec 19, 20, 22(8pm at 7:30pm).
- 7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 8 for details.

Sunday December 24

- 10:30am: Music at St. Andrew’s. 4th Sunday of Advent: Candle of Love. St. Andrew’s Gallery Choir; Dan Bickle, organ. St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. 416-593-5600 x220. Freewill offering. Religious service.
- 7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 8 for details.

Sunday December 24

- 10:30am: Music at St. Andrew’s. 4th Sunday of Advent: Candle of Love. St. Andrew’s Gallery Choir; Dan Bickle, organ. St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. 416-593-5600 x220. Freewill offering. Religious service.
- 7:30: Church of the Holy Trinity. The Christmas Story. See Dec 8 for details.

John McDermott

Family CHRISTMAS

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS DALA

December 21st
7:00 pm

YORKMINSTER PARK BAPTIST CHURCH
1585 Yonge Street
www.yorkminsterpark.com

TICKETS:
General Admission: $25
Online: $26.74
At www.eventbrite.com
At the door: $30.00

Celebrate Christmas at the Church of St Mary Magdalene
477 Manning Avenue
www.stmarymagdalene.ca

Christmas Eve
Sunday, 24 December
4.00 pm Sung Mass with Pageant & Carols
11.00 pm Solemn Midnight Mass & Procession

Christmas Day
Monday, 25 December
8.00 am Said Mass
10.00 am Sung Mass with Carols

Euterpe & Reaching Out Through Music present a free community outreach concert celebrating the spirit of the holiday season.

Ensemble Vivant

joined by the St. James Town Children’s Choir, directed by Anne Massicotte

December 22, 2017 • 7:30

Rose Avenue Jr. Public School
Come One and All!
Concert is free of charge.

The whole note.com
and times vary. See national.ballet.ca for details.

**Wednesday December 27**


**Thursday December 28**


**Friday December 29**

- **7:30**: Sony Centre for the Performing Arts. Jurassic Park in Concert. Motion Picture Symphony Orchestra. 1 Front St. E. 1-855-872-7669 or 416-916-7878. $49-$99. Also Dec 28.

**Saturday December 30**

- **2:00**: Flato Markham Theatre. Canada's Ballet Jorgen: The Nutcracker, A Canadian Tradition. 171 Town Centre Blvd., Markham. 1-855-305-7469. $15-$55. Also 7pm.
- **2:00**: Toronto Operaetta Theatre. Candide. See Dec 28 for details.
- **3:00**: Toronto Operaetta Theatre. Candide. See Dec 28 for details.
- **8:00**: Toronto Operaetta Theatre. Candide. See Dec 28 for details.

**Sunday December 31**

- **3:00**: Toronto Operaetta Theatre. Candide. See Dec 28 for details.
- **7:00**: Attila Glatz Concert Productions/Roy Thomson Hall. Bravissimo! Opera's Greatest Hits. Selections from Carmen, La bohème, Turandot, Carmen, La bohème, Turandot; Barbaras, Soprano, Carolyn, Soprano. 416.872.4255 roythomsonhall.com

**Monday January 1**

- **2:30**: Attila Glatz Concert Productions/Roy Thomson Hall. Salute to Vienna New Year's Concert. Lila Halambos, soprano; Thomas Weinbrenner, baritone; Strauss Symphony of Canada, Kiev-Arka Ballet of Ukraine and International Champion Ballroom Dancers;

Thursday January 4

- **12:00 noon:** Encore Symphonic Concert Band. In Concert. Big Band swing, jazz, film scores and marches. Wilmar Heights Centre, 963 Pharmacy Ave., Scarborough. 416-346-3910. $10.

RACHMANINOFF: Let Hands Speak

Write Off the Keyboard Series at CBC’s Glenn Gould Studio. Thurs. Jan. 4 at 5:30 pm. adamsherkin.com

- **5:30:** Adam Sherkin. Rachmaninoff: Let Hands Speak. Rachmaninoff: Morceaux de fantaisie, op. 3 (transcribed for saxophone and piano), Lullaby (After Tchaikovsky). Scherzo (from a Midsummer Night’s Dream); Scherzo and Parish Music.

New Venue

RYAN WANG

Jan 4 Thu, 7:30 PM Piano Recital

Tickets: canadaticketbox.com

- **7:30:** Li Delun Music Foundation. Ryan Wang Piano Recital. Works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Poulenc and Bartok. Fairview Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Dr. 416-490-7602. $25/833(VIP).

Friday January 5

- **8:00:** Toronto Operaetta Theatre. Candide. See Dec 28 for details.

Saturday January 6

- **7:30:** Li Delun Music Foundation. New Year’s Concert 2018. Bernstein: Magnificent Seven Theme; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 2; Verdi: Ah, forse e lui from La traviata and a Chinese song; Anhuan Huang: Chinese Rhapsody No.9; and other works. Ryan Wang, piano; Yuanyuan Hsu, soprano, Toronto Festival Orchestra; Dongxiao Xu, conductor. Host: Kemin Zhang, George Weston Recital Hall, 5040 Yonge St. 416-490-7662. $30-$88.

- **8:00:** Toronto Operaetta Theatre. Candide. See Dec 28. Also Jan 7(3pm).

Sunday January 7


- **2:00:** St. Barnabas Anglican Church. Charlotte Abbott, soprano and Michael Pare, guitar; Scarlatti; Argerich: Letters from Composers; Celtic and Canadian Folksongs. 361 Danforth Ave. 416-483-1344. $20; $10/sr/ at.

- **3:00:** Toronto Operaetta Theatre. Candide. See Dec 28 for details.

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

- **4:00:** St. Olave’s Anglican Church. Epiphany Choir Evensong: 360 Windermere Ave. 416-769-5388. Contributions appreciated. Religious service with Epiphany tea following. 5pm: Lecture by Dr. Giles Bryant on Cathedral Religious service with Epiphany tea following.

Sunday January 11


- **5:30:** Canadian Opera Company. World Music and Jazz Series: Golpes y Flores, Esian Cuesas, singer and songwriter; Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-393-8231. Free. First-come, first-served. Late seating not available.

- **12:10:** Nine Sparrows Arts Foundation/ Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Lunchtime Chamber Music: Rising Stars Recital. Sophia Sokolov, violin, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-241-1298. Free; donations welcomed.

Wednesday January 10

- **12:00 noon:** Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Noonday Organ Recitals: Alex Straus-Faustos, 1585 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free.


Sunday, January 14

- **3:00:** Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mozart: Don Giovanni. Scherzo, Partita; Symphony No.39 in E-flat K543. Bernard Labadie, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$148. Also Jan 13.

Tuesday January 9


- **12:10:** Nine Sparrows Arts Foundation/ Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Lunchtime Chamber Music: Rising Stars Recital. Sophia Sokolov, violin, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-241-1298. Free; donations welcomed.

Sunday January 14

- **3:00:** Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mozart: Don Giovanni. Scherzo, Partita; Symphony No.39 in E-flat K543. Bernard Labadie, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$148. Also Jan 13.

Thursday January 11


- **12:10:** University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: Be@60! Works by Kontoglogois, Hatzi, Wijeratne and Ho. Beverley Johnston, percussion. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.


- **8:00:** Music Toronto. Brettano Quartet with Soprano Dawn Upshaw. Webern: Bagatelles interwoven with Schubert Minuetts (BDB); Mario Davidovski: Quartet No.4; Respighi; Il tramea. Schoenberg: Quartet No.2. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-368-7723. $50-$85; $10/student, full time.

2018中西雅萃新年音樂會

NEW YEAR’S CONCERT

AN EAST-MEETS-WEST CONCERT OF FAVOURITE CLASSICS

SAT JAN 6, 2018 AT 7:30PM

Toronto Centre for the Arts, George Weston Recital Hall

TORONTO FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

Conductor: Dong Xia Xu (China National Symphony Orchestra)
Pianist: Ryan Wang (1st Place Winner of the American Protégé International Music Talent Competition)
Soprano: Yuanyuan Hsu (China National Symphony Orchestra)

MUSIC BY ELMER BERNSTEIN, BEETHOVEN, VERDI, ANLUN HUANG, TCHAIKOVSKY & MORE

TICKETS: $88 (VIP W/ 1 FREE CD), $50, $45, $40, $35, $30

BOX OFFICE: TCA (416) 250-3708, canadaticketbox.com

TICKETMASTER.CA 1-855-985-2787

ENQUIRY: THE LI DELUN MUSIC FOUNDATION (416) 490-7922 INFO@LIDELUN.ORG

New Venue

RYAN WANG

Jan 4 Thu, 7:30 PM Piano Recital

Tickets: canadaticketbox.com

- **7:30:** Li Delun Music Foundation. Ryan Wang Piano Recital. Works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Poulenc and Bartok. Fairview Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Dr. 416-490-7602. $25/833(VIP).

Sunday 7 Jan. at 4 p.m.

Choral Evensong for Epiphany Sunday plus Epiphany Tea and at 5:

GILES BRYANT: CATHEDRAL AND PARISH MUSIC

Giles traces Anglican church music from just before the Prayer Book up to now. His illustrated talk at the piano will focus on Tallis, Purcell, Maurice Greene, Stanford, S.S. Wesley, Howells and their parish contemporaries.

St. Olave’s Church

Bloor and Windermere

416-769-5686
“arguably one of the most talented acts in the world.”

JANUARY 11

BRENTANO QUARTET with soprano DAWN UPSHAW

FRIDAY JANUARY 12

1:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mozart@262 Festival. What Makes It Great?. Mozart Clarinet Concerto. Q&A with audience. Mozart: Clarinet Concerto in A K622 (Various musical examples and commentary) followed by the complete Clarinet Concerto. Joaquín Valdepeñas, clarinet; Rob Kapilow, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $35.75-$83.75.

Saturday January 13

7:00: Toronto Gilbert and Sullivan Society. Songfest. A glorious evening of G&S with four companies performing excerpts from their upcoming productions. St. Andrew’s United Church (Bloor St.), 117 Bloor St E. 416-763-2197. 416-961-8116.

Sunday January 14


KAMMERKONZERT

Monday January 15

7:00: Royal Conservatory Music Mix. Maple Blues Awards, Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 275 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $35-$80.

Tuesday January 16


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

Wednesday January 17

12:00 noon: Organix Concerts/All Saints Kingsway. Kingsway Organ Organ Series: Andrew Adair, organ. All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church, 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3800. Freewill offering, 45-minute concert.


8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Thursday January 18


8:00: Aga Khan Museum. Yemen Blues. Yemeni song and poetry. Jewish music, West African groove and funk. 77 Wynford Dr. 416-646-677. $50. Tickets include same day entry to the Aga Khan Museum.

8:00: Living Arts Centre. Nikki Yanofsky. 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000. $40-$60.

8:00: Telæmus. Safe Haven. Program created by Alison Mackay. Works by Corelli, Lully, Bach and Vivaldi. Elisa Citto, director. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St W. 416-964-8337. From $19. Also Jan 19, 20(both at 8pm), 213(3:30pm), 29(8pm, George Weston Recital Hall).
Adrian Anantawan, violin; Peter Oundjian, “Jupiter” . Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano; Adrian Anantawan, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $30.75-$148. Also Jan 17(1pm), 21(2pm), 23(7:30pm, 8pm), Koerner Hall, 2139mm. Toronto Centre for the Arts).

Friday January 19
7:30: Living Arts Centre. Shen Yun. 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. 905-306-6000, $160/$150. Also Jan 20(1pm and 7:30pm), 21(2pm), 23(7:30pm).

7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mozart@262 Festival: Mozart Jupiter Symphony. Mozart: Rondo for Violin and Orchestra from Serenade No.7 “Haffner” K248b; Adagio in E for Violin and Orchestra K261; Piano Concerto No. 23 in A K488; Symphony No.41 in C K551 “Jupiter”. Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano; Adrian Anantawan, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $30.75-$148. Also Jan 17(1pm, 20(7:30pm), 21(2pm), 23(7:30pm).

2:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mozart@262 Festival: Mozart Jupiter Symphony. Mozart: Rondo for Violin and Orchestra from Serenade No.7 “Haffner” K248b; Adagio in E for Violin and Orchestra K261; Piano Concert No. 23 in A K488; Symphony No.41 in C K551 “Jupiter”. Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano; Adrian Anantawan, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $30.75-$148. Also Jan 17(1pm, 20(7:30pm), 21(2pm), 23(7:30pm).

7:30: Opera by Request. Salome. Music by R. Strauss. Naomi Eberhard, soprano (Salome); Michael Robert-Broder, baritone (Jochanaan); Jason Lamont, tenor (Herod); Leah Giselle Field, mezzo (Herodias); Ryan Harper, tenor (Narraboth); and others; William Shookhoff, piano and conductor. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-465-2365. $20.


8:00: Guitar Society of Toronto. Thibaut Garcia. Works by Albeniz, Rodrigo, Tarrega and others. St. Simon-the-Apostle Anglican Church, 525 Bloord St. W. 416-964-8298. $35/$30(adv); $30(st)/$25(child).

8:00: Tafelmusik. Safe Haven. Program created by Alison Mackay. Works by Corelli, Lully, Bach and Vivaldi. Elisa Citterio, director. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-964-8337. From $19. Also Jan 18, 20(both at 8pm), 21(3:30pm), 23(8pm), George Weston Recital Hall.

Friday January 20

2:00: Living Arts Centre. Shen Yun. See Jan 19 for details. Also Jan 20(2pm), 21(2pm), 23(7:30pm).

7:30: Opera by Request. Salome. Music by R. Strauss. Naomi Eberhard, soprano (Salome); Michael Robert-Broder, baritone (Jochanaan); Jason Lamont, tenor (Herod); Leah Giselle Field, mezzo (Herodias); Ryan Harper, tenor (Narraboth); and others; William Shookhoff, piano and conductor. College Street United Church, 452 College St. 416-465-2365. $20.


8:00: Guitar Society of Toronto. Thibaut Garcia. Works by Albeniz, Rodrigo, Tarrega and others. St. Simon-the-Apostle Anglican Church, 525 Bloord St. W. 416-964-8298. $35/$30(adv); $30(st)/$25(child).

8:00: Tafelmusik. Safe Haven. Program created by Alison Mackay. Works by Corelli, Lully, Bach and Vivaldi. Elisa Citterio, director. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-964-8337. From $19. Also Jan 18, 20(both at 8pm), 21(3:30pm), 23(8pm), George Weston Recital Hall.

8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Mozart@262 Festival: Mozart Jupiter Symphony. Mozart: Rondo for Violin and Orchestra from Serenade No.7 “Haffner” K248b; Adagio in E for Violin and Orchestra K261; Piano Concerto No. 23 in A K488; Symphony No.41 in C K551 “Jupiter”. Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano; Adrian Anantawan, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $30.75-$148. Also Jan 17(1pm, 20(7:30pm), 21(2pm), 23(7:30pm).

7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Moz-
Richard Hamelin, piano; Adrian Anantawan, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $30.75-$148. Also Jan 19(7:30pm, 8pm, Koerner Hall).

Tuesday January 23


1:30: JAZZ VESUVIUS. 7:30 PM. TORONTO CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

Friday January 26


12:00 noon: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Educational and Contemporary Choral Music. Toronto Mendelssohn Choir: Elora Singers, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-408-0208. Free (donations accepted).

Percussion. Works by Nicole Lizée and Elliot Britton. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208.

7:30: York Masonic Temple. Mozart’s Masonic Journey: The Mysteries of The Magic Flute. Dillon Parmer, tenor (Tamino); Sara Schabas, soprano (Pamina); Gregory Finney, baritone (Papageno); Nicole Dubinsky, soprano (Queen of the Night); John Forster, bass (Sarastro); Christina Faye, piano; Braineder. 1100 Millwood Rd. mozart.valleymmrto.com. $60. Also Jan 27. Reception to follow.

8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Holst: The Planets. Stravinsky: Funeral Song; Estacio: Trumpet Concerto; Holst: The Planets. Andrew McCandless, trumpet; Women of the Elmer Iseler Singers; John Storgards, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-1285. $34.75-$148. Also Jan 28, 29 both at 7:30PM.
Concerts in the GTA

- **4:00:** Toronto Singing Studio Celebration Choir. Joyful, Joyful/Works by Haydn, Vivaldi, Mozart and others. Linda Eyman, conductor. Bloor Street United Church, 300 Bloor St. W. 416-455-9238. $20; $15(sr/st). Cash only at the door.
- **4:30:** Canadian Opera Company. Riggolito. See Jan 20 for details.

Sunday January 28

- **2:00:** Canzona Chamber Players. In Concert. Works by Clara Schumann, Brahms and Shostakovich. Trio Ink (Yosuke Kawasaki, violin; Wolfram Koesels, cello; Vadim Serebreny, piano). St. George the Martyr Church, 147 St. John St. 416-978-4048. $25. Also Jan 21(2pm). St. George the Martyr Anglican Church.
- **8:00:** Canadian Sinfonietta. Happy Birthday Mozart. Overture to Apollo and Haydn: Symphony No. 16. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $45; $40; $15(under 3); $10(st).
- **8:00:** Royal Conservatory. Recital: String Quartet. Works by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre. $35; $30(st); $20(st).
- **8:00:** Toronto Mozart Players. Toronto Mozart Festival: Happy Birthday, Wolfgang! Mozart: Quintet in E-flat for Piano and Winds; Scherkin: New Work. Adam Sherkin, composer and pianist. Church of the Redeemer, 192 Bloor St. W. 416-474-7532. $35; $15(st). Concert will end with the cutting of a sacher torte.

Monday January 29

- **12:30:** York University Department of Music. Music @ Midday: Classical Instrumental Recital. Student soloists. Tribute Communities Recital Hall, Accadale East Building, YU, 4700 Keele St. 416-457-0701.

Tuesday January 30


Wednesday January 31

- **10:00 am:** Royal Conservatory. Discovery Series: Glenn Gould School Concert. Piano. Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $45; $40; $15(under 3); $10(st).
- **12:00 noon:** Encore Symphonic Concert Band. In Concert. Big Band swing, jazz, film scores and marches. Wilmar Heights Centre, 953 Pharmacy Ave. 416-346-3910. $10.
- **12:10:** University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Happy Birthday Mozart. Works by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre. $35; $30(st); $20(st).
Dr. Draw, 18-stringed hybrid guitar/violin/cello/drums. 77 Wynford Dr. 416-646-4677.
$40. Ticket price includes same day Museum admission.


2:00: Rouge Theatre. 383 Huron St. 613-962-3636. By donation.

7:00: Mississauga Festival Choir. Mississauga Festival Choir. 3570 Mississauga Rd., Oakville. 905-829-1028. $69.50. Series discount available.

2:00: Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto. Songs From a Celtic Heart. Tom Leighton, guitar and vocals; Lydia Adams and Joan Andrews, conductors; Shawn Grenke, conductor and piano. Jubilee United Church, 40 Underhill Dr. 416-446-0188. $30; $40(sr); $25(under 30). Also 7pm. Annual fundraising event. Complimentary snacks, cash bar, games and silent auction.

2:00: Tafelmusik. Close Encounters ... in Salzburg. Works by Biber; Thomas Georgi, violist. Tafelmusik, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-964-6337. $45(adv), Also Jan 31(Heliconian Hall, 11am).

7:00: Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto. Songs From a Celtic Heart. Tom Leighton, guitar and vocals; Lydia Adams and Joan Andrews, conductors; Shawn Grenke, conductor and piano. Jubilee United Church, 40 Underhill Dr. 416-446-0188. $30; $40(sr); $25(under 30). Also 2pm. Annual fundraising event. Complimentary snacks, cash bar, games and silent auction.


8:00: Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra/Infiniti Music and Arts Centre. Serifades and Stories. Mozart: Serenade in c; Serenata Transformata; Austria and the US from International Suite; Compositions from SPPO’s 2017 New Composer Workshop; Grand Gallop Through Mysterious Lands. Scarborough Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra; The Winds of the Scarborough Philharmonic; Ronald Royer, conductor. Infiniti Strings, 351 Ferrier St., Unit 1, Markham. www.spo.ca. $30, $25(sr); $15(st); $10(child).

2:00: MFC’s Festival of Friends. SAT, 7:30PM
Join us mfcchoir.com

2:00: Canadian Opera Company. Rigoletto. See Jan 20 for details.


8:00: Royal Conservatory. TD Jazz: Gerald Clayton and Friends - The Blues. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-2028. $40-$90.

905.787.8811


8:00: Royal Conservatory. TD Jazz: Gerald Clayton and Friends - The Blues. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-2028. $40-$90.

7:30: Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra/Infiniti Music and Arts Centre. Serifades and Stories. Mozart: Serenade in c; Serenata Transformata; Austria and the US from International Suite; Compositions from SPPO’s 2017 New Composer Workshop; Grand Gallop Through Mysterious Lands. Scarborough Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra; The Winds of the Scarborough Philharmonic; Ronald Royer, conductor. Infiniti Strings, 351 Ferrier St., Unit 1, Markham. www.spo.ca. $30, $25(sr); $15(st); $10(child).

2:00: MFC’s Festival of Friends. SAT, 7:30PM
Join us mfcchoir.com

2:00: Canadian Opera Company. Rigoletto. See Jan 20 for details.

A. Concerts in the GTA

Friday December 1

- 12:00 noon: First-St. Andrew’s United Church. Friday Advent Noon Recital. Ken Baldwin, trumpet; Terry Mead, piano and organ. First-St. Andrew’s United Church, 350 Queens Ave. London. 519-679-8182. Free will offering. Lunch following. $7.


Saturday December 2


- 6:00: Westben Concerts at The Barn. Westben Christmas. Upper Canada Christmas. Narrated concert. Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill, vocalists; Western Choruses; Donna Bennett and Brian Finley, directors. Norwood United Church, 4264 Hwy 7, Norwood. 705-653-5508 or 1-877-885-5777. $25 (adult); $15 (student). Also Dec 2(7:30pm, St. Catharines).

- 7:30: Choralis Camerata. Handel’s Messiah. Jocelyn Fralick, soprano; Jillian Yemen, mezzo; Bud Roach, tenor; Michael York, baritone; David Braun, conductor; Lyne Honsberger, accompaniment. Knox Presbyterian Church (St. Catharines), 53 Church St., St. Catharines. 905-646-9225. $28; $25 (senior); $5 (student). Also Dec 2(7:30pm, St. Catharines).


B. Concerts Beyond the GTA

Friday December 1

- 6705-749-1146. $37.50; $25 (senior); $5 (student). 705-749-1146.

Saturday December 2

- 2:00: Royal Conservatory. Sunday Inter-Judex: Derek Grüpper, Mazzeolini Concert Hall, Telus Centre, 275 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0206. Free.

- 2:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Choirs in Concert: Music for a Sunday Afternoon. Works by Nancy Telfer and others. Women’s Chamber Choir; Men’s Chorus; Women’s Chorus; Tracy Wong, conductor. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. $30; $25 (senior); $10 (student).


Sunday December 3

- 2:00: University of Waterloo Department of Music. UW Jazz Ensemble. Featuring jazz classics. Michael Wood, conductor. Great Hall, Conrad Grebel University College, 140 University Ave. Waterloo. 519-885-8200 x2426. $10; $5 (student). Reception to follow.

- 8:00: Christmas at Barrie. Christmas at the Beach. Lighthouse Community Church, 80 Sundine Rd., Wasaga Beach. 705-481-1807. Donations to the food bank welcome.
Tuesday February 6


12:30: Canadian Opera Company. Rigoletto. See Jan 20 for details.

8:00: Music Toronto. Alexei Lubimov, Piano. Mozart: Sonata in D K311, Adagio in b K540; Beethoven: Sonata No.7 in D Op.10 No.3; Stravinsky: Sonata (1934), Debussy: Nine Preludes, Book I nine selections. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-368-7723. $50-$85, $10(st, full time).

Wednesday February 7


7:30: Canadian Opera Company. The Abduction from the Seraglio. Music by W. A. Mozart. Jane Archibald, soprano (Konstanze); Mauro Peter, tenor (Belmonte); Claire de Sèvigné (Blonde); Owen McCausland, tenor (Pedrillo); Goran Juric, bass (Ottavio); Wajdi Mouawad, director; Johannes Debuss, conductor. Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-383-8231. $35-$225. Also Feb 10, 13, 16, 18/2pm, 22, 24 (4:30pm).


Concerts Beyond the GTA


8:00: Aeolian Hall. Sultans of Swing: A Christmas Caravan. Guest: Rebecca Campbell, vocals. 795 Dundas St. E. London. 519-672-7950. $30-$35.


Monday December 4


7:30: University of Waterloo Department of Music. Instrumental Chamber Ensembles. Six different chamber ensembles will play classical music ranging from Brahms to Koechlin. Chapel, Conrad Grebel University College, 140 Westmount Rd. N., Waterloo. 519-885-8220 x4226. Free. Reception following.


Tuesday December 5


7:30: Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, Brock University. The University Wind Ensemble. Zoltan Kalman, conductor. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722. $12, $5(child); $5(eveGo); free(Brock students).

Wednesday December 6

12:15: St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (Kitchener). Wednesday Noon-Hour Concerts. Renaissance School of the Arts Flute Choir; Wendy Wagley, conductor. 54 Queen St. N., Kitchener. Free. 11:30am: Optional low cost lunch available in the foyer.


Thursday December 7


7:00: Magisterra Soloists. Baroque Christmas. Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No.3; Corelli: Christmas Concerto Grosso; Vivaldi: Double Concerto in d; Bach: Double Concerto in d; Telemann: Violato Concerto. St. Luke’s Anglican Church (London), 1204 Richmond St., London. 519-930-4842. $25, $20(st); $15(st); $10(under 10). Also Dec 10(3pm, Wintermure on the Mount).

Friday December 8

8:00 pm: Free: First-St. Andrew’s United Church. Friday Advent Noon Recital. Catholic Central Chamber Choir; Don Sills, director. First-St. Andrew’s United Church, 350 Queens Ave, London. 519-670-8102. Free will offering. Lunch following.


8:00: First-St. Andrew’s United Church (London). The Gift of the Magi. Sanja Gustafson; Francesca Ranalli, Todd Wieczorek; Chad Loewerse, Terry Head; George Join, director. 350 Queens Ave, London. 519-670-8102, $45(6:30pm dinner & show); $20(8pm show only). Also Dec 9(3pm and 8pm).

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Toronto Serenade Quartet with Elena Kalabew, Piano. Rare Quintets by Mozart.


Saturday December 9

2:00: Lyricas Chamber Choir of Barrie. Magnificat. Arnessen: Magnificat; works by Ole Gjelio. Chamber strings; organ; Steve Winfield, conductor; Brent Mayhew, piano. Burton Avenue United Church, 37 Burton Ave., Barrie. 705-722-0271, $17, $14(st/$). Also 7:30pm.

December 9
2pm - 7:30pm

- 2:30: Niagara Symphony Orchestra. All Through the House: A Holiday Wassail with Colin Anthes, director; Laura Second Secondary School Concert Choir; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722 or 1-855-615-0722. $26; $20 (sr/30 and under); $12 (sr/arts/child; $5 (eyeGO)).


- 7:00: Georgian Bay Symphony. Christmas Caravan. Choir: Jocelyn Taylor; Sandy Lumsdon; Elizabeth Beale; Jennifer Sedgwick; Philip Biro; Nathan Urban; Sara von Briesen. Orchestra: Brian Wadsworth; John Widgery; Ron Blyth. Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, 133 King St. W., Kingston. 613-578-1570. From $30.


Sunday December 10

- 2:30: Georgian Music. Christmas Memories. Monica Whitcher; soprano; Judy Leman, harp; Alana van Stralen, organ. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Barrie), 47 Ownst., Barrie. 705-726-1181. $65.

- 7:30: Lyrica Chamber Choir of Barrie. Magnificat. Arnesen: Magnificat; works by Oloja. Chamber strings: organ; Steve Winfield, conductor; Brent Mayhew, piano. Burton Avenue United Church, 37 Burton Ave., Barrie. 705-722-0271. $17; $14 (sr/arts). Also 2pm.

- 7:30: Niagara Symphony Orchestra. All Through the House: A Holiday Wassail with Colin Anthes, director; Laura Second Secondary School Concert Choir; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722 or 1-855-615-0722. $26; $20 (sr/30 and under); $12 (sr/arts/child; $5 (eyeGO)).

- 8:00: First-Street Andrew's United Church (London). The Gift of the Magi. Sonja Gustafson; Francesca Ranalli; Chad Louswure; Terry Head; George Jolin, director. 350 Queens Ave., London. 519-679-8182; $20. Also Dec 8, 7:30 at 8pm at 9pm.


- 7:30: Christmas Caravan. Choir: Jocelyn Taylor; Sandy Lumsdon; Elizabeth Beale; Jennifer Sedgwick; Philip Biro; Nathan Urban; Sara von Briesen. Orchestra: Brian Wadsworth; John Widgery; Ron Blyth. Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, 133 King St. W., Kingston. 613-578-1570. From $30.
Friday December 15

12:00 noon: First-St. Andrew's United Church
Friday-Advent Noon Recital. Laudamus Bells; Terry Head, director. First-St. Andrew's United Church, 350 Queens Ave, London. 519-679-8182. Freewill offering. Lunch following for $7.

7:30: Cirque Musica Holiday. Believe. Incredible feats of strength, skill, and grace to great holiday music favourites performed by a live symphony. Peterborough Memorial Centre, 151 Lansdowne St., Peterborough. tickets.memorialcentre.ca. $24-$79.99.


Saturday December 16

8:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Yuletide Spectacular. See Dec 15. Also Dec 16(8pm), 17(2:30pm).


7:30: Chorus Niagara. Big Band Christmas. Lindberg: Christmas Cantata; festive carols, audience sing-along and seasonal music. Chorus Niagara; 20-piece Big Band; John Sherwood, piano. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 1-855-515-0722 or 905-688-0722. $43; $41(ad); $28(under 30); $18(under 12); $15(child); $5(eyeGo).


9:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Yuletide Spectacular. See Dec 15 for details. Also Dec 17(2:30pm).


Sunday December 17


11:00: Kokoro Singers. Prelude to Winter. Works by Rutter and Martin; arrs. by Bolden, Hayfield and Weir; Brenda Uchimaru, conductor. Guests: Cambridge Girls’ Choir (Peter West, conductor). Grace Lutheran Church (Hamilton), 1107 Main St. W., Hamilton. 289-493-9447. $20 ($15/st), free(under 13). Also Dec 9(7:30pm, Kitchener).


Saturday December 23


Wednesday January 3

12:00 noon: Midday Music with Shipera. Michael Adamson, violin and Philip Adamson, piano. Works by Beethoven, Martucci, Morris and Elgar: Hi-Way Pentecostal Church, 50 Anne St. N., Barrie. 705-726-1181. $5; free(st).

Thursday January 4


Wednesday January 10


Tuesday January 11


Friday January 12

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Elgar’s Cello Concerto and Mozart’s Jupiter. Hindemith: Overture to Cupid and Psyche; Elgar: Cello Concerto in e; Mozart: Prelude to Apollo and Hycasinthus; Mozart: Symphony No.41 in C “Jupepr”. Denise Djokic, cello; Tung-Chieh Chuang, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-762-4717. $19-$85. Also Jan 13.

Saturday January 13

3:00: at the First Christmas Music Series. Piano Trio Masters: AVR Trio. Beethoven: Piano Trio in G major Op.70 No.3 “Ghost”; Staniland: Solstice Songs; Brahms: Trio in C major No.2 Op.87. AVR Trio: Yehonatan Berick, violin; Rachel Mercier, cello; Angela Park, piano. First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, 170 Dundurn St. S., Hamilton. 905-389-5125. $20; $15(ad); $5(st,awaged); free(under 12).

Tuesday January 16


Thursday January 18

12:00 noon: Music at St. Andrews. Christopher Dawes, organ. St. Andrews’ Presbyterian Church (Barrie), 47 Owen St, Barrie. 705-726-1181. $5. Free (st).

12:00 noon: Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty of Music. Music at Noon. Kimberly Barber, mezzo; Anna Ronai, piano; Christine Vlajk, viola. Maureen Forrester Recital Hall, 75 University Ave., Waterloo. 519-884-1970 x2432. Free.

Friday January 19

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Casablanca: The Film with Live Orchestra. Evan Mitchell, conductor. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $19-$86. Also Jan 19.

Saturday January 27

2:00: Chamber Music Hamilton. Dover Quartet. String Quartet. Schumann: String Quartet No.2 in F major. Op.41 No.2; Ullmann: String Quartet No.2; Zemlinsky: String Quartet No.2. Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. W., Hamilton. 905-525-7429. $35; $30(st); $15(st);

Sunday January 21


7:00: Niagara Symphony Orchestra. Symphony Drums of Penzance. Act 1 of Lohengrin; Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No.3; Beethoven: Symphony No.5. 519-672-8800. $30; $25(st); $20(st):

Saturday January 27

2:00: Chamber Music Hamilton. Dover Quartet. String Quartet. Schumann: String Quartet No.2 in F major. Op.41 No.2; Ullmann: String Quartet No.2; Zemlinsky: String Quartet No.2. Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. W., Hamilton. 905-525-7429. $35; $30(st); $15(st);

Sunday January 28

2:30: Kingston Symphony. Rachmaninoff and Beethoven. Wagner: Prelude to Act 1 of Lohengrin; Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No.3; Beethoven: Symphony No.5. 519-672-8800. $30; $25(st); $20(st):

Saturday January 27

2:00: Chamber Music Hamilton. Dover Quartet. String Quartet. Schumann: String Quartet No.2 in F major. Op.41 No.2; Ullmann: String Quartet No.2; Zemlinsky: String Quartet No.2. Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. W., Hamilton. 905-525-7429. $35; $30(st); $15(st);

Sunday January 28

2:30: Kingston Symphony. Rachmaninoff and Beethoven. Wagner: Prelude to Act 1 of Lohengrin; Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No.3; Beethoven: Symphony No.5. 519-672-8800. $30; $25(st); $20(st):

Saturday January 27

2:00: Chamber Music Hamilton. Dover Quartet. String Quartet. Schumann: String Quartet No.2 in F major. Op.41 No.2; Ullmann: String Quartet No.2; Zemlinsky: String Quartet No.2. Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. W., Hamilton. 905-525-7429. $35; $30(st); $15(st);

Sunday January 28

2:30: Kingston Symphony. Rachmaninoff and Beethoven. Wagner: Prelude to Act 1 of Lohengrin; Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No.3; Beethoven: Symphony No.5. 519-672-8800. $30; $25(st); $20(st):

Saturday January 27

2:00: Chamber Music Hamilton. Dover Quartet. String Quartet. Schumann: String Quartet No.2 in F major. Op.41 No.2; Ullmann: String Quartet No.2; Zemlinsky: String Quartet No.2. Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. W., Hamilton. 905-525-7429. $35; $30(st); $15(st);

Sunday January 28

2:30: Kingston Symphony. Rachmaninoff and Beethoven. Wagner: Prelude to Act 1 of Lohengrin; Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No.3; Beethoven: Symphony No.5. 519-672-8800. $30; $25(st); $20(st):

Saturday January 27

2:00: Chamber Music Hamilton. Dover Quartet. String Quartet. Schumann: String Quartet No.2 in F major. Op.41 No.2; Ullmann: String Quartet No.2; Zemlinsky: String Quartet No.2. Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. W., Hamilton. 905-525-7429. $35; $30(st); $15(st);

Sunday January 28

2:30: Kingston Symphony. Rachmaninoff and Beethoven. Wagner: Prelude to Act 1 of Lohengrin; Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No.3; Beethoven: Symphony No.5. 519-672-8800. $30; $25(st); $20(st):
Forrester Recital Hall, 75 University Ave., Waterloo. 519-884-1970 x2432. $15; $8(sr/st).

Tuesday January 30
- 12:00 noon: Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts, Brock University. RBC Foundation Music@Noon. Zoltán Kalmán, clarinet; Erika Reiman, piano. Cairns Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722. Free.

Thursday February 1
- 12:00 noon: Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty of Music. Music at Noon. Faculty Woodwinds. Maureen Forrester Recital Hall, 75 University Ave., Waterloo. 519-884-1970 x2432. Free.
- 8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Composers & Improvisers Association. WLU Faculty of Music. Student composers and performers (woodwind quintet and flute/piano duo). KWCMS Music Room, 57 Young St. W., Waterloo. 519-886-1673. $15; $10(st).

Friday February 2
- 8:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Pirates of Penzance. See Jan 26 for details.

Saturday February 3
- 8:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Pirates of Penzance. See Jan 26 for details.
- 8:00: Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty of Music. Laurier Wind Orchestra. Wilfrid Laurier University, Theatre Auditorium, 75 University Ave., W., Waterloo. 519-884-1970 x2432. $15; $8(sr/st). Also Feb 3.

Sunday February 4
- 2:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Pirates of Penzance. See Jan 26 for details.

Music Theatre

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

- Annex Singers. December Diaries: A Choral Drama. Jane Mallett Theatre, St Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St E. 416-968-7747; $35; $25(sr/arts). Opens Dec 9, 7:30pm. Also Dec 10(3pm).
C. Music Theatre


- Dancyp Productions. Aladdin: A Panto in One Arabian Night. Regent Theatre, 50 King St. E. Oshawa. 905-721-3399. $29. Opens Dec 28, 7pm. Runs to Dec 31. Thurs-Sat(7:30pm), Sat/Sun(1pm).


- Lower Ossington Theatre. Annie. Music by Charles Strouse, lyrics by Martin Charnin, book by Thomas Meehan. Randolph Theatre, 736 Bathurst St. 1-888-324-6285. $39.99-$44.99. Opens Dec 8, 7:30pm. Runs to Jan 14. Fri/Sat(7:30pm), Sat(3:30pm), Sun(2pm) and Sun(7pm). Note: no pre show on Dec 31. Note: extra show Jan 4(2pm).


- Soulpepper Concert Series. A Very Soul- pepper Christmas. A family concert celebrating the sounds of the season from around the globe. Mike Ross, music director. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts: Jane Mallett Theatre. 27 Front St E. 416-866-8666. $25-$70. Opens Dec 15, 8pm. Runs to Dec 17. Fri/Sat(7:30pm), Sat/Sun(2pm).

- St. Anne’s Music & Drama Society. Rud- digore, or The Witch’s Curse. Music by Arthur Sullivan, lyrics by W. S. Gilbert. St. Anne’s Parish Hall, 651 Dufferin St. 416-924-4145. $27-$221(2st). Opens Jan 26, 7:30pm. Runs to Feb 4. Thurs/Fri(7:30pm), Sat/Sun(2pm). Also Jan 27 at 7:30pm.


- Tapestry Opera. Tapestry Briefs: Winter Shorts. Jacqueline Wodeley, soprano; Erica Iris, mezzo; Keith Klassner, tenor; Alex Dob- son, baritone; Artists of the 2016 Composer- Librettist Laboratory. Dancemakers Studio, Distillery Historic District, 9 Trinity St. 416-537-6606. From $25. Opens Dec 18pm. Runs to Dec 3. Fri/Sat(8pm), Sun(4pm).

- Tarragon Theatre. Mr. Shì and His Lover. Music by Yo Ho Kie, libretto by Yo Ho Kie and Wong Teng Chi. Tarragon Theatre Main- space, 39 Bridgman Ave. 416-531-1827. $45; $49(2st). Opens Nov 15, 8pm. Runs to Dec 17. Tues-Sat(8pm), Wed(1st), Sat/Sun(2pm).


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 club's websites or use the phone number provided for further information. We apologize for this temporary inconvenience.


**Theatre Aurora.** If/Then. Music by Tom Kitt, lyrics by Brian Yorkey. Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Dr, Aurora. 905-727-3689. $25; $25 (at box office); $10 (at box office). Opens Jan 25, 8pm. Runs to Feb 3, Thurs-Sat(8pm), Sun(2pm).


**University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** Opera Student Composer Collective: Vengeance. Performed with Surfittles. Michael Patrick Albano, director; Sandra Horst, conductor. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-978-8000.


**Toronto Operetta Theatre.** Candide. Music by Leonard Bernstein. Tonatiuh Abrego, tenor; Vania Chan, soprano; Elizabeth Beeler, soprano; Cian Horrobin, tenor; Derek Bate, conductor. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. $49-$95. Opens Dec 28, 8pm. Runs to Jan 7 and Days and times vary. Visit torontoperotta.com for details.


**Toronto Opéraetta Theatre.** Candide. Music by Leonard Bernstein. Tonatiuh Abrego, tenor; Vania Chan, soprano; Elizabeth Beeler, soprano; Cian Horrobin, tenor; Derek Bate, conductor. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. $49-$95. Opens Dec 28, 8pm. Runs to Jan 7 and Days and times vary. Visit torontoperotta.com for details.

**Toronto Opéraetta Theatre.** Candide. Music by Leonard Bernstein. Tonatiuh Abrego, tenor; Vania Chan, soprano; Elizabeth Beeler, soprano; Cian Horrobin, tenor; Derek Bate, conductor. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. $49-$95. Opens Dec 28, 8pm. Runs to Jan 7 and Days and times vary. Visit torontoperotta.com for details.

**The Blue Goose Tavern.** 1 Blue Goose St. 416-255-2442 thebluegooseetavern.com (full schedule) Every Sun 4pm Blues at The Goose. Big Groove featuring Downschild’s Mike Fitzpatrick & Gary Kendall with Special Guests Dec 3-5 Steve Martini & Curtis Chaffey Dec 10 Kevin McQuade & Martin Alex Aucin Dec 17 Raoul Bhanaja & Darren Gellen

**Blooom.** 2315 Blooom St. W. 416-767-1315 blooomrestaurant.com All shows: 19 - Call for reservations.

**Burdock.** 1184 Blooom St. W. 416-546-4033 burdockto.com (full schedule) Dec 1 6:30pm Kalya Rakel feat. Kevin Brett, Jacob Garza/Thelfo & George Chen $15/$10(adv); 9pm Klark $15/$12(adv) Dec 2 6:30pm The O’Pears feat. Danielle Knobbe $20/$15(adv); Virginia Wil/ Campbell Woods $12/$10(adv) Dec 2 8pm Son of Town Hall w/ Abigail Laped $15/$10(adv); Dec 4 Century Thief w/ Creature Speak $10/$8(adv) Dec 5 8pm Hand History Month; Chris, Low Sun & Dinosaur Island $10/$8(adv). Dec 6 8pm Confabulation Presents: Family Stories $10/$8(adv); 9:30 Naked Wild, Pleasure Craft & Sly Why: Kid $10/$8(adv). Dec 7 8pm Clevesea McSride’s Socialist Night School: The Christmas $15/$10(adv) Dec 8 8:30pm Catalyst Ensemble $15/$10(adv); 9pm Oh Geronimo ‘The Sted’ Sneak Preview w/ Little Cayote & Peter van Helvoort $15/$10(adv); Dec 9 9:30pm Deon Blay & The Myth of Fingerprints Band $12/$10(adv); 9pm A Tribute to BLUJ - Guelph Country Line & The Mandevilles $10/$8(adv) Dec 10 6:30pm SOA $15/$12(adv); 9pm Lindsay Footse w/ Armee Butcher & Brandon Holl $15/$10(adv). Dec 11 9pm Honest, Matcham & Rogue Tenant $10/$8(adv). Dec 12 9pm unbradified Futurism $10/$8(adv) Dec 13 6:30pm The Band Named Crow & The Anthology Project $12/$10(adv); Dec 14 9pm The Cluttertones w/ John Millard & Germaine Lieu $15/$10(adv). Dec 14 9pm Bousada $15/$12(adv); 9pm The Clandowwes with John Mildar & Gerardown $15/$10(adv). Dec 14 10pm Community Celebration of the Vocal Arts $10/$8(adv). Dec 18 9pm Nick Donnoff / Rob

**D. In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)**

**Voxbox/Opera in Concert.** I Due Figaro. Music by Saverio Mercadante. Bestie Kalender, William Gerson; Nicholas Baroff, baritone. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. $22-$52. Fri, Feb 2, 2:30pm.


The Daniel Barnes Low Stress Trio
E=Jazz and Latin Jazz w/ Don Naduriak
PWYC.

Association
Dec 5, 19, Jan 2, 16
Finger Style Guitar

Franklin Ave Swingtet
Dec 7 &
3pm Hirut Sundays Open Mic
10pm
Every Wed
Sunday Jam with
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Galas and Fundraisers

- Dec 15 7:00: Choral Society of St. Peter and St. Simon-the-Apostle. A gala presenting good music and a reading of A Child's Christmas in Wales by Dylan Thomas featuring radio personality Tom Allen and Canadian actress Jayne Lewis. Free for all. Refreshments included at intermission. All proceeds will benefit the refugee projects of the church. 525 Bloor St. E. 416-923-6714. $20.

E. The ET Ceteras

10pm Makeshift Island (Rebecca Hennessy).
Jan 23 7:00pm Fergus Hambleton and guests.
Jan 24 10pm Bellweathers 4. Jan 25 10pm The Ryan Driver Sextet.
Jan 28 8pm Michael Laderoute; 5pm Steve Paul Simms and guests; 10pm Chris Adriaanse. Jan 30 10pm Nick Fraser Presents. Feb 2 10pm Heavy Ethics. Feb 4 7:30pm Harrington. Feb 6 10pm Peripherial Vision.

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YIP'S MUSIC FESTIVAL COMPETITION

Celebrating Today's Talent Nurturing Tomorrow's Star $10,000 in trophies and prizes!

Piano Violin Voice Musical Theatre Erhu Guzheng

Traditional Chinese Music Ensemble Chamber Music Crystal Award Competition

2018 Competition Dates (Saturdays & Sundays): Apr 21/22, 28/29, May 5/6

Application Deadline: Tues, Feb 20, 2018

ymf@yips.ca (416) 948-YIPS (947) 12211

E. The ET Ceteras

- Jan 23 7:00 University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Composers’ Forum with Nicole Lizée. Walter Hall, 80 Queen’s Park Cr. 416-408-0208. Free.
- Jan 25 7:00 Tafelmusik. The Listening Club: The Battle for Good Taste. The desire to possess good taste in music was an occupation of the 18th century, highlighted by an ongoing battle between the French and the Italians. Join BBC Radio host Dr. Hannah French and Tafelmusik violinist Christopher Verrette who examine both sides of this debate. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-864-6337. $25.
- Jan 31 7:00 Canadian Opera Company. Opera Talks: The Trials of Teen Love – Rigoletto. Join Wayne Gooding in a multi-media

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**E. The ET Ceteras**

exploration of Ripelleto and explore the way of a timeless role plays out through Verdi’s brill-
lant bel canto music. Toronto Public Library, Don Mills, 888 Lawrence Ave. E. Register by calling the Don Mills branch of the Toronto Public Library at 416-388-6710. Free.

**Master Classes**
- Jan 24:10am-12pm. University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Composition Master Classes with Nicole Lizée. Walter Hall, 80 Queen’s Park Cr. 416-408-0208. Free. Also Jan 26.

**Screenings**
- Dec 10 4:00: Toronto Jewish Film Society/Royal Conservatory of Music. The Concert: Film about Belshazzar conductor Andrei Simonovitch Filippov’s journey from disaster to triumph. Guest speaker: Jordan Klapman, musicologist. Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. 416-904-6216 x608. $15; $10 (18-35). In French and Russian with English subtitles. Also 7:30.

**Singalongs, Jams, Circles**
- Dec 2:30-5:00 Choral Bonanza Team. Messiah Sing-along. Handel Messiah (Christ-
mas portion). Dr. Richard Heinzle, conductor; Sapphire Navaratnarajah, accompanist. Rich-
mond Hill Presbyterian Church, 10066 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 416-568-9838. Choral singers participation fee. $25. Suggested donation for concert: $10. Concert is at 7:00. Choral singers are asked to pre-regis-
ter at ChoralBonanza@gmail.com if possible (required if you need a score: Watkins Shaw ed.). Solists and orchestra musicians: no fee, please email a short resume to ChoralBon-
anzagmail.com.
- Dec 20 7:30: Toronto Shape Note Singing Community. Monthly Sacred Harp Singing. Everyone is welcome, no experience necessary. There are songbooks to borrow. Music room, Bloor Street United Church, 300 Bloor St. W. 647-838-8764. PWYC donation. 7:00: Choral Bonanza Team. Messiah Sing-along. Handel Messiah (Christ-
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anzagmail.com.

**Workshops**
- Dec 2 10am-5pm: International Resource Centre for Performing Artists. From Rags to Reasonable! Financial Management / Planning for Artists with Chris Enns. Oper-
tive tenor and certified financial planner Chris Enns discusses the basics of financial management, with such topics as budgeting with variable incomes (morning); and speaks about financial planning (afternoon). Can-
- Dec 3 1:30-4:00: Toronto Early Music Players Organization. Workshop coached by recorder player Vincent Lauster. Armour Heights Community Centre, 2140 Avenue Rd. Bring your early instruments and a music stand. $20. 416-779-5750. tempotoronto.net.
- Dec 3 2:30-5:00: International Resource Centre for Performing Artists. Artists New to Canada. Performer/composer Shahrizy Jamshidi, a recent newcomer to Canada; and musician, writer and teacher Marcello Puente, who came to Toronto from Chile in 1974, share their experiences of establishing music careers in this country, providing guidance and suggestions for newcomer artists facing the same challenges. 918 Bathurst St. 416-362-1422.

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DO YOU DRIVE? Do you love The WholeNote? Share the love and earn a little money! Join The WholeNote’s circulation team. 9 times a year. GTA and well beyond. Interested? Contact: circulation@thewholenote.com
I first met Cathy Elliott back in the early summer of 2004 when I stage managed her in an experimental musical production at the Toronto Fringe Festival. The days were long and intense, yet Cathy’s spirit shone through all of the stress with her laughter-infused genuine warmth and caring for everyone in the company.

More recently, when I started to adapt and direct Shakespeare plays for the DAREArts Foundation’s summer camps our paths crossed again, as Cathy wore many hats for DA in marketing and publicity as well as her now almost legendary work with the foundation in First Nations communities in Northern Ontario. One memorable summer she came to our rescue when the artist in charge of teaching our campers about set design was called away at the last minute. Cathy was there, ideas and plans ready to implement, energy to burn and to spare, to make everything work out well.

In mid-October of this year I heard with delight that she had just completed a very successful first workshop of the new musical Starlight Tours at Sheridan College, and Facebook was full of glowing posts from the participants about the inspiration of working with her. Created by Cathy with Leslie Arden, this musical, like a lot of her most recent work, combined two central themes in her life – her brilliant talent as a musical theatre creator and her desire to honour and share her heritage as an Indigenous artist and proud member of the Mi’kmaq nation.

The next day, October 16, I was shocked to hear that she was gone, killed the night before by a car while walking near her home in Alliston, Ontario. This was even more of a shock since her career was just beginning to soar, with her acclaimed performance this year in Corey Payette’s new musical about the residential schools, Children of God, at Urban Ink in Vancouver and at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. There was also the successful workshopping of Starlight Tours, her recent one-woman musical Moving Day, and another new musical very close to her heart, Lonecloud, about to begin its public journey at Native Earth Performing Arts’ Weesageechak Festival this week.

This past Sunday, November 19, there was a beautiful celebration of Cathy organized by her partner, Leslie Arden, and Native Earth, at their performance space at Daniel’s Spectrum in Regent Park. It was an amazing evening, not only moving but joyous, full of love and laughter, many stories from her friends and family, and performances from her musicals.

It was also a showcase of her work over the years: several songs from The Talking Stick commissioned by the Charlottetown Festival in 2011, the first all-Indigenous musical performed there; a sweet and moving solo from Sikas Runner sung by the ageless Glynnis Ranney; scenes from Lonecloud featuring Herbie Barnes in the title role of the Mi’kmaq medicine man who performed in Wild West shows; and excerpts from Fireweeds: Women of the Yukon from 1993, the musical she researched while performing as Diamond Tooth Gertie in the Yukon. The songs from this musical were feminist and galvanizing – why isn’t this a more widely known classic of Canadian musical theatre? The evening wrapped up with a magical rendition of “Stories Have Souls” from the in-progress Lonecloud sung by Arden, and then Cathy herself in a recorded version of From the Heart from The Talking Stick, to a final video photo montage (created by Michael Morey).

These last two songs can be seen as theme songs for Cathy, combining as they do the use of music to tell stories, the content of those stories being rooted in her Indigenous heritage and her desire to explore and share that heritage with the world – and, even if those stories begin in darkness like Starlight Tours, always looking for messages of love and hope.

These goals seem to have really begun when Cathy was the first Indigenous artist invited to join the charitable foundation DAREArts, as they headed up north to Webequie for their first time working with Indigenous youth, using arts, story and song to give confidence and inspire leadership. This was a partnership with Cathy that continued for ten years, only stopped by her passing, and would include her directing a documentary film about the experience, Fill My Hollow Bones, narrated by Graham Greene.

Marilyn Field, founder and director of DAREArts, has spoken about how that first trip for Cathy “was the beginning of her embracing and finding her Indigenous self,” that she seemed to find “her voice coming from deep inside herself.” Laura Mackinnon, lead teacher for DAREArts, who worked with Cathy for five years travelling all over the remote areas of the North (even to Tuktoyaktuk in the Arctic), put into words what many are feeling: “She taught me so much about Indigenous culture, about artistic generosity, storytelling and the power of a limitless imagination.”

Cathy leaves an immense legacy that we are lucky to have.

Sheridan College has established a Cathy Elliott Memorial Scholarship for Indigenous students: Sheridancollege.ca/giving-to-sheridan/ways-to-give/memorial-or-tribute-giving/cathy-elliott-memorial-scholarship.aspx; and DAREArts has created the Cathy Elliott Fund to Empower Indigenous Youth – darearts.com.

-Jennifer Parr
December's Child

Jane Archibald

M J BUELL

Born in Truro, Nova Scotia, soprano Jane Archibald’s 2017/18 season includes three productions with the Canadian Opera Company, as well as Carmina Burana with the Joven Orquesta Nacional d’Espana in Madrid and Rinaldo with the English Concert. Recent engagements have taken her to major opera houses in Zurich, Paris, Milan, Berlin, London and the Metropolitan Opera.

What’s your earliest memory of music? I imagine it must have been hearing singing, as all parents sing to their babies, but I don’t recall a specific moment. My father played the piano daily, and I imagine I heard that even in utero!

What did your parents do? My father was a physician (GP). My mother worked for the government before and after we were born, and was a homemaker for 15 years during our childhood.

Musicians in your family? My father probably should have been a musician – he was a talented amateur jazz pianist and it gave him great joy to play. My younger brother and sister both played in the school band. My mother doesn’t consider herself musical, but she is very artistic and creative.

Your first recollection of yourself making music? Singing to myself! I took piano lessons and group cello lessons for a few years and played trumpet in the school band. I never progressed beyond a beginner level of playing in any of those instruments. My favourite of the three was trumpet!

Jane Archibald lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia, with her husband (tenor Kurt Streit), her children and multiple dust-bunnies. Beyond music, some of her other hobbies include reading, bargain hunting, baking, sleeping-in and DIY projects.

A first music teacher? My first music teacher was my school music teacher, Mary Shephard. She was intense and I adored her classes. Every spring, when the local music festival took place, all other classes took a decidedly second seat to preparing to compete in the local festival – it was a point of pride to win first place.

Early experiences of making music with other people? I started taking solo voice lessons at age 11 and I loved that (obviously!!). But most of my time was actually spent making music in groups, which was very fulfilling. I played in the school band in elementary school and junior high (trumpet) and I sang in every choir around; I was in a nationally recognized girls’ choir called the First Baptist Girls’ Choir which exposed me to lots of choral works, Bach being a particular favourite. I also performed in school musicals in junior high and high school. All that kept me very busy and mostly very happy and engaged. It taught me so many life lessons and prepared me extremely well for my future career.

What would you say to parents hoping their young children will grow up to love and make music? Encourage it, however it comes! First off, turn on the radio and sing around the house. Buy tickets to live events instead of – or in addition to – another toy. Then help them find an outlet to make music, especially in a group (choir/orchestra/band.). It’s such a thrilling experience and truly teaches so many important life skills, in addition to the sheer joy they will feel when they play/sing. If they continue to want to pursue it on a serious level as a soloist, they will let you know. You can use those community contacts you’ve made to help you navigate finding teachers and opportunities.

Don’t miss our full-length interview with Jane Archibald at thewholenote.com
Last month a CD of late works by Elliott Carter gave me occasion to muse about the brushes with greatness I have been privileged with, thanks to my relationship with New Music Concerts. A new CD – Complete George Crumb Edition Volume 18 (BRIDGE 9.176 bridgerecords.com) – gives me that opportunity once again. Although it seems more recent, I realize it has been more than a dozen years since George Crumb was last in Toronto as the guest of NMC. For several decades after NMC’s founding in 1971, a tradition developed that Crumb’s new works would receive their second performances in Toronto; in the case of the celebrated Idyll for the Misbegotten for amplified flute and three percussionists, dedicated to Robert Aitken, this city was the location of its world premiere. That tradition continued in 2003 when the composer’s daughter Ann Crumb sang the Canadian premiere of the recently composed ... Unto the Hills, Songs of Sadness, Yearning and Innocence, with the New Music Concerts ensemble. 

On that occasion it was my great pleasure to spend several days in the company of the 74-year-old composer and his family. In the intervening years Crumb has not slowed down much, as this disc attests, with a new work from 2012 – The Yellow Moon of Andalusia, Spanish Songbook III for Mezzo-Soprano and Amplified Piano – and recently revised versions of 1979’s Celestial Mechanics, Cosmic Dances for Amplified Piano, Four Hands and Yesteryear. A Vocalise for Mezzo-Soprano, Amplified Piano and Percussion originally written in 2005. Central to the disc is a 2001 composition, Eine Kleine Mitternachtsmusik, A Little Midnight Music, Ruminations on ‘Round Midnight by Thelonious Monk for Amplified Piano, a nine-movement tribute to both Monk and Mozart performed by Marcantonio Barone. 

Amplification is one of the key elements of Crumb’s music, not to make it louder per se, but to make audible some of the subtle effects that the performers are called upon to execute, be it whistle tones on a flute or plucked notes or pedalled washes of harmonics inside the piano. This is very much a part of the Mitternachtsmusik, along with other Crumb signature sounds and techniques, from dramatic knocks on the piano’s frame to shimmering glissandi on the strings, gentle melodies juxtaposed with brash interjections – veritable explosions of sound – and vocalizations from the pianist. Crumb’s characteristically descriptive movement titles include Cohueb and Peaseblossom; Incantation; Golliwog Revisited (with a nod to Debussy) and Cadenza with Tolling Bells.

There is another personal connection for me on this recording. The soprano in the two vocal works is Tony Arnold, who performed a stunning rendition of György Kurtág’s Kafka Fragments with violinist Movses Pogossian for New Music Concerts at Gallery 345 last season. Arnold is no stranger to Crumb’s music – she received a Grammy nomination for her performance of Ancient Voices of Children – and is in fact the dedicatee of Yesteryear. That title was inspired by a line from François Villon, “Mais où sont les neiges d’antan,” rendered most famously into English by Dante Gabriel Rosetti as “But where are the snows of yesteryear?,” a line declaimed and later whispered in the famous into English by Dante Gabriel Rosetti as “But where are the snows of yesteryear?,” a line declaimed and later whispered in the original archaic French toward the end of the 11-minute work. As the composer’s preface tells us, “the singer is vainly searching for her lost youth and beauty and laments their inevitable erosion by the relentless passage of time.” There is some ritual involved in the performance, as is often the case in Crumb’s music. In this instance, over the duration of the piece the singer moves between nine stations – spread around the concert hall in the original version but restricted to the stage in the 2013 revision.

Both Yesteryear and The Yellow Moon of Andalusia are first recordings. In the latter, Crumb returns to the poetry of Federico García Lorca, which has been the inspiration for many of his works since the 1960s, including the above-mentioned Ancient Voices of Children. While the earlier works used the original Spanish, here Crumb sets English translations of the poems. The comprehensive booklet includes both the originals and the translations. We have to thank Bridge Records for their thoroughness, not only in the preparation of this recording, which also includes the piano duo Quattro Mani and percussionists David Nelson and William Kerrigan, but for undertaking such an exhaustive catalogue of works by one of the unique voices of our time.

I am pleased to note that this month we have reviews of four Analekta discs, and that they all feature contemporary (or at least 20th-century in the case of André Mathieu) composers. I point this out because although this Quebec label is highly respected for its releases, for the most part they stick to more conventionally classical repertoire, even though some of their artists are renowned for their commitment to contemporary music. The Gryphon Trio has been a major “exception to this rule.” The Gryphon’s 19-title discography includes half a dozen Analekta releases of contemporary music, so kudos to them. The most recent of these is Into the Wonder (AN 2 9521 analekta.com), on which they join the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Arthur Post to perform the music of Jordan Pal. Described by Ludwig van Toronto as “the country’s current it-boy composer,” at 34, Pal is currently the RBC affiliate composer of the Toronto Symphony and his music has been performed by every significant orchestra across Canada.

Starling – Triple concerto for violin, cello, piano and orchestra was commissioned by the Gryphon Trio and the Thunder Bay Symphony in 2013. It is a scintillating work in three movements, opening with an orchestral flourish that develops into a 15-minute flight, a “murmuration” with only brief moments of respite, mostly in the form of lyrical cadenzas from the solo trio. It is exhilarating how Pal sustains the momentum throughout. The Largo second movement begins in dark brass timbres that once again give way to gorgeously lyrical passages from the soloists, especially in the cello lines. But one word of caution, or at least a cautionary tale for me. Many years ago I discovered how close the sound of a cello can be to that of a saxophone when I first heard Kabalevsky’s Cello Concerto No.2. About midway through, the solo cello gives way to an alto saxophone cadenza so seamlessly that it takes several seconds for the ear to recognize what has just gone on. I had a similar experience when I first listened to Starling, which I did on small computer speakers. I was convinced I was hearing saxophone at several points in the recording and emailed Pal to ask if this was the case because I did not see any saxophonists credited in the list of orchestra members. He assured me that he had not included saxophone in the instrumentation and subsequent listening on proper speakers has confirmed this. That’s why I make a point of listening on my stereo system before passing judgement on discs – basic computer
I think I will let the composer speak for himself about the title piece, also commissioned by the TBSO, which at half an hour comprises just under half of the disc. “Into the Wonder celebrates the creative will of our universe. Evoking birth and death, creation and destruction, universal interconnectedness and the rapture of love, this piece seeks to capture the mystery, awe and wonder of life. Nature’s own great works of art are reminders that we are a part of this magnificent range of possibilities, that we are part of something much greater. This symphony celebrates all that is beautiful.” Is this simply the naïve vision of a young man couched in slick orchestral finery? This is certainly not “new music” in the sense of Carter or Crumb, but it is genuinely attractive, well-crafted and brilliantly executed. Does it succeed in its aspirations? I welcome you to judge for yourselves. Concert note: The Gryphon Trio joins the Kingston Symphony in a performance of Jeffrey Ryan’s triple concerto Equilateral (which they recorded with the Vancouver Symphony, Naxos 8.572765) on December 3 at the Isabel Bader Centre for Performing Arts, Kingston. On December 7 they return to Music Toronto to perform works by Haydn, Brahms and Marján Mozetich. In the new year the trio heads to Western Canada for a number of concerts around British Columbia (January 19 through February 3), with a side trip to the Edmonton Chamber Music Society on January 26.

I’m not normally drawn to so-called new age music, and I think that’s the category cellist Margaret Maria’s Carried by an Angel would most naturally fall into, yet I find myself drawn to it. In 2011 Margaret Maria Tobolowska left the position she held with the National Arts Centre Orchestra for a dozen years to pursue a solo career as cellist and chamber musician, composer and producer. I must confess that I was a little off-put by the statement on the cover of the promotional copy of the disc I received: “The beauty of the Archangel Raffaele, the bringer of healing, comfort and compassion has been brought to me. The music is full of energy that heals, sings, dances on the edge of winged spirits and brings such indescribable beauty in colours that shimmer and are full of love.” I am not a believer in angels, nor spiritual healing and at first did not think I should be the one to comment on the disc. But as a cellist, and lover of many diverse sorts of music, I gave it a try, and then another. It is ostensibly a solo cello disc, but more accurately, a solo cellist disc. There are many layerings of lines that together produce dense and lush melodic textures, a lovely wash of sound. The finale, Presto – Electric and Wild is simply that, a moto perpetuo once again reminiscent of a thousand starlings soaring and swirling together in the sky. And a quick final note. 2015 Silver Medalist in the International Tchaikovsky Competition George Li has just released his inaugural CD, Live at the Mariinsky (Warner Classics 0190295812942). It was recorded in St. Petersburg one year ago and it features exactly the same repertoire the young superstar performed in Vancouver in October and will perform again in Toronto in February: piano sonatas by Haydn (Hob.XVI:32) and Chopin (Op.35), Rachmaninov’s Variations on a theme of Corelli, and Liszt’s Consolation No.3 and Hungarian Rhapsody No.2. I am a little surprised that the CD booklet, which includes an extended article about the repertoire by Jed Distler in three languages, contains not a word about this fabulous young performer. There is lots of information available on his own website however – georgelipianist.com – including such tidbits as he made his first public performance at the age of ten (2005) at Boston’s Steinway Hall, and in 2011 performed for president Obama at the White House in an evening honouring Chancellor Angela Merkel. If the disc is any indication, the concert will be a barnburner not to be missed by the cognoscenti. Now, if he could just find time to learn some new repertoire!

Concert note: George Li’s recital takes place at Koerner Hall on February 4.

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December 2017 / January 2018 | 73

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TERRY ROBBINS

Les Tendres Plaintes: Works by Jean-Philippe Rameau (Centaur CRC 3603) is the second solo CD from Canadian guitarist Sylvie Proulx; it’s a collection of transcriptions, mostly of dance movements, from harpsichord suites by the leading French Baroque composer.

Three of the transcriptions, including the title track, are by Proulx, with the remaining 12 being by other guitarists including John Duarte and Andrés Segovia. Given the inherent difficulties in transcribing harpsichord music for guitar — the reduced range, the unavoidability of playing fewer notes, and in particular the handling of ornamentation — everything here works extremely well, helped no doubt by the guitar’s greater capabilities for expressive playing.

Proulx’s performances are clean and clearly defined, with a complete absence of extraneous noise and a lovely range of colour, tone and contrast. It’s terrific playing.

There’s more excellent — and fascinating — guitar playing on François Campion Music for Baroque Guitar (Brilliant Classics 95276), with Bernhard Hofstötter playing a Baroque guitar attributed to Matteo Sellas of Venice, from about 1640.

The colour booklet photos show an astonishingly beautiful instrument. It’s a five-course guitar, tuned the same as the top five strings of the modern guitar, with the top E a single string and the other four doubled, either in unison (A, G and B strings) or at the lower octave (D string).

In 1705 Campion published one of the last five-course guitar books, and continued to add handwritten pieces to his own personal copy throughout his life. These manuscript pieces often exceeded the published works in size and difficulty, and form the basis of this recital.

In the excellent booklet Hofstötter remarks on the instrument’s “full-bodied and velvety dark sound which radically differs from comparable modern instruments” and is “round, fully resonating and at the same time subtle and fragile.” It’s exactly that. Hofstötter is a lutenist, and it shows; the sound here seems like a bridge between at the same time subtle and fragile. “It’s meticulously clean playing from Melik and sympathetic support from Broekaert, who also has a short solo.

Whenever you see a 2CD box set from the wonderful cello and piano duo of Matt Haimovitz and Christopher O’Riley you know you’re in for something special, and so it proves with Troika, their latest release of Russian music by Shostakovich, Prokofiev and Rachmaninoff on the Pentatone OXingale Series label (PTC 5186 608).

CD1 is devoted to Shostakovich and Prokofiev, with the former’s Waltz No.2 and Cello Sonata in D Minor Op.40 and the latter’s Troika from Lieutenant Kijé and Cello Sonata in C Major Op.119.

CD2 has Rachmaninoff’s Cello Sonata in G Minor Op.19 and his famous Vocalise before the duo takes a customary left turn into contemporary Russian music with two of their own arrangements: Kukushka, by the singer-songwriter Victor Tsoi; and Pussy Riot’s Punk Prayer — Virgin Mary, Put Putin Away, complete with Haimovitz’s use of a glass slide on the strings and a crushed Styrofoam cup behind the bridge to achieve some gierge punk bass distortion!

The duo’s arrangement of Lennon & McCartney’s Back in the U.S.S.R. completes a terrific set.

Violinist Nuné Melik makes an impressive recording debut with the CD Hidden Treasure: Rediscovered Music from Armenia with pianist Michel-Alexandres Broekaert (DOM Forlane FOR 1686 domdisques.com).

Born in Siberia of Armenian/Georgian/Jewish heritage, Melik moved to Montreal in 2009 and began to explore the music of composers from her upbringing; this recital program grew out of the resulting Hidden Treasure project. Judging by her playing here, it’s clearly been an emotional and rewarding journey.

The central work on the disc is the Violin Sonata in B-flat Minor by Arno Babadjanian, written in Russia in 1939 and criticized as “formalist” by the Soviet authorities. Babadjanian’s close friend Dmitri Shostakovich thought highly of it, and his influence is clearly felt; there are hints of Prokofiev in the slow movement, too.

Lovely short pieces by Komitas Vardapet, Aram Khachaturian and Alexander Spendiarian complete the disc. There’s passionate, rhapsodic playing from Melik and sympathetic support from Broekaert, who also has a short solo.

**Concert note:** Nuné Melik and Michel-Alexandres Broekaert perform in Toronto on December 7 at the Yamaha Recital Space at Atelier Rosemarie Umetsu.

J.S. Bach: Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord BWV 1014–1019 with violinist Mark Fewer and Hank Knox (Leaf Music LM 216) is the third set of these works I’ve received in recent years, following the outstanding releases from Catherine Manson and Ton Koopman (harpsichord) and the Duo Concertante pairing of Nancy Dahn and Timothy Steeves (piano).
Although there is accomplished playing here the harpsichord is prominent and rather heavy, and its lack of dynamic range tends to give the performances a somewhat mechanical feel, with the violin sounding more like a separate voice than an integrated partner. Koopman’s sound is much softer and much more attuned to Manson’s playing.

There are occasional significant differences in interpretation too, notably in the Adagio of the F minor sonata, where Fewer – unlike Manson and Dahn – opts to separate and shorten the eighth note double-stops.

As always, it comes down to personal taste. If you prefer these works strong and bright and with harpsichord there is much here you will enjoy, although Manson and Koopman and Duo Concertante both offer more sensitive readings.

**Concert notes (out of province):** Hank Knox performs solo recitals at Salle Georges-Codling in Sorel-Tracy, QC on December 3 and at Redpath Hall in Montreal, QC on January 31.

**Fantasia** is the 35th studio album from violin superstar Anne Akiko Meyers, this time with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Kristian Järvi (Avie Records AV2385). The title track is by the Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara, written in 2015 at the request of Meyers, who worked on it with the composer in Helsinki only months before his death in July 2016. Meyers describes it as “transcendent” and having “the feeling of an elegy with a very personal reflective mood.” It’s a lovely work that clearly has great emotional significance for her.

The Violin Concerto No.1 Op.35 by Karol Szymanowski dates from 1916, and was one of the first works to reflect the life-changing influence of his 1914 trips to North Africa and to Paris, where he met Debussy and Ravel. It’s a simply glorious single-movement work full of sensuous and exotic melody and lush orchestration, and with an extremely demanding solo part that rarely leaves the stratosphere.

Ravel’s dazzling Tzigane, in the orchestral version, completes a simply outstanding CD.

In the old LP days the Bruch and Mendelssohn Violin Concertos were frequent companions, and the tradition continues on a new CD from the Polish-bom violinist Kinga Augustyn, with the Janáček Philharmonia Orchestra under Jakub Klecker (Centaur CRC 3585). The Bruch Concerto No.1 in G Minor has a lovely opening, with Augustyn displaying a big, bright tone. Tempos are never rushed, and there is beautiful orchestral support.

The performance of the Mendelssohn Concerto in E Minor follows the same pattern, with unhurried tempos, accuracy in the details and some lovely orchestral moments. There’s sweetness and warmth in the playing, but never a hint of superficiality: these are thoughtful performances that bring delightful playing from all concerned.

Massenet’s Meditation from Thais is the final track, and again it’s a performance that leans toward the understated – a sensitive, simple reading with great depth that makes for a very effective ending to an impressive CD.

The outstanding German cellist Gabriel Schwabe is the soloist in the complete Saint-Saëns Works for Cello and Orchestra with the Malmö Symphony Orchestra under Marc Soustrot (Naxos 8.573737).

The two Cello Concertos – No.1 in A Minor, Op.33 and No.2 in D Minor, Op.119 – are the major works here, although the lesser-known five-movement Suite in D Minor, Op.168 from 1916, has much to recommend it. It was written for cello and piano and later orchestrated by the composer, as were the two other short works here: the Romance in F Major, Op.36 and the Allegro appassionato in B Minor, Op.43. Paul Vidal’s orchestration of The Swan from Carnival of the Animals completes the CD.

With his great tone and terrific technique Schwabe easily negotiates the difficult challenges of the second concerto, with some particularly lovely playing in the simply beautiful central Andante sostenuto. There is fine orchestral support from Soustrot and the Malmö orchestra. All in all, an outstanding disc.

There’s cello playing at the complete opposite end of the spectrum on Sweet Anxiety, the first solo CD from the American cellist Ashley Walters featuring new works for cello from 2002–2013 (populist records PR014 populistrecords.com). Walters says that she seeks “to challenge your perception of what the cello... is capable of,” and she certainly succeeds.

Nicholas Deyoe provides two tracks: For Stephanie (on our wedding day) and the title track another anxiety, the latter drawing some astonishing playing from Walters. Luciano Berio’s Sequenza XIV is predominantly percussive; it’s heard here in a performing edition created by Walters.

Wolfgang von Schweinitz’s Plainsound-Litany is a hypnotic inspiration can lead to obsession.

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sequence of precisely tuned double stops; Wadada Leo Smith’s Sweet Bay Magnolia with Berry Clusters includes improvisational sequences. Andrew McIntosh’s Another Secular Calvinist Creed provides a serene, contemplative end to the recital.

Walters is simply brilliant throughout the disc, and the short printed examples of the scores (other than the Berio) give some idea of the challenges she faced.

On Violin Muse the British violinist Madeleine Mitchell presents a program of world premiere recordings of works by British composers (Divine Art dda 25132). The major work here is the two-movement Violin Concerto “Soft Stillsness” by Welsh composer Guto Pryderi Puw, commissioned by Mitchell and heard in a live BBC Radio recording from 2016. It’s an effective piece, with Mitchell accompanied by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Edwin Outwater.

David Jalbert already has five recordings in the ATMA catalogue. His newest is Stravinski – Prokofiev Pétrouchka, L’oiseau de feu, Romeo et Juliette – Transcriptions pour piano (ATMA Classique ACD2 2684). It shows why he’s considered one of the younger generation’s finest pianists. His performance of Danse russe from Pétrouchka explodes into being with astonishing speed and alacrity. Jalbert possesses a sweeping technique that exudes ease and persuasive conviction.

The three extracts from L’Oiseau de feu require, and Jalbert obviously has it, complete command of the keyboard for the Danse that begins the set. Equally demanding is the introspection necessary for the following Berceuse. The Finale builds to a colossal orchestral finish that loses nothing in this transcription for piano.

According to the disc’s informative liner notes, the ten pieces from Prokofiev’s ballet Romeo and Juliet Op.75 are from Prokofiev’s original piano score, and owing to the composer’s facility with the instrument, are highly idiomatic. One of the set’s most engaging pieces is The Montagues and the Capulets, driven rhythmically by its relentless bassline. Jalbert has a complete understanding of these three stage works and the contemporary language their composers used to tell their stories.

**Concert note:** Pianists David Jalbert and Wonny Song perform music inspired by dance, theatre and visual art on January 14 for Mooredale Pianists. David Jalbert and Wonny Song perform music inspired by dance, theatre and visual art on January 14 for Mooredale Pianists. Jalbert possesses a sweeping technique that exudes ease and persuasive conviction.

Alain Lefèvre has recorded an intriguing work with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra under Joann Falletta: André Mathieu – Concerto No.3 (Analekta AN 2 9299). Written at age 15 while marooned with his family in North America by the outbreak of WWII, unable to return to France where he had been studying on a scholarship from the Quebec government, the work was intended to launch Mathieu’s career with the influential decision makers of the New York music scene. Unfortunately, not much came of it until 1946, when a newly created Quebec production company approached Mathieu for the rights to use his Concerto No.3 in a film (La Farteresse/Whispering City) to be shot entirely in Quebec. As things turned out, only major portions of the second movement were used in the film score. Until recently, this had been the only record of the work. Mathieu himself recorded it in 1947, and this same version, revised by Marc Belanger, was recorded by Philippe Entremont in 1977 and made famous by Alain Lefèvre in 2003. Eventually renamed the Concerto de Québec, the recording by Jean-Philippe Sylvestre with the Orchestre Métropolitain and conductor Alain Trudel was reviewed here in October.

In 2008 the original autograph score for two pianos was discovered in Ottawa. Since then, composer and conductor Jacques Marchand has prepared a critical edition that is faithful to the original manuscript. This is its first full recording. It has all the sweeping gestures of its period and a devilishly difficult piano part. Lefèvre’s performance at the keyboard is masterful. He and the BPO perform the work with astonishing authenticity, restoring a fascinating chapter to Canadian music history of that period.

American pianist David Glen Hatch exploits his pianistic link to Brahms in Brahms & Rubinstein (Centaur CRC 3565/3566). Brahms’ student Carl Friedberg taught at Juilliard in the late 1940s; Hatch’s own teacher Joanne Baker won an audition to study there with Friedberg. Hatch recalls numerous instructions from Baker, handed down by Friedberg from Brahms, about his intentions for various passages in the Piano Concerto No.1 in D Minor Op.15. It’s fascinating to consider the extent to which Hatch’s performance is connected to the composer in this way. Hatch’s approach overall is quite deliberate in his slightly slower tempi. The second movement in particular reveals numerous opportunities to dwell on phrases and Brahms’ characteristic harmonic shifts.

As substantial as the Brahms concerto is, the Rubinstein Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No.4 in D Minor Op.70 seems an even grander conception. It may have to do with Rubinstein’s orchestrations, but somehow Hatch seems truly in his element with the composer’s great pianistic gestures. The concertos are an excellent pairing for this two-disc recording.

Robert and Linda Ang Stookey style themselves as Piano à Deux. Their new disc, France Revisited – Music by Onslow, Debussy and Poulenc (Divine Art dda 25132) is an example of piano four hands performance at its very best. One of the disc’s many treats is the appearance of music by George Onslow. Because his oeuvre is largely for chamber strings, his
very few piano works tend to be overlooked. The unique voice of this 19th-century composer is deeply intriguing as heard in the Sonata for Piano Four Hands No.1 in E Minor Op.7. It’s surprisingly forward looking despite its early catalogue entry.

Petite Suite delivers all the rich impressionistic orchestrations with which we associate Claude Debussy, and Piano à Deux are consistently excellent in how they portray the composer’s lightly programmatic intent.

The duo has also transcribed the Poulenc Chansons de l’amour et de la guerre, and done so with a gifted ear that preserves the wistful nostalgia that Poulenc infused into each song.

Concert notes (out of province): Details of upcoming performances can be found at pianoadeux.com/events.

José Menor is an extraordinary pianist with a fearsome technique and unrivalled fluidity of touch. His new recording Goyescas – Enrique Granados (IBS Classical IBS-82017) demonstrates how he brings these gifts to his exploration of this major composition of Spanish piano music. Menor goes to considerable effort in his liner notes to explain how this music captured his imagination and compelled him to study it from a composer’s perspective rather than just a pianist’s. His study of the original manuscripts recommended by the Granados family helped him profoundly in discerning the composer’s intent in writing the suite, which deals with the course of love and death.

Menor admits being attracted by the work’s many, deep contrasts and its expressive intensity. This is most powerfully evident in El amor y la muerte. It’s astonishing to imagine that this century-old work contains such modern tone clusters and rhythmic freedom. Under the hands of Menor it becomes a revealing expression, ahead of its time, and potently magical. The suite is slightly abridged for lack of recording space but the disc does include a rare performance of a single short manuscript, Crepúsculo, that may have been Granados’ first draft of some of the suite.

Harpichordist Gilbert Rowland has completed a substantial project with his recording Johann Mattheson 12 Suites for Harpsichord (Athene ath 23301.1 divineartrecords.com). The three-disc set is a valuable document shedding some light on the music of a hitherto obscure composer. Mattheson was a contemporary of Handel and came to know him well as a friend and colleague. He is said to have written numerous operas, oratorios, sacred works and music for organ. Most of these manuscripts were kept in Hamburg, where Mattheson lived and worked for much of his life. Allied bombing of the city during WWII destroyed most of the Mattheson documents, leaving little for modern scholars to study. Fortunately, the 12 Suites for Harpsichord, dating from 1714, have survived. They are well-conceived mature works written in the French dance suite style. Rowland plays a 2005 copy of a French instrument

Andrew Wright has recorded a second disc in his series of operatic transcriptions, The Operatic Pianist II (Divine Art dda 25153 divineartrecords.com). Opera transcriptions were, in their day, the equivalent of pop song covers. They also provided traveling pianists with ample popular repertoire for performance. Liszt may be the best-known contributor to the form, although a great many composers dabbled in the genre.

Wright clearly has a wonderful working grasp of this repertoire and knows how to bring forward the vocal line as well as how to portray the orchestral colour that any given emotional moment requires. His playing is consistently fabulous, whether he’s grounding out Liszt’s Rienzi Fantasy or Saint-Saëns’ Concert Paraphrase on Thaïs. It’s easy to understand how these transcriptions achieved “hit” status in the time before the gramophone and digital access to opera performances.

Mitsu Tanaka has, at first blush, twinned a pair of unlikely composers in her new release, Janáček, Bach – In concert (Concertant Classics CD PR201601 concerntclassics.com). She admits, however, that in the process of the recording she discovered that both were having the same effect on her. Tanaka’s performance of the Bach Partita No.6 in E Minor BWV 830 reveals her strict adherence to the perfection of Bach’s structure. It also uncovers the emotional richness of the minor key. This last consideration is where she makes the link to Janáček. His Moravian heritage and his links to Czech folk music are reflected in the emotional content of On an Overgrown Path, Books 1 and 2. Minor keys are prevalent. Melancholy is pervasive. In its own way, this shared feature is, for Tanaka, the point of connection.

Tanaka approaches Janáček with an intent to uncover the inspired simplicity of his music. She moves through the numerous parts of Books 1 and 2 with thoughtful deliberation, capturing the essence of the composer’s evocative titles: Words Fail, Unutterable Anguish, In Tears, for example. Her playing is as perfect for Janáček as it is for
Bach. What a wonderfully unlikely pair.

**Concert notes (out of province):** Misuzu Tanaka performs a duo concert with Maksim Shtrykov, clarinet at the Fairmont Chamber Music Society in Fairmont, WV on December 10, at the Highlands Chapel Concert Series in Seattle, WA on January 14 and the Third Sunday Concert Series in Albany, CA on January 21. Tanaka also gives a solo recital for Sunset Music and Arts in San Francisco, CA on January 20.

Martin Perry’s third recording, *Martin Perry Piano – Hugo Weisgall, Piano Sonata & Paul Hindemith, Ludus Tonalis (Bridge 9467)*, continues his artistic focus on contemporary piano music, specifically on substantial forms. The disc opens with a three-movement *Sonata for Piano* by Hugo Weisgall, a Moravian immigrant to the US in 1920 whose serious pursuit of music study at Peabody and Curtis, and privately with composers like Roger Sessions, helped form the rigorous approach he developed in his own writing. His language tends towards a 12-tone, relaxed serialism where the musical ideas are rather long. There’s a good deal of highly contrasted emotional content that Perry handles beautifully, giving the sonata what the liner notes call an “operatic” quality.

In the same vein, the Hindemith *Ludus Tonalis* has an illuminating subtitle: *Studies in Counterpoint, Tonal Organization and Piano Playing*. Hindemith writes a fugue in each of the 12 major keys, joined by interludes that help establish the new key. The opening *Praeludium* is played inverted and in reverse as the *Postludium*. It’s all rather cerebral, but Perry uses the distinct character of each fugue and interlude to colour the work in the most creative way. It’s a very engaging performance.

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**VOCAL**

Luigi Boccherini - *Arie da Concerto Amaryllis Dieltiens; Capriola di Gioia; Bart Naessens*  
Evil Penguin Records Classic EPRC 0023 (eprclassic.eu)

- This is an ensemble on a mission — what it calls rehabilitating Boccherini. Overshadowed by Mozart and Haydn and receiving mixed comments in *Grove’s Dictionary*, Boccherini’s few vocal compositions — few because Boccherini’s patrons overwhelmingly demanded instrumental music — convey, according to Capriola di Gioia, a rare insight into the potential of the human voice. And so to the seven pieces selected by the Capriola di Gioia, *Caro padre*, a me non dei is a worthy introductory piece with an almost juncture interpretation by Dieltiens — an approach repeated in *Se non ti moro allato*.

And yet, the heart of this CD is its intense concentration on classical themes. As perhaps might be expected from a piece with an inspiration of this nature, *Caro luci, che regnate* begins with a more stately character, a tone taken up by Dieltiens as she sings of Jason’s predicament in *Issipile*. *Misera, dovunque* is a worthy combination of a classical theme with a text and instrumental scoring for strings which could have been written by any of the great Baroque composers who preceded Boccherini.

*Capriola di Gioia’s varied choice of Boccherini’s *Arie da Concerto* allows the listener to make up his or her mind as to whether the composer has actually been rehabilitated. This CD from Dieltiens and Naessens means Boccherini does deserve to be listened to. Indeed, the final track *Se d’un amor tiranno* with its sprightly string playing, deep continuo and pleading voice encapsulates all the reasons for doing just that.

Michael Schwartz

Lux  
Choeur de l’église St. Andrew and St. Paul; Jean-Sébastien Vallée  
*ATMA ACD2 2771*

- While this CD obviously represents a Christmas disc, it is rather more than that. The program is anchored by modern arrangements of traditional carols such as *Once in Royal David’s City* and *O Come All Ye Faithful*. But much of the material is more adventurous and many pieces were composed only recently. Of particular interest is *In the Bleak Midwinter*, a setting of a poem by Christina Rossetti. Singers and their audiences will be familiar with this piece either in the setting of Harold Darke or in the much finer one by Gustav Holst. But this CD gives us a contemporary alternative by the Welsh composer Paul Mealor. That anthem is very fine, as are a number of others. An older kind of music is represented in the songs of Mendelssohn and Herbert Howells.

The Choir of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, a Montreal church, is an impressive body of 45 singers, in part professional, in part amateur. I recognized two names: that of the lead baritone Nathaniel Watson, whom we have often heard in Toronto, and that of the alto Duncan Campbell, who is the son of the soprano Kathryn Domoney and the baritone David Campbell. The choice of material is adventurous. It achieves the rare feat of presenting traditional Christmas music but also so much more than that.

Hans de Groot

*Twas But Pure Love  
Ottawa Bach Choir; Lisette Canton  
*ATMA ACD2 2776* (ottawabachchoir.ca)

- The splendid choral offerings on this recording range from Renaissance to the wholenote.com
Canadian works. The first, Sailor’s Carol by Matthew Larkin (director of music, Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa), is based on a text by Cornish poet Charles Causley. With a lovely harp intro and simple chordal accompaniment, three descriptive verses lead to the chant Ave maris stella, creating a sense of great awe at the everlasting guidance of a star. The Darkest Midnight in December by Kelly-Marie Murphy again features lovely passages by harpist Caroline Léonardelli, while the women of the choir present a gentle, yet sublime shimmering interpretation of a 1728 text by Irish priest, Fr. William Devereux. Early works performed beautifully by the full choir include Tomás Luis de Victoria’s O Magnus mysterium, an unaccompanied motet realized in all its haunting splendour. Bach’s Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden, BWV 230 provides a lively contrast with its double-fugue passages, showcasing each of the choir’s sections and their superb tonal and rhythmic agility, as well as deftness of hand (and foot) by organist Jonathan Oldengarm.

**Wagner – Siegfried**

**O’Neill; Goerne; Cangelosi; van Mechelen; Melton; Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra; Jaap van Zweden**

Naxos 8.660413-16

Siegfried is the real McCoy of the Ring Cycle, the epicentre packed with scenes of high drama, superhuman achievement and much of the Ring’s most beautiful music. And it’s also the most optimistic part of the Cycle, each act ends on a high note, reserving the best to the end with the most unusual love duet ever written. There is a fairy-tale atmosphere, a happy ending as well as unforgettable musical and dramatic highlights that usually translate into a glorious night at the opera.

This dramatic new Ring is the brainchild of Dutch conductor Jaap van Zweden, former concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Discovered by Leonard Bernstein, he is now music director of four major orchestras, fulfilling a dream to record his own Ring Cycle with an orchestra he would whip into a Wagnerian superpower and pick the best possible singers available today. Each opera was recorded as a live concert performance, one per year beginning in 2015, so this is the third installment.

The title role, Siegfried, is the biggest casting problem of any Ring attempt, but fortunately New Zealand heidenton Simon O’Neill, a young, athletic fellow who could look good even on a rugby field, solves this problem wonderfully. He is a natural, not only powerful, enthusiastic and tireless, but also sensitive and tender. Wotan, here called the Wanderer (as he is no longer in charge of things), is Matthias Goerne, another excellent choice, one of the greatest baritones in the world today. David Cangelosi became the audience favourite with his characterful, incisive singing as Mime, the evil dwarf. In closing, it’s worth buying this set for the famous Forging Song alone. There were sounds coming out of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre never heard before!

Janos Gardonyi

**James MacMillan - Stabat Mater**

The Sixteen; Britten Sinfonia; Harry Christophers

CORO COR16150

James MacMillan gained his early prominence with the orchestral piece The Confession of Isobel Gowdy. Since then he has generally been recognized as the leading Scottish composer of his generation. He is a Roman Catholic in a largely Protestant country. Sacred music has always been central to his creative work. In the last half decade he has developed a close relationship with the outstanding chamber choir The Sixteen (conducted by Harry Christophers). This CD gives us a sense of that collaboration. The Stabat Mater is an anonymous 13th-century Latin poem that depicts the Virgin Mary at the foot of the Cross and proceeds to meditate on her sorrow and appeals to her as an intercessor with her son.

There have been a number of previous attempts to give musical shape to the text. The versions by Josquin and Pergolesi are especially notable. On this CD the hymn is given in the form of the Medieval plainsong. The following four tracks give us MacMillan’s elaboration. It is a brilliant work, dazzlingly performed by the full choir, the soloists (all of them members of the choir) and the accompanying chamber orchestra, the Britten Sinfonia. In a prefatory note in the CD booklet, Christophers ranks MacMillan as one of the three great composers of religious music, along with Victoria and Poulenc. If one is only looking at the Catholic world, it is hard to disagree with that.

Hans de Groot
The title track, *Breathe*, in its performance here, is by far one of the most extraordinarily beautiful recordings experienced in recent memory. The blending of texts, ancient (Hildegard von Bingen, Antonio Scandello and modern (Anna Chatterton), is mirrored by the use of period instruments for new music. Composer James Rolfe infuses the work with connections between human emotion and the natural world represented by the four elements – water, earth, air and fire – so exquisitely. For example, we enjoy the sensation of love overflowing (as water does) with undulating chordal textures and an abundance of cascading note sequences as Suzie LeBlanc, Katherine Hill and Laura Pudwell magically intertwine their voices.

The two masques on the recording further demonstrate this Toronto composer’s exceptional gift for intermingling qualities of early music with contemporary techniques whilst coaxing subconscious elements to seep through in performance. In *Europa*, the roles of the title character (Suzie LeBlanc) and her long-searching fiancé Hiram (Alexander Dobson) are both composed and sung with an extraordinary measure of pathos as they submit themselves to the will of the gods. And a refreshing new interpretation of the mythical Aeneas and Dido provides a much more intimate view of the doomed romance. As Dido, Monica Whicher is both stately and vulnerable, Alexander Dobson both bold and conflicted as Aeneas, while characters such as the spritely Mercury (Teri Dunn) and the Goat (Vicki St. Pierre) provide comic relief, if somewhat malevolent. Kudos to Larry Beckwith and David Fallis for their direction of these performances.

**Dianne Wells**

*Sing Me at Midnight* - Songs by John Greer
Tracy Dahl; Kevin McMillan; Delores Ziegler; John Greer
Centrediscs CMCCD 24717 (musiccentre.ca)

This Canadian Art Song Project CD features works for voice and piano by noted Canadian accompanist, conductor and pedagogue John Greer. Spanning the past 30 years, the four song cycles comprise 20 songs with a variety of genres, voice types and moods. I am particularly partial to the cycle *Sing Me at Midnight* (1993) sung by lyric baritone Kevin McMillan, whose rich sound and ringing top suits these dramatic settings of sonnets by Wilfred Owen. Adept chromatic harmony conveys the pain of *How Do I Love Thee*, while percussive clusters accentuate the *Anthem for Doomed Youth’s* white-hot anger. Greer offers effective settings of evocative, religiously based poetry by Marianne Lockley in the *cycle The Red Red Heart* (1995). Tracy Dahl’s agile soprano handles the high tessitura well and is also attractive at the lower end in the opening, dancing song *The Beginning*.

The late Romantic style of *The House of Tomorrow* (1986) raised my eyebrows, till I tuned in to the evocation of childhood in these songs. The centrepiece, *Midnight Prayer*, a setting of the pensive poem by Aleksy Khomyakov in translation, is given a rich, expressive performance by American mezzo-soprano Dolores Zeigler. Finally, a *Sarah Binks Songbook* (1988) brings us mock-serious ditties wittily set by Greer, with allusions to various vocal genres. Tracy Dahl becomes the Canadian “prairie songstress,” her operatic persona elevating the work with perfect diction and much humour. John Greer’s collaborative pianism is exemplary throughout.

**Roger Knox**

*Crazy - Songs by T. Patrick Carrabré*
Naomi Forman; Mary Jo Carrabré
Winter Wind Records WWR 2017-01 (tpatrickcarrabre.com)

In his song cycle Crazzy, T. Patrick Carrabré, dean of music at Brandon University, explores “border territory... mental illness or other demons” afflicting “composers who have lost their grounding in the ecstasy and anguish that is creativity.”

The first three songs – Death, Murder and Lust – reveal Carrabré having something powerful to say and not at all timid about saying it. His wife, pianist Mary Jo Carrabré, inhabits the keyboard’s left half, reinforcing the song’s darkness while supporting the passionate vocalism of soprano Naomi Forman. Composer Carrabré adds what I consider unnecessarily intrusive electronics and percussion; the bass-heavy piano alone would have been more appropriate for the songs’ stark beauty.

The sombre mood changes with the fourth song, Burnt, evoking Spanish guitar music. Things go much further afield in the final song, Pain, a wailing rock song over the relentless loud thump of electronic dance music. An additional, speakers-bursting EDM “Audiation Remix” of Pain ends the CD, which also includes a stand-alone song, The Garden, for soprano and piano, thankfully sans electronics.

I’m mystified by Carrabré’s jolting venture into rock; the other songs display a genuine expressive talent that belongs in the concert hall, not the rock-concert arena.

At only 32 minutes, this CD left me wanting to hear more of Carrabré’s “classical” works (I’d previously heard only one), but glad to have heard the five non-rock songs. The texts, by Rilke, Tasso, Goethe, Garcia Lorca and Marvell, are available, with translations, on the composer’s website.

**Michael Schulman**

**CLASSICAL AND BEYOND**

*Altri canti d’amor - 17th Century Instrumental Works*
L’Estro d’Orfeo; Leonor de Lera
Challenge Classics CC72760 (lestrodorfeo.com)

This is a CD with two pleasant surprises. One is a track from undervalued Renaissance composer, Barbara Strozzi. The other is a contemporary set of divisions on a Renaissance theme composed by the present-day artistic director of the CD, Leonor de Lera. Instrumental this collection may be, but the traditional description of the cornetto as being the closest instrument to the human voice is borne out by Josué Meléndez’s playing of Monteverdi’s *Sinfonía*; it is as if an ethereal choir is in attendance. Meléndez’s cornetto returns in *L’Eraclito Amoroso* by Strozzi, here as an example of diminuizioni, or ornamented passages.

The contribution from de Lera is her own diminuizioni on *Apollo’s Lament*, originally by Francesco Cavalli. De Lera’s playing probes the qualities of her Tintagard violin built in Rome in 1739. She is admirably complemented by the plucked instrument playing of Josep Maria Martí.

The selection on this CD is enhanced by the inclusion of variations on popular tunes from the Renaissance. *Pazzig dolente core* is one such set, again played on Baroque violin; while this piece is often scored for voice, listeners to this particular variation will not miss that human aspect.

L’Estro d’Orfeo’s choices are centred on Venice’s prolific output and yet there is still room for pieces by Marco Uccellini of Venice’s prolific output and yet there is still room for pieces by Marco Uccellini of Modena. Listen once again to the brilliance in every sense of the word of the Baroque violin and basso continuo in Uccellini’s Ninth Sonata. And in his *Aria Quarta sopra la “Ciaccona.”*
Tales of Two Cities
Trio Arabica; Alon Nashman; Jeanne Lamon; Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra
Tafelmusik Media TMK 1035 DVDCD (tafelmusik.org)

Tales of Two Cities is an enchanting musical journey through the palatial worlds of two prominent 18th-century cities – Leipzig and Damascus. Although separated by 3,000 kilometres, these cities shared a surprising number of common threads; both were located at the intersections of major trade and travelling routes, both were known as cultural and learning centres, and both nurtured a tradition of coffee houses in which music performances were flowing. Cleverly conceived, programmed and scripted by the creative mind of Tafelmusik’s own Alison Mackay, and narrated by the charming Alon Nashman, Tales of Two Cities comes as a DVD/CD combo, featuring the music portion of the concert on CD. The DVD includes a filmed live performance at the Aga Khan Museum, a video on restoration of the Dresden Damascus Room, behind-the-scenes footage from rehearsals and a split-screen video of the orchestra performing Bach’s Sinfonia.

I absolutely loved Tales of Two Cities. The inventive combination of music and literary selections coupled with stunning images and historically informed narration was only transcended by the excellence of all the musicians involved. Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra presents a fresh, vibrant, theatrical interpretation of music by Telemann and traditional Arabic music, unites all the performers and brings the narrative to a conclusion by telling the story of young, present-day Syrian scholars working alongside German mentors on restoring the Damascus Room in Dresden. Highly recommended.

Ivana Popovic

Concert note: A free screening of Tales of Two Cities will be presented at the Aga Khan Museum on December 10 at 2pm.

Brahms - The Piano Trios
Emanuel Ax; Leonidas Kavakos; Yo-Yo Ma
Sony Classical 88985 40729 2

The Piano Trios form a critical, if less well-known feature of Brahms’ creativity within the world of chamber music. To an extent, Brahms picked up the torch at the point at which Beethoven had laid it down, but although he used Beethoven’s music, along with that of Schubert, as a point of departure, these trios are highly singular creations, with a sound world that is altogether unique. Each of the three instruments is stretched to its limits as if Brahms wanted to create orchestral depth and colour using just three players.

Another fascinating aspect of The Piano Trios – particularly in Piano Trio No. 3 in C Minor Op.101 – is Brahms’ treatment of the string players as soloists, giving both the violin and cello some sonorous passages that are ideally suited to their respective characteristics. Also noteworthy is the fact that Brahms’ wealth of powerfully sculpted ideas amply rewards attentive listening.

These performances of The Piano Trios by Emanuel Ax, Leonidas Kavakos and Yo-Yo Ma are without question the most authoritative and distinguished accounts of the works. Ax, Kavakos and Ma play with unique breadth of insight and a feeling of spontaneous inspiration, a quality that comes all too infrequently to studio recordings like these. The Sony recorded sound is at once brilliant and truthful, but it also has exceptional spaciousness.

Raul da Gama

Vaughan Williams – Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes and other works
Martin Rummel; Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz; Karl-Heinz Steffens
Capriccio CD CS314

This collection of shorter delights, lollipops so to say, opens with the jaunty overture to the comic opera, The Poisoned Kiss, a “romantic extravaganza.” The most interesting work is the Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes for cello and orchestra. Vaughan Williams was a collector of folk music and as Bartok did with Hungarian tunes, he incorporated them into his compositions. Vaughan Williams was quite familiar with Sussex County and had been collecting material there since his school days in the village of Rottingdean in East Sussex. His Fantasia, a work new to me, was premiered in 1930 with Pablo Casals as soloist. Instantly recognizable as Vaughan Williams, there are five folk tunes incorporated in a conversation between soloist and orchestra, making this a compelling and interesting workout for cellist and orchestra. It deserves to be popular.
The earliest work, the *Bucolic Suit* of 1900, also known as the *Pastoral Suite*, is just that, euphoric thoughts of countryside life. *In the Fen Country* is no stranger to the catalogues and paints a picture of the lonely and desolate Fen country in the east of England. There are three movements – *Explorer, Poet and Queen* – arranged from the 1957 inspiring film, *The England of Elizabeth*. The five works add up to a novel and interesting collection, brilliantly played and recorded. The *Elizabeth of Three Portraits from “The England of Elizabeth”* refers to the Elizabeth of the 16th century. The Armada and all that.

**Bruce Surtees**

**MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY**

**ConNotes**

Mei Yi Foo; Philipp Hutter; Bartosz Woroch; Ashley Wass; Britten Sinfonia

Orchid Classics ORCH100065 (orchidclassics.com)

*ConNotes* is a very impressive disc. It features pianist Mei Yi Foo with a trumpeter (Philipp Hutter), a violinist (Bartosz Woroch) and another pianist (Ashley Wass) together with the Britten Sinfonia conducted by Clement Power. The superlative recording owes much, first, to the choice of repertoire. The Shostakovitch Piano Concerto in C Minor Op. 35 for strings, piano and solo trumpet is a combination as unusual as the concerto’s form, which consists of four through-flowing movements which sound like just one. Foo’s playing makes the music rise up like a ferocious beast and both Foo and Hutter are brilliant throughout.

On Alban Berg’s *Chamber Concerto* for piano and violin with 13 wind instruments there’s a fruitful tension between the soloist’s expansive Romanticism and the no-nonsense rigour of Power, a tension that matches the composer’s ideals. Berg restricts the concerto’s accompaniment to 13 wind instruments, yet he ingeniously produced some marvellously unusual colourings. Foo’s piano is given the solo duties in the first movement, Woroch’s violin in the second and then they finally combine together in a show of rousing, immediate expressiveness in the finale.

While Camille Saint-Saëns may have written *The Carnival of the Animals* mainly for the amusement of his friends in 1866, its serious beauty should never be underestimated. In the hands of Foo and Wass there are moments of great magic, with the most beautiful and spectacular of all heard during the rippling arpeggios of the mysterious *Aquarium (VII)*.

**Raul da Gama**

**Concert note:** New Music Concerts presents Berg’s *Chamber Concerto* and a new work by Michael Oesterle inspired by it, with soloists MingHuan Xu, violin and Winston Choi, piano (Duo Diorama) at Betty Oliphant Theatre on January 14.

**Encount3rs**

National Arts Centre Orchestra; Alexander Shelley

Analekta AN 2 8871-2 (analekta.com)

This past April, three new abstract ballets (lacking storylines), each lasting about half an hour, premiered at Ottawa’s National Arts Centre. This 2CD set presents their scores, created by three Canadian composers already-prominent in their 30s and 40s.

According to Phi. Caelístis choreographer Jean Grand-Maitre, “Ten seemingly nude dancers perform “a whirlwind of raw, emotional, primal and often erotic gestures before a backdrop of contrasting aesthetics.” The first movement of Andrew Staniland’s atmospheric score is steadily motoric; the next two are slow and solemn, creating the intended striking contrast between the dancing and the music.

Nicole Lizée’s colourful orchestral score for *Keep Driving, I’m Dreaming* utilizes “archaic” electronic devices, including turntables and reel-to-reel machines. It’s a collage of many stylistically unrelated episodes, with bits of pop music and science-fiction sound effects. The audience members, if not the dancers, were probably kept on their toes, wondering what they would hear next.

Dark Angels, writes choreographer Guillaume Côté, “reflects the resistance and struggle that one can experience living in new territory.” Kevin Lau says his score “resembles a symphony in scope and form,” beginning and ending with a “hammer” of six repeated notes. It’s surely more symphonic than balletic, in three connected sections – a powerful Allegro, a slow middle highlighting a heartfelt cello solo and a propulsive, percussion-heavy finale.

Alexander Shelley and the NAC Orchestra give these disparate, attention-grabbing-and-holding scores the committed, high-energy performances they richly deserve.

**Michael Schulman**

**Katana of Choice**

Ben Reimer

Redshift Records TK456 (redshiftrecords.org)

Virtuoso Montreal percussionist Ben Reimer has made a name for himself as a leading drum soloist, shredding works by elder statesmen of the jazz drumset (Baby Dodds, Tony Williams), as well as works by leading art music composers such as Nicole Lizée and Lukas Ligeti. Reimer reinforces that reputation in *Katana of Choice* his inaugural album (available on vinyl) and digital download.

Reimer puts his cards on the table: Drum Dances by New Zealand composer John Psathas (b. 1966), the first four tracks on the album. Arranged by Ben Duinker, these sleekly crafted pieces, framed by the brilliant keyboard percussionism of Montreal’s Architek Percussion Quartet, are an apt frame for Reimer’s abundant technique and musicality.

The intense Ringer by Nicole Lizée – found only on the digital version of the album – is a tour de force for drumset soloist. Vernacular drum references are handled with sensitivity by both composer and performer, notwithstanding the aggressive pairing of high-octave glockenspiel melodies and high-frequency, high-hat rhythms.

The lengthy Katana of Choice, also by Lizée and featuring the accomplished TorQ Percussion Quartet, is perhaps the most ambitious work on the recording. Reimer’s drumming here is fully incorporated into the ensemble texture. The work is inspired by duel-based narrative video games and wuxia martial arts films, as the composer’s notes state. The music moves unrelentingly from one imaginary scene to another “with unexpected twists in which [musicians] trade off, pushing one another technically and sonically.” *Katana of Choice* is an exhilarating musical ride – as is the entire album.

**Andrew Timar**

**Concert note:** Ben Reimer and Architek Percussion perform the music of Nicole Lizée and Elliot Britton at Walter Hall on January 25 as part of the University of Toronto New Music Festival. (out of province) Ben Reimer and Vicky Chow perform music of Nicole Lizée including *Katana of Choice* with video accompaniment at Roulette in Brooklyn, NY on December 16.

**Poems and Dreams**

Rebecca Jeffreys; Alexander Timofeev

Independent (rebeccajeffreys.com)

Flutist Rebecca Jeffreys, though not well known in this part of the world, has accomplished a great deal as a performer, teacher and music director. She was a founding director and member of Virginia’s Woodbridge Flute Choir, teaches privately in Peperell, Massachusetts near Boston and at
St. Anselm College in New Hampshire, and performs with guitarist, Mike Loce. On this CD she premieres the work of five contemporary composers, ably accompanied by pianist, Alexander Timofeev. The notes make it clear that Jeffreys has a personal connection with most if not all of the composers. For example, composer Kevin Walker is the owner of the recording studio where the recording was made, and was co-executive producer of the CD with Jeffreys. The CD also makes it apparent that Jeffreys is part of a lively and creative musical circle, from which, I hope, there will be more to come.

Of the five, the works which stood out for me were the second movement of Jeffrey Hoover’s Romantic Sonata – Poems of Light, with its lyrical writing for both instruments, and Walker’s Acadian Dreams utilized Cajun music and was a tribute to Jeffreys’ father’s Acadian ancestry. It is encouraging to see evidence like this of a vibrant music culture hidden from view in the United States. May it continue to prosper.

Allan Pulker

JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

Dog’s Breakfast
Barry Elmes Quintet
Cornerstone Records CRST CD 147 (cornerstonerecords.com)

Drummer Barry Elmes first formed his quintet in 1991, and through the years it’s been a showcase for Canada’s finest proponents of mainstream modern jazz as well as the leader’s engaging compositions. Through the years, the group has had few personnel changes, adding to its sense of a collective personality.

The latest incarnation establishes its authority immediately with a performance of Freddie Hubbard’s Little Sunflower, a modal anthem of the 60s imbued here with new vigour, from bassist Steve Wallace’s pulsing ostinato through a string of sharply focused solos from trumpeter Brian O’Kane, guitarist Lorne Lofsky and tenor saxophonist Mike Murley, all of it carried along by Elmes’ secure and lively drumming which comes to the forefront in the conclusion.

The material is divided between Elmes’ recent compositions and jazz standards. The former includes the witty title track, a subtle cool jazz episode that could readily substitute for a Mancini movie theme, while the floating Terminal 2 and the funky Pierre Berton’s Pig bring distinctly Toronto inspirations to the proceedings. The absolute highlights, though, are two standards. Murley brings a fine balance of silk, grit and lyricism to Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most, while Lofsky’s touch is unerring, compounding a glassy electric guitar sound with a striking melodic conception on Beautiful Love, a sustained trio performance with Wallace and Elmes that makes one hope for a CD devoted to the three.

Concert note: The Barry Elmes Quintet performs at the Home Smith Bar in The Old Mill on December 16.

solstice/equinox
Diana Panton
Independent (dianapanton.com)

In 2015, entrepreneur, composer and drummer Ernesto Cervini introduced his North American Sextet, Turboprop, featuring a cross-section of noted contemporary jazz musicians, including Tara Davidson on alto and soprano sax, Joel Frahm on tenor, William Carn on trombone, Adrean Farrugia on piano and Dan Loomis on bass. Their debut self-titled CD was a huge success.

In 2018, Cervini’s Turboprop released their Anzic CD, Anzic Records ANZ-0089-2 (ernestocervini.com), in which he introduces his Turboprop Sextet at their musical finest. The recording quality is also of note, and helps to create a sonic space that is intimate and revealing. Nearly a decade into this group’s affiliation, here’s hoping that theirs is a musical relationship that continues for many more years.

Andrew Scott

Rev
Ernesto Cervini’s Turboprop
Anzic Records ANZ-0089-2
(ernestocervini.com)

What we’re listening to this month: thewholenote.com/listening

Meter
Adi Braun
Ori Dagan

Misoruzu Tanaka in Concert. Music of Janáèek and Bach
Misuzu Tanaka

Moderne Frau
Adi Braun

Nathaniel: A Tribute to Nat King Cole
Ori Dagan

Visit Ori Dagan’s YouTube channel to see “Nathaniel: A Tribute to Nat King Cole,” the first visual album in the jazz genre!
Cervini and company’s brand-new offering includes five original pieces (two composed by Cervini – who also acts as producer here), two pop covers and one vintage Tin-Pan-Alley-era jazz standard. The project is also masterfully recorded by John “Butte” Bailey, capturing all of the dynamism and excitement of a live performance, and mixed on the hot side, with a definite New York City sensibility.

Farrugia is without question one of the most extraordinarily talented young jazz pianist/composers on the scene today, and his composition The Libertine is a perfect opener for REV. The tune kicks things off with a tasty drum intro from Cervini, followed by seamless section work and non-Euclidean punctuating lines, rife with dynamics and sonic colours, as well as a complex and percussive piano solo by Farrugia and burning tenor work from Fabian. Another standout is Cervini’s Granada Bus, which strives to capture the essence of Spain, and shines with a stirring solo on soprano from Davidson.

Other strong contributions include the full-throttle, post-bop title track, Roadhead’s The Daily Mail, featuring a stellar bass solo from Loomis, and the swinging and soulful Med Flory-lish Pennies From Heaven. Truly something for everyone!

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

**Concert note:** Turboprop celebrates the release of REV with two performances at The Rex, January 11 and 12.

The Greatest Invention

Harley Card

Independent DYM003 (harleycard.ca)

Hypnagogia Polis

Simon Legault; Jules Payette; Andrew Boudreau; Adrian Vedady; Louis-Vincent Hamel

Effendi Records FND146 (effendirecords.com)

Two new and strikingly different albums by Canadian jazz guitarists demonstrate the health and diversity of that instrument in this country. Harley Card has been active in the Toronto music scene since 2003 as a sideman, composer, teacher and bandleader. The Greatest Invention is the third album under his own name and features Card on guitar with Jon Maharaj (bass), Matt Newton (piano), David French (saxophone) and Ethan Ardelli (drums). The “invention” is the bicycle and the album opens with the title tune, containing a repeating riff reminiscent of spinning gears or wheels. The orchestration is sophisticated, with Card’s guitar and French’s resonant tenor saxophone weaving throughout most of the piece, sometimes in harmony, other times with alternating melodies while the drums and piano punctuate the piece with their own counterpoint. This initial song sets the tone for the album, which highlights Card’s compositional skills. The song is four and a half minutes but the only solo (guitar) lasts 90 seconds; the rest is intricate ensemble playing.

Card’s liner notes add insight to our listening and he mentions studying with Phil Nimmons, an influence that is heard throughout. It is a treat to listen to a jazz album that develops compositional and ensemble ideas at length rather than the more typical head/solo(s)/head structure. The most ambitious piece is The Shadows of Shea Pines, which is almost nine minutes with three movements. It begins with a slow saxophone and acoustic guitar ballad (with a touch of Epistrophy) then moves into smooth jazz and finishes with a melodic bossa nova-inspired section.

Hypnagogia Polis is Montreal guitarist Simon Legault’s third album and the first with a quintet. Hypnagogia is the transitional state from wakefulness to sleep and many of the songs have a hypnotic, luminescent quality. The opening Aetherial Spheres begins with a wickedly tight ostinato pattern set up by the piano (Andrew Boudreau) and bass (Adrian Vedady). Then the saxophone (Jules Payette) and guitar enter with a contrapuntal unison melody while Louis-Vincent Hamel’s drums underpin the action. This sophisticated playfulness permeates the album. Euphemized Blues has a groovy liltting melody which loops around several times before Legault takes off on one of his lyrical and swirling solo.

Legault’s album benefits from the virtuosity of the soloists. The tunes are inventive and reminiscent of Metheny or Scofield, but the highlights are the freewheeling improvisations, particularly with Legault’s fleet lines and Payette’s wailing and lyrical sax. Boudreau adds some fine piano work as well and it all makes for a clever and sophisticated disc.

Ted Parkinson

**Concert note:** The Alex Samaras Trio (with Harley Card and Jon Maharaj) performs at The Old Mill on December 21.

Alleviation

Mikkel Ploug

Songlines SGL 1623-2 (songlines.com)

Since his 2006 debut, Think Like the Waves with jazz greats Gary Peacock and Paul Motian, Vancouver guitarist Gordon Grdina has pursued multiple musical paths, setting his guitar amidst his jazz-based ensembles, the classically influenced third stream music of the East Van Strings or Dan Mangan’s rock band, while concurrently exploring the oud, a Middle Eastern lute, in both traditional and contemporary applications. Inroads summarizes and synthesizes that decade of exploration, while presenting Grdina in a stellar group of New York-based musicians: Oscar Noriega on alto saxophone, clarinet and bass clarinet; Russ Lossing on piano and electric piano; and Satoshi Takeishi on drums.

Grdina’s disparate influences range through Bela Bartok, the rock band Soundgarden and free jazz, while his compositions pass through divergent moods, densities and methodologies. The opening Giggles is liltly beautiful unaccompanied piano, while Not Sure is chameleon-like, moving from rapid-fire guitar aggression through lyrical piano and alto saxophone passages.
and then on to thrashing drums and howling saxophone, presenting many of Grdina's elements in a single piece.

Some of the most affecting pieces are also models of brevity. Kite Flight is a tantalizing explosion of lower register guitar, raucous bass clarinet and elemental percussion, while Semantics, a guitar/clarinet duet, is subtly evanescent. That same delicacy informs the longer Fragments in its blend of piano and oud, while contrasting Middle Eastern elements energize and quite unforgettable album from a pianist of whom much is expected in the future.

Stuart Broomer

**Intersections**
Emie R Roussel Trio
Effendi Records FND148 (effendirecords.com)

**The Vancouver Concert**
John Stetch & Vulneraville Independent (johnstetch.com)

It is quite impossible not to be seduced by the cultivated and masterful pianism of Emie R Roussel, whose music on Intersections is patently expansive and at times a veritable masterclass in how to build assiduous climaxes, how to intelligently scale one’s dynamics and how to balance the music’s massive textures in sonorously judicious proportions. Her music is vivid. Each piece is a unique narrative. Musical character is well rounded and each piece is always fully developed before its natural denouement announces a natural demise.

On three occasions the trio is expanded into a quartet and on each resulting work the addition of another musician – whether the vocalist on Away, the trumpeter on De Tadoussac à Auckland or the bassist on Tout le monde ensemble – is timely and perfectly placed. It’s surely an indication that the ideas and the material dictate the direction that the music should take. Rhythm is also an essential tool throughout and Roussel depends greatly on her left hand bass lines, together with the flights of fancy by her drummer, Dominik Cloutier and bassist, Nicolas Bédard, as a means of communicating ideas as well as shaping the structure of each piece.

Each piece also has its own unique charisma, and flowing from this each gathers momentum, swinging to its climax with the wind of melody and harmony under its proverbial wings. All of this yields a magical dramatic timbral fluctuations. This is particularly apparent on Rondeau, related to a two-part Renaissance form with one part of the structure set to one musical line and the second to another. Stetch’s extravagant keyboard technique easily adapts the mode, especially in the second section when his emphasis on the piano’s higher-pitched dynamics is furthered by Kortyka’s thickened obbligatos and increasingly powerful crunches from Lemm. It’s these sorts of high-quality themes and variations that inform the pianist’s other tunes, with Oscar’s Blue-Green Algebra, another example. Mixing church-like procession motifs with chunks of pure keyboard swing, he suggests Oscar Peterson’s hefty approach to the piano.

Oddly enough though, Stetch ends the concert with a straight-ahead version of the standard Things Ain’t What They Used to Be. While the performance exudes romping excitement, with ample space for scorching breaks from each quartet member – even Tiberio, who is buried in the mix elsewhere – the choice is unfortunate. Things have changed as Stretch’s compositions and Vulneraville’s playing demonstrate. A less straight-ahead treatment would have been a better choice to affirm the title of the track.

Ken Waxman

**Contumbao**
Hilario Durán
Alma Records ACD92272 (almarecords.com)

Passionate, innovative, expressive, dynamic, evocative, sophisticated, genius – superlatives consistently used to describe the towering musicality and virtuosity that is pianist, composer, arranger and bandleader, Hilario Durán. Born in Havana, Cuba and based in Toronto for the past 20 years, Durán has been wowing the world with his creative approach to Afro-Cuban and Latin jazz, one breathtaking concert after another.

Contumbao is a project that literally has brought Durán back to his Cuban roots. Recorded at Havana’s legendary EGREM studios (whose storied roster includes Orquesta Aragón, Arturo Sandoval, Chucho Valdés and the Buena Vista Social Club, and where Durán had recorded hundreds of sessions), it was Durán’s dream to get back...
there and play with some of his favourite musical collaborators, including two original bandmates from his 1990s band, Perspectives: guitarist Jorge Luis Valdés (“Chicoy”) and bassist Jorge Reyes.

Contumbao is a heartfelt homage to Cuba’s rich, musical history. Indeed, Durán dedicates his album of new compositions to Cuban music and its many musical styles “whose music and rhythms run through my veins.” This is apparent from the pulsating rhythms of the title track, and the spirited rumbas, El Tahonero and Rumba de Cajón, to the poignant Parque 527 – Durán’s former Havana address – and the exhilarating Jondo, rumbas, and his stellar cast of musical compatriots. In fact, Contumbao may leave you speechless!

Sharna Searle

Thank You for Listening
The Joe Bowden Project
Independent (joebowden.bandcamp.com)

As a young teenager, I was taught to repeat the phrase “thank you for listening” when taking a post-performance bow. Joe Bowden should feel free to repeat this phrase over and over as he deserves endless praise and respect for his brilliant work as composer, drummer, arranger and bandleader in his latest release. Originally from Halifax, Bowden moved to Toronto in the early 1980s where he studied at Humber College and was musically inspired by listening to and working with many jazz musicians. His music here is driven by a mature understanding of jazz style, rhythms, and awe-inspiring musicianship.

Joe Bowden’s ten musicians play with a deep respect for his music and artistry. Mingus is an upbeat toe-tapping tradition-flavoured tune with a locked-in groove between the drums and Rich Brown’s bass. I’m Here Again is a slower quasi-ballad, featuring Michael Occhipinti’s modernistic guitar solos and Manuel Valera’s chromatic runs and intervals on piano. Devil Five lives up to its title, featuring a wide interval, almost minimalistic repeating bass line, zippy piano runs and Bowden’s virtuosic drum solos. Nice change of pace with FSC (Funky Soul Calypso), a fun get-up-and-dance tune featuring Joy Lapps-Lewis’ steel pan artistry.

Bowden writes on the CD jacket “Pursuit of Happiness, is it reality or a dream?” Like the track of the same name, the reflection, improvisations and grooves make this a dreamy musical reality!

Tiina Kilk

You’re Gonna Hear From Me
Mary-Catherine Pazzano
Glorious Feeling Records

On her debut release, elegant chanteuse Mary-Catherine Pazzano has not only shown exceptional good taste in presenting 12 fine compositions from musical theatre, film and the Great American Songbook, but she has also penetrated a superb lineup of musical collaborators, including Don Buchanan on piano (also co-producer), Jason Hunter on saxophones, Pat Collins on bass and Steve James on drums. Arranged and produced by Pazzano, she has selectively dipped into the catalogues of venerable composers such as Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein, Harry Warren, Cole Porter, Henry Mancini and Johnny Mercer as well as contemporary artists, Joni Mitchell and Billy Joel.

First up is the stirring (and rarely performed) title track, written for the cult film Inside Daisy Clover starring Natalie Wood. Pazzano shines throughout with energy and luscious tone, as she soars with her quartet. Buchanan and Pazzano have included one well-written original composition, A Simple Conversation – which has the potential to become a contemporary jazz standard. Another standout is Mancini and Mercer’s Charade, from the hit movie of the same name starring Audrey Hepburn. Haunting and languid, this tune is set as perfectly as a Tiffany solitaire – with a many-faceted voice/bass section in front, followed by an up-tempo sequence and fine bass solo from Collins.

Pazzano possesses a gorgeous, classically trained contralto voice capable of projecting the full gamut of emotions, as well as an uncanny skill with rendering the lyrics of current music, jazz standards and show tunes. A fine opening salvo!

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Concert notes: Mary-Catherine Pazzano has a number of upcoming performances in the GTA: December 1 at the Jazz Room in Waterloo with the Penderecki String Quartet, Joni NehRita and the New Vibes Quintet; January 25 at Jazz Bistro in Toronto with Don Buchanan, piano, Pat Collins, bass, and Steve James, drums; and March 9 as part of Women Music Revolutionaries at the Registry Theatre, Kitchener.

Nathaniel: A Tribute to Nat King Cole
Ori Dagan
Independent ODC003 (oridagan.com)

Nat “King” Cole & Me
Gregory Porter
Blue Note 5791468

Nat King Cole had an incredibly prolific recording career, producing an astounding 30 albums, despite his early death at age 45. He was a pop artist as much as a jazz singer and piano player, and he was much loved for his velvety voice and gentle manner. So it’s no surprise that this month we have not one, but two tribute albums to the legendary musician.

Toronto singer Ori Dagan, known for his scat-singing talents, inventiveness and light-hearted tune choices (check out his Super Mario medley on YouTube!), is true to form on Nathaniel: A Tribute to Nat King Cole. With Mark Kieswetter, Nathan Hiltz, Ross McIntyre and Mark Kelso accompanying, we’re treated to familiar Cole songs (Nature Boy) and a few lesser known (Lillette), as well
Swinging on a Star
Tardo Hammer Trio
Cellar Live CL110717 (cellarlive.com)

To play bebop, one needs to deal with two competing impulses: master the instrument – amass the fluency required to float at heightened tempi, navigate harmonic complexities and execute ornamented lines that are part of this music’s tradition – and utilize a relaxed phraseology that is anything but frenetic and that comes across as “not trying too hard.”

No doubt, to speak for themselves. Many of the big hits are covered including Mona Lisa and L-O-V-E, and all the emotional stops are pulled out on Smile.

These two albums are so different in style that a Cole fan could do well by adding both to their collection.

Cathy Riches

Metamorphosis
LAMA + Joachim Badenhorst
Clean Feed CF433 CD (cleanfeed-records.com)

Metamorphosis is true to its title only if the term includes transmogifying one way and subsequently taking a completely opposite form, as this Canadian/Belgian foursome does on this CD. Initially on Metamorphosis I, it appears that the brassy emphasis from Portuguese trumpeter Susana Santos Silva and pressurized flutters from Belgian bass clarinetist Joachim Badenhorst are going to be mere bagatelles to the polyrhythmic undulations from Portuguese keyboardist Gonçalo Almeida, which seem to subsume all other timbres into a crackling electronic wash. But not only is there soon space for brass and reed counterpoint, once the sounds flow into Metamorphosis II, the pulsating tick-tock of Canadian drummer Greg Smith kicks into gear and is joined by string plucks from Almeida, who has switched to double bass, an expansion creating a powerful acoustic jazz trope.

This movement from electronic to acoustic continues throughout the CD, through faultless changes of pitch and tempo. Especially striking is how Badenhorst and Silva appear to be going their separate ways, examining extended techniques, involving, for instance, contralto hollow tones from the clarinetist and billowing plunger excursions from the trumpeter, only to interlock onto a series of connective riffs in the nick of time.

Officially Badenhorst is still a guest of the LAMA trio, but it’s evident that the four have evolved a strategy that gives everyone a chance at textural exploration as a notable group sound is produced.

Ken Waxman

What we’re listening to this month: thewholenote.com/listening
Entangled Pathways
Gillian, Milmine & Pottie
Melos Productions MPCR 005
(bill-gilliam.com)

This challenging and evocative recording is a collection of original music created by the acoustic trio of pianist Bill Gilliam, soprano saxophonist Kayla Milmine and drummer Ambrose Pottie. The creative group originally met through the noted Toronto Improvisers Orchestra (TIO) and soon began writing and performing impressive free music together. According to Gilliam (the producer and primary composer), “Some pieces are composed using free-floating melodies, jazz idioms and modal-chromatic tonalities, while other pieces are freely improvised creations.” Although perhaps gestated by different processes, the 12 impressive tracks all seem to lead to a central concept of connectedness, alternate realities and divergent pathways that may yet resonate together like strands in a web; in other words, musical quantum entanglement.

The Singularity is well-placed in the program, as it seems to portend the sonic and emotional musical journey ahead. Gilliam’s lush, powerful and insistent piano lines are both appealing and unnerving, and Milmine’s commitment to this extraordinary and technically challenging music is evident with every note that she plays – she bends that piece of cold metal to her will, and makes it sing.

Mountain Dance is a standout. One of the most visual and rhythmically complex pieces on the CD, the action is propelled by Pottie, who remains completely musical while deftly driving the trio into the nether regions. Also, the groovy and exotic Porous Borders utilizes unison and descending lines as well as modal dissonance and stark piano statements to create a feeling of nervous isolation - all rendered with a sense of irony, as true isolation may be nothing more than a self-imposed construct.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Concert Note: Gilliam, Milmine & Pottie perform at the Burdock on February 6.

Aladdin’s Dream - The Firebirds Play Carl Nielsen
The Firebirds
ILK 269 CD (ilkmusic.com)

Tweaking the compositions of Denmark’s most prominent composer to new ends, The Firebirds – tenor saxophonist/clarinetist Anders Banke, keyboardist Anders Filipsen and percussionist Stefan Pasborg – discover hitherto hidden grooves in Carl August Nielsen’s (1865-1931) work.

Concentrating on extracts from Aladdin, the Helios Overture and Little Suite for Strings, the trio emphasizes eastern Eurasian dance-like motifs with lilting keyboard shakes and ney-like reed outbursts, while adding a pronounced, almost rock-like beat to the tunes. If a combination of tenor sax blasts and drum backbeats suggest heavy metal tropes on The Market Place in Isphahan, remember that rock style is now as prominent in Scandinavia as the buoyancy of Nielsen’s tunes, exemplified by Filipsen’s animated key chiming. The Helios Overture provides the most varied instance of the trio’s sound reconstitution. Evolving from sophisticated saxophone and ruffled keyboard timbres at the beginning, to a snaking, stop-time melody examination in the middle, to an intense display of agitated snare pops and splashing cymbal from Pasborg, the convivial theme returns as light swing by the finale, helped by the keyboardist’s walking bass line.

The band’s name came about after the trio recorded a CD which transformed some Stravinsky compositions into semi-improvised theme and variations. The three have now proven they can perform similar alchemy on another composer’s work with this CD. There are plenty of other modern composers whose work could provide material for equal transformations.

Ken Waxman

POT POURRI

Meter
Autorickshaw
Tala-Wallah Records TW006
(autorickshaw.ca)

Autorickshaw, the critically acclaimed, world-touring Toronto group is reconnecting with its early band roots in its 15th anniversary season. Its previous album The Humours of Autorickshaw was enriched by more than a dozen musicians appearing in complex studio mixes. On Meter, Autorickshaw returns to its core: Suba Sankaran (voice, percussion), Ed Hanley (tabla, vocal and other percussion) and Dylan Bell (bass, voice, vocal drums, keyboards).

Meter serves up new compositions by each member as well as works by other Toronto musicians. Covers are a again a feature here: Peter Gabriel’s Mercy Street, Paul Simon’s Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard and perhaps most surprisingly, the traditional Francophone J’entends le Moulin, all get the Autorickshaw treatment. The short but delightful Thom Pett’s by Suh Sankaran begins with the phrase “ta-thom, thom-ta,” derived from Carnatic (South India) solkattu (onomatopoetic drum syllables) as vocalized by all three musicians. These phrases echo the percussive clickety-clack of a long train ride through India with its track gaps, curves and straightaways, heard as superimpositions of several rhythmic feels. The addition of a harmonically rich vocalized chord – imitating a passing train horn – adds sparkle to the onomatopoetic fun.

Another musically outstanding moment comes halfway through the song The Trouble with Hari, composed by Toronto jazz veteran Gordon Sheard. Bell’s electric bass joins Sankaran’s jazz-inflected playing, Carnatic solkattus and sargams (solfége recitation) in exact melodic calling, call-response and harmonic comping. It’s a sterling example of the kind of inspired border-crisscrossing musical experience the album offers listeners up for adventure.

Andrew Timar

Moderne Frau
Adi Braun
Independent (adibraun.com)

Perhaps Adi Braun is playing to her strengths on Moderne Frau. But rarely is the seduction of Weimar Berlin cabaret been performed with a sassier va-va-voom.
and oomph than on the 13 songs of this recording. Now that could well be due in part to the outstanding musicians on the album, but there is nothing whatsoever that can outshine Braun’s luminously sung performance. Clearly Braun’s redemptive gods are Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill and she makes every gesture count meaningfully on this disc, where biting satire and burlesque meet outrageously colourful art song.

Certainly the music speaks in a special way to Braun. She reveals their secrets in seductive whispers; there is a burning lust for life played out in these lyrics, especially in the music of Brecht and Weill, but Moderne Frau, the title track (her own composition), is also an outstanding example of her creativity, as is Speak Low from the pen of Weill and Ogden Nash.

Braun clearly revels in the intensity of the songs’ drama and it is this aspect of the disc that spotlights her vocals throughout. The vocalist’s larger-than-life persona is also a perfect fit for this repertoire and she isn’t afraid to push it to its limits either. The results are often more beautiful and nuanced than expected. The edgiest moments come in Muckie Messer, perhaps the defining moment on the entire disc, closely followed by the Mackie Messer played out in these lyrics, especially in the tango groove interspersed with brief three-quarter waltz sections. The closing Anschei Brezan Nigam has a lullaby-feel ending with sublime held-piano sounds.

All the accomplished band musicians, along with special guest Ben Holmes (trumpet) play brilliantly. Sound quality is sublime held-piano sounds. The duo’s music, while a profoundly personal statement, is also emotionally supported and amplified on the album by leading musicians on the Vancouver creative music scene: cellist Peggy Lee, Tyson Naylor on multi-keys, bassist Colin Cowan and Dylan van der Schyff on drums. Ulehla and Bajakian have reportedly already made a splash in the Czech Republic with their live interpretations of this material.

I predict Dálava’s affective music will gain many more global fans with this release.

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Andrew Timar

### Something in the Air: Seven Musical Voices for the Future

**KEN WAXMAN**

The year just ending marked one important milestone in musical history. The first so-called jazz record was issued in 1917 by the Original Dixieland Jass Band (ODJB). Obviously that musical designation, which in its century of existence has gone through as many permutations and rebrandings as so-called classical music has in many centuries, is far different then the ODJB’s primitive efforts. But jazz/improvised music continues to evolve, buttressed by new voices. Here is a group of youngish improvisors who will likely still be contributing to the shape of jazz during its 125th anniversary – and probably for years afterwards.

First is Vancouver-born, Brooklyn-based pianist **Kris Davis.** His presence on advanced jazz sessions over the past half-decade or so has become almost as ubiquitous as Lennon-McCartney tunes at retro-60s parties. Sing Me Some Cry (Clean Feed CF 428 CD cleanfeed-records.com) finds the Canadian pianist in a combo

led by bassist **Eric Revis,** featuring tenor saxophonist/clarinetist Ken Vandermark and drummer Chad Taylor. Although each of the other players has extensive experience, there are points at which Davis dominates. Good Company, for instance, which begins with a J. Arthur Rank-like gong resonance from Taylor’s cymbals and reed amidst in brief Morse Code-like dashes, retains its tension from the pianist’s kinetic pressure, with the saxophonist’s peek-a-boo contributions hardening into pressurized honks that unroll in tandem with keyboard tinkling. Obloquo features a middle section where high-frequency piano notes slice kinetically through saxophone snorts and string elaboration from Revis, but maintain the composition’s careful shape. Instructively Rye Eclipse, the one Davis composition, is multi-sequenced and

...
that sets up an unconventional groove. Eventually, sweeping acoustic piano lines reveal an underlying melody move from aping the guitarist’s heft and power to become chromatic. While dos Reis’ metallic string sawing and percussive strums narrow the interface to a single, almost static line, Risser’s sharp strokes while playing becomes more percussive. The result shapes reed overblowing, string reverberations and complex drum beats into a groove of story-telling and solid forward motion.

Another pianist who is equally valuable in international collaborations as leader and sideman is the United Kingdom’s Alexander Hawkins. 36. On Sideralis (Dodicilune Dischi Ed 354 dodicilune.it), he joins veteran American heavy hitters, bassist Michael Formanek and drummer Gerry Hemingway as part of Italian saxophonist Roberto Ottaviano’s Quark Tet, to interpret ten of Ottaviano’s compositions that range from rhythm numbers to ballads. Checking off the saxophonist’s influences, Planet Nichols, Ottaviano’s stop-time salute to pianist Herbie Nichols, gets much of its rollicking shape from Hawkins’ high-frequency key splatters and crescendos, with a walking bass line and cymbal breaks also contributing. At the same time the power of Formanek’s accompaniment on Planet John Lee Hooker, coupled with singular soprano saxophone breaths, makes the tune appear more a salute to Charles Mingus than the Mississippi bluesman. Replete with shadowing of the composer’s every breath on Berenice’s Code, Hawkins’ keyboard caressing preserves the balladic mood while moving the piece linearly. Centaurus’ lift is cemented by inner piano string plucks that confirm the composition’s jocular theme, with Hemingway’s bell pealing and the pianist’s key slaps and crunches deconstructing and extending the melody until the saxophonist’s tiny reed bites reel it into straight-ahead swing. This same freedom that never exceeds its parameters is displayed on the title tune. Stopped keys and scrubbing slides from the pianist plus the drummer’s rubs provide the perfect contrast to Ottaviano’s intense note puffing. Subsequent return to a rumbling pulse confirms the tune’s gentle motion and the collaborative skill of this ad-hoc quartet.

Minimalist and experimental, Timeless (JACC Records 014 jacc-records.com) is a duet between Portuguese guitarist Marcelo dos Reis and French pianist Eve Risser, 35, who made her reputation working in ensembles as different as France’s Orchestra National de Jazz and in a rock-oriented duo. With both instruments prepared with numerous objects, as well as played straight, the selections are compressed and cramped, inhabiting a narrow spectrum, but never abandoning rhythm or feelings. A piece such as Balance Spring, for instance, suggests computer-generated wave forms even though there is no electronic processing. Instead, as the guitarist creates a strummed continuum, the pianist emphasizes carefully thought out patterns, culminating in chiselled movements. In the same way, clanks and crunches from internal piano strings plus external ones on the guitar neck, produce timbres on Hourglass that could have come from a vibraphone. This sound, jolted along with bottleneck-guitar slashes, reaches a thematic crescendo that’s almost lyrical as Riser’s splayed and sharp tones amalgamate into melodic interface. With the tracks reflecting ambience as well as aggression, a piece like the extended Water Clock reflects this strategy in miniature. While dos Reis’ metallic string sawing and percussive strums narrow the interface to a single, almost static line, Riser’s sharp strokes move from aping the guitarist’s heft and power to become chromatic. Eventually, sweeping acoustic piano lines reveal an underlying melody that sets up an unconventional groove.

Of course it’s not just pianists who will determine the future of 21st-century improvised music. Horn players and drummers will make their own noises. Take for example two of the players in the Amok Amor (AA) quartet, American trumpeter Peter Evans, 36, and German drummer Christian Lillinger, 33. Their work with alto saxophonist Wanja Slavin and bassist Peter Eldh on We Know Not What We Do (Intakt CD 279intaktrec.ch), shows their interactive skills in one of the many bands in which they participate. It’s the same story with Chicago-based tenor saxophonist Dave Rempis, 42, and drummer Tim Daisy, 41, featured on The Halfway There Suite (Relay Recordings 016 timdaisy.com) by the drummer’s Celebration Sextet. Different discs could find Rempis in the leadership role or both as sideman.

Composers as well as players – Evans wrote two tunes on We Know Not What We Do and Lillinger three – the key to their talents is how carefully they work in an organized setting, as on Pulsar, the Evans-penned first track. It’s lavish and lovely, notched with contrapuntal slurs and staccato tremors from the horns as the drummer’s percussive bumbs and focused rim shots keep the tune bouncy and relaxed. These ambulatory dynamics are also present on Trio Amok, a Lillinger composition, pushed along with percussion bumbs and rumbles and resonating pumps from bassist Peter Eldh. While Evans’ spectacular brassiness adds to the tune’s tautness, a respite after he intertwines open-horn brays with staccato tongue flutters from Slavin dissipates the tension. A more striking instance of the drummer’s dexterity is on A Run through the Neoliberalism, another of his compositions, during which allittsimno reed squalls and trumpet tattoos set up as a staccatisimo, near-bebop romp. The drummer’s accompaniment may crackle and churn, but as the horns’ work explodes the theme into atoms, his cymbal cascades and rim shots glue it back into a swinging whole. With some of the other tracks utilizing palindromes, balladic melancholy, fiery stoms and rhythmic stop-time sequences, AA keeps the session engaging and moving. The saxophonist and bassist get solo space as well, with the combination of power and blur from the rhythm section and inventive flutters and echoes from the horns ensuring that while predicting what sounds will appear next is nearly impossible, the knowledge that they will be first-class is confirmed.

Daisy and Rempis are other first-class sound explorers featured on The Halfway There Suite along with Chicago asociates, clarinetist James Falzone, trumpeter Russ Johnson, cellist Fred Lonberg-Holm and visiting New Yorker, trombonist Steve Swell. Composed as a birthday present for himself and the featured musicians, it isn’t clear whether Daisy’s CD title refers to mortality or the length of the four-part suite that lasts only 33 minutes. But like brevity being the soul of wit, the arrangements and solo work are exceptional enough to not need more length. Rempis’ showcase is on Part 2, where his skyscraper-high multiphonics and glossolalia bring energetic freedom to the piece which otherwise flows along with orchestral calm and a steady jazz groove. Falzone’s solo tone is closest to so-called legitimate as he negotiates linkages between the two genres. Swell, and to a lesser extend Johnson, are the disrupters. The trombonist sprays many of the arrangements with gutbucket-styled slurs and tailgate-like elaborations. With the cellist scratching out notes and Daisy replicating kettle-drum-like pressure, Part 3 rolls from crescendos to diminuendos without breaking the melodic continuum. These disparate currents climax in the concluding Part 4, with stop-time polyphony shattered by a clean trumpet blast that joins with cello pumps to herd the sequence into a finale that swings, and neatly refers back to the introduction on Part 1. Throughout, Daisy’s solos, whether involving press rolls and bass drum stoms or freer jumping and double time rhythms, don’t draw attention, but advance the suite.

On the evidence here, the Celebration Sextet is a lot more than halfway along to reaching musical goals. It’s another confirmation of how from their ideas and those of the players on the other CDs, jazz innovation will thrive in the years to come.
Leonard Bernstein - The Remastered Edition (100 CDs)
Sony 541714

In her 1998 DVD Reaching for the Note, Susan Lacey recalls the way the moment felt. “It is very rare that someone dies and the whole community seems to be part of that event. It’s as if everything else stopped and for that moment the world turned around that event.”

Such was the case in New York City following the death of Leonard Bernstein on October 14, 1992. When the funeral cortège left from the Dakota, his apartment on the Upper West Side, there was already a large gathering across 72nd Street to pay homage and see him off. “There was this phalanx of motorcycle cops and police cars leading this enormous cortège out to Brooklyn’s Greenwood cemetery... When we came out on the Brooklyn side of the East River there was a big construction project and in spite of all the cops and motorcycles and police cars and everything, we came to a dead halt.

And on the side were all these hard hats and mothers of various sorts with baby carriages and Orthodox Jews who just happened to be passing by. A perfect cross-section of New York City. And finally the sirens began again as this slowly started to move out, all these people! I especially remember the hard hats all waved and took off their hats and said, ‘Goodbye Lenny, goodbye.’ I can’t think of anything, anything, in the world that would have pleased Lenny more than that.”

Leonard Bernstein – The Remastered Edition does not pretend to be in any way encyclopedic, but it gives profound insight into every facet of his musical life. New York City claimed him but Bernstein, conductor, composer, pianist, educator, author and music lecturer was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts on August 25, 1918, the eldest of three children of Ukrainian-Jewish parents. Soon after, they moved to Boston where father Samuel built up a prosperous business in hairdressing supplies. Samuel expected, naturally, that his elder son would go to college, return and take over the business. However, when Leonard was only ten, cousin Lillian’s unwanted upright piano was moved into their parlour and the die was cast. From the first note he had heard and improvise freely. At 13, he composed a piano concerto with a program, “a war between the Russians and the Gypsies.” At 14, after a disastrous year with two really incompetent teachers, he went to Heinrich Gebhard, one of Boston’s most respected teachers who entrusted him to his assistant, Helen Coates. She completely under-stood her earnest pupil’s impatience with practise and studies but instilled in him self-discipline. Bernstein credited her with being a decisive influence in his training. When he became known and successful he sent for her to be his personal secretary. She became his close friend and lifelong personal assistant and representative. Their letters are part of the Bernstein Collection in the Library of Congress.

At 16, he heard his first live concert when he went with his father to hear the Boston Symphony under Serge Koussevitzky who later became his teacher and close friend. He attended the Boston Latin School. In the summers at Sharon, Massachusetts, he produced and directed shows with the Boston Public School Orchestra with entertainments like Gilbert & Sullivan and Carmen. He graduated in 1935 and thence to Harvard, where he met many of those who would become his lifelong friends. He studied with Walter Piston, Edward Burlingame Hill and Arthur Tillman Merritt. He met Aaron Copland who became a major influence. Also, Dimitri Mitropoulos asked him to play and was so exceedingly impressed that he invited Bernstein to rehearsals with the Boston Symphony. For Bernstein’s part, he was taken by the older conductor’s intellect, his unique conducting style and his personal dynamism. He graduated from Harvard in 1939 and enrolled at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where he studied conducting with Fritz Reiner, orchestration with Randall Thompson, counterpoint with Richard Stöhr and score reading with Renée Longy Miquelle. Reiner said later that Bernstein received the only “A Grade” he ever awarded. After Curtis he spent some time in NYC, then in Boston where Koussevitzky, who was sort of a father figure, was a major influence on Bernstein’s emotional interpretations.

Shortly after he had been appointed (under Artur Rodziński) assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic, Bernstein made his life-changing major conducting debut. Guest conductor Bruno Walter was unable to conduct the afternoon concert of November 14, 1943. Bernstein was told early that morning that he was to conduct the concert. He had not rehearsed but stood before the orchestra and conducted the concert that was heard coast to coast on the CBS Radio Network. A star was born and Leonard Bernstein was well on his way.

In 1958, after he guest conducted major orchestras around the world, he was appointed music director of the New York Philharmonic, a post he held until 1969. After that he was seen and heard around the world conducting and teaching, making recordings and videos and, when he could make time, composing. In truth he most solemnly desired to be remembered as a composer. Consider his works for the theatre that include Peter Pan (1950), On the Town (1944), Trouble in Tahiti (1952), West Side Story (1957) and Candide (1956 rev.1973 rev.1989); also all the ballets, Fancy Free (1944), Facsimile (1946) and Dybbuk (1974), all of which are included in this unique edition of the remastered original recordings. His own works for the concert hall chosen for inclusion are the three symphonies, Jeremiah (Symphony No.1, 1942), The Age of Anxiety (Symphony No.2, 1949 rev.1965) and Kaddish (Symphony No.3 1963 rev. 1977). Prelude, Fugue and Riffs (commissioned by Woody Herman in 1949) is here with Benny Goodman. Toronto musicians heard this work with
Bernstein conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in Roy Thomson Hall in the late 1980s. Mahler figured prominently in Bernstein’s programs, recording all the symphonies except the Eighth with the Philharmonic during his tenure there. His Mahler was something to hear and see, as his demeanour suggested an enraptured identification with the composer.

Mahler’s symphonies Two, Three, Six and Nine are here together with Kindertotenlieder and excerpts from Rückert Lieder both with Jennie Tourel, and Des Knaben Wunderhorn and Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen with Christa Ludwig, Walter Berry and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. In this unique collection are the works of 70 composers from A to Z in compositions ranging from marches, incidental music, ballets, encore-type pieces, chamber music, concertos, symphonies, operas, ballet music, lieder, film music, overtures, etc. Assisting artists include Isaac Stern, Lucas Foss, Adele Addison, Glenn Gould, Eileen Farrell, Andre Watts, Charles Bressler, Felicia Montealegre, Benny Goodman, Zino Francescatti, Regina Resnik, Erich Kunz, Yehudi Menuhin, Julius Baker, Judith Raskin, Judith Blegen, Robert Casadesus, Barbara Cook and others. Also heard are the Juilliard String Quartet, the Westminster Choir, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Camerata Singers, among others.

**In summary:** this edition is a collection of some significant recordings from 1945 to c.1976 issued by Columbia/Sony, either recently or newly remastered for the occasion. The opulent boxed set of 100 CDs in original covers includes a lavishly illustrated, 196-page hardcover book of presentation quality outlining the often complex remastering of the process. Compared to the previous releases of all the recordings that I have sampled these new incarnations are a revelation. For instance, I was disappointed in the perfunctory performance on the original release of Liszt’s Faust Symphony, also with the version on The Royal Edition. However, in this new presentation the sound is immediate and dynamic, revealing playing that is most certainly alert.

I wonder, out of the many hundreds of Bernstein performances of so many different works in the Sony archives, how particular recordings were chosen. It certainly wasn’t the choice of someone or other with little or no knowledge, nor was it a computer’s choice based on sales. For example, the performance of The Age of Anxiety decided upon is the original mono version recorded on February 27, 1950 with soloist Lucas Foss, a recording that required a lot of time and dedication to restore the less-than-mint original elements. How much easier it would have been to utilize the 1965 performance with Philippe Entremont. Regardless, it is the earlier performance that we hear on this well-chosen collection. Well-chosen indeed; there are works one would never think of including, but there is not one that I would remove.

There are complete details of every disc at arkivmusic.com and an interesting YouTube video about the project, titled *Leonard Bernstein – The Art of Remastering.*

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