NOVEMBER 2018
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Cuphead’s Musical Mastermind

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This was taken late last summer, a few weeks prior to the release of Cuphead. The photographer, Samantha Hurley, is an old friend of mine, and she’s great. I had seen somewhere these very cool, very casual black and white photos of Sam Shepard, so that was the idea I brought to the shoot... and we landed somewhere else entirely. I also find something inherently humorous about obviously posed, completely impractical “at work” shots. If anything, I learned that I’m no Sam Shepard. Incidentally, the two scores I brought to the shoot are my favourite tune in Cuphead and my least favorite, but I won’t say which those are.

— Kris Maddigan
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The WholeNote welcomes additional members to the 19th Annual Directory of Music Makers
Living composers quite often get invited, singly or in clusters, to the front of a concert hall to talk about a piece of music they have composed that is on the program of the concert in question. More often than not, this “pre-concert chat” or “illuminating introduction,” or whatever it is called, takes place 45 minutes to an hour before the performance itself and is supposed to end ten or 15 minutes before the concert starts in order to give audience members who showed up early to be enlightened time to dash out for a quick something or other.

Whether or not, on balance, I end up enjoying these pre-concert chats depends on three or four things.

On the negative side of the ledger, the thing I like least is when the interviewer/host “by way of introduction” starts out by parroting word for word from the concert program the stuff I already took the time to read (while the houselights were still bright enough to read by). Almost as bad is when the host avoids that trap and asks an interesting question, and the composer responds, word for word with what they wrote for the concert program. I say “almost as bad” because, if you think about it, being asked to talk about music you probably wrote because there were no words for the thing you wanted to express is not an enviable task.

On the positive side of the ledger, when the dialogue works out, when there’s a genuine rapport between host and guest, the reward for coming 45 minutes early is getting to eavesdrop on what sounds like a spontaneous conversation between two people who care deeply (and know more than I do) about something I am genuinely interested in. I say “sounds like” a spontaneous conversation because I know a little bit about how much preparation it takes on the part of the host/interviewer to have a chance of achieving that kind of flow, especially when your guest composer, as often as not, equates sitting on a chair looking into bright lights with being at the dentist.

I particularly enjoy the pre-concert chats that Alexina Louie has hosted over the years for Esprit Orchestra. A composer herself, Louie more often than not manages to put her guest or guests at ease and to hosted over the years for Esprit Orchestra. A composer herself, Louie more often than not manages to put her guest or guests at ease and to

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This past Wednesday, for example, I played hooky from WholeNote production to make it to Koerner Hall in time for the pre-concert chat ahead of the opening concert of Esprit’s 36th season, only to discover that none of the composers programmed were in attendance. Two of them, Charles Ives and Tristan Keuris, being dead, had a different discipline reaching out and finding each other and making music they might otherwise not have found. Stories about artists in different streams” or “thousands of gamers” – and bringing those audiences to morph and change. Stories about reaching audiences – “60 million in the issue (I won’t tell you which two) a composer is asked how they was being written for the issue, I find myself delighting in the way, over and over again, one thing happens to chime with another.

What to make, for example, of the fact that in two unrelated stories in the issue (I won’t tell you which two) a composer is asked how they...
When Toronto percussionist and composer, Kristofer Maddigan, was first approached by his friends back in 2013 to write the music for the video game they were developing, his first reaction was “no way.” Actually his second and third reactions were the same. He felt far out of his comfort zone. As a classically trained percussionist and someone without a lot of composition experience, he felt he just didn’t have the writing chops. But the brothers, Chad and Jared Moldenhauer, persisted.

“I think I was the only musician that they knew!” says Maddigan.

That turned out to be a very fortunate thing as – fast forward five years – the video game Cuphead is a huge hit worldwide, selling over three million copies within the first year of its release and garnering all kinds of accolades, including best game of 2017 by Entertainment Weekly, a BAFTA for Best Game Music and an Academy of Arts and Sciences D.I.C.E. award for Outstanding Achievement in Original Music. One of the charms of the game is its artwork, which was inspired by cartoons and animation of the 1930s.

The music has been really well-received too. Maddigan was nominated for a JUNO award for best instrumental album this year (a 4-LP deluxe vinyl set) and at one point the album reached No. 3 on Billboard’s jazz charts. Maddigan was also named “2017 Musician of the Year” by the Toronto Musician’s Association.

One of the behind-the-scenes videos of the recording session for the soundtrack has gotten over 3.2 million views on YouTube, which is pretty much unheard of for modern big band music. As well, a live outdoor show of the band playing the score at the recent Kensington Market Jazz Festival was sold out to a very enthusiastic audience.

Here, Maddigan gives us some interesting insight into the process for devising a game soundtrack.

**WN:** So how did you get the gig?

**KM:** I met the brothers Moldenhauer around Grade 5 and have been friends with them ever since. We grew up about two blocks from each other in Regina and I spent countless hours in their basement playing video games growing up. (I probably should have been practising.) Six or seven years ago when they had the idea for this little video game they wanted to make, they asked me if I was interested in writing the music.
What’s your musical background?
Like many youngsters I started on piano, but also like many youngsters I found I didn’t have the patience for it. I wanted to be a rock drummer, so my mom and I compromised and I began taking classical percussion lessons when I was around ten. I continued playing percussion throughout high school and fortunately still ended up playing lots of rock drums, which was a great balance.

While taking a year of general courses at the University of Regina I came across a poster for a U of R percussion ensemble concert and I said to myself, “Hey, I used to do that.” So I checked it out, and it reawakened a love of music that had been dormant for a few years. That fall I started my undergrad in percussion performance, and then moved to Toronto 11 years ago to do an Artist’s Diploma at the Glenn Gould School. I’m very fortunate to have been a member of the National Ballet of Canada Orchestra since 2010.

Was this your first major composition?
Essentially the only other compositions I have done are a tune from my recital from my brief stint in the U of T jazz program and some processed marimba background music for a Nuit Blanche project. That’s pretty much it. I do have many other musical interests though. For the past four years I have been really into Brazilian percussion, and I’m always working on my drum set playing. I’m also trying to expand my composing experience and am currently digging deeper into theory and counterpoint.

Tell us about the process for composing for a game. Were there style guidelines? Were there precise timings to adhere to? How long did it take? What was the most challenging part?
The game development and the composition process took place pretty much simultaneously. I was sent a list of levels and bosses that would require music. [Editor’s note: In video gaming, a boss is a significant computer-controlled enemy. A fight with a boss character is referred to as a boss battle and Cuphead has been praised for its numerous clever and challenging boss battles.]

My typical process was to just to write and we would match the tunes up with the appropriate bosses later in the process. Often, once it was decided which tune would go with which boss, I would then tweak the music to be more appropriate for the situation (i.e. adding train-like effects to the train boss, etc).

Considering how long it took me to write the music, if I had waited until the game was finished to start, it still wouldn’t be out!

The approach to the music of Cuphead is very different than the music of most games. There are no real precise timings to line things up with and the music is not reactive or dynamic as would be more typical for games. It was more important for us to capture a “vibe” as opposed to following the action, so I ended up just writing standard three- to four-minute jazz tunes. Typically a player won’t even reach the end of the tune on a given stage since the tunes are long enough that the player has either died and had to restart, or would have already completed the level.
The only style guidelines I was given were “1930s big band.” As the game expanded to include levels and world maps, I started to think outside of that one specific era and style, and we decided on ragtime for the platforming levels and numerous stylistic iterations of the main four-note theme for the world maps. In some cases (as in the shrines), they just said “Do whatever you like.”

The most challenging part for me was trying to write in a highly derivative style while still maintaining my own identity. It was very important to us to approach the music in Cuphead with respect and a sense of history. And to understand and utilize the clichés that define a style while doing something new and original with them. For example, there are many firmly established conventions that define a Joplin-esque ragtime style.

The question then became how do I write in that style without just blatantly ripping off those that came before, but while still using the devices I had no hand in creating? And maybe more importantly, how to do that in a way that honours the work of the great composers and musicians that came before? I always approached this project more from the standpoint of “What if the golden age of big bands and the golden age of video games coexisted side by side?”

While a lot of it is pretty bonkers (it’s game music, it sort of has to be), we were very conscious to never let it descend into parody. We realized early on that this game had the potential to reach a demographic that has probably never been exposed to this type of music, so we had a responsibility to do it correctly. The sheer number of messages we get from people who have said that this was their first exposure to jazz music – and that it has opened a door to another world for them – has been very gratifying.

How did the recording sessions go?
I was extremely nervous before the first rehearsal. I wasn’t sure if some of the music was going to be completely unplayable, or whether there would be technical glitches – scores and parts getting exported incorrectly, wrong transpositions, etc). By the end of that rehearsal I knew that everything was going to be all right, and it was a great relief.

I don’t think the musicians knew exactly what they were getting into, and when they showed up many of them were like “What’s up with these tempos?” But they more than rose to the challenge and obviously played their asses off. I think you can really hear the synergy that exists between them. Many have been working together for decades, in bands like the Boss Brass. More than that, I think it sounds like they’re having fun, which was very important for this music.

“Cuphead was a great experience. You don’t get a chance to play intense big band swing on video games very often (like never),” said Dave Dunlop, trumpet player on the soundtrack. “Kris’ writing was excellent for a relatively young man and the players really rose to the occasion, considering how difficult the music was.”

How do you account for the popularity of the recording session videos?
I feel the reason the behind-the-scenes videos have had such a great response is that people like seeing the process firsthand. There’s a visceral reaction to seeing real musicians at work, maybe for the same reason we go to concerts to see bands play the same songs that we already have on albums at home.

What was John Herberman’s role in the recording?
John Herberman was my mentor throughout the project, from first being a teacher and helping me parse through the composition process, to taking on the role of contractor for the sessions, and being the conductor of the band both in studio and at our first ever live show at the Kensington Market Jazz Festival. Without John’s experience and help the music would have been a shadow of what it eventually became.

“Kris is a very smart man and we developed a really good working relationship,” said Herberman. “He did a ton of research into 1930s music. So although I have years of experience composing for big bands and was able to coach Kris on some technical things like voicings for horns, his understanding of the 30s music style really helped.

“He entrusted me with a lot of responsibility for these sessions and that’s not easy to do. As well, working with the Moldenhauers was one of the most enjoyable experiences I’ve had in a long time. They were very supportive and wanted to do the sessions right and make sure everyone was having fun. And that’s not how things usually go these days.”
I always approached this project more from the standpoint of “What if the golden age of big bands and the golden age of video games coexisted side by side?”

At the Kensington Market Jazz Festival

SPARE PARTS

Who are your jazz-music heroes? Any particular influences for the music composed for Cuphead?

Duke Ellington and Scott Joplin were by far my two biggest influences, but Cab Calloway, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa and Fletcher Henderson also cast long shadows on the Cuphead music.

Is it unusual to have a full band playing a game soundtrack? Isn’t it usually electronic/synth music?

I think that using live musicians is certainly becoming more common, especially in AAA games, but on the indie side of things my impression is that it is typically too cost prohibitive. I certainly don’t know any other games that have used a live big band. An extra special shout-out goes to Jeremy Darby and Julian Decorte at Canterbury Music Company in Toronto. I cannot imagine having recorded this soundtrack anywhere else. And Jeremy spent months refining the mixes: getting just the right balance between clean instrument tones and a vintage sensibility.

Are you a gamer?

Growing up I was, but I pretty much stopped when I started my undergrad as there was just not enough time. I’m more of a casual gamer now, mainly just checking out games that are considered important that I should be familiar with, or games with acclaimed soundtracks so that I can keep up with what’s going on musically in the gaming world.

Cathy Riches is a Toronto-based recovering singer and ink slinger who hasn’t played a video game since Pac-Man, and who thinks it’s better to carry a tune than a grudge.
Angèle Dubeau was the seventh of eight children growing up in a musical family in Saint-Norbert, Quebec. She began playing the violin at four and entered the Conservatoire in Montreal when she was eight. At 15, she studied at Juilliard under the renowned Dorothy DeLay, later moving to Romania to work with Ştefan Gheorghiu. After a globetrotting solo career, she formed La Pietà, a string orchestra which has garnered JUNOs and a widespread public following. To celebrate 20 years of La Pietà, Analekta has released Ovation, a 15-track CD of music chosen from live performances from last year’s anniversary tour. The WholeNote celebrates this milestone with the following conversation with Dubeau.

WN: Congratulations on the 20th anniversary of La Pietà. Please tell us what inspired you to form your string chamber orchestra.

AD: After 20 years touring the world as a soloist all the time, the solitude was heavy to bear. I decided to form my own orchestra to be free to choose the repertoire and to explore colours and textures. As a conductor, I was free to find and create the Pietà’s sound that characterizes the orchestra today.

Why did you select the name La Pietà?

In 1997, I wanted to record an album of Vivaldi’s concertos. I was thinking of Antonio Vivaldi – Maestro del coro in Venice 300 years ago at the Ospedale della Pietà. Young orphans and illegitimate girls were playing in the orchestra.

You’ve had great success in recording with La Pietà. How did you choose the 15 tracks on Ovation? Please talk briefly about your relationship to each of them.

I chose pieces that really impacted my musical journey, all for different reasons. First of all, I think of the composers I have had the privilege of creating a lot of repertoire with throughout the years. When I play [film composer] Joe Hisaishi, for example, I can’t help but think of all the concerts I played alongside him in Japan. The legendary concert halls in which I had the pleasure of playing those musical pieces (Southbank Centre in London, Tokyo’s Opera, Bellas Artes in Mexico City) also come to mind. Many memories of foreign trips as well with, for example, the Romanian Rhapsody No.1 by Enescu that brings me back to 1983-1984 when I worked with Ştefan Gheorghiu in Romania. Each piece also brings back memories of great characters for whom I had the chance to play; Nelson Mandela, Queen Elizabeth II, the president of China in 1987 and so on.
You have developed a strong library of contemporary repertoire -- from Philip Glass to Arvo Pärt and John Adams; from Ludovico Einaudi to Max Richter. When did you first discover the music of Philip Glass? How did your musical relationship with him evolve over the years? Was Glass’ music the gateway to your love of those other contemporary composers? If not, what drew you to them?

In the past 12 years, I have been drawn to a variety of composers. Gravitating around the minimalist movement that has, and will continue to have, an impact on the intellectual and musical life of our time. I must say that the more I listen to those composers, the stronger my desire to interpret their music becomes.

First, I revisited the colossal work of Philip Glass that I discovered in the 80s and with whom I worked on his first violin concerto in NYC in the 90s. Then came the “essentialist” Arvo Pärt, and John Adams whose music is both strong and exuberant. After came a music portrait of Ludovico Einaudi and two years ago, the portrait of Max Richter who brilliantly follows in the steps of the previous album.

With all those icons of contemporary music, I have expressed my desire to go beyond and to grant myself those unique voices, unique signatures. A great way to widen my horizons!

I always thought that music is for everyone and that it really is meant to be shared. To think that my own accompanies people in their everyday life fills me with joy.

With more than 15 million streams, your Einaudi CD was enormously popular. What attracted you to his music? What is your approach to it?

It’s crazy to think that in the last five years, my music has been, to this day, streamed 60 million times all over the world. This number I could’ve never imagined when I started 40 years ago. I always thought that music is for everyone and that it really is meant to be shared. To think that my own accompanies people in their everyday life fills me with joy. As for Einaudi himself, he is a master of melody. His music is pure and refined without any artifice. I find his music to be soothing and truly luminous.

How has your choice of repertoire changed over the last 20 years? I like to pick out my repertoire from different eras, from different styles. I like envisioning it without any limit of choice; a gift I gave myself quite a long time ago. I strongly feel that if a certain music speaks to me, that I can express something personal with it, I should share it.

What are your plans for La Pietà going forward?

After 40 years of constantly touring and always being on the road, I decided to change my lifestyle and reduce the number of concerts I perform. I remain a violinist. I will keep making albums and I still have a head full of potential projects. I am currently working on my next album which will be recorded in March 2019. As for live performances, I will, of course, continue to meet my audience for various concerts.

Finally, who were your musical heroes growing up?

I always had the curiosity to go and discover music and musicians. I had the privilege to play and work alongside Henryk Szeryng, Ştefan Gheorghiu. I played with Dave Brubeck, Alain Marion, Alexandre Lagoya, Joe Hisaishi. All great musicians that truly made me grow.

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.
I've been writing The Wholenote’s World View column for around a decade. Well over a generation before that I was invited to be a founding member of Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan (ECCG), the first Canadian ensemble of its kind. Clearly wearing two hats, I've always been explicit about outing myself as an ECCG member when writing about the group in my column.

On the occasion of ECCG's 35th anniversary season however, rather than a somewhat self-deprecating aside in the column (which follows elsewhere in the issue) I've received special dispensation from my esteemed publisher to give a somewhat fuller account of the group's career and an unapologetic shout-out for the group's upcoming November 25 Aga Khan Museum concert. After all, who better than an insider to make sense of this band's arcane music, and to share a story or two?

I agree that ECCG's music and 35-year career is admittedly difficult to pigeonhole. Pioneering a made-in-Canada approach to the exploration of links between post-classical and world music even before those terms became mainstream, ECCG's repertoire is a confluence of its founding core members' musical training and multiple professional practices. Over the years most have been percussionists, among the country's top drummers and mallet freelancers. On the other hand there has also been a violist, a flutist, guitarists – including founder Jon Siddall and longtime member Bill Parsons – and an ex-bassoonist. The latter? Me! Before I picked up the ECCG’s suling (bamboo end-blown ring flute) in 1984. A lifetime convert from bass to treble winds, I've never looked back.

Despite being difficult to slot in a genre, ECCG’s eclectic musical approach has captured the imagination of leading Canadian, American, European and Indonesian concert composers. Musicians, singers, choirs and instrumental ensembles from several genres have also chosen to perform with ECCG. Our music has attracted the interest of international audiences, such as those that attended ECCG’s June 2018 concerts in Munich, Germany. This interest has resulted in a number of tours over the years starting in 1989, and taking us to Indonesia, the gamelan heartland, in 2002.

November 25, the Aga Khan Museum will celebrate the 35th anniversary of Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan with a concert that touches on many bases. It will feature the premiere of a new work by Canadian composer Peter Hatch, whose composition thematically explores the environment of his new BC island home. The presence of returning guests, Indonesian musician/composer Ade Suparman and dancer Nurrika, will signal ECCG deep collaborative ties with the rich performance culture of West Java. Their residency will culminate in joint performances of several works. Finally, the group will also honour the centennial of American maverick composer Lou Harrison – one of its founding musical mentors – with a suite of his works arranged by yours truly.

Right from its first season, ECCG's primary goal has been to create a Canadian-based repertoire which it would commission, perform, tour and record. Has ECCG been successful in meeting these aims? Well, it has generated some 300 works, the sum total of which is a brand new repertoire not replicated anywhere. The group has recorded 15 albums and presented 35 concert seasons in Toronto.

Throughout all this activity, ECCG’s primary aim has always remained – paradoxically to some – to perform music on its degung instruments which ultimately explores and expresses a core Canadian ethos and identity.

During our 2002 Indonesian tour, the ECCG was invited to headline the Yogyakarta Gamelan Festival, along with Toronto’s Maxine Heppner Dance Company. When we arrived I was asked by a young Indonesian organizer what our music was like, having never heard it. Considering an appropriate response, I replied, “We play Canadian music on degung instruments.” After the festival wrapped, we made our way to the tour bus and said our goodbyes. He turned to me and said with a wry smile, “Now I know what Canadian music sounds like.”

Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer. He can be contacted at worldmusic@thewholenote.com
Soundstreams’ presentation of the Latvian Radio Choir (LRC) with artistic director Sigvards Klava, in concert at Metropolitan United Church on November 17 at 8pm, has significance in a number of ways. Founded in 1940, the 24-voice LRC is one of the few professional choirs that owes its existence to a national public broadcaster. It was created for the purpose of providing Latvian Radio with a high-quality choral group that could serve the diverse needs of the broadcaster in making its music programs. One of those needs was to allow Latvian composers to not only create new Latvian choral compositions, but also to experiment with the art of choral writing, through creative lab sessions with the choir. This has no doubt contributed to the rise of the tiny nation’s highly respected status in the choral world.

Choral music is at the heart of music making in Latvia, as it is in the entire Baltic region. Every school has a choir and music training is considered a core subject. The well-known Singing Revolution, as it was dubbed in Estonia at its start, in the late 1980s was a broad expression of cultural and political independence that affected the whole region. The 2018 tour by the Latvian Radio Choir, furthermore, is part of a broader celebration of independence from czarist Russia that Latvia and all the Baltic countries gained in 1918.

The November 17 concert will be the third time that Soundstreams has presented this widely esteemed choir. The program includes, among other things, music by three leading Latvian composers: the renowned Peteris Vasks (b. 1946) and the much younger, but already well-established Santa Ratniece and Ēriks Ešenvalds (both born in 1977.) Ratniece has composed a large and growing number of quite varied works for the LRC. For example, the choir’s current North American tour follows on the heels of an Australian production of Ratniece’s multimedia opera, WAR SUM UP. Music. Manga. Machines (2011), an ambitious work, in which choir members appear
as soloists. By contrast, her first work for the LRC, *Saline* (2006) is a quiet, delicate, introspective piece containing much subtle detail. At the November 17 concert, the choir will sing *Chu Dal* (2009), which won her a Copyright’s Infinity Award in 2011.

Ratniece first came to worldwide attention in 2004 when Latvian Radio presented one of her works to the international delegates at the International Rostrum of Composers (IRC) in Paris. The IRC describes itself as “An international forum of representatives of broadcasting organizations who come together for the purpose of exchanging and broadcasting contemporary art music.” Think of it as a contemporary music meet-up sponsored by public broadcasters from some 35 countries and organized by the International Music Council. Latvian Radio presented works by Ratniece to the IRC three times between 2004 and 2012, including her choral music as performed by the LRC. Each time her music was presented there, the international delegates voted her works to the top ten list of the best works heard. By the end of this period she had become quite well known on the international scene, and I had the pleasure of witnessing this progression. In 2002, I had been elected president of the IRC, after having served as the official delegate for CBC Radio for 25 years. Over that time, I had seen the benefits of exchanging original productions of new compositions from around the globe, benefits that accrued not only to the composers whose music was being made available, but also to the broadcasters themselves, in the form of fresh, high-quality content for use in their programs.

Latvian Radio also presented the music of Eriks Ešenvalds at the IRC in 2006; a choral composition, in a production with the LRC. Like Ratniece, Ešenvalds’ piece was voted as the top selected work in the IRC, resulting in dozens of international broadcasts, a tribute to how effective Latvian Radio, together with their world-famous choir, have been in bringing the story of emerging Latvian composers to international public view. Ešenvalds’ two choral works on the Soundstreams program are *Stars* (2011) with poetry by Sarah Teasdale (1884–1933), and *A Drop in the Ocean* (2006) which includes biblical texts, a prayer of St. Francis of Assisi and words of Mother Theresa.

The November 17 concert will also include a world premiere by Canadian composer Omar Daniel (b. 1960). The work was commissioned by Soundstreams Canada, with the financial assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts, to create the work for another choir, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir. The Estonian choir has yet to perform the work in its entirety. Daniel, who is an Estonian-Canadian, chose to set a poem by the world-renowned Estonian poet Marie Under (1883–1980), *Sõduri ema* (The Soldier’s Mother). Daniel told me that he had always wanted to set the poetry of Under, perhaps Estonia’s most famous poet. “There is only a vague narrative to the three sections of the poem: the son arrives for a visit, stays for a brief time, and then leaves to once again join the war. But nothing really occurs in the poem; only fleeting images of hands in prayer, snow, the visage of the son. The images appear as if emerging ever so briefly out of the shadows of the mother’s sadness. The essence of the poem, and I hope my composition, is in its intimacy, in its soft dynamics and use of silence to express quiet grief of the woman who must quietly come to terms with her son’s brief presence and impending departure. It is a highly spiritual poem as it embraces ideas of hope, faith and sacrifice.”

Like Ratniece and Ešenvalds, Daniel enjoyed the support of his country’s national broadcaster in the development of his career as an emerging composer. Daniel wrote: “It is not an exaggeration to say that CBC radio’s commitment to broadcasting contemporary music in the 1980s and 1990s shaped the musical culture of Canada. Simply put, I would not have become the composer that I am had it not been for the broadcast opportunities that I was privileged to be part of through CBC radio. I remember in my early professional days as a graduate student at U of T, mounting concerts at the old Music Gallery with the then fledgling Continuum; David Jaeger offered to record our concerts for broadcast on CBC’s Two New Hours. We were shocked and ecstatic: They took a risk on an upstart group like ours, and gave the composers, performers and organization a profile boost that we could never have obtained otherwise – national radio exposure. I have the fond memory of, after the soundcheck, all of us (including the iconic David Quinney) having dinner at the Elvis restaurant on Queen Street.”

Daniel goes on to reflect on how throughout the last two decades of the 20th century, he became friends with many of us at CBC in those days: “Radio producers, hosts and engineers who were true believers in the value of homegrown contemporary classical music. Another one of my favourite memories is an episode from one of the many years I spent attending the Winnipeg New Music Festival during the 1990s and early 2000s. It was a live-to-air national show, and there was a rather extensive set change between two pieces on the stage of Centennial Hall in Winnipeg. The legendary Larry Lake, microphone in hand, called me quickly to the stage and conducted an interview with me while stage hands, engineers and musicians were charging across the stage all around us. All broadcast live across Canada.”

He also recalls the 1990 CBC Radio Competition for Young Composers, held in Quebec City that year, as another highlight. “It was my first real experience being part of an event that was of national significance, one that was given national press exposure. I remember
Tālivaldis Ķeniņš (1919–2008) was born in Latvia and emigrated to Canada in 1951. His career as a prolific composer, teacher, organist and music director has been celebrated not only in this country, but also in his native Latvia, where he is remembered and respected. Ķeniņš himself was the recipient of numerous commissions from the CBC’s Radio Music department throughout his creative life. The LRC will sing his Alleluia for choir and organ, composed in 1981.

The LRC’s recording of Sergei Rachmaninoff’s (1873–1943) All-Night Vigil, composed in 1915, gained a Grammy nomination in 2013, and has become a sort of a signature work for the choir. The countless reviews of this recording are all complete raves. The Soundstreams concert will include several movements of this Romantic Russian showstopper.

Latvian Radio has achieved a sustainable strategy for the development of its talented artists, a model that could serve broadcasters, composers, performers and listeners around the world.

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

They took a risk on an upstart group like ours, and gave the composers, performers and organization a profile boost that we could never have obtained otherwise – national radio exposure.

—Omar Daniel
A Remarkable Series and a One of a Kind Concert

Paul Ennis

Now in its 13th year and divided into six smaller series – vocal, chamber music, piano virtuoso, jazz, world music and dance – there are very few series in town that cover so many WholeNote areas of interest as the Canadian Opera Company’s remarkable Free Concert Series in the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre. This month, for example, in addition to five concerts that jumped out at me, both Lydia Perović in her Art of Song column and Jazz Notes columnist Steve Wallace found noteworthy concerts in their respective beats. It struck me as an opportune moment to ask the series’ program manager Dorian Cox how the curatorial process works.

He told me that he programs each series in a slightly different way. The vocal series, for example, “is largely comprised of artists who are already involved with the COC (on the mainstage or part of our Ensemble Studio), whereas the world music and jazz series are largely comprised of artists who have approached me or whom I have sought out.” Overall, about a third of the performances are COC artists, a third are presented in collaboration with other institutions and the last third are independent artists.

Cox is always on the lookout for artists who he thinks might want to participate and whom he thinks his audience will appreciate. “It’s a 24/7 job in that way,” he says. “The wheels are always turning and I try to see as many concerts as possible, which can truthfully get a bit overwhelming when I already have 72 that I’m presenting this season.” He feels fortunate to be approached by many performers and connected to others through mutual contacts. And based on what his network is interested in, he finds social media to be a helpful tool.

“Remembering Kristallnacht” on November 8 was the first concert that caught my own eye this month. Cox told me that a meeting last January with the German Ambassador to Canada, Sabine Sparwasser, that “Remembering Kristallnacht” was born. Ian Cusson a Canadian composer and pianist of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson Highway, Patricia Cano and Marcus Ali on this project as a rehearsal of Métis and French-Canadian descent, had worked with Tomson. Ian connected me to Patricia and I was thrilled that everything fell into place from there!”

November 14’s “Piano Teatro” program features Glenn Gould School fourth-year B.Mus. student Sae Yoon Chon performing Bach’s Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D Minor and Brahms’ Piano Sonata No.3 in F Minor. Chon recently won First Prize at the Dublin International Piano Competition and Cox calls him “a pianist who is on the rise in the international music scene.” (I was fortunate to hear Chon’s impressive playing of the Bach for Leon Fleisher in a master-class on October 12, where Fleisher told Chon he was “filled with admiration for the way you play the piano, for the amount of finger control you have.”)

“Like the Glenn Gould School, the Schulich School of Music at McGill University is another powerhouse music school and another one of our educational institution partners,” Cox says. “November 20, their critically acclaimed cello professor, Matt Haimovitz will be travelling to Toronto with Uccello, an all-cello ensemble, to showcase the best of the best from their program.”

The Golden Violin Competition has been held every year at McGill since 2006. The 2017 winner of its $25,000 prize, Mathena Girault, performs on November 21 at noon. Her program had not been finalized but some of the works performed will be Chopin’s Sonata No.3 in F Minor and Brahms’ Piano Sonata No.3 in F Minor.

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The Free Concert Series is justifiably popular. Seating and standing room are limited. Plan on arriving at least 30 minutes in advance.

One of a Kind: Mandle Phil

“The very first piece of classical music I heard was Saint-Saëns’ Third Violin Concerto,” Mandle Cheung writes on his website. “I was 13, listening to a pocket-sized radio with earphones. I was born and raised in Hong Kong, and though my family wasn’t particularly musical, from that point, I was hooked on music ever since.” After he moved to Canada in 1968, he stuck to a sensible major, computer science – but he managed to pick up some music courses along the way, eventually taking up conducting with Arthur Polson and leading the orchestra in Beethoven’s Third Piano Concerto for their graduation concert. Later, he was invited to perform Arthur Benjamin’s Harmonica Concerto with the CBC Winnipeg Orchestra, Eric Wilde conducting.

That was his last musical activity for a few decades. He moved to Toronto in 1975, working for large corporations in software and networking. In 1987 he struck out on his own, which brought him business success. Then one day in 2015, “I woke up thinking that if I still dream of conducting, I better get researching.” At 70, Mandle Cheung decided to pursue that longtime dream. And with his brand-new orchestra, comprised of almost 70 professional musicians based in the GTA, “All Awakens with Joy.” is finally happening. Mandle Cheung and the Mandle Philharmonic perform Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op.67 and Mahler’s Symphony No.4 in G Major. (Jennifer Taverner is the soprano soloist in the fourth movement of the Mahler.) November 9 at 8pm at the Glenn Gould Studio will see the dream fulfilled, fuelled by passion and hard-won through tireless rehearsal and meticulous study. Admission is by donation. Proceeds will go directly into a career development grant fund – grants will be awarded to promising early career musicians, to aid in professional development.

Gallery 345

There’s a cornucopia of concertizing at Gallery 345 this month. Here is a sample of the bounty. On November 1, fans of Gregory Millar’s chamber music get an opportunity to hear him as a soloist in the Gallery’s ongoing Art of the Piano series. His recital ranges from CPE Bach to Barbara Pentland, from Beethoven and Chopin to Brahms and Prokofiev. The Mexican-born Alejandro Vela continues the series on November 10 with a program of Gershwin, Granados and Chopin, anchored by Rhapsody in Blue and the Funeral March Sonata.

Cellist Noémie Raymond-Friset was recently named one of the 30 hot Canadian musicians under 30 by CBC Music. For her contribution to the Art of the Cello series on November 11, she will perform music by Schumann, Stravinsky, Poulenc and WholeNote contributor David Jaeger (Constable’s Clouds). Peter Klimo is the collaborative pianist. Pianist Jean-Luc Therrien teams up with violinist Jean-Samuel Bez for a program of music by Schubert, Fauré, Lili Boulanger, Enescu and Kreisler on November 22. And TSO assistant principal cello Winona Zelenka continues the Art of the Cello series – with the Gryphon’s Trio’s pianist, Jamie Parker – on December 1, with a fascinating program of Bach, Ligeti, Pärt, Crumb and Bjarnason.

Music Toronto

The long-running chamber-music series continues its 47th season with three auspicious concerts.

On November 15, Ensemble Made in Canada bring their ambitious Mosaïque project to the Jane Mallett stage. This recently commissioned suite of piano quartets by 14 Canadian composers, each inspired by a particular region of Canada, is currently on a nationwide tour of all ten provinces and three territories. After intermission, look for the Ensemble to bring out the subtleties of Schumann’s Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, Op.47.

Next, the whole world is the subject of pianist Louise Bessette’s November 27 recital. From John Adams’ China Gates to Percy Grainger’s In Dahomey, Bessette’s musical grand tour consists of 15

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diverse selections.
Music Toronto stalwarts, the Gryphon Trio, celebrate their 25th anniversary season on December 6, with a variety of works – Mozart, Silvestrov, Fört and others – before moving into Paul Frehner’s Bytown Waters (carnivalised to celebrate the Trio’s milestone), and Brahms’ fully packed Piano Trio in C Major, Op.87.

John Storgårds conducts the TSO in November.

Beat by Beat | Choral Scene

Aural Remembrance for a New Generation

BRIAN CHANG

One hundred years ago, World War I raged on the battlefields of Europe, across the Middle East, in Southeast Asia and in proxy battles the world over. This year, the generation coming of age has lived entirely in the new millennium. Their experience of war is drastically different from the textbooks and grainy history videos in Grade 9 and 10 classes. Their experience of war is that of insurgency in Afghanistan, invasion of Iraq, annexation of Crimea, the global war on terrorism, and irregular migration. The terms they hear are drones, airstrikes, cyberterrorism, IEDs and asymmetrical warfare. Long past are the stories of trenches, machine guns, Spitfires, barbed wire, tanks and mustard gas.

As new generations of musicians explore works of commemoration, the older histories and stories don’t fade, they evolve. This month, the Choral Scene explores how children’s choirs are marking Remembrance Day.

The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month...
In 2014, Paul Cummins and Tom Piper’s Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red was a public arts installation entailing the placement of 888,246 poppies in the moat of the Tower of London; one handmade ceramic poppy for each of the British fallen in WWI. Elise Bradley, artistic director of the Toronto Children’s Chorus (TCC), remembers this particular exhibit well. Four years on, we are approaching the centenary of the Armistice – 11am, November 11, 1918. “As a teacher and as a musician, I felt it was important to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Armistice that led to the end of World War I.” Bradley shares. “In 2014, I had witnessed many stirring events which honoured the start of the War... but to me, it seemed even more important to mark the end of the War.”

Bradley was born in New Zealand. On November 11 at 7:30p, she will be joined by a host of Canadian guests, including Lydia Adams and the Elmer Iseler Singers, along with Australian-born accompanist Lara Dodds-Eden, and Bob Chilcott from England. Bradley highlights the four Commonwealth nations represented: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK – all allies during WWI. “It is vitally important that we know about our history – but sharing it through music adds a very personal and emotional dimension to our understanding.” The concert will present works from all four countries.

From her New Zealand home, Bradley brings a particular history based on her long experience with Maori peoples and culture. “A Maori battalion fought on the fields of Gallipoli,” she says. “Part of the concert will be performing a full kapa haka piece of welcome and dedication to those who have passed.” Bradley holds a unique honour, being bestowed by the Wehi whānau (Wehi family), to act as guardian of Light.

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From the UK, Bob Chilcott is prominently featured, conducting smaller works and his larger sacred works: Peace Mass and Canticles of Light. Canadian Andrew Balfour, of Cree descent, wrote the work Ambe, based on an Ojibway song gifted by Cory Campbell. Local Toronto Ismaili composer Hussein Jamnigham’s Rest for a Soul is also on the list. The concert features the world premiere of three WWI popular songs in arrangements commissioned by the TCC from Stuart Calvert: It’s a Long Way to Tipperary, Keep the Home Fires Burning, and Keep Right on till the End of the Road. The Elmer Iseler
Singers will also perform, including Healey Willan’s *How they so softly rest*. An unverified, but persistent folktale amongst the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir is that Willan wrote the song to commemorate members of the choir who died in WWI.

Chilcott has a different historical context than those of us on this side of the ocean as well as being of a different generation. He shared some thoughts on the upcoming concert as well. “For most in my country, the two world wars are a fading memory,” he says, “but to visit the Normandy beaches, which many young people still do, or to look for the graves of family members in the First World War cemeteries in Belgium is still an aspect of our history that is truly alive for many and very important to them.” (Many Canadians still make similar pilgrimages to cemeteries around the battlefields Canadian soldiers fought on, but they are a great deal further from Canadian shores than the UK.)

“Music has a role to play in [commemoration] and it reminds us of the cost of war,” Chilcott said. The concert will feature a Canadian program that includes works by composers such as William bowed and Gordon Lightfoot.

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that there are many technical and emotional responses within music that express some very deep and essential elements of our humanity,” Chilcott continues. “Harmony, resolution, blend, balance and unity.” These are all words used by conductors to describe the musicality they are looking for. It is fitting that these are virtues extolled by artists to the wider world. Chilcott finishes with a strong sentiment: “Remembrance is so important in that it teaches us to honour those who believed that fundamentally, good is better than bad.”

The Toronto Children’s Chorus presents “We Remember” a concert commemorating the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day. Featured guests include the Toronto Youth Choir, Elmer Iseler Singers, and guest conductors Lydia Adams and Bob Chilcott. November 11, 7:30pm. George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre for the Arts.

When the old and the new meet

“I want my choristers to know that history matters,” shares Charissa Bagan, artistic director of the Bach Children’s Chorus. “And that we have great power as singing storytellers and artists because we can connect the past, present and future... Choir offers a wonderful way for children to interact with serious topics.” For Remembrance Day, the Bach Children’s Choir and the Bach Youth Chamber Choir present “Resonant Reflection” on November 10.

Choral performance is always meant to be educational. One should learn from every rehearsal, every concert, and leave changed in some way, even if very small. Children’s choirs have a unique place in the musical process, being equally education- and performance-based.

Bagan understands the role she has to play in a complex concert like this: “When it comes to working with the choir on a particular song and the text highlights a significant and catastrophic event from the past such as the Holocaust, there is absolutely a responsibility for the conductor to make space in the preparation of the music for the choir to engage with the story,” she shares. “[We have] to consider all that is being expressed and the implications it has for the future.” The management skills necessary to balance this educational and narrative process can easily become unbalanced in the pursuit of performance-readiness. “It is so easy for rehearsal minutes to be consumed with simply learning and polishing the notes,” she says. “And yet choral performances can really only come alive when the singers know the story that they are collectively expressing and the reason for singing it in the first place.

“While War and Remembrance are overarching themes, the concert is designed as just that – a concert and not a ceremony,” says Bagan. There are works by many female Canadian composers on the program including Lydia Adams’ gentle and simple arrangement of In Flanders Fields, Eleanor Daley’s flowing rendition of An Irish Blessing, and Sarah Quartel’s focused, bright Lux aeterna, a sonic setting of Vancouver Island sky from her four-part Sanctum. Bagan has also found an arrangement of After the War with words and music by Canadian actor Paul Gross and David Keele. The song was made popular by local Toronto artist Sarah Slean in the 2008 WWI film, Passchendaele.

Like Chilcott, Bagan has some insights, as well, on the new generation: “It seems to me that young people are more likely to [be] educated by their families, friends and teachers, facing new, complex issues, which were oversimplified for us in the past.” Bagan sees
their intelligence and compassion firsthand: “Their thoughts go to the people their own age who are affected by the devastation of war as well as human suffering in all forms, from residential schools to modern-day slavery to famine and injustice at local, national, and international levels. They’re more aware of the importance of considering multiple perspectives, less likely to assume a Commonwealth allegiance, and are genuinely grappling with how to be peacemakers in their communities.” Music is a good place to start.
Bagan raises another aspect of conflict that is often lost in commemorations – refugees. “I know that some of our choristers’ families have personally sponsored refugees which brings such a different perspective on war and peace than my experiences as a child, listening to my grandfather tell stories about the war.” This contemporary reality is striking. The major conflicts may not be physically in our neighbourhoods, but in a diverse city like Toronto, you’re never far removed from someone who has personal experience of some conflict around the world.

“Resonant Reflection presents a wide range of styles of music with some weighty history, sincere conviction, as well as hope and happiness,” says Bagan. “It is a way of engaging with the past and gradually understanding it a little more with each passing year through reflection, poetry, songs and communal moments that stay with us.”

These children though, are contributing more than just their voices in the service of healing. Some of the proceeds from the concert will benefit the East End Refugee Committee Fund.

The Bach Children’s Chorus and Bach Chamber Youth Choir present “Resonant Reflection,” a benefit concert for the East End Refugee Committee Fund featuring songs of remembrance and winter seasonal music. November 10 at 7:30pm. St. John’s Norway Church, Toronto.

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**CHORAL SCENE QUICK PICKS**

- **NOV 3, 7:30PM:** The Guelph Chamber Choir presents “Haven: Music of Protection and Peace.” As the search for Gerald Neufeld’s replacement as artistic director continues, one of the contenders, Patrick Murray, takes the helm of the choir for this concert as part of the Passing the Baton: The Search for Our Next Conductor series. St. George’s Anglican Church, Guelph.

- **NOV 8 AND NOV 10, 8PM:** The Toronto Symphony Orchestra presents Benjamin Britten’s masterpiece War Requiem. With soloists Tatiana Pavlovskaya, Toby Spence and Russell Braun, and the massed power of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and the Toronto Children’s Chorus. Bramwell Tovey takes the baton. Roy Thomson Hall.

- **NOV 17, 7:30PM AND NOV 18, 3PM:** The Grand Philharmonic Chamber Singers present the Canadian premiere of Craig Hella Johnson’s masterpiece, Considering Matthew Shepard. 20 years have passed since Matt Shepard was beaten and left tied to a fence to die in rural Wyoming. His remains were recently interred at the National Cathedral in Washington DC in respect. Humanities Theatre, University of Waterloo, Waterloo.

Remember to look ahead into December for holiday music concert listings at thewholeno te.com. Many performances will start to sell out by the time you get the December issue in your hands!

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

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**Secular to Sacred November’s Seismic Shifts**

MATTHEW WHITFIELD

The return of November signals a change in the world around us, as the ghosts, ghouls and gremlins of October are supplanted by Christmas cards, commercials and carols. A similar shift also takes place in the musical scene each year, with presenters and performers moving their focus from the varied programs of September and October to increasingly festive and seasonal offerings.

For the early music people around us, this often means an exploration of the concerti, oratorios and choruses composed by some of the greatest musicians of the Renaissance and Baroque, as they were inspired by the Christmas story. This November is no exception, the seismic shifts of the season allowing us to hear everything from less-familiar Italian operatic excerpts to our first Messiah of the year.

On Turtle’s Back: On November 4, in St. Catharines, Gallery Players of Niagara present “Songs of Life – Bach on Turtle’s Back,” featuring a sonata, a partita and a selection of arias, all composed by J.S. Bach. This multimedia presentation is conceived by Ojibwe/Irish artist Brian Solomon and combines music, storytelling and dance in an exploration of birth, death and rebirth as connective themes of human expression. Bach himself was greatly concerned with the subjects of life, death and life after death, and these themes recur frequently throughout Bach’s works. Lutheran theology led Bach to a view of death as a relief from the struggles of life, firm in Luther’s teaching that all who trust in Christ alone and his promises can be certain of their salvation. Whether in his choral settings, masses, passions or cantatas, Bach’s approach to death is frequently positive, peaceful, and even joyful, the reuniting of a soul with its ultimate destination.

What is most interesting about Bach on Turtle’s Back is that Bach’s most potently exegetical musical settings are conspicuously avoided – there are no chorales, for example, or any other direct connections to Lutheran theology. By exploring the themes of life and death within...
a uniquely mixed North American context, coupled with one of history’s greatest musical minds, Bach on Turtle’s Back combines the universality of Bach’s music with the equally universal concepts of death and the afterlife in what looks to be a fascinating synthesis of music, movement, and mysticism.

Sacred and Secular at Tafelmusik: Back in Toronto, Tafelmusik plays two separate concerts in November, moving from vocal drama to instrumental concerti with a Christmas theme. Their first presentation (November 8 to 11) features mezzo-soprano Krisztina Szabó and conductor Ivars Taurins in a survey of Agostino Steffani’s secular and sacred vocal music. Beginning with two sacred choral works, the early Beatus vir a 8 and the late Stabat Mater, and proceeding through a pastiche of arias, duets, choruses and instrumental movements from Steffani’s operas, this concert will display Steffani’s dual role as sacred and secular dramatist.

Steffani lived an extraordinary life. In addition to being a renowned composer and a mentor to Handel, he was also a diplomat, politician, spy and priest. Steffani’s ecclesiastical status did not prevent him from turning his attention to the stage, for which, at different periods of his life, he composed a large number of works which undoubtedly exercised a potent influence upon the dramatic music of the period. Premiering his early operas in Munich, Steffani developed his skill and social connections before achieving great renown in Hanover through eight operas composed and performed at the new opera house, opened in 1689. As a rapidly rising cleric given increasingly great honours in the Catholic Church, Steffani was ultimately consecrated as a bishop; because of his high standing, Steffani published three late operas under the name Gregorio Piva, who was his secretary and assistant, to avoid breaching the etiquette required by his high rank. Approached from a chronological perspective, the Tafelmusik Chamber Choir bookends Steffani’s career in the works chosen for this concert. He wrote the Beatus vir in 1676 at the age of 22, one year after he was appointed court organist in Munich; 51 years later, after
being appointed honorary president for life by London’s Academy of Ancient Music, he composed the *Stabat Mater*, a magnificent work for six voices and orchestra. Between these two sacred compositions will be a plethora of operatic material from no fewer than nine separate dramatic works, each of them a Tafelmusik premiere. With such skilled performers and Ivars Taurins at the helm, this concert will provide a wealth of delightful and well-done material, much of it new to many in the audience.

**Sound the trumpet!** When asked how he composed his songs, Gustav Mahler replied: “How do you make a trumpet? Hammer brass around a hole.” There may be more to making a trumpet than Mahler suggests, and there is certainly great skill required in mastering the instrument, especially when that instrument has no valves! November 21 to 24, Tafelmusik celebrates the holiday season with instrumental treasures from France, Italy, Spain, Germany and England, festive music by Telemann, Corrette, Fasch, and Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerto No.2*. This concert also features the Tafelmusik debut of guest trumpeter David Blackadder, principal trumpet for the Academy of Ancient Music in the United Kingdom. (He also performed at the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.)

Blackadder plays a Baroque trumpet, a valveless trumpet based on early instruments (his is modelled on a Nuremberg trumpet from 1700), capable of great ranges of expression. According to Blackadder: “The trumpet is often thought of as being perhaps the most majestic, powerful instrument of all. However, there is a much more subtle, lesser-known side to the trumpet which uses the more florid, angelic quality of its upper register to symbolize the glory of God and the heavens. This technique of playing developed throughout the 17th and 18th centuries and became highly prized by composers and their patrons alike. Court trumpeters were handsomely rewarded for their prodigious skill and were required to play at the most important ceremonies and state occasions.” Blackadder will also hold a guest artist masterclass on November 24 at Jeanne Lamon Hall, providing another opportunity to experience this renowned musician as he guides the next generation of skilled performers.

**From Villancicos to de Victoria:** Christmas has arrived by the end of November, as the first *Messiahs* appear on the horizon and dog-eared festive favourites are revived once again. Popular Christmas songs come in many familiar national varieties: English carols, French Noëls, and German Weihnachtslieder. Perhaps the least known are the Spanish Christmas villancicos, popular songs from the countryside that were developed by court composers of 16th- and 17th-century Spain into wonderfully rhythmic, danceable carols. Michael Erdman’s Cantemus Singers explores this lesser-known variety of carol, November 24 and 25, in their concert “Es Nascido – He is Born,” with works such as Mateo Flecha’s *La Bomba* and Joan Brudie’ts *Goigs de Nostra Dona* paired with Tomás Luis de Victoria’s strikingly beautiful motet *O Magnum Mysterium* and its accompanying parody mass, Missa “O Magnum Mysterium.”

Rather than being necessarily humorous, parody in music, in its Renaissance sense, meant any readaptation of existing material in new and creative ways. Composers could use their own material, as Victoria does, but they could also take popular chansons (and hide a naughty folk tune within the polyphonic texture), *cantus firmus* style, or use another composer’s sacred work as a starting point for their own ingenuity and craftsmanship. Palestrina wrote over 50 parody masses, and Josquin des Prez composed a number of fine essays in the form.

A popular model throughout the 16th century, the Council of Trent ultimately banned the use of secular material as part of their decree to “banish from church all music which contains, whether in the singing or the organ playing, things that are lascivious or impure.” Far from lascivious, Victoria’s motet and mass are profound meditations on one of the most crucial events in the Christian year and Cantemus’ engaging and original programming makes this a concert worth hearing. Come for the villancicos, stay for the Victoria!

Regardless of whether the music is secular, sacred, or a combination of the two, there are great concerts happening throughout November. From the dramatic excellence of Steffani’s operas to the sacred sounds of the Spanish Renaissance, there is something for everyone within the pages of this magazine. As stores begin to assemble this year’s window displays and the first strains of tin-can carols assault our ears, another round of seasonal favourites will be upon us before we know it. To keep up to date on all the Messiahs, oratorios, concertos, and other Baroque things happening in the city, check out next month’s column. Until then, drop me a line at earlymusic@thewholenote.com.

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**EARLY MUSIC QUICK PICKS**

- **NOV 4, 2PM:** Rezonance Baroque Ensemble. “Folk of the Baroque.” St. Barnabas Anglican Church, 361 Danforth Ave. The title says it all: let your wig down and hear some music for dancing, dining and play.

- **NOV 19, 8PM:** Against the Grain Theatre. *BOUND v.2*. The Great Hall, Longboat Hall, 1087 Queen Street West. Something old, something new. Hear music by G.F. Handel and Kevin Lau as AGT addresses the big issues that face our society today, inspired by stories of refugees.

- **NOV 25, 8PM:** Toronto Chamber Choir. “Kaffemusik: The Bremen Town Musicians.” Church of the Redeemer, 162 Bloor St. W. A concert of story and song, with humorous fairy tales about solidarity among musicians paired with madrigals by Lassus, Dowland and more.

- **NOV 30, 7:30PM:** ChoralWorks Chamber Choir. Messiah. New Life Church, 28 Tracey Lane, Collingwood. Take a trip to cottage country and get in the festive spirit with one of the first Messiahs of the season.

**Matthew Whitfield is a Toronto-based harpsichordist and organist.**
When the budding stage director Anna Theodosakis received the Vancouver Opera Guild’s career development grant, instead of spending it on summer schools or workshops, she decided to use it as the seed money for the creation of a new art song collective. She and her co-founder, pianist Hyejin Kwon, decided to call it Muse 9 Productions: because they would be multidisciplinary and welcoming of all the Muses, and because they wanted to create more opportunities for female creators and performers.

Their first project gives a taste of what’s to come: a dancer, an actor and a singer each performs an aspect of Virginia Woolf’s personality in a staging of Dominick Argento’s 1974 song cycle *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf* which was originally written for the British mezzo Janet Baker. Two piano pieces by a Woolf contemporary, American composer Amy Beach, round up the musical material. The show premiered in April this year at the Ernest Balmer Studio, and will be remounted and rethought for the natural lights of the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre at the Four Seasons Centre on November 13.

For the next year, Theodosakis promises an equally multidisciplinary project, but can’t say much until February, when they are due to hear back from the granting juries looking at their proposal. “It’s important for us to pay the artists, and next year we’re hoping to be able to pay the Equity minimum,” she says. Sometime in November, the company will post the official Call for Submission but, says Theodosakis, they are being continuously pitched by other artists on a weekly basis. “Hyejin and I are much inspired by our colleagues from other disciplines, and we really want to open the doors up for a wide range of projects.” Projects should be art-song based; everything else is up for grabs.

Virginia Woolf’s writing desk and chair from the premiere will return for the RBA performance, as will the same cast of three: English mezzo Victoria Marshall, dancer Renee Killough and actress Keshia Palm. To the diaries in Argento’s songs, spoken word excerpts are added from Woolf’s novels and letters. “All of them sing a little Keshia Palm. To the diaries in Argento’s songs, spoken word excerpts were added from Woolf’s novels and letters. “All of them sing a little bit, act a little bit and dance a little bit,” says Theodosakis. “The actress is Woolf’s public persona, the novelist that we all know. The singer is her more private, family persona – which we can find in letters. And the dancer stands for her innermost turmoil and depression, but also romance, and her love for Vita [Sackville-West].”

Of the cast trio, it was the dancer, Renee Killough, who was the biggest Woolf fan from the get-go and the originator of the project. Before they joined forces, Theodosakis was familiar with Woolf but hadn’t read her very much. “And now I’ve read everything and all of her letters. I couldn’t leave anything unread.” All three women came out of the project with a renewed love of Woolf. Her diary entries set to music by Argento will each have their own musical theme. “There is a through-line, and it’s very evocative material throughout. In a song about war you’re pretty much hearing shrapnel and bombs.”

When we talked, Theodosakis was directing the Glenn Gould School’s fall operas: Paul Hindemith’s *Back and Forth* and Bohuslav Martinů’s *Tears of the Knife*, which the School’s ensemble presents on November 2 and 3 at Mazzoleni Hall. Before the end of this year she’ll also be directing the COC’s opera for young audiences *WOW Factor: A Cinderella Story*, Joel Ivany and Stéphane Mayer’s adaptation of Rossini’s *La Cenerentola* for kids. It’s set in a middle-school talent competition.

Ivany is among her favourite stage directors, together with Paul Curran, Tim Albery (whom she’s assisted in COC’s *Arabella* and her U of T mentor, Michael Albano. And internationally? “Definitely Claus Guth. I was a young singer at Mozarteum in Salzburg when I went to the Salzburg Festival to see The Marriage of Figaro that he directed. I’ve never been a huge fan of The Marriage – I know this is minority view! – but in Guth’s production it’s treated like a tragedy, and at the end more weight is given to what was actually happening to these poor people. The Marriage is not a happy opera.”

**HAMILTON**

Hamilton’s first art song concert series announced itself on the Internet last month with a simple but elegant website: The Linden Project. Its founders are soprano Julie Ludvig (whom you may remember as a sparkling Adele in Opera 5’s *Die Fledermaus*) and baritone Jeremy Ludwig (whom you might have noticed in *Tongue in Cheek Productions’ 24-baritone/bass Winterreise* and Opera 5’s *The Boatswain’s Mate*). To set it all off on November 3 at St. Cuthbert’s Presbyterian is a concert billed, appropriately enough, as *The Song Sampler.* “Wondering what we’re all about? Get a flavour of what

**From the Diary of Virginia Woolf:** (from left) Victoria Marshall, Renee Killough and Keshia Palm
we mean by art song. We’re dedicated to the core of this repertoire, but also not afraid to do something different, “reads the refreshingly straightforward promo copy for the concert. The program is another praiseworthy move, available well in advance and downloadable. It shows a selection spanning Italian and English Baroque, fin de siècle French and Austrians, 20th-century Brits and post-1970s sophisticated pop classics.

“We love art song, and we’d like to introduce Hamiltonians to some of the music that we find so meaningful,” writes back Julie Ludwig when I email the couple to learn more about their plans for the series. “To our knowledge, The Linden Project is the first of its kind in Hamilton.”

There are other concert series, of course, but none that are dedicated exclusively to song repertoire. Hamilton is an eclectic city: several choirs, lots of musical theatre, the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, and a very active rock and folk scene. We want to bring together both kinds of audiences: those who already enjoy classical music, and those who might not be familiar with it but are open to trying something new.”

The idea for a song concert series came to the Ludwigs soon after they moved to Hamilton in 2014. Each had given song recitals there and “It was the response to those recitals that encouraged us to start The Linden Project. We both love art song — how much room there is for expression and how closely the music is linked to the poetry — and we saw how the audiences at our recitals appreciated the music, much of which had been unfamiliar.”

“They’re starting off with just two recitals in the pilot season, both of which will be sung by them. “We definitely intend to involve other singers in the future,” writes Julie in reply to my question about their programming plans. “Each program will be centred around a theme and will include a mix of standard and more obscure rep. As much as possible, we intend to include music by living Canadian composers. Without giving too much away, we have a few ideas kicking around for future recitals, such as commissioning new works, commissioning illustrations for our projections, incorporating theatrical elements.”

The venues will change with each new concert. “We intend to select venues that are appropriate for the repertoire on each program. Churches and small concert halls are very practical, of course, but we also want to bring our concerts to other Hamilton locations.”

The inaugural do, The Song Sampler at St. Cuthbert’s Presbyterian, “is a kind of a survey of the genre, with a couple selections that lie on the periphery of what some might consider art song,” she writes. “We’ll include projections of condensed translations paired with one or two images to help convey the gist of what each song is about, so the audience is better able to watch the performance instead of having to read everything in the program. We also intend to speak a little about the songs in order to help the audience enter more deeply into them, but our goal is to be approachable, not lecture.”

ART OF SONG QUICK PICKS

- **NOV 4, 2PM:** 13A Robina Ave, Toronto. “Art Song in House Masterclass.” Bass-baritone Daniel Lichti, associate professor emeritus, Faculty of Music at Wilfrid Laurier University, opens up his voice coaching practice — and his living room — to the public in this part-salon, part-masterclass. This one is for the song nerds. Soprano Sinead White and baritone Adam Kuiack with pianist Narnina Efendiyeva, and Lichti in the coach chair. $20, proceeds go to singers and the pianist.
- **NOV 11, 2PM:** Mazzoleni Concert Hall at the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto. “L’invitation au voyage.” A song recital with soprano Joyce El-Khoury and mezzo-soprano Beste Kalender. Some well-trodden repertoire (Duparc, Debussy) and some seldom-heard. The program promises “Levantine songs.” Turkish composers, Middle-Eastern motifs in the works of Western composers? Or Middle-Eastern motifs in the works of Western composers? Tickets start at $30.

Lydia Perović is an arts journalist in Toronto. Send her your art-of-song news to artofsong@thewholenote.com.
By Leaps and Bounds
Iterative Opera from AtG

CHRISTOPHER HOILE

When Canada’s largest opera company commissions a new opera like Hadrian from Rufus Wainwright and Daniel MacIvor, it will necessarily be seen as the major event of the season. Yet we should not forget that Toronto’s smaller opera companies have been creating new operas and new interpretations of opera all along. One of the most exciting of these is Against the Grain Theatre which will be presenting two important operas this season. The first is BOUND v. 2 by composer Kevin Lau to a libretto by AtG artistic director Joel Ivany. The second is a major revival of Copernicus, the only opera by Québecois composer Claude Vivier (1948-83). I spoke with Ivany in October about BOUND v. 2, which plays for only three performances in November, about its background and intent.

BOUND v. 2 is the second stage in AtG’s experiment with a three-year, concept-to-realization production. The first stage, simply titled BOUND, premiered in December 2017 and presented the basic concept of artists choosing various arias and ensembles by George Frideric Handel to which Ivany would write new lyrics. The premise was that seven citizens were detained by a government and held against their will in a waiting room. The audience watched and heard about their struggles, hopes and fears. Composer Lau introduced new sound ideas and arrangements to place the arias in a modern sound world. BOUND v. 2 takes BOUND a significant step further. BOUND v. 2 is no longer a collection of reimagined, repurposed Handel arias that Lau has arranged. Rather it is now a fully fledged opera by Lau inspired by Handel. As Ivany says: “Kevin Lau received a commission for this project between last year and this year. What he’s written will be used in our third and final version. In the last month or six weeks he’s really immersed himself in the world of Handel to essentially write a brand new opera which, especially for us, is kind of unreal. Typically we’ve taken a Mozart or Puccini opera and written a new story on top of that which is familiar and exciting. But for this, Lau has done more than arranging. He is adding his own composition so that this is truly a new piece inspired by Handel about the humanity crises which we, unfortunately, are still reading about in the news. We’re still hearing these stories about persecuted people both in North America and abroad.”

The first version of BOUND was written for seven soloists and piano. BOUND v. 2 is written for four soloists and a ten-piece chamber orchestra with electronics. Of BOUND v. 2, Ivany says: “It is further fleshed-out musically in that Kevin has taken melodies and scenes but written them brand new. The opera is by Kevin Lau but you will definitely say this sounds like Handel.”

Why do this? Ivany explains: “Many people around the first version were saying why not just write a brand new piece, but Kevin very intellectually says this is a unique challenge to take these stories [by Handel] which were written in a specific context and to start with them. But then to move them somewhere else is compositionally an unusually interesting creative challenge. For the company, this is a further step after our Orphée where we take these tunes and melodies that have stood the test of time and ask what they could sound like to an ear of today.”

The obvious question is that if BOUND v. 2 will eventually be the basis for a new opera, why retain the link to Handel? Ivany responds to this in several ways: “At one point we were talking to [COC general director] Alexander Neef, who was talking about the party atmosphere of Handel and how people would go to socialize at the opera. He was curious about what a Handel mashup with AtG could look like. We took that idea and instead of going the party...
before getting down to sampling November’s wares, a couple of highlights from October are still reverberating in my thoughts. Djanet Sear’s searing and award-winning play Harlem Duet, while not really music theatre, is yet described by the playwright as a “rhapsodic blues tragedy.” As seen in the powerful production recently at Tarragon Theatre directed by the playwright, and with subtle live instrumental music accompanying and underscoring the action, it uses the form and structure of the blues to give shape and resonance to a reworking of Shakespeare’s Othello from the point of view of his first love, Billie, exploring the emotional and social politics of race and gender over three time periods.

Unequivocally grounded in the music theatre scene, the Canadian Musical Theatre Project’s Festival of New Musicals at Toronto’s CAA Theatre (as well as at Sheridan College where it is based) gave audiences the fun and excitement of being witness to the first public steps being taken by four new musicals currently in progress, promising great things to come both in terms of top-notch new musical shows and a whole new generation of excellent musical theatre performers.

November runs the gamut of riches of what we refer to as “Music Theatre,” offering an interesting chance to compare the recipes of its various subgenres. Music is always the essential ingredient in the recipe however much it may vary in style, tone, period or character. Story is also essential but after that the proportion of the other ingredients can vary extremely. Beyond the words of a libretto or book of a musical, how much will spoken dialogue, solo, duet, bridge or song lyrics be used in each creation? How much movement will a director decide on, or a project dictate, from simple or stylized staging to complex detailed choreography?

**Poppins:** Starting with established recipes this coming month, Young People’s Theatre is presenting the Broadway hit Mary Poppins (November 5 to January 6) which uses the traditional Broadway musical recipe of spoken dialogue, melodic show tunes and theatrical choreography to tell a beloved children’s story in a version shortened to appeal to families and younger children. An annual tradition, and always well received, the show this year will be directed by Thom Allison and choreographed by Kerry Gage.

**Ain’t Too Proud:** Over at the Princess of Wales Theatre until November 17, Des McAnuff’s new “jukebox musical” Ain’t Too Proud has taken up residence for a while on the long out-of-town road to Broadway. A thrilling recreation of the life story of “Motown’s greatest group” the Temptations – with superb singing and dancing – the book and structure are still undergoing changes. This gives us a fascinating glimpse into the development of what may become another monster hit for the director following his other award-winning jukebox smash, Jersey Boys. This musical format has an obvious appeal for fans but also unique obstacles to overcome: how do you package all the biographical information in a way that is interesting for an audience without it becoming just a linear storyline peppered with songs? How can you best interweave the songs into the story so that they are more than just stepping stones along the way? The secret seems to be identifying an underlying theme that can dictate an arc for the show that can include all the top hits and at the same time provide a satisfying journey for the audience to share. From the performance I saw, Ain’t Too Proud is close, with an unstoppable cast and a thrilling first act. If the second act can be given a tighter, bolder shape and the hinted-at themes strengthened, this could turn into not just a fun show but a powerful one, as well.

Christopher Hoile is a Toronto-based writer on opera and theatre. He can be contacted at opera@thewholenote.com.
Uncovered: At the Musical Stage Company it is time for the annual Uncovered concert series, this year focusing on the songs of Joni Mitchell and Carole King – at Koerner Hall November 13 to 15 and at the George Weston Recital Hall November 21. While at first glance this might seem to be a straightforward jukebox event, it is anything but. What fascinated me about the Uncovered series when I first came across it was finding out from artistic director Mitchell Cushman that the impetus for the series was to explore the stories inherent in popular songs. From an in-studio exploration involving himself, the singers and music director Reza Jacobs, the goal is to come up with a new arrangement for each song that will enhance the story and singers and music director Reza Jacobs, the goal is to come up with a new arrangement for each song that will enhance the story and perhaps recast it slightly to give the audience a new experience of an old favourite. These newly arranged songs are then built into a story-telling structure for the evening that encompasses the individual stories in an overall biographical arc. This year, headlining the experience is Joni Mitchell and Linda Kash as Carole King.

Dance: Over on the dance side of the music theatre spectrum, three events stand out, evidencing very different mixes of story, movement and music, even though, obviously, words apart from those in the librettos are absent from the stage.

Frederick Ashton’s The Dream, a long-beloved ballet version of one of Shakespeare’s greatest plays A Midsummer Night’s Dream, appears as part of the National Ballet of Canada’s fall season mixed program, November 21 to 25.

I am always fascinated to see how well Shakespeare’s plays – which are, of course, made up of some of the most beautifully crafted words in the English language – will work when translated into pure movement, and this is one of the best. Mendelssohn’s music which forms the score is also much beloved and long associated with the play as well as the ballet.

Also at the NBoC from November 10 to 18, is the North American premiere of a much more experimental story ballet, Anna Karenina, choreographed by one of the modern masters of the story ballet, John Neumeier. While based on Tolstoy’s 19th-century novel of the tragic romance between Anna Karenina and Count Vronsky, this is apparently not a straightforward telling of that story but rather a reflection on the original. Interestingly, the choreographer made the decision to bring the story into the modern day to unearth more contemporary nuances. I am a longtime fan of Neumeier’s Don Juan but I am intrigued to see how he will maintain the power of the specific historic context of this novel – particularly the suffocating rules and mores of the society that trap Anna in an increasingly desperate and unhappy path to the final tragic decision to end her life by famously stepping in front of a train. How much will the choreography be literal storytelling and how much more abstract movement exploring the emotional content of the story’s highlights and themes? Musically it will also be interesting with the score combining the classical dramatic power of Tchaikovsky with the more modern eclectic sounds of Alfred Schnittke and Cat Stevens’ YusufIslam.

Red Sky: The third dance theatre piece is more modern and yet more primal: the world premiere of Truce, the latest creation conceived and directed by Sandra Laronde for Red Sky Performance with choreography by her usual collaborator (and lead dancer) Jera Wolfe at the Berkeley Street Theatre from October 30 to November 11.

Continuing a theme of exploring the traditional legends and beliefs of the Anishinaabe people, Trace aims to map the Anishinaabe sky and stars offering a glimpse at our origins and looking ahead to our possible evolution.

In the second year of a residency at Canadian Stage, where their Dora award-winning show Backbone debuted last fall, Red Sky have an increasingly strong presence on both the national and international scene. What gives their best pieces power is a unique combination of elements: the rich traditional stories and legends of the Anishinaabe people, the physically powerful and yet flexible dance vocabulary inspired by both modern and Indigenous dance forms, a mix of music that evokes a traditional First Nations atmosphere – which can then expand beyond evincing a mix of influences – and an increasingly sophisticated use of moving imagery with the use of video projections to echo and enhance the live work onstage.

Projections are being used far more frequently by almost every type of theatrical endeavour and really fall more under the category of design rather than the list of recipe ingredients I have been talking about, and yet for Red Sky they have become an increasingly important element of the creation of each project, although in the case of Miigis, it was the living backdrop of historic Fort York against the living urban landscape of Toronto that set the scene.

An interesting debate could be had about the impact of design on the success of theatrical works and how much they contribute to each piece’s intrinsic value, particularly as the barriers between genres are increasingly being bent and broken down.

All in all, November will be an exciting month with a music theatre menu to suit all tastes.

Toronto-based “lifelong theatre person” Jennifer (Jenny) Parr works as a director, fight director, stage manager and coach, and is equally crazy about movies and musicals.
Cultivating Community

WENDALYN BARTLEY

In last month’s column, I wrote about the Music Gallery’s X Avant festival and the vision of the Halluci Nation. From both my personal experience of attending some of the concerts and from talking to other concertgoers, it was an exciting and exciting four days of listening to a wide and diverse array of music which also helped to further expand the Halluci Nation community. The last set on the Sunday evening (October 14) saw A Tribe Called Red performing together with other featured musicians to bring the whole festival to an exhilarating close. For this month’s column, I’d like to pursue this thread of building community further, and talk about other ways this is happening amongst presenters, composers and performers of new music in the city.

Arraymusic

Starting this fall, Arraymusic has appointed a new artistic director, percussionist David Schotzko. He succeeds Martin Arnold who stepped down to pursue a wonderful opportunity to teach at Trent University. Fortunately, Arnold will be staying on as artistic associate as well as continuing to curate his Rat-drifting series which will happen on December 7 and January 11 of this current season. I had a chance to speak with Schotzko about his vision moving forward for Arraymusic, and also to Allison Cameron whose music will be the focus of a mini-festival occurring on November 23 and 24.

Schotzko moved to Toronto in 2011 and has had an active career as a performer for several new music ensembles including Esprit Orchestra, New Music Concerts and also as a member of the Array Ensemble. Prior to 2011 he performed in New York City where he was a founding member of the acclaimed International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). In addition to performing, he also has been involved in composer advocacy work throughout his career.

We spoke about where Array has been in the past and the direction that Schotzko would like to take in the future. Historically, the ensemble has generally had composers or composer-performers as artistic directors, and was focused around specific individual performers developing repertoire for a quirky instrumentation of two percussion, piano, violin, double bass, trumpet and clarinet. Once these original players moved on in their careers, it’s been challenging Schotzko said, to replace them.

With both Arnold and Rick Sacks (AD from 2011 to 2016), the process of moving away from the original instrumentation began. Coming from a performing background, Schotzko would like to create an ensemble with a regular group of individuals who are able to perform more and more without a conductor. Essentially, he wishes to move the group towards becoming a true chamber ensemble – an ensemble similar to a string quartet who perform together for years without a conductor and have a unique way of both rehearsing and performing together. This is challenging to achieve with an ever-changing group comprised of freelance musicians.

Schotzko sees adding more artistic associates such as Arnold in the future and broadening the range of voices coming out of Array. One step in this direction has been the signing of the Canadian League of Composers Gender Parity Pledge. The issue of balanced programming has surfaced in several of my columns over the last year or more, making this recent initiative by the CLC all the more welcome.

The pledge is intended for presenters across the country to adopt and can be read in full on their website. It begins with these words: “We pledge to achieve or maintain gender parity in our programming and commissioning by our 2022/23 season. We welcome the opportunity to add our voice to a growing international movement that acknowledges artistic choices must be representative of the gender diversity within the community of creators.” This is a direction that Array has already taken on and their programming is already at 50/50, Schotzko said.

Array will also continue its community-based focus through a commitment to co-productions with several resident artists and organizations, such as the Thin Edge New Music Collective, the Evergreen Club Gamelan and Frequency Freaks, amongst others, as well as presenting mini-festivals highlighting the music of specific composers, such as the one featuring Allison Cameron’s music, an event planned during Arnold’s tenure as artistic director.

Allison Cameron

The mini-fest will present a variety of pieces that Cameron has created over the years, including composed works as well as improvised music. Her current group c_RL will perform both nights, first with the Arrayensemble on November 23 and on their own on November 24. c_RL is an innovative improvising trio featuring Cameron, electronics/found objects/keyboards; Germaine Liu, percussion; and Nicole Ramperaux, trumpet. The composed works on November 23 will include a newly commissioned piece from Array (which for now is remaining untitled), Kid Baltan, and In Memoriam Robert Ashley. Kid Baltan was written for Dutch composer Dick Raaijmakers in 2013; its title is the alias that Raaijmakers gave himself during the late 1950s when he was creating some of the first electropop music ever written. It is a graphic score for mixed ensemble and was first performed at The Music Gallery’s X Avant festival with Trio 7090 and others from Toronto and Amsterdam. Cameron wrote this piece for Louis Andriessen’s 75th birthday and has reworked the piece for the current instrumentation of the Array Ensemble plus c_RL.

Allison Cameron

We spoke at length about the aesthetic vision behind both the newly commissioned work and the more recent pieces that use graphic scores, and she told me about one inspiring experience she had a few years ago in Amsterdam that has significantly influenced her thinking. It occurred when she met with the performers for a rehearsal of one of her works. The performers had all received their parts ahead of time, but had not had a chance to practise on their own. Cameron was quite surprised by how the music unfolded. “It was like they were coming to the score without preconceptions. It was very refreshing and innocent-like.”

Cameron realized she had structured the score in a more open way, allowing each player to make their own unique contributions. This experience inspired her to create pieces with more flexibility. “I used to write things where everything had to be perfect, where this note had to happen at this time.” With so little time and money for extensive rehearsals, this became a very frustrating experience and she wanted to find a way of moving away from the constraints of the rehearsal environment in order to create pieces that allowed players more freedom to contribute to the overall work.

The newly commissioned piece we will hear on November 23 has several short movements that can be changed around and played in no particular order. Some aspects are fixed and others are mobile, and the graphic score allows the players to make their own decisions. Over the years, Cameron has created various performing ensembles that
have given her a platform to develop her own performing skills and to create work for a consistent instrumentation. Participating within the improvisational community in Toronto and developing relationships with performers has been a key aspect of her creative process that has also influenced her compositional practice. The second night of the festival will be dedicated to her improvised music with one set featuring c_RL and one solo set.

A Mini-Tour of Upcoming Concerts

Continuing with the theme of community building, here is a short walk through some of the events happening in November within new music.

First of all, it’s noteworthy to see the influence of Array’s contribution beyond their own activities as two of their resident ensembles will be presenting concerts this month. The Thin Edge New Music Collective are performing at the Canadian Music Centre on November 8 and the Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan will be appearing at the Aga Khan Museum on November 25 with a premiere of a new work by Canadian composer Peter Hatch. Also, c_RL member Germaine Liu will be teaming up with Sarah Hennies for a concert of percussion pieces on December 6 at the CMC.

Veteran composer and influential educator John Beckwith has a new work titled *Meanwhile*, for marimba and piano, which will be played by percussionist Zac Pulak (who commissioned it) and pianist Edana Higham at the CMC on November 22 at 5:30pm [not in our listings]. The piece, which received its first performance this past July in Ottawa, can be viewed on YouTube.

Esprit Orchestra’s concert on November 28 will feature works by Alexina Louie and Murray Schafer, as well as a piece by Icelandic composer Anna Thorvaldsdottir, who was chosen in 2015 as the New York Philharmonic’s Kravis Emerging Composer. She is currently composer-in-residence with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra and Esprit will be performing *Dreaming*, her work from 2008. Schafer’s 1973 composition, *North/White*, sets the stage for an North-inspired evening, with Louie’s *Take the Dog Sled* capturing the essence of life in the Arctic.

Early in the month on November 2, Continuum Contemporary Music begins its new season with “Super Hot Sax,” featuring saxophonist Wallace Halladay in a number of works. This new season Continuum’s programming features 60 percent female composers, works that engage with new technologies and their newly expanded ensemble. The November 2 concert is dedicated to the memory of Daniel Cooper, a longtime supporter of contemporary chamber music in Toronto. Cooper’s commissioned work *The Wind Wreaths My Words* by composer Jimmie LeBlanc will receive its world premiere.

On November 11, the Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal will be performing in Toronto as part of their *Generation2018* Canadian tour presenting works by four emerging composers. Toronto’s New Music Concerts will be hosting this project as they have since 2000. The featured composers selected from across the country will be interviewed as part of the performance and audiences will be able to vote for their favourite work.

NMC will then continue their season on December 2 with a program of works selected by Michael Koerner who has served on their board since 1978. The concert includes works by several key composers from the 20th century: Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, Charles Ives, Elliott Carter and Murray Schafer, whose *String Quartet No. 6 “Parting Wild Horse’s Mane”* was a commissioned work from Koerner.

And finally, a community building workshop on November 25 hosted by the Music Gallery will feature composer-improviser Anne Bourne guiding participants through various text scores by Pauline Oliveros. This will be the first of four opportunities this season to experience Oliveros’ Deep Listening process through listening and sounding and is aimed towards cultivating a shared creative expression.

Wendalyn Bartley is a Toronto-based composer and electro-vocal sound artist. sounddreaming@gmail.com.
Creative Community without Boundaries

Andrew Timar

In my story on the Festival of Arabic Music and Art (FAMA) in my October 2018 column I explored the GTA’s Arabic music scene. That festival is still in full swing, so consult our concert listings for details or visit the festival website at CanadianArabicOrchestra.ca/FAMA.

This month we are taking a peek into the world of Chinese orchestras in the GTA, a form of community music-making long hidden from audiences outside its various host communities. Then we join an early world-music adapter, the American composer, percussionist and conductor Adam Rudolph as he returns to the Music Gallery to explore the implications of dastgah (melodic-modal systems) with Toronto tar player and Persian classical music advocate Araz Salek.

The Chinese Orchestra

While ensemble music has been practised on a sophisticated level in Chinese aristocratic courts for some three millennia, I am referring here to the modern Chinese orchestra, as currently performed in China and overseas Chinese communities, which began its development in the 1920s, modelled on both the instrumentation of the regional Chinese Jiangnan sihzu ensemble and the organization of the Western symphony orchestra. Such orchestras use Chinese instruments divided into four sections: winds, plucked strings, bowed strings and Chinese percussion. They typically play modernized traditional music often called guoyue (literally “national music”), or adaptations of Western works.

In terms of the dawn of Chinese instrumental music in Canada, the relevant Canadian Encyclopedia entry states that Chinese emigration to Canada – specifically to the Fraser River Gold Rush in British Columbia – began in 1858, mostly from Kwangtung (Canton) Province. Already by the 1870s there were three Cantonese opera clubs established in Victoria, BC.

The production of Cantonese opera required about six instrumentalists, and this led to the founding of music clubs apart from opera clubs. These music associations, as exemplified by the Ching Won Musical Society (founded in Vancouver in 1936), performed for many types of Chinese community activities.

Chinese orchestras in the GTA

The Chinese community in Toronto was established around 1877, with an initial population of two laundry owners. The community grew considerably during the 20th century when, again according to the Canadian Encyclopedia, professional troupes from Hong Kong were frequently invited to perform Cantonese opera until the 1980s, when the expansion of the Chinese community provided performers for locally produced Cantonese opera, often featuring artists from abroad. As well, local companies such as the United Dramatic Society in Toronto, the Wah Shing Music Group in Ottawa, and the Yuet Sing Chinese Musical Club in Montreal provided training and experience for Canadian performers.

As I am a newbie to this world, I phoned Amely Zhou, an erhu musician and Chinese orchestra insider. Trained in both Chinese and Western music, she began her music studies at an early age in the city of Shenzhen, in southeastern China. “After immigrating to Canada in 2007,” she told me, “I joined the Toronto Chinese Orchestra where I served for ten years as the bowed string section assistant principal, as well as conductor of the TYCO, its Youth Orchestra.”

She pointed out that beginning with the TCO, today there appear to be four Chinese orchestras active in the GTA: Toronto Chinese Orchestra (1993-), Ontario Chinese Orchestra (2007-), North America Chinese Orchestra (2011-), and Canadian Chinese Orchestra (2017-).

The Canadian Chinese Orchestra (NACO), was formed by several Mandarin-speaking top-ranking Chinese music conservatories, led by Peter Bok, they have produced a regular series of concerts ever since.

The TCO: Despite ample evidence of a century and a half of Chinese music making in Canada, it wasn’t until 1993 that the Toronto Chinese Orchestra was established by a group of Chinese traditional music enthusiasts. According to its website, the “TCO is the largest Chinese orchestra in Ontario and the longest running in Canada. Members include professional and amateur musicians trained in Asia as well as Canada.”

The TCO presents its next concert, “Scenic Sojourn: A night of Chinese Music,” at Yorkminster Citadel on December 1. In addition to works by Chinese composers, the TCO performs works by the emerging Toronto composers Matthew van Driel (Whiteout) and Marko Koumoulos (Reincarnation Suite), indicating an active engagement with the non-Chinese music community.

The Canadian Chinese Orchestra: Chinese orchestras in the GTA appear to be affiliated along linguistic and cultural lines, reflecting Cantonese and Mandarin origins. How does the CCO fit into this context? “In establishing the CCO I was motivated by a desire to reach out to the various Canadian Chinese communities, as well as to the Canadian public in general” said Zhou. “I believe we are Canadians first, so I wanted to include musicians from various Chinese communities, from newcomers to musicians born here.”

The CYCO mounted its most ambitious project to date in the summer of 2018: a five-city tour of the Cantonese region of China. “It came about through an invitation from the president of the Overseas Nanhai International Students Association,” stated Zhou, “partly funded by the Cultural Department of the government of China.”

It’s part of a trend of the GTA’s Chinese orchestras performing in the motherland, made possible through the Chinese government’s sponsorship of cultural exchange between overseas and mainland Chinese communities. It reflects 150 years of region-of-origin (Cantonese in this case) affiliations, transnational business links, and a trend of Canadian cities “sistering” with Chinese cities of similar industry

Amely Zhou

“I founded the Canadian Chinese Orchestra (CCO) last year and serve as the CCO’s artistic director and conductor. We actually have three groups under the CCO banner: the Canadian Philharmonic Chinese Orchestra made up of amateur adult musicians and the Canadian Youth Chinese Orchestra (CYCO). The third group is a cadre of professional musicians who serve as section leaders. These contract artists teach our CYCO and CPCO musicians, while also performing as soloists in our concerts.”

What about the other Chinese orchestras in our region? “In 2007 the Ontario Chinese Orchestra (OCO) was founded by graduates of top-ranking Chinese music conservatories,” replied Zhou. “Led by Peter Bok, they have produced a regular series of concerts ever since.”

More recently another performing group, the North American Chinese Orchestra (NACO), was formed by several Mandarin-speaking musicians in 2011, added Zhou.

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focus, all connected via cultural links. For instance, both cities of Nanhai and Jiangmen, located in the Cantonese region of China and on CYCO’s 2018 tour itinerary, have sistered with the City of Markham, reflecting the commercial interests of high tech companies.

CCO’s November 17 concert at the Mary Ward Catholic Secondary School Theatre is conducted by Amely Zhou and Wang Yi. The concert features repertoire reflecting various regional Chinese folk genres. Here are some highlights.

The CCO’s young prize-winning Canadian-born dizi (bamboo transverse flute) soloist Sophie Du is accompanied by the CCO in an orchestrated Taiwanese folk song inspired by a scene of tea pickers in the Lugu mountains.

Racing Horses, an erhu standard, was composed by Haihuai Huang. Depicting horses racing on the vast Mongolian grassland it is performed by the CCO erhu section together, evoking the sound of a large herd of galloping horses. The concert closes with Flower Festival (1960s). Composed by Xuran Ye as a pipa solo, it is based on a Sichuan folk song; it has been arranged by Zhou for the CCO for this concert.

Dastgah: Go: Organic Orchestra

Coincidentally, also on November 17 the Music Gallery and New Ambient Modes present “Dastgah: Go: Organic Orchestra.” The concert will be curated by Araz Salek, the Toronto tar (Persian long necked lute) player, and conducted by American world music pioneer Adam Rudolph.

Adam Rudolph embarked on a career as a jazz percussionist in Chicago in the late 1960s. He was eager however to expand his musical world view. In 1977 he travelled to West Africa to live and study music, experiencing drumming, singing and dancing, as well as trance ceremonies.

He shares on his blog that in 1978 he “lived in [trumpeter, pioneer of world fusion jazz] Don Cherry’s house in the Swedish countryside.” Cherry inspired Rudolph to “start composing and showed him about [free-jazz pioneer] Ornette Coleman’s concepts and the connection of music to nature.” Back in the USA Rudolph and kora player Jali Foday Musa Suso co-founded The Mandingo Griot Society in 1978, combining aspects of African and American music. He explored Moroccan Gnawa music in the 1980s with sintir (three-stringed bass lute) player and singer Hassan Haktmoun. His music-making and composing has continued to grow over the decades, resulting in a large number of ensemble projects, reflected in over 90 album releases.

Rudolph often sets discussions of his approach to music in a philosophical frame. Case in point, in an April 2017 Downbeat interview by John Ephland, Rudolph evocatively talks about “shooting the arrow and then painting a bullseye around it” when describing his music creation process. He also reports undertaking a rigorous study of North Indian tabla for over 15 years with leading tabla virtuoso and teacher Taranath Rao (1915-1991), crediting Rao with imparting the notion of music as a “form of yoga – the unity of mind, body and spirit…”

Founded two decades ago, Rudolph’s Go: Organic Orchestra is a culmination of a lifetime of musical and philosophical searches, embracing music forms and cosmologies from around the world. His compositional and operational modus operandi is built on a three-page score with graphic notation elements he calls matrices and cosmograms. It’s evidently been successful: over the last ten years Rudolph has conducted several dozen Go: Organic Orchestra residencies throughout Europe, North America and in Turkey.

Toronto’s Music Gallery first presented Go: Organic Orchestra in 2016, inviting 15 eclectic Toronto musicians to play under Rudolph’s direction. Araz Salek, the only musician in the ensemble whose primary background was outside of jazz or Western classical music, was particularly inspired by the experience.

Salek: Born in Iran in 1980, Araz Salek began his tar tutelage at a young age and continued studying classical radif (sets of Persian melodic figures preserved through oral tradition) with master tar musicians. He began an active performing career in Tehran.

Moving to Toronto in 2005 however blew open the doors of Salek’s strict Persian classical music training. While establishing himself in his new home, he quickly began to learn and perform with a wide variety of musicians practicing in numerous musical traditions. In addition to gigging nationally and internationally as a tar player, in 2017 he founded Labyrinth Ontario, dedicated to presenting music workshops and concerts focused on global modal music traditions.

I’ve been involved in a number of concert projects with Salek for over 12 years. I am however not personally involved in Dastgah: Go, so I called Salek late in October to get the skinny.

“Adam Rudolph’s 2016 Music Gallery concert,” he began “was a stunning experience for me. As you know I have an extensive background in Iranian classical music. When I arrived in Toronto I continued my tar practice, but also engaged with the local free improvisation scene. On occasion however, I felt lost in the midst of such freedom, particularly when compared with my own rigorous training and practice in Iranian music.

Working with Adam, on the other hand, says, felt substantially different than playing free improv. “What really amazed me was how his use of graphic matrices defined not only tonal [and rhythmic] structures, but also freed individual musicians to make choices within them. It was the best of both worlds for me, combining the liberty of free improv with the kind of modal structures I’m most comfortable with. In that way, the 2016 concert was personally an inspiring moment. I wanted the opportunity to expand that musical experience. I made a proposal to Adam: to develop his score by including aspects of Iranian tonal systems. He agreed and our Dastgah: Go: Organic Orchestra project was born.

“The 15 Toronto musicians chosen for the November 17 concert are divided roughly into two instrumental categories: a Western group and an Iranian group. “I will be conducting a series of ear training sessions for the musicians to develop their perception of the micro-tonal intervals in some of the traditional Iranian modes,” Salek says. “An interesting cross-cultural instrument in our orchestra will be a retuned acoustic piano. This used to be done in 20th-century Iran, but was found to be too costly, and moreover could only accommodate a very limited number of tonal modes. We’ve revived this practice for this concert. I will prove, I think, that even an instrument with fixed tuning like the piano can be accommodated to perform with Iranian instruments.”

Rudolph’s improvisationally conducted spontaneous orchestrations will no doubt be substantially complicated – and enriched – by Salek’s Iranian contributions.

The multicultural dynamics of Dastgah: Go: Organic Orchestra aptly express Rudolph’s creative vision of our shared humanity. As he states on his website, “It is a realization of creative community in a world without boundaries; of culture as the vessel for understanding, empathy and sharing.” It’s a fitting legacy for an early adopter of a single-minded approach to world music.

Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer. He can be contacted at worldmusic@thewholenote.com.

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Beat by Beat | Jazz Notes

Take (A High) Five, JPEC
STEVE WALLACE

The Jazz Performance and Education Centre (JPEC) is now in its tenth year – my, that went fast – and is celebrating the milestone with a special concert on November 24 at the Aga Khan Museum called “The Music of Dave Brubeck and Paul Desmond.” It will feature Remi Bolduc on alto saxophone and arrangements; Bernie Senensky on piano; Reg Schwager on guitar; Terry Clarke on drums; and yours truly on bass. With well over 30 concerts under its belt to date, and many other presentations and initiatives, JPEC has become an integral part of the Toronto jazz scene. To mark the occasion I recently did an email interview with Ray Koskie, who, along with his wife Rochelle, is co-founder of JPEC.

I’ve known Ray (a retired founding partner of the law firm Koskie Minsky) and Rochelle (a retired schoolteacher) casually as dedicated jazz fans for close to 40 years now. As JPEC is clearly a labour of love for this jazz-loving couple, I decided to begin by asking Ray a little about how he and Rochelle became such avid fans.

WN: How did you and Rochelle catch the jazz bug?
RK: We both grew up in Forest Hill and met when we were in our late teens. Rochelle was a couple of years younger but way ahead of me; she was already musically educated, played piano and cello and had accumulated some jazz records. I mostly teethed on stuff my father listened to at home – Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and so on. Live jazz was kind of the soundtrack to our romance as some of our first dates were at the Town Tavern, where, thanks to part-owner and manager Sammy Berger, we were able to get in despite being underage. He took a shine to us for some reason and made a spot for us in the back room where we could nurse Cokes and split a club sandwich – about all we could afford in those days – while listening all night to incredible music by the likes of the Oscar Peterson Trio with Ray Brown and Herb Ellis, Art Blakey, Illinois Jacquet, Jackie and Roy, Ben Webber and many others. It became clear before too long that we were both hooked and we’ve never looked back.

I graduated from Law School around 1961 and we got married and eventually started a family. The late, great John Norris was a big part of us getting to know more about jazz in those years and during this time we became regulars at Bourbon Street where we heard the likes of Chet Baker, Barney Kessel, Dexter Gordon, Al and Zoot, Paul Desmond and so many of the great Toronto players – Ed Bickert, Don Thompson, Bernie Senensky and Terry Clarke, among many others. In fact, that’s where we first heard you play, Steve. The rhythm section for the upcoming Brubeck/Desmond concert with Bernie, Terry and you is a nod toward those days. After Bourbon Street closed we frequented both the Café des Copains and the Montreal Bistro where we enjoyed the hospitality of Brigitte and Lothar Lang while hearing great music from people like Johnny Guarneri, Jim Galloway, Doc Cheatham, Rob McConnell, Jay McShann, Geoff Keezer, Dave McKenna, Oliver Jones, Joe Sealy and so many others.

How did JPEC get started?
After The Top O’ the Senator and the Montreal Bistro closed we were approached by some other well-known Toronto jazz people to help in obtaining alternative jazz venues and as result a working committee was formed. Part of this involved examining the concept of the successful Jazz At Lincoln Center (JALC), which we thought might be a new model for presenting jazz in Toronto. Following a tour of that beautiful facility and being supplied with certain pertinent documents, we recommended to the committee that this approach – i.e. becoming a not-for-profit charitable organization – might be the best way to go under the circumstances. Although this might prove more challenging than creating another jazz club, we felt it would likely have a longer shelf life. As a result, JPEC was incorporated in August 2008 as a not-for-profit charitable organization.

What were some of the early challenges?
Some members of the committee felt that the charitable organization route, while laudable, was too ambitious, which led to certain people leaving who were replaced by those who believed more in the JALC concept. Lack of funding was an early problem with respect to meeting some of our objectives, but various fundraising events were held and Toronto jazz fans really pitched in. When we began to make progress certain members of the TO jazz community mistakenly seemed to believe that we were in competition with their endeavours even though we were all supposedly working for the same cause, namely the furtherance of jazz. We went on to succeed despite such misguided thinking because there were many others who supported our efforts and believed in our objectives.

What are those objectives?
To provide performance opportunities for Toronto’s jazz musicians, including jazz students, and to properly compensate them. To promote jazz in this city and reach out to new audiences. An educational element, namely to present community-based workshops in underserved areas at schools having little, if any, music education. This is something Rochelle, as a former schoolteacher, feels very strongly about. And eventually to establish a fulltime jazz hub similar in concept to, but smaller than, JALC.

After the inevitable early struggles, what kind of support have you received over the years?
We’ve been lucky to have the benefit of corporate sponsors such as TD Bank, BPA, LiUNA and private donors such as Jack Long of Long...
& McQuade, who has supported jazz so generously over the years. My law firm Koskie Minsky absorbs our administrative costs, which leaves more money for fulfilling our mandate. JPEC has been blessed with a talented board of directors and many other dedicated volunteers who have worked tirelessly to help deliver our mission.

How does JPEC plan its concert programming and choose the venues?

We try to present both international jazz stars and Toronto-based talent and often to combine them in one concert or even one band, as for example with Americans Ernie Watts and Brad Goode recently being backed by a crack Toronto rhythm section of Adrean Farrugia, Neil Swainson and Terry Clarke, with Rich Brown’s band opening. We like to present performance opportunities for up-and-coming musicians – all of JPEC’s shows include pre-concert duos or trios consisting of students from the three GTA jazz institutions or Mohawk College. As with most things JPEC, the programming is designed by a committee, some of the members of which are musicians, marketing people and those involved with the technical aspects of staging. All committee decisions are subject to board approval. As to venues, we’ve preferred more intimate concert ones with seating ranging from 150 to 200 people. As the Glenn Gould, the George, and for the first time with our upcoming concert, the concert hall in the Aga Khan Museum, which we’re very excited about.

There’s also a community-outreach aspect to JPEC which is tied to both programming and education. In addition to the 170 music workshops we’ve presented in underserved schools over the last decade, we’re proud to be supporting and participating in the initiative of the International Resource Centre for Performing Artists, an outgrowth of the old “jazzmobile” model, using a mobile facility to present events in more isolated communities that will benefit the talent in those areas as well as the talent of Toronto’s musicians. In other words, if the people can’t get to the jazz, then take the jazz to the people – good jazz makes for a good society and vice versa.

Not that I think it’s an odd idea, but why a Brubeck/Desmond concert at this particular time?

In consideration of JPEC’s tenth anniversary, we wanted to reach out to a broader jazz audience by presenting a tribute to two such well-known and respected musicians who achieved enormous popularity not only internationally, but with Desmond in particular, on a local level. Desmond’s late-career appearances at Bourbon Street were unforgettable to those of us lucky enough to have heard them, and his ringing musical endorsement of Ed Bickert in particular – but also Don Thompson and Jerry Fuller – gave Toronto jazz a major shot in the arm. Hence the addition of Reg Schwager on guitar to reflect Desmond’s career after Brubeck. Unless Ed Bickert himself were to come out of retirement, it would be hard to imagine a guitarist more suited to the task.

What do you see for JPEC moving forward and do you think you’ve made a difference?

We’ll continue to present quality concerts such as this one and of course the outreach workshops will continue. We’re still seeking to create a fulltime hub. As for making a difference, I like to think we have. In July of 2018 Rochelle and I received a special award and donation to JPEC from TD Bank for: “Giving back to the community by bringing jazz to public schools, educating students young and old, and providing Toronto with outstanding jazz concerts.” I think that sums it up nicely.

Me too. Thanks for your time, Ray, and for all you and Rochelle have done for jazz in Toronto over the years.

Jazz Wespers

Featuring some of Toronto’s best jazz musicians with a brief reflection by Jazz Wespers Clergy

Sunday, Nov. 11 at 4:30pm
The Dave Young Duo
Dave Young (bass), Brian Dickinson (piano)
Christ Church Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St. (north of St. Clair at Heath St.)
Admission is free; donations are welcome.
416-920-5211 www.thereslifehere.org

Sunday, Nov. 25 at 4:30pm
‘A Charlie Brown Christmas’
John Sherwood (piano), Scott Alexander (bass), Brian Barlow (drums)

Patricia Cano appears in the COC’s Jazz Series on November 28.

JAZZ NOTES QUICK PICKS

• NOV 8, 5:30PM: Old Mill – Ken Page Memorial Trust Annual Fundraiser. The Lairds of Swing – Warren Vaché, cornet and musical director; Guido Basso, flugelhorn; Russ Phillips, trombone; Ken Peplowski, reeds; Harry Allen, tenor saxophone; Rossano Sportiello, piano; Reg Schwager, guitar; Neil Swainson, bass; Terry Clarke, drums. I’ve written in greater detail about this star-studded event in the past – simply put, the finest in modern mainstream swing with both an international and local thrust.

• NOV 16, 8PM: Toronto Centre for the Arts – Jazz at the George. Etienne Charles – Carnival. This concert by the brilliant young trumpeter/composer who explores his calypso/Caribbean roots in tandem with jazz, kicks off the five-concert Jazz at the George season.

• NOV 28, 12 NOON: Canadian Opera Company – Jazz Series “Songs In the Key of Cree.” Tomson Highway, piano and vocals; Patricia Cano, vocals; Marcus Ali, saxophone. Never mind whether it’s jazz or not, do not miss this rare chance to hear the musical – and I mean musical – side of one of our greatest playwrights. And Cano is a vocal powerhouse.

• DEC 4, 8PM: Toronto Centre for the Arts – Jazz at the George. Dianne Reeves Christmas Time Is Here – For my money, the best jazz singer on the planet singing Christmas music can’t fail to put you in a festive spirit.

• DEC 5, 5:30PM: Canadian Opera Company – Jazz Series. “Music From the Claudia Quintet Playbook” – McGill Jazz Sextet, John Hollenbeck, director. This is highly recommended mostly for Hollenbeck, a highly original drummer/composer with an audacious taste for combining – and bending – musical genres.

Toronto bassist Steve Wallace writes a blog called “Steve Wallace Jazz, baseball, life and other ephemera” which can be accessed at Wallace-bass.com. Aside from the topics mentioned, he sometimes writes about movies and food.

For more on what’s happening on the local jazz scene, see In the Clubs, and Mainly Clubs, Mostly Jazz, starting on page 60.

SymphRONica & Tap Dance Return!

7:30pm Thurs. December 13
918 Bathurst Centre for Culture
$25 (advance) / $30 (door)
Tickets & info @ bemusednetwork.com
jazz + tap dance = a kinetic night out ronnavismusic.com
In last month’s column I made reference to the upcoming Rebel Heartland celebration at Fairy Lake Park in Newmarket. Ergo: now we can report on what took place. As a starter, the weather could not have been better with a moderate temperature and a bright blue sky. Fairy Lake Park’s three gazebos (one large with two smaller ones immediately adjacent) provided an ideal location for musical performances. On the large gazebo we had the current Newmarket Citizens Band, somewhat scaled down to fit within their venue. On the smaller gazebos, three different ensembles made up of members of the main band performed. One was a brass ensemble roughly representative of the early 1800s. The other two were a flute ensemble and a clarinet group, including alto and bass clarinets.

Unless the organizers had been prepared to spend enormous amounts of money to ensure absolute accuracy and authenticity of all costumes and displays, this event inevitably was going to have some items that could not qualify as characteristic of the period. There were interesting anomalies, some more apparent than others. First was the makeup of the band: well-dressed in a wide range of period costumes, almost half of the band members were women, something town bands in the 1830s would not have permitted. In general, women were not allowed to play in such bands until the mid-1940s. I remember well when the first girl was permitted to play in the University of Toronto Band in 1947. It was some years after that when the first female player appeared in a military reserve band in this country.

Other anomalies: some distance from the band there was an encampment of tents with all the occupants in period costumes. Immediately adjacent were all of their late model automobiles, with nary an 1837 model in sight! Also, whereas at such a concert in the park any time in the 1800s people would be sitting close enough to the band to hear well, that was not necessary here. A powerful sound system with speakers located throughout the park made it possible for the audience members to select a listening location of their choice.

Perhaps the most interesting anomaly for me was a gentleman dressed from head to toe in the greatest of sartorial splendour including an elegant top hat, an elegant impression that was a bit shattered when I noticed that he was speaking to someone on a 2018-model cell phone and had a modern plastic water bottle close at hand.

Next thing that caught Mike’s eye was a March 8, 2018 article by Warren. He soon discovered what an incredibly talented group they were; all the band members were women, something town bands in the 1830s would not qualify as characteristic of the period. Altogether, the OEPV is teaching almost 300 children the joy, teamwork, discipline, concentration and co-operation that come from learning music and, at the same time becoming good citizens.

Friendship Club (IFC) has supported the OEPV since 2014 as part of the club’s emphasis on helping Mexican children reach their potential. Altogether, the OEPV is teaching almost 300 children the joy, teamwork, discipline, concentration and co-operation that come from learning music and, at the same time becoming good citizens.

The door had been opened, and I learned firsthand that those with the tenacity and desire to help others and share their love of music can indeed make a difference.

One of the major challenges facing the Puerto Vallarta Orchestral School is obtaining musical instruments, and this is where things came full circle for Mike. “The cost of labour in Mexico makes repairing things far more viable than in, say, Toronto” he says. “Many instruments that we might discard because of the cost of repair here
in Canada can be repaired and reused in places like Mexico.”

Mike’s primary focus so far has been aimed at the more affluent schools in the Greater Toronto Area, and thanks to a generous donation of instruments by Upper Canada College, the process has begun. “Anyone with old instruments in the attic or garage that they know will never realize any real cash might wish to consider donating them to the children and young members of OEPV.”

To this point Mike has received instrument donations including nine clarinets, six flutes, two bassoons, one alto sax, one tenor sax and one French horn (from Upper Canada College). An additional two flutes were received from individuals not associated with the school. Beyond donations of instruments, though, shipping costs are also a significant challenge. The total cost of shipping this first batch was $900 which was donated by a friend who also spends time in Puerto Vallarta in the winter. The initial shipment went directly using UPS and was $600. It arrived in three days. The other two shipments went using Chitchats Shipping and in total cost $300. It took four weeks but arrived intact.

For Mike it’s simple. “You can help improve a life through music!” he says. If you have any questions, comments, or, in particular, appropriate contacts in GTA schools, you may contact Mike at instruments-foroepv@gmail.com. For information regarding the OEPV, check their Facebook page – facebook.com/oepuertovallarta/ or website – oepv.org/web.

As mentioned earlier, I am still waiting for responses to my requests for information from a number organisations with similar projects. I know someone who is working on a similar project for South Africa, and have heard of another person collecting old instruments for children in Cuba. Stay tuned.

Prize for playful programming
November 21, 7:30pm. Henry Meredith of The Plumbing Factory Brass Band, sent the following: “In their 23 years of entertaining Southern Ontario audiences, the Plumbing Factory Brass Band has been noted for performing eclectic repertoire that exemplifies all kinds of brass music, ranging from A to Z,” he writes. “However, this concert will focus on a single letter of the alphabet – the letter B! That is ‘B is for BRASS.’” As an example of their diversity the band’s Basses, also known as the Tuba Mirum Trio, will be featured playing Leroy Anderson’s Bugler’s Holiday. I certainly don’t want to miss hearing three tubas perform that trumpet number. ... BEautiful, BEguiling and BEDazzling Music to BE presented by London’s Plumbing Factory Brass Band at Byron United Church, 420 Boler Road (@ Baseline), London.

BANDSTAND QUICK PICKS

▶ NOV 4, 3PM: The Hanningford Street Silver Band presents “Cascades” with guest Carol Jantsch, tuba; Jean-Michel Malouf, conductor. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts,

▶ NOV 5, 7PM: The Toronto Artillery Foundation presents “Lest We Forget.” Toronto Artillery Foundation Band; John McDermott, tenor. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.

▶ NOV 24, 7:30PM: Silverthorn Symphonic Winds open their season with “Out of This World.” Their musical journey will include Astronaut’s Playlist, Superman and Moonscape. This takes place at Wilmar Heights Event Centre – Concert Hall, 963 Pharmacy Ave, Toronto.

▶ NOV 25, 3:30PM: The Wychwood Clarinet Choir will celebrate their tenth season with “Clarinet Bells Ring.” Highlights will include Schubert’s Shepherd on the Rock featuring Michele Jacot as clarinet soloist, Appalachian Folk Carol with guest soprano Christina Haldane and Holst’s St. Paul’s Suite.

▶ NOV 30, 7:30PM: The Newmarket Citizens’ Band will combine with the York Harmony Chorus for the finale of their “Comfort and Joy” concert. The theme for the evening will be “Christmas on Broadway.” Old Town Hall, Newmarket.

▶ DEC 7, 8PM: The Etobicoke Community Concert Band presents “A Classic Christmas.” Etobicoke Collegiate Auditorium.

Jack MacQuarrie plays several brass instruments and has performed in many community ensembles. He can be contacted at bandstand@thewholenote.com.
A GENERAL WORD OF CAUTION. A phone number is provided with every listing in The WholeNote—in fact, we don’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 November 1 to December 7, 2018. All listings must be received by 11:59pm, Monday October 8.

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 416-323-2232 x27 for further information.

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

B. BEYOND THE GTA covers many areas of Southern Ontario outside Toronto and the GTA. Starts on page 56.

C. MUSIC THEATRE covers a wide range of music types: from opera, operetta and musicals, to non-traditional performance types where words and music are in some fashion equal partners in the drama. Starts on page 59.

D. IN THE CLUBS (MOSTLY JAZZ) is organized alphabetically by club. Starts on page 61.

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 63.

A. Concerts in the GTA

Thursday November 1

- 12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: Opera Spotlight. A preview of U of T Opera’s production of Weill’s Street Scene. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.
- 5:30: Canadian Opera Company. A Night of Voices: Centre Stage. Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-363-8231 or coccentrestage.ca. From $50. 5:30 Cocktail reception; 6:30 Ensemble Studio Competition.
- 7:00: Canadian Arabic Orchestra. Festival of Arabic Music and Arts: Nur. Dalal Abu Amneh, singer. 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, 918 Bathurst St. canadianarabicorchestra.ca. $35.
- 8:00: Civic Theatres Toronto. Vusi Mahlasela. Traditional South African music, soul and blues. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 1-800-708-6754. $16-$80.
- 8:00: Corktown Chamber Orchestra. In Concert. Dvorák: Symphony No. 8; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No.3; Hindemith: Trauermusik. Jeff Vidov, piano; Paul McCulloch, conductor. Little Trinity Anglican Church, 425 King St. E. 647-528-7159. PWYC($20 suggested).
- 8:00: ProKordaVoices. Figaro 2.0. Music by Mozart and Harrison. Robert Gluckbe (Bar-tolo); Benjamin Landsberg (Figaro); Ryan Lee (Marcellina); Daniel McArthur (Count); Victoria Mehaffey (Susannah) and others. Harbourfront Centre Fleck Dance Theatre, 207 Queen’s Quay West. 416-977-4000. $37-$50. Discounts for sr/st/artworkers/groups. Also Nov 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Friday November 2

- 7:30: Canadian Arabic Orchestra. Festival of Arabic Music and Arts: Jazmine from Damascus. Lena Chamamyan, singer. Jane Mallet Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 1-855-662-6763. $47.50-$64.75; $43.20-$57.30(sr/st).
- 7:30: Classical Context. A Night of String Quartets. Debussy; String Quartet in g; Shostakovitch: String Quartet No.9. Canadian work (premiere). Alice Hing, violin; Alexis Meschter, violin; Maxime Despax, viola; Christopher Hwang, cello. Canadian Music Centre, 20 St. Joseph St. 647-784-6229. PWYC($20 suggested).
- 7:30: Continuum Contemporary Music. Super Hot Sax. Iannotta: 3 sur 5; Donovan.

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

Nov. 1 ALL SAINTS’ DAY
6:15 pm Solemn Eucharist Music by T.L. de Victoria

Nov. 2 ALL SOULS’ DAY
6:15 pm Requiem for All Souls
Music: Requiem by Maurice Durufé

Nov. 11 REMEMBRANCE DAY
7:00 pm Armistice Centennial Service Music by C.V. Stanford, R. Vaughan Williams and Stephanie Martin

Dudréfou March 2023 9

3 Three choral services each Sunday
4 Advent carols Dec. 2 and 23 at 7:00 pm Details: stthomas.on.ca

Matthew Larkin
Organist & Director of Music
Elizabeth Anderson
Associate Organist
HOT: LeBlanc: The Wind Wreaths My Words (world premiere); Romitelli: Natura Morta (world premiere); Alliance Française del Fuego Flute Duo. 7pm: Pre-concert ceremony. W. 416-444-7807. $20; $10(st/child). Also Nov 2.


Saturday November 3

- 2:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Young People's Concerts: The Mozart Experience. Magic Circle Mime Company; Duncan McDougall, violin (17/18 TSYO Concerto Competition Winner); Sameet Patel, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. $20-$33.75. Also 4pm.

- 4:00: Toronto Operaetta Theatre. Out of Character. Music from Latin America. Lynn Insar, soprano; Margie Bernal, soprano; Stuart Graham, baritone; Guillermo Silva-Marín, baritone; Naurnica Mandiyeva, music director and piano. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-398-7723. $29-$49.

- 7:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Young People's Concerts: The Mozart Experience. See 2pm.


- 4:30: Canadian Opera Company. Eugene Onegin. Music by Tchaikovsky. Gordon Bintner, bass-baritone (Eugene Onegin); Joyce El-Khoury, soprano (Tatyana); Vardui Abrashyan, mezzo (Olga); Joseph Kaiser, tenor (Lenski); Oleg Teslyuk, bass (Prince Gremin); Robert Carsen, stage director. Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-893-9821. 85-$925. Final performance.

- 4:30: Opera Atelier. Charpentier: Action/ Rameau: Pygmalion. Colin Ainsworth (Action); Mireille Asselin (Diana & Amour); Allyson McHardy (Luna & Philosophy); Jesse Blumberg, Christopher Enns, Meghan Lindsay, Ceylan Sollo; Anna Sharp, Markaieff; Sarah text, director; Jeanette Lajeunesse Zingg, choreographer; Artists of Atelier Ballet; Chorus of the Choir of the Theatre of Early Music (Daniel Taylon; choral director); Azimuth Quire; Toronto Youth Choir; Toronto Youth Orchestra; Lawrence Arnold, music director; Melinda O’Boyle, concertmaster. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $45-90. Also Nov 2.

- 7:00: Toronto Opera. La Bohème. Puccini. Sara Papini (Mimi); Kjønn Wi (Rudolfo); Anna Sharpe, baritone; Narmina Afandiyeva, music director; Densham, Graziano Brescacin, saxophone. Donway W. 416-444-7807. $20; $10(st accompanied by paying adult); Free(child accompanied by paying adult). Also Nov 2.

- 7:00: Mele де Artistes. The Art of the Piano. Agony and Ecstasy; Journey; 1st Sun; Reversable. Gallery 345, 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-877-2971. $35.

- 7:00: Canadian Arabic Orchestra. Festival of Arabic Music and Arts: Ya Sitti. Dalal Abu Anneh, singer; Lyric Theatre, Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. 1-888-672-6767. $47.50-$54.75, $42. $20-$57.30 (cr/st). Also Nov 2.

- 7:30: Music On The Donway. Choral Expressions and Sidecar78: An Evening of Sax and Song, Walkin’ After Midnight; Fascinating Rhythm; Teddy Bears Picnic. Choral Expressions; Norman Miller, Mike Lewis, Jeff Denham, Graziano Brescacin, saxophone. Donway Covenant United Church, 230 Donway W. 416-444-7807. $20; $10(st accompanied by paying adult); Free(child accompanied by paying adult). Refreshments following performance.

- 7:30: Opera by Request. Mozart's Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute). Austin Larusson, baritone (Papageno); Graham Stew, soprano (Pamina); Cian Horrobin, tenor (Tamino); Holly Chaplin, soprano (Queen of the Night); William Shockhoffer, piano. College St. United Church, 452 College St. 416-456-2985. $20. Also Nov 2. In concert with piano accompaniment.

- 8:00: North York Orchestra. Lest We Forget. Holst: Mars from The Planets; Granados: Intermezzo from Goyescas; Vaughan Williams: The Lark Ascending. Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5. Rafał Luż, conductor. Yorkminster Citadel, 1 Lord Seaton Rd., North York. 416-628-9195. $30; $25(cr/st); $10(st).


- 8:00: ProArteDanza. Figaro. 2.0: See Nov 1. Also Nov 7, 8, 9, 10.

- 8:00: Royal Conservatory. Daniel Hope and Friends: AR – A Baroque Journey. Works by Vivaldi, Handel, Falconieri, Ortiz, Matteis, Uccellini, and others. Daniel Hope, violin; Simos Papapanas, violin; Nicola Mosca, cello; Emmanuelle Forru lifiti; Naoki Kitaya, cello; and others. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $45-$90.

Concerts in the GTA

Singing for Our Lives
Led by Andrew and Wendy Donaldson presented by the Southern Ontario Chapter of the Hymn Society

Nov 4, 2:30pm
sochs.org

- 4:00: Cathedral Church of St. James. Twilight Recital: David Briggs, organ. 65 Church St. 416-385-7865. Free. Donations welcome.
- 5:00: St. Olave’s Church. For King and Country. Commemorating the centenary of the end of World War I exploring the role of the monarch. Choral Evensong for All Souls. St. Olave’s Anglican Church, 380 Windermere Ave. 416-769-5686. Contributions appreciated. Pumpkin Tea to follow. Historian Richard Fineness-Clinton explores the special role of the monarch on important occasions.

Monday November 5

- 9:30: Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto. The Great War: A Commemoration. Concert marking the 100th anniversary of the end of the war for: Faure; Requiem; Vaughan Williams: Dona Nobis Pacem. Andrew Dodington, soprano; Paul Winkelmans, baritone; Nelson Lohnes, bass-baritone; Shawn Grenke, piano, organ and conductor; Lydia Adams, conductor. Eglinton St. George’s United Church, 53 Lytton Blvd. 416-446-0188. $45; $35 (sr); $25 (under 20).

Tuesday November 6


Wednesday November 7

- 12:30: Organix Concerts/All Saints Kingsway, Kingsway Organ Concert Series. Stefani Bedin, organ. All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church, 2560 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3863. Freewill offering, 45-minute concert.


8:00 ProArteDanza. Figaro 2.0. See Nov 1. Also Nov 8, 9, 10.

Thursday November 8


NOVEMBER 8, 2018 | 1.30 PM

THOMAS OLIEMANS

Thomas Oleians, baritone
Malcolm Martineau, piano
416-923-7052
wmct.on.ca


7:30: Canadian Music Centre. CMC Presents: Thin Edge New Music Collective. 20 St. Joseph St. 416-961-6601 x201. General: $20/$15(adv); CMC Members/arts workers: $15/$10(adv); Students: $15/$10(adv).

8:00 Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Britten War Requiem. Britten: War Requiem. Tatiana Pavlovskaya, soprano; Toby Spence, tenor; Russell Braun, baritone; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Toronto Children’s Chorus; Bramwell Tovey, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-593-5600 x231. Free.

8:30: Opera by Request. Pique Dame. Tchaikovsky. In concert with piano accompaniment. Paul Williamson, tenor (Gherman); Anush Passishnik, soprano (Lisa); Anna Belikova, mezzo (Countess); Yevgeny Yablonovsky, baritone (Count Tomsky); Andrei Andreychik, baritone (Prince Yeletsky); and others; William Shookhoff, piano. College St. United Church, 432 College St. 416-455-2365. $20.


NOVEMBER 11, 2018

Tafelmusik

STEFFANI: DRAMA & DEVOTION

Nov 8–11, 2018
Jeanne Lamon Hall
Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre
tafelmusik.org

12:30: Opera by Request. Pique Dame. Tchaikovsky. In concert with piano accompaniment. Paul Williamson, tenor (Gherman); Anush Passishnik, soprano (Lisa); Anna Belikova, mezzo (Countess); Yevgeny Yablonovsky, baritone (Count Tomsky); Andrei Andreychik, baritone (Prince Yeletsky); and others; William Shookhoff, piano. College St. United Church, 432 College St. 416-455-2365. $20.


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A. Concerts in the GTA


- 8:00: ProArtsDanza. Figaro 2.0. See Nov 1. Also Nov 10.

Saturday November 10

- 7:00: Brampton Chamber Music Concert Series. In Concert, Madawaska String Quartet (Sarah Fraser Raff, violin; Jeewon Kim, violin; Anna Redekop, viola; Amber Ghent, cello).

Toronto Music Academy of Canada presents

Lee-Shillingberg Piano Duo

November 10, 7:00pm


St. Paul’s United Church: (Brampton), 30 Main St. S., Brampton. 905-450-9220. PWYC.

Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 1-855-682-6726. $65.75-$89.50; $58.20-$85.20(sr/st).

- 7:30: Canadian Chamber Players Orchestra. Sixth Annual Elizabeth Krehm Memorial Concert. Humperdinck: Overture to Hänsel and Gretel; Ryan Trecce: Come Closer (Songs on texts by Elizabeth Krehnm); Brahms: Symphony No.4. Canadian Chamber Players Orchestra; Rachel Krehnm, soprano; Evan Mitchell, conductor. Christ Church Deer Park, 1510 Yonge St. 647-248-4048. By donation ($30 minimum suggested). Donations to the St. Michael’s Hospital ICU.


- 7:30: St. John the Baptist Norway Anglican Church. Resonant Reflections. Songs of remembrance and winter seasonal music. Bach Children’s Chorus; Bach Chamber Youth Choir; Charissa Bagan and James Pinches, conductors. 470 Woodbine Ave. 416-691-4560. $20; $10 (sr/st). In aid of the East End Refugee Centre.


- 8:00: Gallery 454. The Art of the Piano: Aleksandra Vela. Rhapsody in Blue; Granados: Quisqu la 6 La maja y el ruiseñor; Liszt: Les requiébros; Chopin: Nocturne in c. Sonata No. 2. Polonaise No. 6. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781. $30; $20 (sr/art workers); $10 (st). Cash only.

- 8:00: ProArtsDanza. Figaro 2.0. See Nov 1.
- 8:00: Royal Conservatory, TD Jazz Concerts: Joshua Redman. Still Dreaming. Avantgarde free jazz. Works by Ornette Coleman and original compositions. Brian Blade, drums; Scott Colley, bass; Ron Miles, trumpet. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-2026. $50-$105. 7pm. Pre-concert talk with Mark Micklethwaite. SOLD OUT.

- 8:00: Tafelmusik. Steffani: Drama & Devotion. See Nov 8. Also Nov 11(3:30pm).

- 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Britten War Requiem. Britten: War Requiem. Tatiana Pavlovskaya, soprano; Toby Spence, tenor; Russell Braun, baritone; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Toronto Children’s Chorus; Bramwell Tovey, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. $34.75-$148. Free pre-concert performance at 6:45. Also Nov. 8.
O’Callaghan

2403_Listings_Master.indd   45

416-767-6122. Freewill offering. Religious contralto; River Guard, tenor; Alex Halli- nod: Requiem for Choir, Organ, Strings and orchestra. Op. 2. Myriam Blaron- done, harp; Sunny Zhai, piano. St. Simon’s Anglican Church (Oakville), 1450 Litchfield Rd., Oakville. 905-483-6767. $30; $25(sr); $15(st). Also Nov 10 (7:30 pm; St. John’s United Church).


7:30: ECM + Generation 2018. Works by Józef Kropiński: Złota jesień; Prózno!; Kla- vierspiel; Pesen bez slow; Blàczeapo; Emile Gou; Deux Impromptsu; Duett (for violin & cello); Rudolf K given: Prankal marqer Op. 42; Berthold Hummel: Abendlied; and works by William Hilsley, Zygryd Maciej Straijcak, Sándor Kuti, and others. Francesco Lotoro, piano; Cantor Charles Osborne, baritone; Igor Gefer, cello; Mark Skazinetsky, violin. 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, 918 Bathurst St. 416-971-3802. Free.

Tuesday November 13


7:30: St. Paul’s Anglican Church (Uxbridge). Rememberance Day Concert. Vaughan Williams: Symphony No.3 (Requiem); Sibelius: Symphony No.4; meditation by Ted Barris. Orpheus Tromphoniella; Stuart Beau- don, conductor. 65 Church St. 416-952-7016. $15. Ted Barris reflects on the Battle at Vimy Ridge.

Wednesday November 14


7:30: National Ballet of Canada. Anna Karenina. See Nov 10. Runs to Nov 18. Tues- Sat(7:30pm), Thurs(Sat/Sun(2pm).

8:00: Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal/Music Gallery/New Music Con- certs. ECM – Generation 2018. Works by O’Callaghan, Tidrow, Giguère and Dupuis, Ensemble contemporain de Montréal; Véro- nique Lacroix, director; Gabriel Dharmoo, concert host. 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, 918 Bathurst St. 416-961-9594. $35; $25(sr/artists/New Music/Music Gallery); $10(st).

Monday November 12

6:30: Istituto di Cultura Italiana/918 Bathurst Cultural Service. The Saved Music: Francesco Lotoro in Concert. Music composed in concentration camps finds new life. Karel Berman: Terezin Suite; Józef Kropiński: Złota jesień; Prózno!; Kla- vierspiel; Pesen bez slow; Blàczeapo; Emile Gou; Deux Impromptsu; Duett (for violin & cello); Rudolf K given: Prankal marqer Op. 42; Berthold Hummel: Abendlied; and works by William Hilsley, Zygryd Maciej Straijcak, Sándor Kuti, and others. Francesco Lotoro, piano; Cantor Charles Osborne, baritone; Igor Gefer, cello; Mark Skazinetsky, violin. 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, 918 Bathurst St. 416-971-3802. Free.
November 15 at 8pm
ENSEMBLE MADE IN CANADA

- 8:00: Music Toronto. Ensemble Made In Canada. Schumann: Piano Quartet in E-Flat Op.47; Mosaique: A specially commissioned suite of piano quartets by 14 Canadian composers, each inspired by a particular region of Canada. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-396-7723. $47.50-$52; $10(s). Also Dec 13.

Friday November 16

- 7:30: National Ballet of Canada. Anna Karenina. See Nov 10. Also Nov 17(2pm & 7:30pm), 18(2pm).
- 7:30: York University Department of Music. Faculty Concert Series: Duo Forte. Christina Petrowska Quilico and Shoshana Telnor, pianos. Tribute Communities Recital Hall, Accadela East Building, YU. 4700 Keele St. 416-736-5888. $15; $10(st).
- 8:00: Civic Theatres Toronto. Jazz at the George: Etienne Charles. Jazz amalgam mix. Étienne Charles, trumpet. George Weston Recital Hall, 5040 Yonge St. 1-855-885-2878. $42.50-$82.50.

November 16 at 8 pm
WOMEN’S BLUES REVUE

- 7:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra/Civic Theatres Toronto/Attila Glatz Productions. Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire™ In Concert. Movie screening accompanied by live symphony orchestra. Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, 1 Front St. E. 416-598-3375. $47-$125, Also Nov 15, 17.
- 7:30: Choirs and Instrumentalists of Thornhill United Church. 27th Annual November Delights Concert. Thornhill United Church, 25 Egnin St., Thornhill. 905-889-2131. Freewill offering. Refreshments to follow.
- 7:30: National Ballet of Canada. Anna Karenina. See Nov 10. Also Nov 18(2pm).
- 7:30: Opera by Request. Aida. Verdi. In concert with piano accompaniment. Stephanie DeGiusto, soprano (Aida); Monika Zerbe, mezzo (Amneris); Boris Derov, tenor (Radames); Andrey Andreychik, baritone (Amonasro); Steven Henkinson, baritone (Ramfis); and others; William Shokhoff, piano. College St. United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20.
- 8:00: Acoustic Harvest. Lynn Miles, St. Paul’s United Church (Scarborough), 200 McIntosh St., Scarborough, lillian. wauthier@gmail.com. $25/$22(adv).
Celebrating Couperin and Debussy

Nov 17, 8:00pm

MISSISSAUGA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Old: The Music of Spain and Latin America.
Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio espagnol; Bizet: Danse bohème; Lecuona: Malagueña; Uruguayan, Romulo Delgado, tenor; Viva Mexico Mariachi; Kiyu Asaoaka, flamenco dancer; Denis Mastromonaco, conductor. Living Arts Centre, 65 Church St. 416-365-7865. Free. Donations welcome.

Toronto Guitar Society

Tuesday November 20


Wednesday November 21


7:00: Tafelmusik. Sound the Trumpet!
Locatelli: Christmas Concerto; Corrette: Christmas Concerto; Rebel: Les caractères de la danse; J.S. Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No.2 in F. David Blackadder, trumpet; Elisa Citterio, violin and conductor. Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, Jeanne Lamon Hall, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-964-6337. $39 and up. Also Nov 22,
A. Concerts in the GTA

23, 24, 25(mat).


● 8:00 Against the Grain Theatre. Bound v.2. Music by George Frederic Handel and Kevin Lau. Miriam Khalil, soprano; David Trudgen, countertenor; Andrew Haji, tenor; Justin Welsh, baritone; Tophor Mockrewski, conductor. The Great Hall, Longboat Hall, 1087 Queen St. W. 416-367-8943. $35-$80. See Nov 19.

● 8:00: Civic Theatres Toronto/Musical Stage Company. UnCovered: Joni Mitchell & Carole King. Concert featuring hit songs of Mitchell and King performed by stars of the stage. Aimee Bessada, Julia Black, Sara Farb, Hailey Gillis, Jackie Richardson and others. Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St., North York. 1-855-888-2781. $39-$96.

● 8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Beethoven Piano Concerto No.4. Adams: City Noir; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No.4; Ravel: Boléro. Kirill Gerstein, piano; John Storgårds, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. $34.75-$148. Also Nov. 23, 24.

2018 / 2019

TRUMPET!

Tickets available at www.orianachoir.com

Jeanne Lamon Hall, 26 Delisle Avenue • Toronto

Calvin Presbyterian Church

Ticket pricing: Adults $25
Under 35 & Seniors $20 • Students $10
Tickets available at www.orianachoir.com or Hart House Tickets at 416-978-8849

ORIANA Women’s Choir gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of

Thewholenote.com


● 8:00: Tafelmusik. Sound the Trumpet! See Nov 22. Also Nov 23, 24, 25(3:30pm).

Friday November 23


Friday November 22

● 12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: Student Chamber Music Ensembles. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.


● 2:00: National Ballet of Canada. The Dream & Being and Nothingness. See Nov 21. Runs to Nov 25. Wed-Sat(7:30pm), Thur/Sat/Sun(2pm).

● 2:00: Orchardviewers/Music Toronto. In Concert. Fauré: Violin Sonata No.2 in A; Ravel: Violin Sonata No.2 in G; Ghostakovich: Duets for two violins and piano. Huachu Huang, violin; Jennifer Murphy, violin; Qiao Yi Miao Mu, piano. Toronto Public Library, Northern District, 40 Orchard View Blvd. 416-393-7810. Free.


● 7:30: National Ballet of Canada. The Dream & Being and Nothingness. See Nov 21. Runs to Nov 25, Wed-Sat(7:30pm), Thur/Sat/Sun(2pm).


● 8:00: Tafelmusik. Sound the Trumpet! See Nov 22. Also Nov 23, 24, 25(3:30pm).

Friday November 23


Friday November 22

● 12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: Student Chamber Music Ensembles. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.


● 2:00: National Ballet of Canada. The Dream & Being and Nothingness. See Nov 21. Runs to Nov 25. Wed-Sat(7:30pm), Thur/Sat/Sun(2pm).

● 2:00: Orchardviewers/Music Toronto. In Concert. Fauré: Violin Sonata No.2 in A; Ravel: Violin Sonata No.2 in G; Ghostakovich: Duets for two violins and piano. Huachu Huang, violin; Jennifer Murphy, violin; Qiao Yi Miao Mu, piano. Toronto Public Library, Northern District, 40 Orchard View Blvd. 416-393-7810. Free.


● 7:30: National Ballet of Canada. The Dream & Being and Nothingness. See Nov 21. Runs to Nov 25, Wed-Sat(7:30pm), Thur/Sat/Sun(2pm).


● 8:00: Tafelmusik. Sound the Trumpet! See Nov 22. Also Nov 23, 24, 25(3:30pm).
Nov 24 (7:30pm), 25(2pm).

5:00: Royal Conservatory. Taylor Academy Showcase Concert. Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists. Muzslori Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. Free (ticket required).

5:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. A Child’s Prayer. James MacMillan: A Child’s Prayer; and other works. Choristers from the Theatre of Early Music and Schola Cantorum; Daniel Taylor: conductor. Trinity College Chapel, University of Toronto, 6 Hoskin Ave. 416-408-0208. $30; $20(sr); $10(1st); free(UofT st).

7:00: Oakville Choir for Children and Youth. Come Together in Song. Raise Her Voice and A Few Good Men Chois. Clearview Church, 2300 Sheridan Garden Dr., Oakville. 905-337-7104. $25; $20(1st); $15(under 13).

7:30: Angela Maria Sanchez. Itali: Mio Tesoro. Works by Bellini, Puccini, Donizetti and Verdi. Alvaro Vasquez-Robles: tenor; Angela Maria Sanchez, soprano; Melanie Taverno, soprano; Jennifer Tung, piano. Heliconian Hall, 53 Hazeltown Ave. 647-456-9266. $15; free(12 and under).

7:30: Cantemus Singers. Es Nascido - He is Born. Flecha the Elder: La Bomba; Brudieu: Seven Joys of Mary; Victoria: O Magnum Mysterium; Guerrero: Pastores Loquebantur. Michael Erdman, conductor. Church of the Holy Trinity, 19 Trinity Sq. 416-578-6802. $20; Free(1st under 12). Also Nov 25 (3pm - St. Aidan’s Anglican Church).

7:30: National Ballet of Canada. The Dream & Being and Nothingness. See Nov 21. Also Nov 25(2pm).

7:30: Silverthorn Symphonic Winds. Out of This World. Includes Astronaut’s Playlist, Superman, and Moonscape. Wilmar Heights United Church, 333 Crosby Ave., Toronto. 905-337-7104. $25; $20(1st); $10(1st). Free parking, accessible.

7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. U of T Opera: Street Scene. Music by Daron Hagen; Flecha the Elder: The Robber Bridegroom; Flecha the Elder: La Bomba; Brudieu: Seven Joys of Mary; Victoria: O Magnum Mysterium; Guerrero: Pastores Loquebantur. Michael Erdman, conductor. Church of the Holy Trinity, 19 Trinity Sq. 416-578-6802. $20; Free(1st under 12). Also Nov 25 (3pm - St. Aidan’s Anglican Church).

8:00: Arraymusic. Allison Cameron Mini-Festival. Concert I. Allison Cameron: Four Dreams. Arnold Schoenberg, String Trio no. 3 “Eroica”. Samir Abd-Elmessih, horn; Angela Maria Sanchez, soprano; Noriko Kusama and Yuichiro Inoue, dancers. Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. 416-678-8499. $32-$37; $20(1st)


8:00: Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts. Irish Mythen. 130 Navy St., Oakville. 905-815-2021 or 1-888-489-7784. $32-$44.


8:00: Royal Conservatory Orchestra. Bramwell Tovey Conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra. Elgar: Cello Concerto in E Op.85; Mahler: Blumine; R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier Suite, Trv227; Hannah Craig, cello; Bramwell Tovey, conductor. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $25-$60. Prelude Recital at 6:45pm; Pre-concert Talk at 7:15pm.

8:00: Tafelmusik. Sound the Trumpet! See Nov 22. Also Nov 24, 25(3:30pm).

Saturday November 24

2:00: National Ballet of Canada. The Dream & Being and Nothingness. See Nov 21. Also
A. Concernts in the GTA

Sunday November 25

YORKMINSTER PARK BAPTIST CHURCH PRESENTS

REQUIEM

WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25 11:00 AM


2:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music. U of T Opera: Street Scene. Music by Kurt Weill. Lyrics by Langston Hughes. Sandra Horst, conductor; Michael Patrick Albano, director. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson-Boyd Building, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. $40; $25(sr); $10(st). Also Nov 22, 23, 24 (all at 7:30pm).

2:30: VOICEBOX: Opera in Concert. Werther. Music by Jules Massenet. Isabel Bayrakdarian, soprano; Holly Chapman, soprano; Matthew Chittick, tenor; Brett Polegato, baritone; Robert Cooper, chorus director; Narmina Afandiyeva, music director and pianist. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-6754. $20; $38; $50. In French with English Subtitles.

3:00: Agra Khan Museum. Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan. Peter Hatch: new work; Lou Harrison: suite of works (arr. Andrew Timar). Agra Suparman, composer/musician; Nurrika, dancer. 77 Wynford Dr. 416-646-4677. $30; $27(friends of the museum); $22.50(sr/st).

3:00: Cantemus Singers. Es Nascido - He is Born. Flecha the Elder: La Bomba; Brudieu: Seven Joys of Mary; Victoria: O Magnum Mystereum; Guerrero: Pastores Loquebantur. Michael Erdman, conductor. St. Aidan’s Anglican Church (Toronto), 70 Silver Birch Ave. 416-578-6602. $20; Free(child under 12). Also Nov 24 (7:30pm - Church of the Holy Trinity). Benefit concert for Community Centre 55’s Share-a-Christmas program.

3:00: Music on Main. In Concert, Ursula Iyonfiski, soprano; Wesley Bells, violin; Vlad Soloviev, piano. Trinity United Church (Newmarket), 461 Park Ave., Newmarket. 905-895-4833. $20; $10(st).


3:00: Toronto Chamber Choir. Kaffemusik: The Bremen Town Musicians and Other Tales of Musical Camaraderie. Peter Keleghan guides the audience through humorous fairy tales about solidarity among musicians. Madrigals by Lassus, Banchieri, Dowland and others. Peter Keleghan, narrator; Lucas Harris, lute/letern; Kirk Elliott, fiddle, flutes, bagpipes; Elizabeth Anderson, guest conductor. Church of the Redeemer, 162 Bloor St. W. 416-763-1695. $30; $25(sr); $12.50(under 30).

3:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. TSO Fall Concert. Bernstein, Overture to Candide; Brahms: Academic Festival Overture; and other works. Simon Rivard, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375. $28; $16(youth).

3:30: Telermusik. Sound the Trumpet! See Nov 22.

10TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

WYCHWOOD CHORUS CLARINET BELL S RING

SUN, NOV 25, 2018

CLARINET BELL S RING

WYCHWOOD CHORUS CLARINET BELL S RING

Cathedral Church of St. James. Twilight Recital. Ian Sadler, organ. 65 Church St. 416-408-0208. $30; $25(st). Pre-concert Talk at 2pm.

4:00: Cathedral Church of St. James. Twilight Recital. Ian Sadler, organ. 65 Church St. 416-408-0208. $30; $25(st). Pre-concert Talk at 2pm.


7:00: A Charlie Brown Christmas. John Sherwood, piano; Scott Alexander, bass; Brian Barlow, drums. Canadian Stage, 270 Bathurst St. 416-368-0711. $30; $25(youth).

11:00: St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts. Ian Sadler, organ. 65 Church St. 416-408-0208. $27; $22(st).

1:00: St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts. Ian Sadler, organ. 65 Church St. 416-408-0208. $27; $22(st).

2:00: St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts. Ian Sadler, organ. 65 Church St. 416-408-0208. $27; $22(st).

3:00: St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts. Ian Sadler, organ. 65 Church St. 416-408-0208. $27; $22(st).

5:00: St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts. Ian Sadler, organ. 65 Church St. 416-408-0208. $27; $22(st).
North/White

Wednesday November 28 2018
8pm Concert
Koerner Hall

ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

November 27 at 8pm
LOUISE BESSETETT pianist

The Wholenote
apple cider reception to follow.

7:00: Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra - The Nutcracker: A Family Holiday Concert! Rowson: Fanfare: A fanfare for Canada’s 150th; Royer: Fantasia on Canadian Carols; Miller & Jackson (arr. Mark Hayes): Let There Be Peace on Earth; Cable: Christmas Songbook; Traditional Music and Carols Sing Along; Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker, Act I SPQ Women’s Choir; St. Paul’s Ulumoreaux Youth and Adult Choirs; Sistema Toronto Youth Choir; Woburn C.I. Youth Choir; Ronaldo Royer, conductor. Salvation Army Scarborough Citadel, 2021 Lawrence Ave. E., Scarborough. spec.ca $35; $30(sr); $15(st); $10(child); Pre-concert singalong (6:15pm).

7:00: Canadian Men’s Chorus - Not Another Christmas Concert. Nickel: In Bleak Mid-winter; MacDonald: Winter Sun; Murray: The Christmas Night; Martin: Atheists Don’t Have No Songs. Church of the Redeemer, 162 Bloor St. W. $21-$32.

7:30: Candlelight Concerts - Messiah in the Age of Elegance. Handel: Harp Concerto; Corelli: Christmas Concerto; Handel: Messiah (excerpts); Rutter: A Candlelight Carol and Christmas Lullaby; sing-along. Ying Ying He, harp; Sasha Weintangel, conductor. Trinity Anglican Church (Aurora), 79 Victoria St., Aurora. yorkchamberensemble.ca $25; $20(sr/st); $10(child under 10).


7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music - U of T Wind Ensemble - Floating and Flying. Helmamy: Skyline; McCune: High Water Lullabies. Leslie Ting; Ben Smith, piano; Laurie Brown. The Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. $15-$25. Accessible to all levels of vision. Also Nov 30.

8:00: University of Toronto Faculty of Music - University of Toronto Faculty of Music - U of T Wind Ensemble - Floating and Flying. Helmamy: Skyline; McCune: High Water Lullabies. Leslie Ting; Ben Smith, piano; Laurie Brown. The Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. $15-$25. Accessible to all levels of vision. Also Nov 30.


8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music - Marco Roberts. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-2008. $45-$100.

Saturday December 1

11:00 amm and 2:00 - Canadian Opera Company - Opera for Young Audiences: WOW Factor - A Cinderella Story. Music by Gioachino Rossini, libretto by Joel Ivan, musical adaptation by Stephanie Mayer. Members of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio. Imperial Oil Theatre, 227 Front St. E. 416-363-8231. $40; free (under 12). Also Dec 2 (11am & 2pm).


7:00: Music at St. Andrew’s - Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol. Dramatic readings with musical interludes. Michael Errichet and Rick Phillips, readers; Joseph Angelo, tenor; and others. St. Andrew’s Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. 416-593-5600 x231. Freewill offering. Donations support St. Andrew’s Out of the Cold program. Gingerbread and hot chocolate will be served.

11:00 amm and 2:00 - Canadian Opera Company - Opera for Young Audiences: WOW Factor - A Cinderella Story. Music by Gioachino Rossini, libretto by Joel Ivan, musical adaptation by Stephanie Mayer. Members of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio. Imperial Oil Theatre, 227 Front St. E. 416-363-8231. $40; free (under 12). Also Dec 2 (11am & 2pm).


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Elmer Iseler Singers

Friday, Nov. 30, 2018 @ 8pm Metropolitan United Church

With special guest artists, The Amadeus Choir and soloists

Meredith Hall soprano

Marjorie Malats mezzo soprano

Asista Tennekoen tenor

Giles Tomkins bass baritone

416-217-0537 elmeriselersingers.com

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A. Concerts in the GTA

8:00: Elmer Iseler Singers - Handel’s Messiah. Meredith Hall, soprano; Marjorie Malats, mezzo; Giles Tomkins, baritone; Patricia Wright, organ; Robert Venables, trumpet; and others. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. 416-217-0537. $55; $50(sr); $30(under 30). Pre-concert dinner at the Albany Club (91 King St. E). $65 per person. Arrive at 5:30pm for 6pm dinner.

8:00: Music Gallery - Speccial Guest Laurie Brown & Pondercast. Leslie Ting; Ben Smith, piano; Laurie Brown. The Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. $15-$25. Accessible to all levels of vision. Also Dec 1.


Sunday December 2

11:00am: Canadian Opera Company - Opera for Young Audiences: WOW Factor - A Cinderella Story. See Dec 1. Also 2pm.

12:00 noon: Toronto Children’s Chorus.
Sing Lo! Seasonal carols. Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel lobby, 123 Queen St. W. 416-932-8666 x231. Free. Donations welcome. Concert runs to 4pm, come and go as you please.


2:00: Canadian Opera Company. Opera for Young Audiences: WOW Factor - A Cinderella Story. See Dec 1.


8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Tchaikovsky’s The Nutcracker and More. Tchaikovsky: Polonaise from Eugene Onegin; Suite No.1 from The Nutcracker; Symphony No.4. Earl Haig: Polonaise from Eugene Onegin; Suite No.1 from The Nutcracker; Symphony No.4. Joel Sheridan, conductor. Joel Sings Cole & Cole! Tilted Dog, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. $8-$12.


10:00: Friends of Christmas. The Glow of Christmas. Gjeilo: Sunrise Mass; Chilcott: Little Jazz Mass; Lauridsen: Sure on This Shining Night; Christmas Carol sing-along. Christina Haldane, soprano; Oakham House Choir; Toronto Sinfonietta; Concert Arts Guild. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-822-9781 or info@gallery345.com. $25; $15(st). Cash only. Tickets available online at eventbrite.ca.

11:00: Toronto Beach Chorale. Great Joy. J.S. Bach Cantata 147. D. Buxtehude Magnificat and Motets by Hassler, Bruckner, Reger and Rachmaninov along with carols recounting the story of Mary and the Angel Gabriel. Sunday Dec 2 18:70 3pm toronto-beach-chorale.com


5:00: Joel Sheridan. Joel Sings Cole & Cole! Musical tribute to Nat King Cole and Cole Porter. Joel Sheridan, vocals; Richard Whitman, piano; Jordan O’Connor, bass. Tilted Dog, 918 Bathurst St. 416-901-5425. PWYC($10-$20 suggested).

6:00: St. Olave’s Church. Christmas Lights. Light music and entertainment. Wenecias by Britain’s Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy; dramatic readings from The Screwetwork by S.C. Lewis. Performers include St. Olave’s Arts Guild and Pan4Christ Steel-pan Band.

7:00: St. Thomas’ Anglican Church. Advent Carols. Matthew Larkin, music director. St. Thomas’s Anglican Church (Toronto), 383 Huron St. 416-079-2232. Free.

7:30: Gallery 345. Payadora. Tango and Argentine folk music. Rebekah Wolkstein, violin; Drew Jurecka, bandoneon; Robert Horvath, piano; Joe Philips, bass; Elios Fernandez, vocals. 345 Sorauren Ave. 416-922-9781 or info@gallery345.com. $25; $15(st). Cash only. Tickets available online at eventbrite.ca.

Jubilate Singers
Celebrating our 50th Anniversary

Golden Jubilee Concert

Victoria, Bruckner, Casals, Lauridsen, Rutter, Whitacre ...

Sat. Dec. 1, 7:30 pm Eastminster United Church jubilatesingers.ca

416-587-8394. $20; Child 12 and under pay their age.

Peter Mahon
Artistic Director

Tallis Choir

A Gabrieli Christmas

The Tallis Choir is joined by period brass, strings, and organ for a thrilling evening of poly-choral masterpieces by Gabrieli and his contemporaries. Saturday, December 1 at 7:30pm St. Patrick’s Church, 141 McCaul St. Tickets: $30; Seniors: $25; Students with ID: $10 (only at the door) Info: 416 286-9798 Order online: boxoffice.tallischoir.com

www.tallischoir.com

November 1 - December 7, 2018

The whole note.com

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A. Concerts in the GTA

**KOERNER’S CHOICE**

**Celebrating Michael Koerner @ 90**

**KOERNER’S CHOICE**

*Betty Oliphant Theatre*

**www.NewMusicConcerts.com**

**Jumping Meatballs**

**Monday December 3**

- 7:30: **Chorisma. Joy of Christmas.** Susan Ryman, soprano; Alexa Ball, flute; Damon Richard, percussion; Robert Richardson, conductor; Lena Richardson, accompaniment. Thornhill United Church, 25 Egin St., Thornhill. 905-731-8318. Food donation and free will offering. In aid of Thornhill Christmas Assistance Program.

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

**Tuesday December 4**


**Toronto Mendelssohn Choir**

**Festival of Carols**

**Guest Conductor Howard Dyck**

**December 4 & 5**


- 1:00: **Cathedral Church of St. James.** Music at Midday. Nick Veltmeyer, organ. 65 Church St. 416-365-7885. Free. Donations welcome.

**Toronto Mendelssohn Choir.**

**Festival of Carols.** Stephanie Martin: An Earthly Tree; Alban Berg: Es ist ein Reis entsprungen; Mendelssohn: Ave Maria; Maria durch ein Dornwald ging (arr. Stefan Claas); and audience sing-along of popular Christmas carols. Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Canadian Staff Band of the Salvation Army; Toronto Youth Choir; Howard Dyck, guest conductor; Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-408-0208. $35-$78; $20 (Voxitix for patrons 30 and under). Also Dec. 4.

- 7:30: **Nathaniel Dett Chorale.** An Indigo Christmas Black Virgin...Great Joy. Sandra Faire and Ivan Fecan Theatre, Accadale East Building, 4700 Keele St. nathanieldeett.org. $TBA.

- 7:30: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** Rebands Family Fellowship Concert: Mazoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. Free (ticket required).

- 7:30: **Toronto Choral Society.** Navidad Nuestra (Our Christmas). Ramirez: Misa Criolla; Geoffrey Butler, conductor; Casavant (Latin ensemble); Ernesto Cardenas, tenor; Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $45-$65.

- 7:30: **University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** String Chamber Ensemble. Mark Fewer, director. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen’s Park. 416-408-0208. Free.

**Thursday December 6**

- 7:00: **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. 6 (7pm) & 9/12 (3pm).

- 7:30: **Canadian Music Centre.** CMC Presents: Germaine Liu and Sarah Hennies, Percussion. Works by Liu and Hennies. 20 Joseph St. 416-961-6601 X201. General: $20:$15(adv); CMC Members/arts workers: $15:$10(adv); Students: $15:$10(adv).

- 7:30: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Home Alone in Concert.** Resonance Youth Choir; Constantine Kitsopoulos, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-368-3378. $57-$81. Also Dec 7, 8 (mat & eve).

- 8:00: **An Indigo Christmas Black Virgin...Great Joy.** Sandra Faire and Ivan Fecan Theatre, York University 4700 Keele St. Toronto. Nathaniel Dett Chorale. www.nathanieldeettchorale.org. *Details and Tickets at nathanieldeettchorale.org*
Friday December 7


● 8:00: Royal Conservatory. Paquito D’Rivera with the Harlem Quartet. Bolcom: Three Rags for String Quartet; Debussy: Second movement from String Quartet in g Op.10; Weber: Clarinet Quintet in B-flat Op.34; Paquito D’Rivera: Suite aires tropicales; and other works. Koerner Hall, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. $45-95.

Thursday November 1
- 7:30: FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre. Dean Brody with Andrew Hyatt. 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-683-7722 or 1-855-515-0722. $75, $65 (Hot Ticket); $25(university/college); $5(high school).

Friday November 2
- 12:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Fridays #2-3 Concert: Lowell Lewis, violin; Joseph Lanca, violin; Boris Medicik, harpsichord. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.

Saturday November 3
- 10:30am: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Bear Needs to Sleep: Doors open 30 minutes before each concert for music activities provided by Music for Young Children. Stay after the concert to meet the performers and their instrumentalist KWS Musicians; Barbara Cronk, storyteller: Concerts for the Performing Arts, 36 King St. W., Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. $19-$85. Also Nov 3.

Sunday November 4
- 2:00: Gallery Players of Niagara. Songs of Life - Bach on Turtle's Back - Creation. Music by Alessandro Scarlatti, Bach; Violin Sonatas, Partitas and Arias; Solomon: Songs of Life, Bach on Turtle's Back. Brian Solomon, artistic creator and dancer; Julia Wedman, solo violin; Marian Newman, mezzo. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-468-1255 or galleryplayers.ca. $30; $36 (sr/arts); $141(family).
- 3:00: Brantford Music Club. The Gryphon Trio. Sanderson Centre for the Performing Arts, 88 Dalhousie St., Brantford. 519-756-7096. $30.50.
- 3:30: Kitchener-Chapel Choir. White Lights in Darkness. Trillium Lutheran Church, 22 Willow St., Waterloo. See Nov 3 (8pm, Kitchener).

Monday November 5
- 8:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Early Music Studio. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.

Tuesday November 6

Wednesday November 7
- 11:00 noon: Midday Music with Shigeru. Chamber Music Recital. Works by Bach, Prokofiev, and others. Matthew Christako, cello; and works by Debussy and Chopin. 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2442. $40-$58; $37-$55(faculty/staff); $19-$25(students).

Thursday November 8
- 6:00: Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region. WAAM-A-PALOOZA - Celebrating 25 years of WAAM. Grand Opera House, 250 St. Paul St., Waterloo. 519-787-5500. $20 ($10 student).

Friday November 9
- 12:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Fridays #2-3 Concert: Patrick Green, mezzo; Laura Leeoen, piano; Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.

Saturday November 10
- 1:00: Linden Project. Clock Tower Cultural Centre, 36 Front St. S., Campbellford. 705-653-5508 or 1-877-883-5776. PWYC.
- 7:30: Hamilton Philharmonic Orchesstra. From Broadway to Tin Pan Alley. Selections by Scott Joplin, Irving Berlin and George Gershwin, along with wartime favourites. Doug LaBreque, vocalist; Bach Elgar Choir; Royal Hamilton Light Infantry Band; Gemma New, conductor. FirstOntario Concert Hall, 1 Summer Pl., Hamilton. 605-256-7765. $10-$71.

Sunday November 11
- 3:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Faculty Concert Series: Pianoalopaloza Returns. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.
- 4:00: St. George's Cathedral. Evening Service commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. Cathedral Choir; Military band. St. George's Cathedral
Wednesday November 14

12:15: St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (Kitchener). Wednesday Noon-Hour Concerts. Paul Stouffer: Jazz Trio. 54 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-284-6727. Free. Low-cost lunches available in the foyer from 11:30am or bring your own.


1:30: Sultans of String. 122 Frederick St., Kitchener. 519-745-2175 or 1-888-745-4717. $36. Also Nov 16 (Kitchener).

1:30: Grand Philharmonic Chamber Singers. Considering Matthew Shepard. Johnson: Considering Matthew Shepard (Canadian premiere). Grand Philharmonic Chamber Singers; University of Waterloo Choral Choir; Mark Vuorinen, conductor. Humanities Theatre, University of Waterloo, 200 University Ave. W. Waterloo. 519-738-5600 or 2929. $30; $10 (student & school); $5 (child). Also Nov 13 (Guelph).

2:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts. Jazz: Shuffle Demons. Jazz, funk, pop and rap. 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424. $40-$55; $37.95 (full/ student); $19.95 (student). Also Sep 25 (Charlottetown).


2:30: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. A Night in Vienna. See Nov 23. Also 8pm.

3:00: Avanti Chamber Singers. And on Earth. Works for choir & trumpet. Landey: Premier for trumpet & choir; Koskinen: In Flans Wield. St. John’s Anglican Church, 471 Shaw St., Guelph. 519-837-5593. Also Nov 17 (Cambridge).

3:00: Grand Philharmonic Chamber Singers. Considering Matthew Shepard. See Nov 17 (Toronto). Also Nov 12 (Kitchener).


5:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Artist in Residence Concert. Ensemble Made in Canada; Cameron Crezman, cello. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1515 Richmond St. N., London. 519-681-3767. Free.

Saturday November 17

10:00: Westben Concerts. The Little Drummer. Jordan Mowat, drums; Westben Festival Chorus; Western University Chamber Choir; Patricia Bennett and Brian Finley, directors. The Barn, 6688 County Road 30, Campbellford. 705-653-5508 or 1-877-883-5777. $25. Also Nov 25(3pm). Dec 10(3pm), Peterborough; Dec 13(3pm, Norwood).

10:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. A Night in Vienna. See Nov 23. Also 8pm.

12:00 noon: Music at St. Andrew’s. Organ and Piano Duets. Lorne Vining; John Whiting; Brett Kansing, piano; St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (Barrie). 47 Owen St., Barrie. 705-726-1181. $10; free (student).

12:15: St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church (Kitchener). Wednesday Noon-Hour Concerts. Glen Souli, multi-instrumentalist; Joanne Bender, piano. 54 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 226-647-1290. Free. Low-cost lunches available in the foyer from 11:30am or bring your own.

2:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Opera at Western: The Turn of the Screw. See Nov 15. Also Nov 17(2pm), 18(2pm).

2:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Please Sir; I Want Seconds! Harcourt Memorial United Church, 87 Dean Ave., Guelph. See Nov 14(Waterloo). Also Nov 17(Cambridge).


5:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Opera at Western: The Turn of the Screw. See Nov 15(8pm).

7:00: Verdi Cosa Opera. The Fairies / Le Villi. Music by Puccini. Featuring Contempor- ary School of Dance, Waterloo. Knox Presby- terian Church (Waterloo), 50 Erb St. W., Waterloo. coopera.ca. $15, free (student).


* * *

For a full list of events, visit thewholenote.com.
B. Concerts Beyond the GTA

Chamber Music Showcase. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.

Friday November 30


Saturday November 29

12:15: St. George’s Cathedral. Advent Concert. St. George’s Cathedral (Kingston), 270 King St. E., Kingston. 613-533-2424. $9.50($3(faculty/staff); $13(under 14). Free. Low-cost lunches available in the foyer from 11:30am or bring your own.

Tuesday November 27

12:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Western University Wind Ensemble: One Life Beautiful. Paul Davenport Theatre, Talbot College, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.

Tuesday November 28


12:30: ChamberWorks Chamber Choir. Messiah. Chamber orchestra and soloists: Brian Rae, conductor; New Life Church, 25 Tracey Ln., Collingwood. 705-884-4454. $31.50($30(faculty/staff); $15/16 and under). Also Dec 12(pm).

12:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Chamber Music Showcase. Von Kuster Hall, Music Building, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.

12:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Choral Works. Messiah. Chamber orchestra and soloists: Brian Rae, conductor; New Life Church, 25 Tracey Ln., Collingwood. 705-884-4454. $31.50($30(faculty/staff); $15/16 and under). Also Dec 12(pm).


12:30: ChamberWorks Chamber Choir. Messiah. Chamber orchestra and soloists: Brian Rae, conductor; New Life Church, 25 Tracey Ln., Collingwood. 705-884-4454. $31.50($30(faculty/staff); $15/16 and under). Also Dec 12(pm).


Saturday December 1

2:00: Chamber Works Chamber Choir. Messiah. See Nov 30(7:30pm).

3:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Western University Wind Ensemble: One Life Beautiful. Paul Davenport Theatre, Talbot College, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.

3:00: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Western University Wind Ensemble: One Life Beautiful. Paul Davenport Theatre, Talbot College, Western University, 1151 Richmond St. N., London. 519-661-3767. Free.

7:00: Boreal. Larger than Life. Skoggard: Piano Quintet ROMA; Settings of Billy Collins poems; Bernstein: Songs and Duets. Marion Samuel-Stevens, soprano; Robert Missen, tenor; Penderecki String Quartet; Christopher Burton, piano; Daniel Wrukowski, piano, Wellington County Museum, 236 Wellington Rd. 18, Fergus. 1-800-683-0750. $40.

7:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Chamber Works. Messiah. Chamber orchestra and soloists: Brian Rae, conductor; New Life Church, 25 Tracey Ln., Collingwood. 705-884-4454. $31.50($30(faculty/staff); $15/16 and under). Also Dec 12(pm).

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Beethoven’s Triple Concerto. Mozart: Overture to Don Giovanni; Beethoven: Triple Concerto for Violin, Cello and Piano in C; Clyne: Within Her Arms; Mozart: Symphony No.36 in C. Reid’s Landing Auditorium, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-578-1570. $25/$20(st).

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Beethoven’s Triple Concerto. Mozart: Overture to Don Giovanni; Beethoven: Triple Concerto for Violin, Cello and Piano in C; Clyne: Within Her Arms; Mozart: Symphony No.36 in C. Reid’s Landing Auditorium, 101 Queen St. N., Kitchener. 519-578-1570. $25/$20(st).

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Friday December 2

2:30: Guelph Chamber Choir. Carols For Christmas. Music, poems and stories for the Christmas season; Handel: Hallelujah Chorus (sing-along); Gerald Neufeld, conductor; Winter’s Eve Trio (Sharlene Wallace, Joseph Macerello, accordion; George Koller, string bass). St. George’s Anglican Church (Guelph), 99 Woolwich St., Guelph. 519-783-3000. $25; $10(under 30); $5(under 14).

3:00: Achiil Choral Society. Never a Brighter Star. Western University Choral Ensemble, 247 Broadway Ave. Orangeville. See Dec 13(pm, Alliston). Also Nov 25(pm, Bolton - see GTA listings).

3:00: A la Jeunesse Youth Orchestra. Home for the Holidays! Port Hope United Church, 34 South St., Port Hope. 1-888-463-5596. $25; $15(st); free(under 12).

3:00: Western Concerts. The Little Drummer. Norwood United Church, 2424 Hwy 7, Norwood. See Nov 24(pm, Campbellford).

5:00: St. George’s Cathedral. An Advent Candlelight Procesion with Carol's Works by Bach, Powell, Buyler, Hassler, and others. St. George’s Cathedral (Kingston), 270 King St. E., Kingston. 613-548-4617. Freewill offering will be received. Religious service.

7:00: Cuckoo’s Nest Folk Club. Boreal. Cuckoo’s Pub, 122 Carling St., London. 519-519-5847. $25/$20(st).

Monday December 3

8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society. Penderecki String Quartet. Lutoslawski: Quartet No.1; Elgar: Piano Quintet; and other works. Jerry Kaplenick and Jeremy Bell, violins; Christine Vlajk, viola; Katie Schmijker, cello; Leopoldo Erice, piano. KWCMMS Music Room, 57 Young St. W., Waterloo. 519-886-1673. $35; $20(st).

Tuesday December 4

12:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music. Electric Guitar Compositions. Poulenc, Hindemith, and works by Poulenc, Schnittke, Enescu and Ravel. Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts, 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424. $39; $32(faculty/staff); $16(st). Also Dec 26(pm).


$25/$20(st).

Free event listings:
listings@thewholenote.com

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


**Angelina Maria Sanchez**. Italie Mio Tesoro. Works by Bellins, Puccini, Donizetti and others. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 416-456-9266. $15; free(12 and under). Nov 24, 7:30pm.

**Brampton Music Theatre**. Hunchback of Notre Dame. Music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, based on the novel. Rose Theatre, 1 Theatre Ln, Brampton. 905-874-2800. 42; $35(15); $28(ch); Opens Nov 8, 7:30pm. Nov 8, 7:30pm. Also Nov 10(7:30pm).

**Brampton Music Theatre**. Mary Poppins Jr. Music and lyrics by Richard M. Sherman and Robert B. Sherman, with Julian Stiles and Alexander Dworkin. Follows B. Lester. 150 Central Park Dr. Brampton, Ont. Sat 9:30; 2; 15; $35(15); Opens Dec 7, 7pm. Also Dec 8(7:30pm).


**Canadian Opera Company**. Vocal/Dance Series: From the Diary of Virginia Woolf. Works by Bellini, Puccini, Donizetti and others. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 416-456-9266. $15; free(12 and under). Nov 24, 7:30pm.

**Canadian Opera Company**. Vocal/Dance Series: From the Diary of Virginia Woolf. Works by Bellini, Puccini, Donizetti and others. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 416-456-9266. $15; free(12 and under). Nov 24, 7:30pm.

**Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony**. A Night in Vienna. Works by the Strauss family and others. Centre in the Square, 101 Queen St. N. Kitchener. 519-745-4711 or 888-475-4711. $19-$88. Nov 23(8pm), 24(2:30 & 8pm).

**Lower Ossington Theatre**. The Producers. Music and lyrics by Mel Brooks, adapted by Mel Brooks and Thomas Meehan from the film. Lower Ossington Theatre, 100A Ossington Ave. 416-807-0485. $54.99-$84.99. Opens Sep 8, 7:30pm. Nov 11-17, 7:30pm. Runs to Nov 24. Fri/Sat(7:30pm), Sat/Sun(2pm).


**Opera by Request**. Mozart’s Die Zauberflote (The Magic Flute). Music by W.A. Mozart, libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder. In concert with piano accompaniment. College St. United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20. Nov 2, 7:30pm. Also Nov 3.

**Opera by Request**. Pique Dame. Music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, libretto by Modest Tchaikovsky. In concert with piano accompaniment. College St. United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20. Nov 9, 7:30pm.

**Opera by Request**. Aida. Music by Giuseppe Verdi, libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni. In concert with piano accompaniment. College St. United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20. Nov 17, 7:30pm.

**Opera by Request**. La bohème. Music and libretto by Ruggero Leoncavallo. In concert with piano accompaniment. College St. United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. $20. Nov 25, 7:30pm. Also Nov 25 (3pm, gala).

**Opera by Request**. La bohème. Music and libretto by Ruggero Leoncavallo. In concert with piano accompaniment. St. Matthew’s United Church (Belleville), 25 Holloway St., Belleville. 416-455-2365. $20. Nov 25, 7:30pm. Also Nov 23 (7:30pm, Toronto).

**Opera For All**. Verdi, Rossini, Mozart, Oh My! Chorus and soloists from the Opera Studio. Glenn Gould Studio, 250 Front St. W. 416-315-0049. $20. Audience is encouraged to sing along! Nov 30, 7pm.

**Opera York**. La Bohème. Music by Giacomo Puccini, libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 905-787-8811. $40-$50. Also Nov 4(12pm). Opens Nov 2, 7:30pm. Also Nov 4(2pm).


**Port Hope Festival Theatre**. King Arthur:


Royal City Musical Productions. Annie. Music by Charles Strouse, lyrics by Martin Charnin, book by Thomas Meehan, based on the comic strip. River Run Centre Main Stage, 25 Woolwich St, Guelph. 519-763-3000. $42; $39(sr/sst); $27(ch). Opens Nov 21, 7:30pm. Runs to Nov 25. Wed-Sat(7:30pm), Sat/Sun(2pm). Note: no mat Dec 2.


University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Thursdays at Noon: Opera Spotlight. A preview of U of T Opera's production of Weill's Street Scene. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park. 416-408-0208. Free. Nov 1, 12:10pm.

University of Toronto Faculty of Music. U of T Opera: Street Scene. Music by Kurt Weill, lyrics by Langston Hughes. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. 416-408-0208. $40; $25(sr); $10(st). Opens Nov 22, 7:30pm. Runs to Nov 25. Thurs-Sat(7:30pm), Sun(2:30pm).


W

W are fortunate in Southern Ontario to have access to a large number of live-music venues. In the listings below, you will find over 30 clubs and restaurants that regularly present jazz and creative music, including Grossman’s Tavern, which celebrated its 70th birthday in September; The Rex, which has been in operation for over 40 years; and Burdock, which, having opened in April of 2015, is a mere three-years old. Mixed in among many exciting one-off events in these listings are a number of recurring gigs, most commonly once a week or once a month. These residencies form a vital part of the Toronto gig ecosystem, playing an important role for musicians, venues, and audience members alike.

To begin, a working definition: to qualify as a recurring gig for the purposes of this article, a gig must happen at regular intervals and feature the same artist(s); a one-off, two-or three-night run at a club does not qualify. A residency is also functionally different than a series, in which a presenter (not necessarily the venue itself) books artists who may be representative of a certain genre or theme. A residency, as the name implies, is about the creation of a kind of home base for musicians, (a hopefully) comfortable space in which they build a show and grow over time. As guitarist and York University instructor Robb Cappelletto puts it, a residency provides an opportunity “to try out new music, new players, new gear, [and] new approaches in a real-world setting.” Cappelletto performs regularly at Poetry Jazz Café with his trio, as well as at 416 Snack Bar with the group re:verse (with bassist Damian Matthew and drummer Chino De Villa).

There are a number of different residencies that take place in Toronto on a regular basis. In addition to a full calendar of (typically) standalone shows that take place in the late slots throughout the week, The Rex has a number of different residencies every month. If you visit on a Friday at 4pm, you’ll hear the Hugtown Syncopators; on Saturday at noon, the Sinners Choir; on Sunday at noon, the Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band; on Mondays at 6:30, U of T Jazz Ensembles (at least throughout the school year); and, on the last Monday of every month, the John MacLeod Rex Hotel Orchestra, which features many of Toronto’s more established musicians. The Rex also features month-long weekly residencies in early evening slots; often dubbed “Reduxen,” social media promotional material, these short-term weeklies are unique in the Toronto club scene. In November, watch out for the Brodie West Quintet on Tuesdays, JV’s Boogalo Squad on Wednesdays, Kevin Quain on Thursdays, and the James Brown Trio on Fridays.

Beyond The Rex, many other local venues support residencies. At The Tranzac, the JUNO-nominated band Peripheral Vision (Don Scott, guitar, Michael Herring, bass, Trevor Hogg, saxophone, Nick Fraser, drums) hosts the first Tuesday of every month at 10pm. As Peripheral Vision typically books a band to play an opening set, this residency is also something of a series, as there is a curatorial component beyond the musical work that the band undertakes. Bassist Michael Herring plays regularly on Wednesdays with a guitar trio at the tequila bar Reposado, which also features its house band – the Reposadists – on Thursdays and Fridays. At Poetry Jazz Café, in Kensington Market, artists such as the guitarist Luân Phung, vocalist Joanna Majoko, vocalist/pianist Chelsey Bennett, guitarist Robb Cappelletto and singer/guitarist Dan McKinnon play monthly gigs. The structure provided by regular performances can give musicians the
opportunity to focus on growth and development in a manner that isn’t always accessible in one-off gigs. Having a residency at Poetry, says McKinnon, “was pivotal to my development as a musician, band-leader and artist. Since that first gig over three years ago, my group won the 2017 Toronto Blues Society Talent Search, the Amy Louie Grossman’s Music Scholarship, and recently put out a well-received album this spring. None of this would have been possible if not for the residency I had at Poetry.”

The issues: There are many positive aspects to Toronto’s many fine residencies, but they are not without their issues. The first, and most obvious, is financial: for most of the aforementioned gigs, there is no financial guarantee. Musicians are typically compensated by passing the hat, through a percentage of bar sales, and occasionally through a percentage of a cover charge. This is not to say that it isn’t possible to make a fair fee playing in a residency – it can sometimes be the case, on a good night, that a group earns more than they may have if they were playing for an average preset guarantee – but it is certainly not always the case. There can also be other, unforeseen musical consequences of playing the same music with the same people in the same venue over an extended period of time. Nick Teahan, who held residencies at The Cameron House and The Rex for a number of years, makes the point that while playing consistently “really cemented the sound of [his] band,” providing “a regular audience who knew what to expect,” it also, unexpectedly, made the recording process harder. It “took a lot of effort to re-configure the songs” for the studio, Teehan says, as “some of the energy we felt was propelling our shows didn’t sound so great in a studio setting.”

Even with these issues, however, residencies are an important part of any healthy live-music scene, and, for most of the musicians who spoke to me about this column, participating in a residency is an overwhelmingly valuable, positive experience that fosters the growth both of individual musicianship and of the community at large. So, this month: check out a residency! As an audience member, it may become your regular gig, too.

D. In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

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Live jazz and dinner, $45.00 per person. Dinner from 6pm and music from 7pm to 9pm.
Nov 14 Laura Gauthier and Paul Grecco.
Nov 28 San Murata Duo.

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

The Home Smith Bar: No reservations. No cover. $20 food/drink minimum. All shows: 7:30-10:30pm unless otherwise listed.
Nov 4 Sophia Pertman & Adrean Farrugia.
Nov 2 Canadian Jazz Quartet & John Mac-Murphy.
Nov 3 Fern Lindzon.
Nov 5 Sound of Jazz: Leonard Bernstein Tribute.
Nov 6 Gene D'Inio.
Nov 9 Debbi Flemming.
Nov 6 Chris Gre- vino Quartet.
Nov 9 Carol McCarthy Quartet.
Nov 10 Brian Blain.
Nov 14 Dave Young Quartet.
Nov 15 Bob DeAngelis.
Nov 16 Steve Koven Trio.
Nov 17 Wendy Lands Quartet.
Nov 19 8pm Sounds of Jazz: Aretha Frank- lin Tribute (Dining Room).
Nov 21 David Steinmetz.
Nov 22 Shirantha Bedagee Quartet.
Nov 23 Don Vickery.
Nov 24 Julia Mahen- dran Trio.
Nov 28 Steven Taez Quartet.
Nov 29 Jesse Barksdale Trio. Nov 30 Melissa Lauren Trio.

Only Cafe, The
972 Danforth Ave. 416-463-7843
theonlycafe.com (full schedule)
Pilot Tavern, The
22 Cumberland Ave. 416-923-5716
thepilot.ca

All shows: $15.
Nov 3 Dave Young Quartet.
Nov 10 Jeff King Quartet.
Nov 17 Pat LaBarbera Quartet.
Nov 24 Barry Elmes Quartet.

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

Reposado Bar & Lounge
136 Osgoode Ave. 416-532-6474
reposadobar.com (full schedule)

Reservoir Lounge, The
52 Wellington St. E. 416-955-0887
reservoirlounge.ca

Every Tue & Sat, 8:45pm Tyler Yarema and his Rhythm. Every Wed 9pm The Digs.
Every Thurs 8:45pm Stacey Kaniuk. Every Fri 9:45pm Dee Dee and the Dirty Martini.

Rex Hotel Jazz & Blues Bar, The
194 Queen St. W. 416-598-2475
therex.ca (full schedule)

Call for cover charge info.
Nov 16:30pm Kevin Quain, 9:30pm Geoff Broadfield (Dining Room).
Nov 24pm Hogtown Syncopators, 8:30pm James Brown Trio, 9:45pm Davie. Nov 8:30pm Kevin Quain, 9:30pm Davie. Nov 9pm Hogtown Syncopators, 8:30pm James Brown Trio, 9:45pm Avi Granit.

Rex Hotel Jazz & Blues Bar, The
194 Queen St. W. 416-598-2475
therex.ca (full schedule)

Call for cover charge info.
Nov 16:30pm Kevin Quain, 9:30pm Geoff Broadfield (Dining Room).
Nov 24pm Hogtown Syncopators, 8:30pm James Brown Trio, 9:45pm Davie. Nov 8:30pm Kevin Quain, 9:30pm Davie. Nov 9pm Hogtown Syncopators, 8:30pm James Brown Trio, 9:45pm Avi Granit.

Sinners Choir: 3:30pm Fred Spek’s Camp Combo, 7pm Justin Bacchus, 9:45pm Joe Bowden Sextet. Nov 12 11pm Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band. 3:30pm Red Hot Rambler, 7pm Sonic Perfume, 9:30pm Lake Affect. Nov 12 6:30pm U of T Jazz Ensembles, 9:30pm Bob Rice’s Latin Jazz Big Band. Nov 13 6:30pm Brodie West Quintet, 9:30pm Chris Grieve.
Nov 14 6:30pm JVs Boogalo Squad, 9:30pm Nick Morgan Quintet.
Nov 15 6:30pm Kevin Quain, 9:30pm Kelly Jefferson’s Tune Town.
Nov 16 6pm Hogtown Syncopators, 6:30pm James Brown Trio, 9:45pm Joe Policastro Trio.
Nov 17 12pm The Sinners Choir, 3:30pm The Toronto Jazz Orchestra, 7pm Justin Bacchus, 9:45pm Roberto Occhipinti.
Nov 18 12pm Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band, 6pm Private Event.
Nov 19 6:30pm U of T Jazz Ensembles, 9:30pm Ethan Ardell Quartet.
Nov 20 6:30pm Brodie West Quintet, 9:30pm Ethan Ardell Quartet.
Nov 21 6:30pm JVs Boogalo Squad, 9:30pm Ernesto Cervini’s Turboprop ft. Joel Frahm.
Nov 22 6:30pm Kevin Quain, 9:30pm Ernesto Cervini’s Turboprop ft. Joel Frahm.
Nov 23 4pm Hogtown Syncopators, 6:30pm James Brown Trio, 9:45pm Hafez Modirzadeh Group.
Nov 24 12pm The Sinners Choir, 3:30pm Chris Hunt Tentet + 7, 7pm Blue Standard, 9:45pm Mark McLean’s Playground.
Nov 25 12pm Excelsior Dixieland Jazz Band. 3:30pm Freeeway Dixieland Band, 7pm Hannah Barstow Trio, 9:45pm Mark McLean’s Playground.
Nov 26 6:30pm U of T Jazz Ensembles, 8pm, John MacLeod’s Rex Hotel Orchestra.
Nov 27 6:30pm Brodie West Quintet, 9:30pm Claudio de Rosa.
Nov 28 6:30pm JVs Boogalo Squad, 9:30pm Humber College Jazz Orchestra.
Nov 29 6:30pm Kevin Quain, 9:30pm Dave Young Quartet.
Nov 30 4pm Hogtown Syncopators, 6:30pm James Brown Trio, 9:30pm Chuck Jackson’s Big Bad Blues Band.

Salty Dog Bar & Grill, The
1880 Queen St. E. 416-849-5064
thatsidog.ca (full schedule)
Every Tue 7-9pm Jazz Night. Every Thu 8:30pm Karaoke. Every Fri 9:30pm Blues Jam - house band with weekly featured guest. Every Sat 3pm Salty Dog Saturday Matinee.

Sauce on Danforth
1378 Danforth Ave. 416-647-1376
sauceondanforth.com

All shows: No cover.
Every Mon 6pm Gareth Parry’s Book Club.
Every Tue 6pm Julian Fauth. Every Wed Paul Reddick & Friends. Every Thu 8pm Steve Koven and Artie Roth. Sat and Sun Matinees 4pm various performers.

The Senator Wine Bar
249 Victoria St. 416-364-7517
thesenator.com

All shows with $10 cover charge ($5 after 10pm arrival, free after 11pm arrival)
Nov 2 Julian Fauth & Guest. Nov 3 Alex Pangman.

Tranzac
202 Brunswick Ave. 416-923-8137
tranzac.org (full schedule)

3 shows daily, various styles, in four different performance spaces. Mostly PWYC.
Education Week program. Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave. Admission: FREE, registration required, call 416-924-6211 x0 or www.mnjcc.org.

• Nov 12 7:00: Telafmusik, The Listening Club: Did You Hear That? Delve a little deeper into baroque music with this special series with Telafmusik musicians. BBC Radio host and musicologist Dr. Hannah French moderates with obstinat John Abberger. Memorial Room, Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-964-6337. 25.

• Nov 12 7:30: University of Toronto, Faculty of Music, Geiger-Torle Lecture: Stephen Clarke – Opera and Song 100 Years Ago, presented by Stephen Clarke, adjunct professor with expertise in historic recordnings and chair of the UK-based Historical Singers Charitable Trust. Walter Hall, University of Toronto, 80 Queens Park, 416-408-0208.

• Nov 21 3:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University, Music Cognition, and the Quantitative Seminar Series: Glenn Selchberg. Talbot College, Room 101, Western University 1151 Richmond St, London, Free, all are welcome. Info: music.uwo.ca/events/useful-information.html.

• Nov 22 7:00: Canadian Opera Company/ Toronto Public Library, Opera Taks: Intro to the Opera, series with musicologist Margaret Gormer who will discuss the evolution of opera and how to navigate its rich music and stories. Toronto Public Library, Don Mills, 888 Lawrence Ave. E. Free, registration recommended. 416-395-7160.

• Nov 23 3:30: Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University, Music Graduate Colloquium: Robert Hatten. Robert Hatten (University of Texas at Austin) “A Theory of Articulation.” Talbot College, Room 101, Western University 1151 Richmond St, London, Free, all are welcome. Info: music.uwo.ca/events/useful-information.html.

• Dec 03 5:00: University of Toronto, Faculty of Music, METH Colloquium. Max Katz, College of William and Mary. Faculty of Music, Room 130, 80 Queen’s Park. Free.

Masterclasses

• Nov 10 9:00am: Royal Conservatory. Flute Masterclass. Led by Keith Underwood. Mazzoleni Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca. Also at 2:00.

• Nov 9 5:00: Royal Conservatory, Violin Masterclass, led by Cecily Ward. Mazzoleni Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca. Also at 7:00.

• Nov 10 17, 18 & 24 10:00am: OperA: For All. A masterclass and performance opportunity for professional singers in their early career to work with Avelar Lozano Guliermez on artists, duets and trios, and perform in the Opera for All Concert. Four-4 hour masterclasses $349 (no tax), scholarships are available for tenors and baritones. Info: contact@operaforall.ca.

• Nov 10 10:00am: Royal Canadian College of Organists/Lawrence Park Community Church. Ken Cowan works with advanced organ students. Lawrence Park Community Church, 2180 Bayview Ave. 416-489-1551. Free. Info: rcmusic.ca. Also at 7:00 (Temerty Theatre).

• Nov 10 7:00: Royal Conservatory. Violin Masterclass, led by Erikia Raum. Mazzoleni Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca. Also at 2:00.

• Nov 11 10:00am: Royal Conservatory. Violin Masterclass, led by Philippe Graffin. Temerty Theatre, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca.

• Nov 10 5:00: Royal Conservatory, Piano Masterclass. Led by Ben Fleisher. Jhontawyr Chair in Piano. Mazzoleni Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca. Also at 2:25.

• Nov 12 10:00am: Royal Conservatory, Voice Masterclass, led by Adrienne Piczak. Temerty Theatre, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome to attend. Info: rcmusic.ca.

• Nov 16 5:00: Royal Conservatory, Piano Masterclass, led by Philippe Graffin. Temerty Theatre, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca. Also at 7:00 (Temerty Theatre).

• Nov 16 7:00: Royal Conservatory, Violin Masterclass, led by Erikia Raum. Mazzoleni Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca.

• Nov 20 12:00 noon: Royal Conservatory, Percussion Masterclass, led by Joseph Tompkins. Temerty Theatre, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca. Also at 2:00.

• Nov 23 10:00am: Royal Conservatory. Voice Masterclass, led by Brian Zeger. Mazzoleni Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca. Also at 2:00.

• Dec 07 5:00: Royal Conservatory. Piano Masterclass, led by Leslie Kinton. Room 410, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca.

• Dec 07 7:00: Royal Conservatory, Cello Masterclass, led by André Diaz. Mazzoleni Hall, 273 Bloor St. W. Free, all are welcome. Info: rcmusic.ca.

Religious Service


Sing-alongs, Jams, Circles

• Nov 03 7:15: Toronto Gilbert and Sullivan Society. Join us for an evening of war songs, 365 music and remembrance and refreshments. St. Andrew’s Church, 117 Bloor St. E. 456(non-members).

• Nov 12 20:00: Classic Music Club Toronto. Debussy in Historically Informed Performance. Listen to familiar music from early
decades of the past century in a new way through recent recordings. Info: classad@thewholenote.com or John Sharpe at 416-898-3549, or torontohiti@sympatico.ca. Annual membership: $25(regular); $10(st). Free for first-time visitors; donation accepted for refreshments.
● Dec 01 7:15: Toronto Gilbert and Sulli-
van Society. Join us for a lovely and lovely evening Christmas-related entertain-
ment, refreshments included. St. Andrew's Church, 117 Bloor St. E. Parking below off Hayden. $5(non-members).

Tours
● Nov 11 10:30am: Canadian Opera Company, 90-Minute Tour of the Four Seasons Cen-
tre. Visit the Isadora and Rosalie Sharp City Room, the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre and R. Fraser Elliott Hall, as well as backstage areas such as the wig rooms and dressing rooms, the orchestra pit. Four Seasons Cen-
tre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-363-8231. coc.ca. $20(adults); $15(sr/ st). Also Nov 18 & 25. Tours are available in French on select dates.

Workshops
● Nov 03 10:30am. Toronto Mendels-
sohn Choir. Singation Saturday. a choral workshop for everyone who loves to sing. Join guest conductor Ross Inglis for Han-
del's beloved Coronation Anthems, music and refreshments provided. Cameron Hall, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. 1562 Yonge St. $10. Info: toronto@tmchoir.org/ singing-saturdays.
● Nov 04 1:30: Toronto Early Music Player-
● Dec 07 7:30: Toronto Recorder Players Society. Renaissance and Baroque workshop for recorders and other early instruments, refreshments included. Coach: Avery Mac-

WholeNote CLASSIFIEDS can help you recruit new members for your choir; band or orchestra; find a new music director or accompanist; sell your banjo! Starting at just 3/$44. INQUIRE BY November 24 for the combined December/January issue. classad@thewholenote.com

AUDITIONS & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
Available pro bono positions with the KINDRED SPIRITS ORCHESTRA: Oboe, Horn, Trumpet, Violins, Violados, and Contrabasses. For information, visit KSOrchestra.ca or email GM@KSOrchestra.ca

BASS 2 OPPORTUNITY! SING AWESOME CHORAL MUSIC with other skilled singers! Perfect your electric guitar skills. Create incredible musical experiences! Excellent, piano to meet women – JOIN the Canadian Men’s Chorus! NOW! Email TODAY! grainville@canadianmenschorus.ca

BUY & SELL
CLASSICAL RECORD AND CD COLLECTIONS WANTED. Minimum 350 units. Call text or e-mail Aaron 416-471-8169 or A@A31.CA.

FRENCH HORN: very nice Selmer double horn in excellent condition. suitable for a committed student or working musician. mjbuell1@gmail.com

BASS TROMBONE: King Dual Gravis with special Partch modifications, in excellent condition. TRUMPET Bach Stradivarius model 37 (never used); SAXOPHONE Bundy Selmer; alto; BASSOON Linton; TENOR saxophone, Yamaha. Phone 416-964-3642.

VIOLINS BY EUROPEAN VIOLIN MAKER after 6pm 905-886-7374. Weekends anytime.

PIANOS WANTED. Minimum 350 units. Call, text or e-mail Aaron 416-471-8169 or A@A31.CA.

STRAINS BY EUROPEAN STRAIN MAKER after 6pm 905-886-7374. Weekends anytime.

VIOLINS BY EUROPEAN VIOLIN MAKER after 6pm 905-886-7374. Weekends anytime.

INSTRUMENTS WANTED. Minimum 350 units. Call, text or e-mail Aaron 416-471-8169 or A@A31.CA.

Leslieville). To discuss your child's need for music-making please contact larissa@lmmtstudio.com 416-574-0018.
The WholeNote
19th Annual Blue Pages: SUPPLEMENT, November 2018

Welcome to the following six presenters whose member profiles were received too late to publish in our October 2018 Blue Pages directory, now online, and updated year-round, at thewholenote.com/blue. For more information about WholeNote membership please contact Karen Ages at members@thewholenote.com or by phone at 416-323-2232 x26.

● Canzona Chamber Players

Now in our 16th season, this year’s 2018-2019 Canzona Chamber Music concert series features some of Canada’s most talented musicians, coming together to collaborate for your entertainment. Performers include Concert Masters of NACO and the Edmonton Symphony, Yusuke Kawasaki and Robert Uchida, cellist Joseph Johnstone and clarinetist Miles Jacques of the TSO, and many more. This Winter/Spring, join us for fresh interpretations of musical classics, including a masterful rendition of Mozart’s “Gran Partita,” conducted by music director Evan Mitchell of the Kingston Symphony in May. This season we will have six concerts with two performances of each program in two locations: St. Andrew-by-the-Lake Church on beautiful Toronto Island, and St. George-the-Martyr Martyr Church, located at 197 John Street in the heart of the city. Brunches are available by reservation at our Sunday Island performances. For more information, visit our website, send us an email and/or follow our Facebook page “Canzona Chamber Players.”

Jonathan Krehm
416-822-0613
reservations@canzona.org
www.canzona.org

● FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre

The FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre is a 95,000 square foot cultural complex comprised of four state-of-the-art performance venues that host a signature presentation of international and local performing artists. Designed by Diamond Schmitt Architects, the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre plays a vital role in the renaissance of downtown St. Catharines, serving as the catalyst in modernizing the area and reinforcing the brilliance of Niagara region’s diverse cultural cluster.

Jordy Yack
905-688-5601, x3614
jyack@stcatharines.ca
www.firstontariopac.ca

● Orchestra Toronto

One of Canada’s longest-running and best-loved community orchestras, Orchestra Toronto is an orchestra created by passionate musicians within the community – for the community. We offer the enjoyment of music, the fostering of education, music appreciation and the support of emerging Canadian talent. Our organization of volunteers is committed to making symphonic music accessible to a broad and diverse public beyond the concert hall. With a concert season of five performances in the splendid acoustic of the George Weston Recital Hall at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, we offer musical excellence, a warm sense of community, and innovative programs. Our commitment to music in the community extends beyond our schedule of weekly rehearsals and five performances: we offer student fellowships for accomplished musicians under age 18; five annual conducting apprenticeships; and an annual concerto competition for young soloists.

Jennie Worden
416-467-7142
info@orchestratoronto.ca
www.orchestratoronto.ca

● Reaching Out Through Music

Founded in 2007, Reaching Out Through Music provides musical opportunities to the youth of St. James Town, one of North America’s most densely-populated and ethnically diverse communities. We seek to enrich children’s lives by offering active participation in choral, instrumental, and other programs, including the opportunity to attend some of the myriad concerts in the City of Toronto. We create social opportunities for children by encouraging them to share a love of music, performance and teamwork through collaborative choral and instrumental ensembles. A critical part of child development, music education provides children with cognitive and emotional benefits that have a lifelong impact on learning and social skills. ROTM has a tradition of hosting benefit concerts yearly (often with popular silent auctions), featuring both world-renowned artists and our own students. Under the direction of Cheryll Chung, and assisted by Jacqueline Teh, the St. James Town Children’s Choir is expanding and increasing the number of musical learning opportunities for its members, culminating in a Gala Fundraising concert on April 27, 2019. Our dedicated teachers and volunteers look forward to an enriching season.

Virginia Evey
416-421-8518
ed.rotm@gmail.com
www.reachingoutthroughmusic.org

Show One Productions

For over a decade, Svetlana Dvoretsky and Show One Productions have presented some of the world’s greatest symphony orchestras, ballet companies, dance and theatre productions in Canada. Show One is responsible for many debuts and has produced very special collaborations, including a big ticket premiere of the play “Brodsky/Baryshnikov” that featured the long-awaited return of Mikhail Baryshnikov to Toronto, and the world premiere of the exclusive, once-in-a-lifetime performance by Dmitri Hvorostovsky with Anna Netrebko and Yusif Eyvazov in an unprecedented gala evening at the Canadian Opera Company (COC) this past season.

The upcoming Show One season will feature a rare recital by our beloved Sondra Radvanovsky at Koerner Hall; the world-renowned Slava Snow Show; and the Eifman Ballet featuring their brilliant production “Tchaikovsky”, as well as the return of the Vakhtangov Theatre with the play “Masquerade.” Further compelling projects are continually added to the roster. Check our website for more details.

Svetlana Dvoretskaia
416-737-6785
info@showoneproductions.ca
www.showoneproductions.ca

Ukrainian Art Song Project

The Ukrainian Art Song Project (UASP) is a ground-breaking initiative that aims to record and publish over 1,000 art songs by 26 of Ukraine’s greatest composers under its Musica Leopoli label. Equally important is introducing Ukrainian art songs to vocal students along with audiences everywhere through its annual Ukrainian Art Song Summer Institute, published anthologies and regular live performances. Artistic director and founder, British bass-baritone Pavlo Hunka, has assembled a stellar cast of Canadian operatic performers both for recordings and performances. The principal piano accompanist for the project is Albert Krywolt. Since 2004, the label has recorded 388 dramatic songs by composers such as Lysenko, Stetsenko, Stepovyi, Turkewich, Barvinsky, D. Nyzhanivsky, Volynsky and N. Nyzhanivsky. The latest compilation, Galicians II, can be heard on the UASP website.

Musical scores for Ukrainian art songs are published on the UASP website in the Ukrainian Millennium Foundation Online World Library and are available for download free of charge.

Plans for 2019 include live performances and the annual Ukrainian Art Song Summer Institute in August. Please visit us at ukrainianartsong.ca or Facebook for further details.

Lesia Tkach
416-346-8283
info@ukrainianartsong.ca
www.ukrainianartsong.ca
DAVID OLDS

As I sit down to write this column in Toronto, there is a gala performance taking place in Montreal celebrating the winners of this year’s Azrieli Foundation music composition prizes. Kelly-Marie Murphy is the winner of the 2018 Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music. This is the second time that the Foundation has awarded the $50,000 prize – the largest of its kind in Canada – which is granted to a Canadian composer based on a proposal for a new work which expresses an aspect of the Jewish experience with “the utmost creativity, artistry and musical excellence.” Established by the Azrieli Foundation in 2015, the biennial Azrieli Music Prizes (AMP) also include a $50,000 international prize, granted to the composer of the best new major work of Jewish Music written in the last ten years.

Murphy’s new work, a double concerto for cello and harp, explores Sephardic music and how it impacted other cultures as the diaspora settled in Morocco, Tunisia and parts of Europe. “What fascinates me is how music travels, and how it can subtly influence cultures throughout its journey,” says Murphy, who drew from Sephardic folk and liturgical melodies for the new concerto. Murphy adds: “The Azrieli Foundation has created a wonderful opportunity to encourage Canadian composers to write significant works on a grand scale.”

This is certainly true for Brian Current, winner of the inaugural AMP in 2016, whose proposal was to write an extended cantata based on the Zohar (Book of Enlightenment), “the most central book of the Kabbalah and the most mysterious of Jewish mystical texts.” I am sure that it is no coincidence that Analekta has just released New Jewish Music Vol.1 (AN 2 9261 analekta.com) featuring that commission, Seven Heavenly Halls, and the Klezmer Clarinet Concerto by young Belarus-born Wlad Marhulets, winner of the international prize that year.

In the interests of full disclosure, I must declare that I know Brian well, and he has served on the board of New Music Concerts, where I have been general manager for many years. He is an integral part of the re-visioning of the organization as it embarks on its second half-century of activity and in the coming years will share artistic duties with founder Robert Aitken. Current says that he became interested in the Zohar, particularly its reference to “Seven Heavenly Halls,” while researching texts for The River of Light, a large-scale oratorio in six parts that will explore the subject of transcendence in a variety of religious and cultural traditions. Seven Heavenly Halls is a dramatic work, almost operatic in scope, for solo tenor (Richard Trocelli), (unnamed) chorus and orchestra (Czech National Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Steven Mercurio). It is an exceptionally well-crafted work, with impeccable balance between soloist – busy throughout – chorus and orchestra, with a wealth of well-chosen colours which support the vocal writing, never masking the texts so carefully prepared by Current’s librettist Anton Piatigorsky from translations by Yehoshua Rosenthal. I find the concept of a prize rewarding an outline rather than a finished work to be intriguing, especially considering this it the largest composition prize in Canada. Congratulations to both Sharon Azrieli of the Azrieli Foundation for conceiving the award, and to Current for bringing the proposed work to such dazzling fruition.

As mentioned, the CD also includes the other 2016 winning work, Marhulets’ Klezmer Clarinet Concerto composed in 2009. The composer says “Klezmer music came crashing into my life when, as
a 16-year-old living in Gdansk, my brother Damian brought home a CD by a band called Klezmer Madness, featuring clarinetist David Krakauer [the soloist here]. This was music that was so boldly Jewish, so full of wild energy that a kind of madness enveloped my senses as I listened to it. I decided to become a musician on the spot.” Five years later, having moved to New York, Marhulets met Krakauer and the result was this whirlwind work that draws on not only the Klezmer tradition, but also jazz, funk and hip-hop. This dazzling album is completed with a touch of history, Lukas Foss’ Song of Songs (1947) sung by Sharon Azrieli. All in all, a fine addition to the Analekta catalog.

This just in: At the recent gala it was announced that the Azrieli Foundation will add a third $50,000 prize to its roster for the next round in 2020. The Azrieli Canadian Prize, open to Canadian composers only, will be based on proposals for a new large-scale work exploring specifically Canadian themes. With added performance guarantees, recording and residency benefits, the prize will be worth some $200,000 in all. Applications begin in February 2019.

Another Analekta disc, The Bounds of Our Dreams (AN 2 8874-75) is the latest from Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra and director Alexander Shelley. It also includes a significant recent Canadian work, Concerto de l’asile (Asylum Concerto), by Walter Boudreau. Composed at the request of pianist Alain Lefèvre, the work pays homage to Québec poet: poet, playwright and co-signer of the seminal Refus global manifesto that played such a large part in the Quiet Revolution, Claude Gauvreau. Boudreau is best known as the conductor and artistic director of the Société de musique contemporain du Québec (since 1988), but is a significant composer in his own right with more than 60 concert works and 15 film scores to his credit. The award-winning Lefèvre has devoted his energies to promoting the music of child-prodigy André Mathieu (1929-1968), known as Québec’s “Mozart” (although his virtuosic music had more in common with that of Rachmaninoff than with the Classical era). There are touches of this Romantic sensibility in Boudreau’s expansive (45-minute) concerto, perhaps surprising from such a champion of contemporary music, no stranger to the extremes of the avant-garde. The work is in the traditional three-movement form, here referring to different aspects of Gauvreau’s troubled life. The first, Les oranges sont vertes (The Oranges are Green), refers to Gauvreau’s final work, published posthumously in 1972. It starts with a flourish that sets the stage for an extended movement where the soloist and orchestra are seemingly at odds throughout, and ends with a cadenza representing the poet’s descent into madness. The gentle second movement, St-Jean-de-Dieu, depicts a time of heavy sedation (and shock therapy) spent in the asylum of St-Jean. The final movement was inspired by Gauvreau’s chef-d’œuvre, La charge de l’original épormyable (The Charge of the Expropriable Moose) which received its English language premiere by One Little Goat Theatre at Taragon Theatre in May 2013. Like the play, Boudreau’s concerto is formidable, and Lefèvre, clearly in his element, is in perfect form.

The 2-CD set opens in a welcoming fashion with a sparkling performance Ravel’s Pavane pour une enfant défunte in which the orchestra shines. The second disc is devoted to Rimsky-Korsakov’s Shehêrezade with impeccable solo work from concertmaster Yosuke Kawasaki. I see that the orchestra has grown over the years from its classical model of 50-some players to a current total of 80, big enough to tackle these large Romantic works, which it does with convincing agility and aplomb under Shelley’s direction. This is their fourth recording for Analekta with Shelley at the helm, each of which has included new significant Canadian repertoire. Finally, or perhaps once again after an extended hiatus, we can celebrate the (CNACO as a truly national orchestra. Accolades all around!

Beginning in the mid-1960s, Paul Lansky was among the first to experiment with the computer for sound synthesis. Until the mid-1990s, the bulk of Lansky’s work was in computer music, for which he was honoured in 2002 with a lifetime achievement award by SEAMUS (the Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States). The first time I heard his music was thanks to my WholeNote colleague and former CBC radio producer David Jaeger, sometime in 1985 on his program Two New Hours. It was a brilliant piece titled Idle Chatter, in which the composer had used computer synthesis to mimic the sound of the human voice, or actually a room full of human voices, and created the babble of a crowd in which you could swear you heard actual words and syntax. It’s available on YouTube and if you’ve not heard it, it’s well worth the search.

Since 2004 Lansky has concentrated on instrumental composition without any electronic involvement, as witnessed by the latest of some two dozen recordings on the Bridge label, The Long and the Short of It (BRIDGE 9195 bridgerecords.com). In the notes Lansky states that the music contained here, although recently composed, relates to his earliest musical experiences at the High School of Music & Art in Manhattan, playing folk guitar (with some classical studies) and later the French horn. He achieved quite a high performance level with the latter and for a time was a member of the Dorian Wind Quintet. It is with a wind quintet that this disc begins, the title work performed by Windscape. It is an extended work inspired by the third-movement Adagio of Mozart’s Serenade for Winds K.361, passing through a number of moods and colours, at some moments reminiscent of the busy chatter of the electronic piece I mentioned above. Talking Guitars uses the metaphor of a conversation to characterize a dialogue between the two instrumentalists, although it is much more lyrical than the busy computer chatter I keep mentioning. It is performed by the brilliant young guitarists, Jiyeon Kim and Hao Yang. Pieces of Advice for horn and piano was written for William Purvis and Mihae Lee. The suite consists of “character studies,” with the following performance instructions for the five movements: “Be Mysterious,” “Be Proud,” “Be Patient,” “Be Annoying” and “Be Insistent.” It quite effectively depicts all these moods and is beautifully realized by its dedicativeness. It seems whatever the genre, Lansky’s music continues to attract and satisfy.

I cannot remember when I first heard the music of Polish composer Witold Lutosławski, but I do know that I was thoroughly enthralled by the time I had the great pleasure of meeting him thanks to New Music Concerts back in 1993, before I was directly involved with the organization. On that occasion he was in Toronto to conduct what would turn
out to be his last concert – he died just a few months later of cancer. The live CBC recording was released as an independent CD by New Music Concerts and later reissued by Naxos (8.572450). Needless to say, I was pleased when I received a new CD by 12 Ensemble, one of the UK’s leading string orchestras, which features Lutosławski’s *Musique funèbre*. Composed in 1958 and dedicated to the memory of Béla Bartók, it was the last traditional work he composed before incorporating aleatoric principals into his writing, although it does employ 12-tone techniques. It is a moving work, suitably dark, and is here performed with distinction. The group, known for performing without a conductor, has a homogenous sound and an innate sense of ensemble. The Lutosławski is followed by Ulysses Awakes by John Woolrich, which seems to rise from the shadows of the Lutosławski, and perhaps gives rise to the album’s title *Resurrection*, released on the new *Sancho Panza* label (SPANCD 001 juno.co.uk/labels/Sancho·Panza). It grows gradually and with an almost medieval, primitive solo melody fades again. This is followed by Kate Whitley’s *Autumn Songs*, with whirling glissandi and quiet tremolos in the ensemble once again, and a gentle, soaring melody rising above. The final work, by far the longest, takes us full circle with American rock guitarist Bryce Dressner’s *Response Lutoslawski*, a moving homage commissioned by the National Audiovisual Institute of Poland. The five-movement work explores various thoughtful moods and shows a command of the string orchestra idiom, without a hint of Dressner’s pop-music roots. This perfect bookend completes a stunning debut for both this impeccable ensemble and a new label.

I was skeptical when I first came across the disc *The Scene of the Crime* featuring Colin Currie and Håkan Hardenberger (Colin Currie Records CCR0002 colincurrie.com). I was not convinced that the combination of percussion and trumpet could sustain interest over the duration of an entire CD. But sustain it does, in many intriguing and satisfying ways. In the words of Currie, “The duo with Håkan Hardenberger is my musical safe space for maximum risk-taking. From my earliest point of connection with this most regal of musicians, what entranced me was the fearless audacity of the endeavour. Envelopes pushed, or simply reinvented, boundaries moved and canvases recast.” They do this through interpretations of some striking repertoire, from André Jolivet’s 1971 *Heptade* with its unpitched percussion instruments, through Joe Duddell’s *Catch* (with Currie on marimba) and Tobias Broström’s use of gongs and vibraphone in *Dream Variations*, to Daniel Bortz’s mystical *Dialogo 4* which begins in near silence, and the title track, Brett Dean’s 2017 composition *The scene of the crime*... written especially for the duo’s “skill and infectious drive, scored for trumpet, flugelhorn and drum kit.” The album never loses its grip on the listener’s attention. A resounding achievement!

We invite submissions. CDs and comments should be sent to: DISCoveries, WholeNote Media Inc., The Centre for Social Innovation, 503 - 720 Bathurst St. Toronto ON M5S 2R4.

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**STRINGS ATTACHED**

**TERRY ROBBINS**

Hilary Hahn is one of the truly great violinists on the world stage, so it perhaps comes as something of a surprise to see that she has never issued a complete set of the Bach Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin, despite her reputation for outstanding Bach playing. Her 1997 debut CD on Sony, *Hilary Hahn plays Bach* (Sonata 3, Partitas 2 & 3) when she was only 17 drew rave reviews.

Now, 21 years later and with her first release on the Decca label, she completes the set with *Hilary Hahn plays Bach Sonatas 1 & 2, Partita 1* (Decca Classics 4833954).

What immediately strikes you is the smoothness of line, the warmth (with full vibrato), the full measure given to the inner notes in the multiple stopping and the brilliance of the definition in the numerous presto movements. Complete technical assurance is given, of course, but the depth of her musical intelligence and insight is always equally evident.

Hahn says that since the initial CD she has continually been asked when she would be recording the remaining works, and that she felt that “now was the moment” to do so. “What you hear in this completion of my solo Bach set,” she says, “is therefore the best recording that I feel I can offer at this point in my life.” It’s hard to imagine how she could ever improve on it.

The *Dreams & Fables I Fashion* is the stunning debut recording by the American violinist Elicia Silverstein, considered by many to be a rising star on the European early music scene (Rubicon Classics RCD1031 rubiconclassics.com). Noted for playing music from the 17th to 21st centuries on historical and modern instruments, Silverstein demonstrates that extensive range here with music that spans 500 years.

Two Biber works from around 1676 open the disc: the *Cruciﬁxion Sonata* X from the Rosary or *Mystery Sonatas*; and the solo *Passacaglia*. The contemporary Italian composer Salvatore Sciarrino’s *Capriccio No.2* from his Sei Capricci dates from 1976, its technical challenges handled here with ease.

Little is known about Giovanni Pandolfi Melali (1630-c.1669/70), but his Sonata No.2 “La Cesta” from 6 Sonatas for Violin and Continuo Op.3 is really something, with some dazzling playing by Silverstein in the opening section. Another work from 1976, Luciano Berio’s *Sequenza VIII* provides yet another opportunity for the soloist to demonstrate her complete mastery of contemporary technique.

A dazzling period-inﬂuenced performance of the Bach Chaconne from the Partita No.2 in D Minor ends an outstanding debut release that seamlessly combines period and contemporary styles.

Violinist Anne Akiko Meyers is in fine form on *Mirror in Mirror*, her 37th album (Avie AV 2386 avie-records.com). With the exception of Ravel, Meyers has collaborated with all of the composers or arrangers on the album, several of the works being either written or arranged for her.

An arrangement of the Philip Glass *Metamorphosis II* by Glass collaborator...
Michael Riesman opens the disc, followed by two works by Arvo Pärt: Fratres; and the album’s title track Spiegel im Spiegel (Mirror in Mirror).

There’s a quite different sound to the Ravel Tzigane. The original violin and piano version contained instructions for a lute/real, an optional piano attachment which could add a cimbalom-sounding effect to the keyboard. It’s essentially a museum piece now, and for this recording Jakub Ciupiński sampled the original instrument in a Brussels museum and produced a digital recreation of the sound for keyboard player Elizabeth Pridgen. The sound is not as strong as a regular piano, but does add a highly appropriate sound to this gypsy-inspired work. You can watch a video of the recording session on YouTube under Anne Akiko Meyers Records Ravel Tzigane with Luthéal.

John Corigliano’s Lullaby for Natalie was written to mark the birth of Meyers’ first child in 2010. The pianist here and in the Glass and Pärt tracks is Akira Eguchi.

Two works by Ciupiński are both for violin and electronics. Edo Lullaby is based on a Japanese folk song that Meyers’ mother used to sing. Wreck of the Cumberland from 2009 was commissioned by Meyers and was inspired by the composer’s exploration of an underwater wreck in Sudan in 2005.

The final track is Morton Lauridsen’s own arrangement of his a cappella choral work O Magnum Mysterium, with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Kristjan Järvi. It brings a thoughtful and thought-provoking CD to a beautiful close.

All but the Ravel and Pärt works are premiere recordings.

The two works by Arvo Pärt – Fratres and Spiegel im Spiegel – are also included on the new Onyx CD from the outstanding violinist Viktoria Mullova, simply titled Arvo Pärt (ONYX4201 onyxclassics.com). Paavo Järvi conducts the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra.

Pärt’s tintinnabulation style, developed in the 1970s, produced one of the most distinctive compositional voices of the past 50 years. “I build with primitive materials – with the triad, with one specific tonality,” said the composer. “The three notes of a triad are like bells, and that is why I call it tintinnabulation.”

Nearly all of the works here were first performed by Gidon Kremer. Tabula rasa and Fratres were both written in 1977, the latter heard here in a 1991 arrangement by Pärt for violin, string orchestra and percussion. Passacaglia, written in 2003 for violin and piano was arranged for violin and strings in 2007 in honor of Kremer’s 60th birthday.

Paper Ich . . . for bells, bells and strings was originally dedicated to Yehudi Menuhin in 1995 but revised for Kremer in 1999. Spiegel im Spiegel dates from 1978, its slow stepwise melody over gentle piano arpeggios the epitome of Pärt’s style.

The English violinists Jameson Cooper and James Dickenson are the performers on Spohr Violin Duets 1, featuring the Three Duets Op.67 and the Duet in E-flat major WoO 21 No.3 by the 19th-century German violin virtuoso and composer Louis Spohr (Naxos 8.573763 naxos.com).

The Op.67 duos were an attempt by Spohr to produce duets that were less demanding than his previous Op.3, Op.9 and Op.39 duos, which had not sold well due to their difficulty. They are really quite charming – fresh, melodic, inventive, and with a good deal of multiple stopping, which makes them sound more like string trios at times. The Duet No.2 in D Major has long been particularly popular.

The WoO 21 duos are Spohr’s earliest surviving compositions, written when he was about 12 years old. Technical ability and musical sensitivity are already there, albeit in a framework lacking mastery of form and structure. The mature composer noted that they “may be childish and incorrect, but they do nevertheless have a form and a flowing melody line.” Indeed they do.

Cooper and Dickenson provide warm and stylish playing throughout an absolutely delightful CD.


Dvořák’s immensely popular String Quartet in F Major Op.96, “American” was written at Spillville, Iowa in 1893 during his first summer in the United States. It’s given a solid performance here. Sirota’s String Quartet No.2, “American Pilgrimage” was commissioned by the performers and was conceived as a companion piece to Sirota’s first quartet “Triptych,” written in response to the 9/11 tragedy. It celebrates American geography and culture, the source material for the four movements being Protestant hymnody, gospel, Native American song and Jazz.

The Barber is the Adagio for Strings, here in its original form as the slow middle movement from the String Quartet Op.11. Recorded in 2011, six years before the rest of the disc, it’s an intensely lovely performance.

The first release on the new Bear Machine Records label is Dissonance, a performance of Mozart’s String Quartet in C Major.
The Russian violist and conductor Rudolph Barshai arranged

There’s some

violinist Ethan Wood called

Ah! vous dirais-je, Maman: a folktale for

Adagio

Barber’s

Lamentations

Hymnody

enjoyable works on the CD is particularly effective.

and

(“anxiety”),

effective

three-movement

Bartók and Stravinsky. Ferdinando (Fred) De Sena is represented by his

on the children’s counting song, with an acknowledged nod to Carter,

is a brief take

than the other works here, but is still essentially approachable and

Quadrant Vol.2

composer bios – available on the website. There is also a 12-minute

Paul Osterfield’s Khamsin is wider ranging in sound and technique

than the other works here, but is still essentially approachable and

attractive. David T. Bridges’ This Fragmented Old Man is a brief take

on the children’s counting song, with an acknowledged nod to Carter,

Bartók and Stravinsky. Ferdinando (Fred) De Sena is represented by his

three-movement String Quartet No.1, and L. Peter Deutsch by the really
effective Departure, the four movements representing Anticipation
(“anxiety”), Preparation (“diligent activity”), Leave-taking (“sadness”) and Setting Sail (“excitement”). The third movement of one of the most
enjoyable works on the CD is particularly effective.

Katherine Price is a young composer with strong roots in the choral

tradition. Her lovely and meditative Hymnody has shades of Samuel

Barber’s Adagio. Another really strong work, Marvin Lamb’s

Lamentations, ends an excellent disc.

Quadrants Vol.2 features works for string quartet by six contemporary American composers in excellent performances by the Boston-based Pedroia String Quartet (Navona Records NV6184 navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6184). There is unfortunately zero information on the works or composers included with the cardboard digipak, but additional album content – basically just

Visions and Variations is an excellent new CD by the American string ensemble A Far Cry (they are also known as The Criers) on their own label (Crier Records CR1801 afarcry.org).

There’s a fine performance of the early Benjamin Britten work Visions on a Theme by Frank Bridge, followed by a newer Theme and 12 Variations work by

The 20 short pieces of Sergei Prokofiev’s Visions Fugitives Op.22 were written individually between 1915 and 1917, many for specific friends. The Russian violist and conductor Rudolph Barshai arranged

15 of them for string ensemble, the remaining five having been

arranged here by A Far Cry members Alex Fortes, Jesse Irons and Erik

Higgins.

Cliper Erikson explores a dual theme in his new CD release Tableau – Tempest & Tango (Navona NV6170 navonarecords.com). Beginning with the dark overtones of Russian history, he explores works by Russian-born composer David Finko. He combines Fantasia on a Medieval Russian Theme with three piano sonatas that cover a 15-year period in the composer’s life. Finko’s music is substantial and occupies the entire first disc. The Russian theme continues on the second CD with Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition. Erikson reads a great deal of personal content into this familiar work and draws philosophical connections from its program to Finko’s compositions.

The tango element appears courtesy of composer Richard Brodhead who wrote both Sonata Nocturno and Una Carta de Buenos Aires for Erikson. While the Latin flavouring and dance form are unmistakable, they blend with a contemporary language to form a unique expression that sustains interest throughout the works.

Dana Muller and Gary Steigerwalt have been performing as a piano duo for more than 30 years. Their latest recording In Your Head – New Music for Piano Four Hands (Navona NV6190 navonarecords.com) is a reminder of how much wonderful four-hands repertoire there actually is beyond the familiar material of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The works on this disc are by six American composers and present an astonishingly wide array of compositional styles. The opening tracks are a five-part suite by Donald Wheelock titled Mind Games, to which the CD links its own title. The final movement comes as a complete surprise with an energetic and humorous touch.

The major work is John La Montaine’s Sonata for Piano Four Hands Op. 25. This is a substantial work with a clear intent to exploit everything two players can bring to the keyboard collectively. Density, volume and colour are the effects the composer requires the pianists to create. These are particularly critical in the closing Fugue, where the subject relies heavily on these devices.

While there’s so much in this program that’s commendable, Dreamworlds by Lewis Spratlan deserves special mention for its unique shadings and the distinctive voice of its composer. Its three movements are artfully and entertainingly written character portrayals.

Danniil Trifonov lives in the shadow, cast by mountains of gob-smacked reviews all struggling for fresh superlatives to describe his impact on the world of piano music, of his own success. His newest release Destination Rachmaninov – Departure, Piano Concertos 2 & 4. The Philadelphia Orchestra, Yannick Nézet-Séguin (Deutsche Grammophon 483 5335 4)

dechuschemammophon.com/en/artist/trifonov) demonstrates why he has such an effect. Plenty has been written about his technique and the perfect ease with which he manages the most demanding passages. There is, moreover, a sense of confident repose in his musical presence that creates a sense of originality and newness to everything

K465 by the Diderot String Quartet (bearmachinerecords.com). The ensemble, which was formed in 2012 and received training in modern and early music, uses period instruments with gut strings.

The remarkable opening Adagio of the quartet consequently sounds quite different from the rich, full approach you frequently hear, with the softer sound and minimal

vibrato helping to reveal just how shocking this passage – which gives the work its name – must have sounded to contemporary audiences; you really do hear this astonishing progression with new ears. It pointed the way for the future; as the sparse accompanying notes perceptively point out: “discomfort and pain became new ways to accent the beautiful and transcendent.” This is Mozart with a difference indeed, with excellent dynamic range and flexibility with tempos and phrasing.

The rest of the CD is puzzling. It’s a 14-minute podcast discussion between Ben Cooper, who mixed and mastered the disc, and Josh Lee, who produced it, that can most charitably be described as Mozart for Idiots. It seems to want to be both semi-humorous – Cooper first pretends that he’s never heard of Mozart and then saying that his understanding of him “comes 100 percent from the movie Amadeus” – and semi-serious, but even if it does slowly progress through very basic Mozart biography to minimal discussion of the quartet, it ends up being neither particularly amusing nor particularly informative.
Both concertos on this disc are truly breathtaking. The lesser known No.4 is especially satisfying to hear for its rarity and the occasional flavours of jazz-band harmonies that recall the contemporary sounds of 1926 New York. The most memorable moments are those when Rachmaninov swells the music to a veritable orchestral and pianistic tsunami that wreaks an exhilarating devastation on anyone listening.

Trifonov also includes three sections from Rachmaninov’s solo piano transcription of Bach’s Violin Partita No.3 in E Major, BWV1006. His performance shows how much good Rachmaninov had stripping away the Baroque strictures in favour of a more playful contemporary iteration.

**Hyeyeon Park** is an accomplished performer and a respected academic. Her new release Klavier 1853 Liszt, Schumann, Brahms (Blue Griffin records BGR351 bluegriffin.com) uses 1853 as the starting point for a selection of piano works that have their genesis in that year. It seems to have been a time of historical significance on numerous fronts. Both piano manufacturers Steinway and Bechstein founded their respective firms in 1853. More importantly, the paths of several key musical personalities crossed in that year, beginning a series of influential relationships that shaped the evolution of European music.

The young Brahms met Liszt in Weimar in June 1853 shortly after Liszt had completed his Ballade No.2 in B Minor S.171. By September he’d presented himself at the Düsseldorf home of Robert and Clara Schumann. Clara had written her Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann Op.20 in early 1853 as a birthday gift for her husband. After Robert Schumann’s decline in health, Brahms used the same theme in a set of variations he composed as a gift for Clara. Brahms had arrived with some samples of his work including the Piano Sonata No.3 in F Minor Op.5. Robert was so impressed by this young talent that he experienced a resurgence of creative inspiration and composed several pieces, including the Gesänge der Frühe Op.133.

This group of historically-linked pieces forms the intriguing program Park performs on this disc. She is a complete artist who brings everything to this music that it needs. She plays with a Romantic sensitivity to the language of each composer, perfectly capturing the spirit of the age.

**Romain Descharmes**’ new CD Saint-Saëns Piano Concertos Nos.4 & 5 “Egyptian” (Naxos 8.573478 naxos.com) completes his project begun in 2017 with the release of the first three concertos. Marc Soustrot conducts the Malmö Symphony Orchestra for all the performances in the set.

The two-movement Concerto No.5 is not often heard. The easy flow of the music from both the piano and orchestra comes as a reminder of Saint-Saëns’ remarkable gift for composition. Descharmes’ playing perfectly matches the attractive elegance of the music. While his sensitive playing suggests a vulnerability that suits the composer’s voice exquisitely, power and forceful statement are always available when needed.

The artistic partnership between pianist and orchestra is superb. It makes its greatest impact in the Concerto No.5 “Egyptian” where Saint-Saëns uses exotic orchestrations and musical ideas to create his Egyptian mystique. Descharmes describes the work as the composer’s best – a showpiece designed to impress and dazzle the audience.

Everything builds toward the final movement where high energy, brilliant scoring and performance leave an impression as lasting as the pyramids at Giza.

This recording is excellent on all counts. It reflects the highest production values and a shared artistic genius consistently present from start to finish. If you’re going to get this recording, get the earlier two discs as well. It’s a set worth having.

**Karsten Scholz** is now well into his project to record Beethoven’s 32 piano sonatas. His latest release is, like its two predecessors, a two-disc set. Beethoven Klaviersonaten III (Elmstudio 309794-4 karstenscholz.de). Apparently recording them in reverse chronological sequence, this third set presents the early half of the middle sonatas, Nos.12-18. The first two sets cover everything after this period and clearly, the early sonatas are yet to come.

Scholz is in his late 40s and has an impressive bio with a credible collection of awards, postings, performances and other career achievements. In a world filling quickly with self-recorded and self-promoted artists, Scholz stands out as an obvious talent. Scholz is the kind of artist that sets the standard for trusted, intellectually informed performance. Maturity guides his artistic decisions. His expression has a wide dynamic supported by wonderful keyboard technique all of which is spent in aid of the perfect balance.

Sonata No.14 in C-sharp Minor, Op.27 “Moonlight,” is for its wide familiarity and inner variety, a potent litmus test of interpretive skill. Scholz takes the opening movement with an unhurried intention that frequently hesitates at critical phrase endings to heighten the appearance of the next idea. The second movement is slower than often
heard but effectively echoes the tenderness and also sets up the high-speed turbulence of the final movement.

All seven sonatas in this set benefit from the same unerring performance quality that Scholz has made his hallmark in this project. Eliane Rodrigues has recorded nearly 30 CDs and shows no sign of easing up her pace. Her latest recording is Claude Debussy – Reflets (Navona NV6164 navonarecords.com). Rodrigues has chosen a program that supports her view of Debussy as a composer of more than just languid, dreamy, impressionistic music. Indeed, it’s as much her approach as it is the program that clinches her argument. The opening tracks, Suite Bergamasque, contain the famous Clair de lune, which is usually taken as a prime opportunity for creating the impressionistic atmosphere of Debussy’s fluid arpeggios and richly blended harmonies. Rodrigues, however, moves through the piece at a more determined pace, lingering less indulgently on the familiar emotional hotspots. Surprisingly, the work loses nothing in this approach and comes across with a new and rather different meaning – something perhaps more actively philosophical rather than deeply contemplative.

Other tracks like Pour le piano, especially its Toccata movement, are highly energized and percussive, words not often used to describe this repertoire. Intriguingly, this performance does more to connect the composer to some of his contemporaries than a traditional interpretation would do. Ravel and Satie suddenly share a kinship with Debussy that has hitherto seemed more tenuous.

Still, Rodrigues doesn’t entirely reject Debussy as the arch-impressionist of piano composition. Arabesques is as powerfully mystical as you’ll hear it played by anyone. So too are the slower movements of Images Books 1 & 2. Rodrigues knows exactly what she’s doing and her ideas are worth hearing.

Mahan Esfahani has resumed his recording relationship with Hyperion Records with an early November release The Passinge Mesures – Music of the English Virginalists (Hyperion CDA68249 hyperion-records.co.uk). Having recorded a couple of discs in 2014 then moved to DG for a couple more in 2015 and 2016, Esfahani is back at Hyperion with his articulately unapologetic approach to harpsichord performance. Current plans include some pre-Baroque repertoire, plenty of J.S.Bach as well as contemporary works written for Esfahani himself.

The current recording samples music from well-known composers of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods: Byrd, Farnaby, Bull, Gibbons and others. Esfahani’s liner notes offer a passionate argument about the limited usefulness of authentic performance approaches to early forms of music. Freed from the tightest interpretive and stylistic constraints, Esfahani explores emotional expression through tempo changes, rich ornamentation and an intensity of performance whose absence has made the instrument a tough sell to a wider audience. He plays with an enormous amount of energy. And in some inexplicable way, he brings out inner voices and countermelodies on an instrument where this is not supposed to be possible.

Esfahani points to the humanity, beauty and complexity of Shakespeare’s work and asks why music of that period shouldn’t be considered in the same light. He may have single-handedly begun the expansion of our thinking on issues of early music performance. He has, at least, shown us a credible alternative to what has been doctrine for several decades.

VOCAL

Adieu mes tres belles

Poline Renou; Matthieu Donarier; Sylvain Lemêtre
Yolk Records 3 2076 (yolkrecords.com)

The vocalist Poline Renou and clarinettist Matthieu Donarier have been making ethereally beautiful music for more than a decade. Joined on this excursion Adieu Mes Tres Belles by the percussion colourist Sylvain Lemêtre, their music makes a magical rhythm turn with Renou’s pristine, high-sprung voice being daubed by rhythmic paint, so to speak, while both musicians are embraced by Donarier’s near-mystical harmonics as he breathes into his various clarinets.

This repertoire cuts a majestic swathe from early European monodies through the polyphonic music of the late Renaissance to the edge of the Baroque era. Despite this extraordinary range of music cutting through a myriad of modal frameworks, a magical gossamer-like thread sews it all together. This is largely due to the wraith-like presence of Renou, whose chaste, slender voice creates a sense of rapt spirituality throughout the proceedings. Her vocals are bathed in the voluptuous, round sound of Donarier’s clarinets, aptly suggesting a warm and resonant music from ninth-century anonymous works to those of Gilles Binchot, Michelangelo Rossi and Vicente Lusitano from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

Lemêtre’s drums create contemporary drama around the moments of Renou’s vivid word paintings and Donarier’s expressive chromaticisms and dissonance, of which Heu Me Domine is a splendid example. Overall the disc is a rapturous unveiling of sacred and secular works – a happy marriage of astute scholarship and daringly rigorous, idiomatic performance.

Raul da Gama

Mozart: Lucio Silla
Kurt Streit; Patricia Petibon; Teatro Real, Madrid; Ivor Bolton; Claus Guth
BelAir Classiques BAC 150 (belairclassiques.com)

Lucio Silla is Mozart’s fifth opera, written when he was a 16-year-old. Lucio Silla was a Roman dictator and as one might expect, was surrounded by endless found love, lost love, intrigue, threats, dire punishments, etc.

Mozart’s early operas are characterized by concertante arias – that is to say the vocal line is like an instrumental concerto (duet, trio, quartet, etc.). Such vocal writing is extremely demanding of the singers. These early works of Mozart bare no signs of being composed by a teenager. The stories, and Lucía Silla is no exception, have complex plots and lyrical texts that are dealing with human feelings and troubled souls. Another characteristic of these early works was the employment of castrati in the leading roles. In Lucio Silla, as in other works, for the most part Mozart wrote for singers that he knew and the writing was customized to suit their virtuosity.

Whereas today there are no castrati, there are countertenors who specialize in Baroque and early classical composers: Vivaldi, Pergolesi, Handel et al. In all Mozart operas, however, today’s practice is to use female vocalists. The best example is the role of Cherubino, a male character written to be sung by a castrato in Le nozze de Figaro, where today only female vocalists are heard. In Lucio Silla, two of the main male characters are stunningly sung by women, in particular, soprano Silvia Tro Santafe in the role of Cecilio. She is truly outstanding with a magical voice and a true Mozart technique and affinity, in the company of a cast not far behind. This production attempts to recreate the story into a later time. I am not taken by the staging, truly abstract and not of
anything to do with the plot. Hence, there is nothing else but the superb singing to occupy our attention. In that way the staging issue is unimportant, thanks to the greatness of Mozart’s incomparable score.

The orchestra and conductor are first-class in every respect. Others in the cast are Kurt Streit (Lucio) Patricia Petibon (Giunia), Inga Kalna (Cinna), Maria José Moreno (Celia) and Kenneth Tarver (Auﬁdio).

Bruce Surtees
Andrew Staniland – Go By Contraries
Tyler Duncan; Martha Guth; Erika Switzer
Centrediscs CMCCD 25918
(musiccentre.ca)

► Three dramatic song cycles by Canadian composer Andrew Staniland comprise this exciting, intense, rewarding release performed with respect, musicality and technical prowess by soprano Martha Guth, baritone Tyler Duncan and pianist Erika Switzer. Each showcases the composer’s innate ability to combine words and sound to create thought-provoking, quasi-programmatic works.

Earthquakes and Islands, a setting of Robin Richardson’s poetry, is a tour de force, provoking, quasi-programmatic works. The CD also includes Walter Steffens’ clever, fanciful libretto is set to music by his father, German composer Walter Steffens (b.1934). The 38-minute opera, scored for oboe/English horn, clarinet, saxophone, cello and piano, in addition to the four singers, was premiered in Houston in 2016. The text is sung in parlando style, the vocal and instrumental lines lively and engaging. Given its economical forces and inherent entertainment value, with many familiar musical and literary references, this comical chamber opera is a natural audience-pleaser for conservatories and small opera companies everywhere.

The CD also includes Walter Steffens’ pensive, 12-minute song cycle, Five Songs on Hölderlin (2008), performed by Bruzaukas and pianist Tali Morgulis. No texts are provided, but the opera libretto and Hölderlin’s German verses, without translation, are downloadable from Navona’s website.

Michael Schulman

Two Cells in Sevilla: Don Quixote Is Hungry
Sonja Bruzaukas; Todd R Miller; Octavio Moreno; Benjamin Leclair; Greenbriar Consortium; David Kirk
Navona Records NV6174 (navonarecords.com)

Two cells in adjacent buildings overlook a square in 16th-century Seville. Gabriel Tellez (baritone Octavio Moreno), a monk who wrote under the name Tirso de Molina, is in his cloister; Miguel de Cervantes (tenor Todd R. Miller), along with his Servant (bass Benjamin LeClair), is in prison, accused of embezzlement.

Gabriel and Miguel lament over their “watery broth” and plead with the Cook (mezzo Sonja Bruzaukas) for better food, but she rebuffs them, lost in her dreams of romance. Trying to charm her, Gabriel and Miguel begin creating their now-classic tales of Don Juan and Don Quixote, respectively, until they’re interrupted by a letter signed “John Falstaff.”

Marc Béla Steffens’ clever, fanciful libretto is set to music by his father, German composer Walter Steffens (b.1934). The 38-minute opera, scored for oboe/English horn, clarinet, saxophone, cello and piano, in addition to the four singers, was premiered in Houston in 2016. The text is sung in parlando style, the vocal and instrumental lines lively and engaging. Given its economical forces and inherent entertainment value, with many familiar musical and literary references, this comical chamber opera is a natural audience-pleaser for conservatories and small opera companies everywhere.

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Michael Schulman

And So It Goes – Song of Folk and Lore
Elora Singers; Noel Edison
Naxos 8.573661 (naxos.com)

► This superb recording literally cuts a choral swath through Canada, the United States and the British Isles, by including musical material that literally helped shape the cultural identity of those nations. Britain is represented here by compositions from Ivor Novello, Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams. Several traditional airs are also present, as is the work of two Canadian composers: Jimmy Rankin’s JUNO-winning Fare Thee Well My Love and Eric Whitacre’s Go, Lovely Rose. From the US comes Billy Joel’s melancholy And So It Goes. With Joel’s poetry reframed in a fresh and almost hymn-like arrangement, the song takes on a whole new emotional life. Recorded by Nobert Kraft at St. John the Redeemer in Elora, this ambitious recording was produced by Kraft and Bonnie Silver; the two gifted pianists featured are Leslie De’Ath and James Bourne.

The award-winning Elora Singers is an all-professional vocal ensemble founded in 1980, that has thrilled the world with many memorable performances, as well as bringing Canadian vocal chamber repertoire to the international stage. The choir is, of course, the linchpin of the noted Elora Festival.

There are 21 pieces on this CD, each one a perfectly cut diamond – all refracting light in their own uniquely beautiful way. Of special note are Vaughan Williams’ Three Shakespeare Songs. The choir, expertly conducted by founding director Noel Edison, uses dynamics, sibilant consonants, control of vibrato and impeccable intonation to wend its way through the complex arrangements; it almost seems as if they can morph into a fantastically intricate one-celled being, displaying precision, inspiration and un failing musicality in equal parts.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

What we’re listening to this month:

A QSF Journey
Quartet San Francisco
On this new release QSF invite you to join in their journey into the chamber music of the 21st century.

It’s Time
Tanya Wills Quartet
Tanya Wills is a Toronto based Jazz singer. With the TANYA WILLS QUARTET she brings her sensual and evocative sound to this recording with three of her favourite gentlemen – master musicians, Bill Bridges, Jordan Klапman and Ron Johnston.

Tanya Wills Quartet
Halibut Cheeks & Other Love Songs
Leslie Fagan; Lorin Shalanko
Independent (canadianartsong.com)

Soprano Leslie Fagan and pianist Lorin Shalanko, both international performers and professors of music at Wilfrid Laurier University, are devoted to showcasing Canadian composers through their Canadian Art Song Series, which premiered with the release of Thread of Winter in 2016. This second recording in the series, which takes on the theme of love and romance, is bursting with great warmth and passion. Since the prelude to romance is often a meal, the recording begins with the witty David L. McIntyre’s Creek Bistro Specials in which Fagan and Shalanko delicately evoke sensuous and silent is the lake, Gladys Davenport’s Cool and silent is the lake, in which Fagan and Shalanko delicately evoke a sense of wonder at nature’s tranquility.

Dianne Wells

CLASSICAL AND BEYOND

Mahler – Symphony No.6
Minnesota Orchestra; Osmo Vänskä
Bis BIS-2266 (bis.se)

The enigmatic Sixth of Mahler is one of the “Wunderhorn Symphonies” (Nos. 5–7) because each draws its main inspiration from Das Knaben Wunderhorn, Mahler’s most atmospheric and melodic song cycle. But the Sixth stands out because it ends in a minor key; with no triumphant fortissimo ending, it fades out into nothingness.

Hailed as “exacting and exuberant” (New York Times), Finnish conductor Osmo Vänskä at the head of the prestigious Minnesota Orchestra is putting his mark on the US and the entire world’s music scene with his highly original and compelling interpretations. He has a visceral sense and immediate grasp of the essence of the music and a near hypnotic grip on the orchestra. His revolutionary Beethoven cycle already caused a world sensation and now he is ready to tackle Mahler.

In this superb, spacious BIS recording Vänskä avoids all overt emotional excesses and concentrates on the musical textures and beauties of the score. In fact, in his hands the symphony is not tragic at all, but a strong affirmation of life. He leads us through a remarkable journey: the relentless, terrifying military march that dominates the first movement is relieved by a magnificent love theme (inspired by Mahler’s beloved wife Alma) into an idyllic realm of an alpine meadow, cows grazing and village church bells ringing in the distance. The Andante is one of Mahler’s heavenly creations, but military madness returns as a demonic 3/4 time Scherzo punctuated with piercing and agonizing shrieks. The 32-minute Finale is an incredible piece of music that culminates in those three giant hammer blows, the power of fate that ultimately destroys man, sure, but after what a journey and what a struggle!

Janos Gardonyi

Violoncelle Français
Cheng² Duo
Audite 97.6987

Violoncello del Fuego
Cheng² Duo
Audite 97.7366 (audite.de/en/ensemble/127-cheng_duo_duo)

If one went by the names on the cover of pianist Jacob Greenberg’s two-disc set Hanging Gardens, one might wonder if Debussy were the odd man out. After all, of the four composers featured Debussy was the impressionist, while Schoenberg, Berg and Webern were pioneers of the Second Viennese School, not only tending towards expressionist painting but also favouring an atonal approach to harmonic conception. However, the connection between the four men is deep and born of the desire to look beyond mainstream Western traditions as a way of expanding the vocabulary of music, the vividness of Symbolist poetry and above all an overwhelming sense of the elemental beauty of indeterminate harmonies.

The centerpiece of this repertoire is Schoenberg’s Das Buch der hängenden Gärten, a song cycle based on the poetry of German Symbolist poet Stefan George. The work is a telling illustration of Schoenberg’s search for new modes of expression, which though unified poetically, tend to complete a musical statement within the frame of a miniature, with miniatures succeeding one another without developing a broad narrative pattern. But Greenberg shapes this work, as Schoenberg himself declared writing it: seeking beauty and sacrificing everything to it with the ripples of atonality and dissonance that come with it. Tony Arnold’s agile, luminous soprano voice is ideal and sings with power and subtlety. The Berg Sonata Opus 1 with traces of Liszt and – unsurprisingly – Schoenberg, manipulates tiny fragments of melody and rhythm into a statement dense with dramatic gesture and emotional power. And Webern’s Variations Op.27 are packed with incident and crafted like an overture, which enhances its dramatic potential.

Greenberg appears to be ever the outstanding interpreter of fin de siècle French piano music and his wonderfully lucid and fluent pianism seems perfectly suited to Debussy’s quicksilver imagination. His accounts of both the Études and Preludes are astonishing. The Préludes indicate an affinity with the allusive world of the composer’s Images from several years earlier. The Études are more technically demanding and Greenberg, with marvellous gradations of dynamics and timbre, seems perfectly suited to this, Debussy’s most macroscopic piano music.

Raul da Gama

Violoncelle Français
Cheng² Duo
Audite 97.6987

Violoncello del Fuego
Cheng² Duo
Audite 97.7366 (audite.de/en/ensemble/127-cheng_duo_duo)

Having heard the best of the best during more than 60 years of frequent concert-going, I’m not easily impressed, but four years ago, when I first heard the Cheng² (Cheng Squared) Duo, I was thrilled by their prodigious virtuosity and impassioned expressivity. Cellist Bryan Cheng was then all of 16, pianist Silvie Cheng in her early 20s. I was thrilled again this past August when the brother-and-sister pair from Ottawa performed at the Toronto Summer Music Festival. Bryan combines a dark, robust tone with jaw-dropping bravura, while Silvie creates an extraordinarily varied palette of keyboard colours that enhance her imaginative, nuanced phrasing. Together, they offer remarkably fresh approaches to familiar music, making their first two CDs so very special.

The major works on Violoncelle Français, the Cello Sonatas of Claude Debussy and César Franck, are performed with unusual extremes of moody introspection and rhapsodic abandon. I’d grown tired of hearing the Franck, whether in the original version for violin or Jules Delsart’s cello transcription,
but the Duo’s revelatory re-invention of this much-performed work, with myriad subtleties of tempo, dynamics, phrasing and tonal colour, surprised and delighted me.

The CD also includes five encore-style selections, Saint-Saëns’s Allegro Appassionato and The Swan, and three well-loved pieces by Gabriel Fauré that receive especially loving treatments – Pablo Casals’ (bigroundrecoreds.com) Big Round Records BR8953 Duo Beija-Flor – composer whose piece was especially convincing. Less familiar is Celso Machado’s languorous Quebra Queixo. Machado, a world music guitarist now based in Vancouver, wrote the piece in homage to a popular Brazilian candy!

De Falla’s set of Seven Spanish Folksongs was originally arranged for soprano and piano in 1914 and this transcription is particularly convincing. Less familiar is Celso Machado’s languorous Quebra Queixo. Machado, a world music guitarist now based in Vancouver, wrote the piece in homage to a popular Brazilian candy!

Not all works on Costas are by Hispanic composers. Roddy Ellis is a Canadian performer and composer whose piece Havana Street Parade was especially commissioned by the duo. Its quirky and syncopated rhythms are an intriguing blend of jazz and Latin elements, performed with much aplomb.

Throughout the disc, the addition of extraneous effects – percussive tapping on the guitar and the sound of wind created by the flute – further heighten the listening experience. Infectious rhythms, a diverse program and superb playing by both performers make this CD ideal not only for a cool gray day but any time of year – highly recommended.

Duo Beija-Flor – guitarist Charles Hobson and flutist Marie-Noëlle Choquette – began playing together during their student days at Concordia University and officially became a duo in 2010. Since then, they have performed throughout Canada, the United States and Argentina.

This disc, titled Costas – referring to the Latin coastlines of the Atlantic – is a delight, featuring music by such diverse composers as Manuel de Falla, Astor Piazzolla, Celso Machado and Roddy Ellis. What is particularly striking from the very beginning is the wide variety achieved with respect to style, mood and tempo within a thoughtfully chosen program.

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More encore pieces, arrangements of familiar music by Spanish composers Granados, Albéniz, Sarasate and de Falla, appear on Violonchelo del Fuego. Bryan says: “Arrangements open up a whole new world of possibilities, and you’ll hear that at times I will strum like a guitar or Silvie’s playing will imitate castanets.” “Playing” is the appropriate word for their playful, exuberant approach to this music.

Brian and Silvie add expressive embellishments to Maurice Gendron’s transcription of de Falla’s Siete canciones populares españolas, reflecting their desire to convey the meanings of the songs’ words. Bryan has also arranged the second song of the cycle, Seguidilla murciana, omitted from most instrumental arrangements, including Gendron’s. He says: “A lot of the idiosyncrasies in articulation, vibrato and colour are based on the vocal originals of these songs. It was my goal to really make the cello sing and speak as a dramatic singer would.” The results are truly exhilarating!

This wonderful CD also affords Bryan and Silvie the chance to shine as individuals, in Gaspar Cassado’s virtuosic Suite for solo cello and Joaquín Turina’s evocative Exaltación for piano. Though only in their 20s, both Bryan and Silvie are already world-class, performing separately and together at major international venues and festivals. I can’t – and won’t – stop raving about them.

Michael Schulman
Lance Austin Olson is a 75-year-old painter (his paintings appear on many of the CDs in the series) and sound artist who lives in Victoria. Dark Heart (at128, CC#7) focuses largely on graphic scores and field recordings and various mergers of the two. Performances of his work range from two different realizations of a graphic score, Thesaeus’ Breath, by members of Apartment House, to Olson’s extended explorations of others’ materials and graphic scores, creating soundscapes that mingle guitar, voice, field and found recordings as well as amplified copper plate and park bench. These works are far more engaging than one might expect: an ancient wax cylinder in A Mediation on the History of Painting sounds like a voice from another world.

Alex Jang’s momentary encounters (at127, CC#9) inevitably suggests Feldman and Christian Wolff. He literally lets the world in on the title piece, a clarinet solo performed outdoors amidst birds, children, a dog and a consistent hum. Other pieces include a grey, bent interior horizon, beautifully realized by guitarist Cristián Alvear. Linda Catlin Smith, the artist who created the series, adds Wanderer (at130, CC+10), another set of often limpidly beautiful, evanescent chamber works performed by Apartment House, to the two-disc Drifter in the first five-CD batch.

Stuart Broomer

Miller’s O, Zomer! (at126, CC series #6) presents string quartet pieces performed by Montreal’s Quatuor Bozzini, varied works that possess a rare, original lyricism, in which traditional materials are fragmented and recombined, including the delicate bird songs of Warblework and the strangely still About Bach in which transcribed materials are evidently undone by computer glitches, while the first violin part is performed in a stratospheric upper register.

The passionate performances by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under conductor Dennis Russell Davies are her virtuosic closing first-movement flute solo for electric guitar via vocoder. This is a tough slog, and, to quote the helpful liner notes, marked by “various abstruse texts… embedded into the timbral fabric.”

Max Christie

Canadian Composers Series Nos.6-10 Various Artists another timbre (anothertimbre.com)

► Canadian Composers on Another Timbre: Another Timbre is a distinguished English label that specializes in a particular range of contemporary music that draws from the indeterminacy and minimalism of John Cage and Morton Feldman and intersects regularly with the textures and practices of European free improvisation. In 2017 it released five CDs by Canadian composers (reviewed by Raul da Gama in these pages in May 2017) and has just released five more, all ten discussed in a 116-page book of interviews with the composers that’s available with the CDs (anothertimbre.com).

Among the highlights of the series are two CDs by Victoria native Cassandra Miller. Just So (at129, Canadian Composer series #9) presents string quartet works, including the delicate bird songs of Warblework and the strangely still About Bach in which transcribed materials are evidently undone by computer glitches, while the first violin part is performed in a stratospheric upper register.

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Miller’s O, Zomer! (at126, CC series #6) presents her work for varied ensembles, including an octet form of the group Apartment House performing the title work (from 2007, it’s Miller’s earliest work here), a minimalist piece that moves from a kind of light tapping to insistent ensemble reiteration of the same tones. Philip the Wanderer, composed for pianist Philip Thomas, wanders until it ends on a simple, and repeated, major scale. Her unusually titled Duet for Cello and Orchestra, performed by Charles Curtis and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, includes a cello part that is radically minimalist, at one point posing a two-note phrase against a busy orchestral melody. As with many of Miller’s works, it’s much more than merely unusual, creating great drama and depth from truncated materials.

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Stuart Broomer

Legends and Light – New Works for Large Ensemble Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra; Cristián Alvear

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Legends and Light – New Works for Large Ensemble Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra; Cristián Alvear

Miguel Kertsman – Three Concertos; Chambord Symphony No.2 “New York of 50 Doors”

Marina Piccinini; Orsolya Korcsolán; Martin Kuuskmann; Gergely Sugar; London Philharmonic Orchestra; Dennis Russell Davies

Naxos 8.573987 (naxos.com)

► Four melody-saturated neo-Romantic works offer lots of “good-old-fashioned” musical entertainment.

Dutch composer Hans Bakker (b.1945) calls his ten-minute Canzona III: “Hidden in Her Light” a “hymn to the sun,” but I found this music far from hymn-like, its propulsive rhythms, blazing brass and ringing percussion suggesting instead an ancient martial saga.

The 15-minute Suite for Strings by Ottawa native Jan Järvelepp (b.1953) begins with Changing Times, a merry dance featuring abrupt changes in metre. Shifting Cargo is more dramatic, with strong, syncopated ostinatos. The elegiac A Thoughtful Moment reminded me of Grieg, while Dance of the Monkey Man is a rustic romp, complete with foot-stomping.

Clive Muncaster (b.1936) left England to study in the U.S., where he remained as composer, teacher and music-therapist. His 21-minute Redcliffe Gardens Suite for Strings comprises the cinematically sentimental Petronella, the gently rocking Pastorella and Stella, Fuga Romantica (in which the “romantica” dominates the “fuga”) and the sprightly Girandole.

American Shirley Mier (b.1966) teaches at Century College in White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Her 19-minute Of Lakes and Legends presents four local scenarios: Legend of the White Bear depicts a tragic tale of lovers from rival Indigenous tribes; Ride on the Rails evokes the inaugural train journey from St. Paul to White Bear Lake in 1868; a nostalgic waltz, Parlor Recital, recalls “intimate concerts” at a piano-teacher’s home; Regatta (White Bear Yacht Club) celebrates the region’s boat-racing community. A highly enjoyable disc!

Michael Schulman

Miguel Kertsman – Three Concertos; Chambord Symphony No.2 “New York of 50 Doors”

Marina Piccinini; Orsolya Korcsolán; Martin Kuuskmann; Gergely Sugar; London Philharmonic Orchestra; Dennis Russell Davies

Naxos 8.573987 (naxos.com)

► Brazilian/American Miguel Kertsman utilizes his artistic musical experiences as a composer, keyboardist, producer, audio engineer and music executive to compose classification-defying symphonic music that ranges from classical to atonal to mainstream/ modern jazz to rock to folk.

The passionate performances by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under conductor Dennis Russell Davies support the soloists. Flutist Marina Piccinini performs colourful long-held notes, melodies and rhythmic sections in the Concerto Brasileiro for Flute, Strings and Percussion. Noteworthy are her virtuosic closing first-movement flute cadenza-like coda, and the third movement rhythmic folk/orchestral Repentes dance featuring flute and string conversations with
Julius Eastman – Piano Interpretations
Kukuruz Quartet
Intakt Records CD 306/2018 (intaktrec.ch)

> In his relatively brief career, Julius Eastman (1940-1990) inhabited a kind of no man’s land as an African-American composer-performer in the classical wing of the American avant-garde, an associate of Cage, Feldman and Foss and a practitioner of a minimalism that embraced traditional chordal sequences. His titles were deliberately provocative – for example, Crazy Nigger and Gay Guerrilla – and he endured both drug addiction and homelessness. By the time of his death at 49, his work seemed slated for oblivion, and a rebirth of interest only began around 2010. Here the four pianists of the Kukuruz Quartet (Philip Bartels, Duri Collenberg, Simone Keller and Lukas Rickli) provide interpretations of four of Eastman’s compositions, works that possess drama and luminous power, resonating at once with work by Terry Riley and John Coltrane.

While the pieces operate on similar principles, using overlapping repetitions of short cadences, each has its own identity. The opening Fugue No.7 (1983) resembles church bells that echo and decay, building density through repetition and thickening, accumulating dissonances. Evil Nigger (1979) refines and expands elements of African-American church music. Buddha (1983) is a quiet change of pace, an extended foray into delicate textures as the four pianists focus on their instruments’ strings. The concluding Gay Guerrilla (1979) begins with repeated single notes, developing force through its half-hour length to its final triumphant, ascending figure.

There’s a rare strength to this music, its very methodology assuming a kind of defiance as the work develops its compelling identity.

Stuart Broomer

Endings Rarely Are
Natasha D’Agostino
Independent (natashadagostino.com)

> What a bold move for Natasha D’Agostino to begin Endings Rarely Are, a debut album, with an original song in a minor key and sung with a seemingly endless line of wordless vocalastics. It immediately sets the tone for a very unusual album. But the young Vancouver-based Canadian is not only an audacious vocalist who has decided to buck the conventional trend, but also leaps off a musical cliff time and again when singing her own compositions, and also four wonderful jazz standards.

D’Agostino’s agile, luminous voice seems ideal for this kind of derring-do and she sings with power and subtlety. Immediately after two originals, including the aforementioned show-opener Flutter, she serves notice that she will worship at the altar of originality by swinging Earl Brent’s Angel Eyes at a blistering pace, turning the 1946 original on its proverbial head. And we find her taking a similarly bold and angular approach to the rest of the standards, especially in an intoxicating version of You Go to My Head and a touching rendition of I’ll Be Seeing You.

But the highlight of the album are D’Agostino’s originals, each of which she illuminates with wonderful control not only of narrative and emotion but also of lyricism and texture of word and line, which boasts some beautifully controlled singing in the deft tapering of quiet dynamics. Her resonant timbre deepens in Home, where she engages a wonderful band completely attuned to her artistry.

Raul da Gama

In A Sentimental Mood
Joani Taylor (featuring PJ Perry; Miles Black; Neil Swainson)
Cellar Live CL111517 (cellarlive.com)

> After the sudden passing of her husband and musical partner, followed by a brutal (but victorious) battle with leukemia, veteran Vancouver-based jazz vocalist Joani Taylor was in no mood to record an album of standards. Fortunately for jazz listeners everywhere, Taylor was ultimately coaxed back to the microphone by iconic saxophonist (and lifelong friend) P.J. Perry. As the project began to take shape, inspired pianist, Miles Black, created arrangements of Taylor’s personally-selected tunes that framed her voice like a Tiffany setting, and fully embraced the considerable talents of multi-saxophonist Perry and bassist Neil Swainson.

Each of the 12 tracks are ripe with skill, inspiration, and of course, Taylor’s sumptuous alto voice. There is no gratuitous, ill-informed scat-singing here – just superb musicianship, flawless and fluid interpretation, as well as a voice that reflects a lifetime in jazz. The CD kicks off with the Rodgers and Hart classic, This Can’t Be Love. The sound is authentic, warm and swinging – as is Taylor! The fine title track is a languid trip to the smokiest, hiest jazz boite in town. Taylor’s voice is full of power and intent, and her passionate wravings every last emotional drop out of each Ellingtonian phrase.

A true standout is Taylor’s rendition of the Vincent Youmans hit, More Than You Know. Black and Swainson move contiguously through the bluesy, musical landscape while Taylor’s voice lifts and wails like a horn, until Perry enters the scene with a sax solo that elevates the tune to a whole new level. No doubt, this is one of the finest jazz vocal recordings of the year, and should be a required part of any serious jazz curriculum.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

No One Ever Tells You
Amy Cervini
Anzic Records ANZ-0062 (amy cervini.com)

> No One Ever Tells You, released this summer on New York’s Anzic Records, is Amy Cervini’s fifth solo album, and marks the singer’s continuing interest in exploring the connections between jazz and other kinds of American roots music. Where her previous release – 2014’s Jazz Country, also on Anzic Records – featured
intelligently arranged, acoustic guitar-driven versions of country songs from artists such as Hank Williams and Carrie Underwood, the focus of No One Ever Tells You is on the link between jazz and rock- and- roll, with a decidedly more electric feel than its predecessor. While this new album is as much Susan Tedeschi as it is Blossom Dearie, Cervini maintains a distinct small-ensemble vibe throughout, with all of the nuance and communicative interplay that one would expect from Cervini’s seasoned band (Jesse Lewis, guitar, Michael Cabe, piano, Matt Aronoff, bass, Jared Schonig, drums, with special guest organist Gary Versace on four tracks).

I Don’t Know, the album’s opener (and the sole Cervini original), is a groovy, smouldering 12/8 blues, with strong solos from Versace and Lewis, and aptly establishes the mood for the nine tracks to come. Please Be Kind and You Know Who! hew closer to the jazz end of the blues—jazz spectrum, and Bye-Bye Country Boy — something of a feature for Lewis — is a fun highlight. Also a highlight: the album’s penultimate track, a fun highlight. An accomplished musician, Baro’s résumé includes performances with a wide range of artists, such as saxophonist Paquito D’Rivera, organist Joey DeFrancesco and producer David Foster. Inspired by Baro’s experiences living in a big city, Sandstorm is framed as a celebration of “the vibrant energy of diverse cultures living together in a rapidly changing urban environment.” Nine of the album’s eleven compositions are Baro’s; of the remaining two, one is a rerecording of the traditional Latin American folk song Drume Negrita, and the other is a cover of The Beatles’ Come Together. In addition to Baro, Sandstorm features keyboardists Jeremy Ledbetter and Anthony Brancati, bassists Yoser Rodriguez, Roberto Riveron and Andrew Stewart, and drummers Amhed Mitchel, Anthony Daniel, and Larnell Lewis. After an exploratory, searching intro, in which Baro demonstrates the range of his melodic and timbral control, Sandstorm’s hard-driving title track begins with a repeated 5/8 motif that is woven throughout the song. The B Side of A, one of the album’s funkier entries, sees Baro playing with a filtered, electric trumpet sound while trading with Brancati, with a strong drum solo from Lewis. Baro’s trumpet glides smoothly atop the programmed drums in Drume Negrita, and Come Together is arranged with a sophisticated, understated groove. Central to Sandstorm is Baro’s sound: warm, articulate and confident in both the lower and upper registers, reassuring and surprising throughout the album.

Colin Story

Abundance
Ernesto Cervini’s Turboprop
Anzic Records ANZ-0063
(ernestocervini.com)

► Is there a more perfect time to release a CD titled Abundance than amid the lush colours of October and the overflowing riches of the fall harvest? Drummer, bandleader and composer Ernesto Cervini’s JUNO-nominated sextet Turboprop’s third CD, released on the eve of the Thanksgiving weekend, is a study in abundance and gratitude.

A seasoned, thoughtful (and grateful) bandleader, Cervini consistently draws out the best in his bandmates. Featuring Tara Davidson on alto and soprano saxophones and flute, Joel Frahm on tenor sax, William Carn on trombone, Adrean Farrugia at the piano and bassist Dan Loomis, the CD’s eight tracks include innovative originals from Davidson, Farrugia, Loomis and Cervini, as well as inventive takes on three classics, Dameron’s Todd’s Delight, Arlen’s My Shining Hour and Smile by Charlie Chaplin, the latter showcasing some absolutely lush trombone work by Carn.

Davidson’s The Queen is a driving duet; The Ten Thousand Things by Farrugia opens with Loomis’ rich and resonant bass work; Cervini’s Gramps is a lovely, contemplative ballad dedicated to his late grandfather; and his Song for Cito celebrates legendary Blue Jays manager, Cito Gaston (remember those back-to-back World Series titles in 1992/93?). Evident throughout are Farrugia’s stellar piano solos, Davidson’s and Frahm’s saxophone mastery and Cervini’s always tasteful work on the drums.

In the liner notes, Cervini expresses heartfelt gratitude to several important and inspiring people in his life. However, it is we, the listeners, who should be abundantly grateful for the existence of this outstanding album.

Sharna Searle

Sandstorm
Alexis Baro
G-THREE GT0015 (alexisbaro.com)

► Released in August on G-THREE Music, Sandstorm is the newest album from Havana- born, Toronto-based trumpet player Alexis Baro.

An accomplished musician, Baro’s résumé includes performances with a wide range of artists, such as saxophonist Paquito D’Rivera, organist Joey DeFrancesco and producer David Foster. Inspired by Baro’s experiences living in a big city, Sandstorm is framed as a celebration of “the vibrant energy of diverse cultures living together in a rapidly changing urban environment.” Nine of the album’s eleven compositions are Baro’s; of the remaining two, one is a rerecording of the traditional Latin American folk song Drume Negrita, and the other is a cover of The Beatles’ Come Together. In addition to Baro, Sandstorm features keyboardists Jeremy Ledbetter and Anthony Brancati, bassists Yoser Rodriguez, Roberto Riveron and Andrew Stewart, and drummers Amhed Mitchel, Anthony Daniel, and Larnell Lewis.

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Colin Story

Missing Element
Alex Francoeur Group
Effendi Records FND151
(offendirecords.com)

► Even the abundant Québecois music scene throws up a particular surprise every once and a while; such is the case listening in wonder to the saxophonist Alex Francoeur. A superb technician who plays with tremendous elan and whose music allows the unimpeded flow of emotion without ever descending into gratuitous sentimentality, Francoeur plays with eloquent articulation and astounding control capped off by erudition and temperament that eludes many woodwind players of his generation.

The audience of the Upstairs Jazz Bar and Grill in Montreal was certainly in the best position to experience all of his unique gifts, as this recording, Missing Element, certainly proves. It is a brilliant record of the proceedings that eschews pyrotechnics for depth of feeling, couched in the restrained liquidity of the music. Francoeur’s playing feels extraordinarily reflective and relaxed throughout, and is especially rewarding in his limpid account of I Hear a Rhapsody, a standard that is all too often covered with fire and brimstone which, in turn, destroys its emotional content completely.

The rest of this wonderful repertoire comprises original material and here too one gets a glimpse of Francoeur’s musical stature. Works such as Tides are layered and complex and the musicians in his group (Chris Edmondson, alto sax; Gentiane MG, piano; Levi Dover, bass; Louis-Vincent Hamel, drums) respond with great musical intellect and intuition to meld the infectious allure of each with consummate skill and whole-hearted enthusiasm.

Raul da Gama

Northern Ranger
Harry Vetro
TOSound TSND-02 (harryvetro.com)

► Northern Ranger is both an ice-breaking ferry operating in Newfoundland and Labrador and the name of an album by drummer and composer Harry Vetro. Vetro was inspired by Canada’s 150th birthday and a desire to travel across the country and learn more about our geography and Indigenous communities. An undergraduate special projects grant from the University of Toronto to record his first album allowed him to create this ambitious project.
The album creates an illusion of traveling through its descriptive names and some programmatic elements in the music. Many of the compositions are named after travel, for example: Gondola to Blackcomb, Hawk Air. Another way of creating movement is the mixing of several shorter pieces (solo guitar, solo piano and two trios), with works using a larger group with rhythm section, trumpet, saxophone and a string quartet.

The album opens with Northern Ranger: Leaving Goose Bay, an almost two-minute guitar solo played in a semi-classical style by Ian McGimpsey over the sampled sounds of the ocean. This leads into a thoughtful drum solo by Vetro which begins Buffalo Jump. Then the whole ensemble plays but quiets for a solo violin poignantly playing the main melodic motif, which is repeated by guitar, and then all strings and brass join for an animated central section.

Repeatedly beginning small and gradually building could be a cliché in music but in the context of this album it is a thoughtful exposition of the travel theme, where soft beginnings lead sometimes to rousing excitement and other times to quieter introspection. Vetro’s compositions are mainly jazz-oriented but have heavy folk and classical influences. The performances and solos are excellent and Lina Allemano has a marvellous trumpet sound, with a broad lyricism that reminds me of Kenny Wheeler.

Ted Parkinson

Jim and Paul play Glenn and Ludwig
Jim Gelcer; Paul Hoffert; George Koller
Centrediscs CMCCD 25818
(musiccentre.ca)

Curiosity and doubt surprisingly quickly turned to delight and respect when listening to Jim Gelcer (drums), Paul Hoffert (piano) and George Koller (bass) with guests Bill McBirnie (flute on three tracks) and Ifield Joseph (guitar on one track) face the music and develop their jazz ideas based on recordings of pianist Glenn Gould playing Beethoven.

Why you may ask? Well, why not? Following the Glenn Gould Estate’s suggestion to create a recording, Gelcer and Hoffert listened to the wealth of Gould-recorded Beethoven music, and subsequently chose to arrange themes from the Moonlight Sonata, Fifth Symphony, Fifth Piano Concerto and Pathétique Sonata to create nine tracks.

Touches of classical and jazz resonate throughout. Opening track Moon Light starts with an almost traditional piano Moonlight Sonata performance but with drum accompaniment, until the bass moves the music into a dramatic jazz direction featuring a witty jazzy flute middle section. The closing track Day Light takes the same Sonata in a more classical direction with shifts in major and minor tonalities and a contrapuntal jazz flute development above a piano back drop playing the opening sonata-line ideas. The famous four-note opening of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony takes on a toe-tapping upbeat fun jazz sound in Vitamin B51. First Path has the trio lead the Pathétique theme into a tight, fun jazz trio and duet improvisations.

With their jazz brilliance, all the musicians give new life and colour to the music of Glenn and Ludwig!

The Bitter Suite
Marie Goudy 12tet featuring Jocelyn Barth
Independent (mariegoudy.com)

Haunting, poetic, imaginative – The Bitter Suite grabs the listener right away and doesn’t let go. A love story told through five movements, each chapter of the story connected with a particular season, a song cycle that is enchanting in atmosphere and brimming with emotion. The Bitter Suite feels intimate, like late night confessions, yet universal in meaning. Written and arranged by Marie Goudy, it has an interestingly varied musical language – elements of jazz and mariachi styles combine very well here. Goudy’s musical world is gentle and transcendent but she is fiery in her expression as a composer and as a trumpet player. The large jazz ensemble lays out harmonies and rhythms across the board, creating a mellow landscape for engaging solos in each piece. But what really links the pieces together is the mesmerizing voice and phrasing of the vocalist Jocelyn Barth.

The album opens with Goudy’s dreamy solo trumpet Intro. Playful Son for Sunshine and passionate Autumn’s Embrace follow in its footsteps, each different in expression but both influenced with mariachi rhythms and style. Winter is simply beautiful, a story about the world covered in snow and a heartbeat. The suite itself concludes with Lilacs, a classy tune with a melancholy feel. Although the last piece on the album, Remember the Days, does not belong to the suite (it is an ode to a cherished friendship), it makes for a lovely postscript.

Ivana Popovic

The Silent Wish
Bill McBirnie; Bernie Senensky
Extreme Flute EF08 (extremeﬂute.com)

Though Kenny Wheeler left Canada for England in 1952, the distinguished composer/ flugelhornist always maintained close relations with musicians and audiences here. In 2013, the year before Wheeler’s death, composer (and sometime trumpeter) John Korsrud commissioned Wheeler to compose a suite for Vancouver’s Hard Rubber Orchestra, an 18-member group Korsrud has been leading since 1990, debuting Canadian works. The Bitter Suite

Raul da Gama

Kenny Wheeler: Suite for Hard Rubber Orchestra
Hard Rubber Orchestra featuring Norma Winstone
Justin Time JTR 8614-2 (justin-time.com)
works from jazz to new music. Wheeler provided five movements, and Korsrud has sequenced them, adding improvised interludes.

The music is distinctively Wheeler’s, bringing a Hindemith-like richness and clarity to the big-band format to evoke joy and wistfulness, celebration and memory, then shifting and mingling with them at times astonishing harmonic nuance. Singer Norma Winstone, a longtime collaborator, is an essential component of the orchestra, her wordless parts soaring through the massed brass and saxophones.

The music, too, is a celebration of the subtlety and art that Wheeler brought to the trumpet: two orchestral movements feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and lustrous interludes have Brad Turner improvising duets with bassist André Lachance, veering duets with bassist André Lachance, lustrous interludes have Brad Turner improvising duets with bassist André Lachance, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott, while the brief and wistful interludes feature Mike Herriott.

The quality of the music is such that one doesn’t mourn, but instead celebrates Wheeler’s continuing presence – a national legacy that now stretches from Nova Scotia to the University of Toronto Jazz Orchestra’s Sweet Ruby Suite to this suite for Vancouver’s Hard Rubber Orchestra. Séance

Philippe Lemoine; Simon Rose
Tour de Bras TDB9036cd (tourdebras.com)

Consisting of a dozen brief tracks that showcase the sweep of extended reed playing, Séance also confirms improvised music’s universality. French tenor saxophonist Philippe Lemoine and British baritone saxophonist Simon Rose, both Berlin-based, are on a Canadian label. Geographic considerations aside, the tracks, which last from just over one minute to almost six and a half, demonstrate that saxophone probing can be both penetrating and pleasing.

Hope River is the only track on which expected baritone and tenor tones are displayed with comforting familiarity; the others concentrate on testing as many reed tropes as possible. Sometimes, as on Worm Gil, it is tongue slaps; other times, as on Planche, air is whooshed through horns’ body tubes without key movements, creating whale-like or bird-echoing textures; or on Nou Séance the two fluidly modulate deep pitches to their farthest extensions without losing momentum.

Still it’s the longest pieces that meet the most reed challenges. Veering from squeaky to subterranean timbres during Dans(e) le flux, both burrow deep inside their horns for protracted rumbles that are cleverly harmonized with key percussion. Equally percussive as well as abstract, Medium is an essay in tongue slaps, key rattles, juddering cries and slurs that accede to a concentrated mass, but one in which both horns can be heard clearly.

Whether believing in contacting the deceased through a medium or not, this Séance is one in which many a saxophonist would want to participate.

Ken Waxman
Moose Blues
Subtone
Laika Records 3510366.2 (subtone.eu)

Moose Blues is the fifth album from the German jazz quintet Subtone, a collective whose members include Malte Dürrschnabel (reeds), Magnus Schriefl (trumpet, trombone), Matthias Pichler (bass), Peter Gall (drums), and Florian Hoefner, a pianist who, after years working in New York, now teaches at Memorial University in Newfoundland. Released on the German label Laika Records, and recorded following a Subtone tour of Canada earlier this year, Moose Blues is a tour diary of sorts: a reflection on time spent travelling throughout Canada, during which the group’s music was developed and refined.

Moose Blues begins with the Hoefner-penned Orbit, a propulsive, groove-based song featuring confident solos from Hoefner and Schriefl, bookended by dark, texturally lush sections. E-Nuts, a Schriefl composition, is a strong, swinging entry, with tight melodic playing from Schriefl and Dürrschnabel, and a concise, interesting bass solo from Pichler. Gall’s Alphabet City is a simmering, mixed-meter affair that showcases the group’s ability to juxtapose intensity and shifting dynamic levels, and Upside Up, written by Hoefner, is a sophisticated, bluesy 3/4 song, with satisfying playing both from the rhythm section and from the horns.

Subtone is a group with firm roots in the tradition of artists such as Lee Morgan, and the album’s final track – the titular Moose Blues – is as close as they get to a conventional hard bop aesthetic. The real charm of Subtone, however, is their ability to synthesize the performance practices of hard bop – strong rhythm section playing, tight horn lines, bluesy flourishes – with modern harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic ideas.

Colin Story
POT POURRI

Jamie Thompson and the Urban Flute Project – Live at St. Anne’s
The Junction Trio & Friends
Independent (urbanfluteproject.com)

This latest CD from the Urban Flute Project is a compilation of 20 performances recorded live over the first ten years of the Music at...
St. Anne’s concert series. That makes it more than just a CD; it is a “remembrance of things past,” a chronicle of a time and a place when a loosely knit band of musicians listened to the impulse to bring music to life – yes, to make it live but also, as documented in the listings in The WholeNote over the course of that decade, to bring it to the life of their community. For this they received very little money and only a modicum of fame, as many in the community do. Music at St. Anne’s was the musical equivalent of what British theatre and film director Peter Brook called – in his book The Empty Space – “Holy Theatre...the theatre of the invisible–made-visible.”

The CD brings all this to life, with unvarnished live performances which, maybe just because they are unedited and un-doctored, make those moments in lost time immediate and all the more precious because they are gone. The names of over 20 musicians are listed, and many more unnamed were involved because there are performances by three choirs. The range of music is vast, from a motet by Thomas Tallis to improvisations involving both conventional instruments and second-hand pots and pans which produce the most magical sounds, and something of everything in between.

This CD is like a slice of The WholeNote made audible, and a testament to our need for art in life.

**Allan Pulker**

**Concert Note:** Music at St. Anne’s continues this month on Sunday, November 18.

**Bhumika**

**Toronto Tabla Ensemble**

Independent (torontotabla.com)

Bhumika, a rich philosophical Sanskrit term, derived from *bhūmi* meaning earth or soil, can refer to a writing surface, receptacle, or an introduction to a book, among other things. *Bhumika* is also the title of the Toronto Tabla Ensemble’s sixth album and its first track. Composed by TTÉ’s artistic director and tabla educator Ritesh Das, the title track, featuring a chanted Sanskrit sloka, is dedicated to Ritesh Das’ brother the influential Kathak dancer and teacher Chitrinesh Das (1944-2015). The liner notes also acknowledge another key artistic inspiration, Swapan Chaudhuri who is among today’s outstanding tabla masters.

*Bhumika* the album reflects the richness of the tabla’s extensive technique, repertoire and the complexity of Indian rhythmic practice: the album features talas (rhythmic cycles) of 5½, 9½ and 11 beats. It also speaks to Ritesh Das’ larger artistic ambition to engage culturally with his Toronto home and collaborate with other resident musical cultures and musicians. For example, instruments heard on the album include ritual Indian conch trumpet, finger cymbals, Hindustani tabla and sarod, Carnatic mrdangam, but also drum kit, violin, Chinese zheng, flute, and the Japanese taiko ensemble Nagata Sachu. Most of them are played by Toronto area musicians, some of whom are students of Das.

For me the strength of this album is the convincing argument it makes for the tabla forming the core of a musically compelling drum-centric ensemble in 2018 Toronto, far from its (first) homeland. Before Das dreamed it in 1991, that did not exist.

**Andrew Timar**

**A QSF Journey**

**Quartet San Francisco Reference Recordings RR-143**

(referencerecordings.com)

A QSF Journey is also the title track, featuring a chanted Sanskrit sloka, and its first track. Composed by TTE’s artistic director and tabla educator Ritesh Das, the album contains seven world premieres, making it an adventureome journey into the chamber music of the 21st century.

While the album features arrangements of traditional folk songs (Chinese, Mongolian and African), many of the tracks are rooted in the tango tradition and, to some extent, American folk. *Rhapsody in Bluegrass* combines two vastly different works – Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* and bluegrass tune *Orange Blossom Special*. The result is a lively, toe-tapping, buoyant tune. *Frederico II*, written by Italian cellist and composer Giovanni Sollima, is a whirlwind piece with a constantly pushing rhythmical drive and strong medieval roots. I really enjoyed Cohen’s tango pieces as well – *Al Colon*, *Francini*, *La Heroina* and the opening *Tango Eight* – and their passionate, cheeky melodies. QSF members are true crossover stars. Their playing is effortless and entertaining, with just the right amount of classical touch, and with an abundance of beauty.

**Ivana Popovic**

**It’s Time**

**Tanya Wills Quartet**

Independent (tanyawills.ca)

Carrying the DNA of an artistic lineage, it is no surprise that gifted vocalist, dancer and actor Tanya Wills would enter the family business and manifest an international performance career. With the release of her debut CD, Wills has drawn from her diverse career experiences and fashioned an eclectic, stirring and musically stunning recording – beautifully recorded by Bernie Cisternas. Acting as producer here, Wills has assembled the perfect musical complement to her smoky, substantial, mezzo-soprano: Jordan Klapan on piano, Bill Bridges on guitar (and also primary arranger) and Ron Johnston on bass.

A few of the sources of the intriguing material on this project come from the worlds of musical theatre, the European/ American cabaret culture of the post-WWII era, American popular song, traditional folk music, a proto-rock ‘n’ roll contribution from Elvis and two original compositions, including Tony Quarrington and Klapan’s dark bossa, *Rain on the Roof*.

One of the many standouts is Wills’ performance on *Lazy Afternoon*. Her voice is exquisitely controlled, as she weaves a laconic, gossamer web of sensuality around the mesmerized listener, and Bridges’ guitar accompaniment is nothing short of luminous. Another track of note is Arthur Hamilton’s *Cry Me a River* – a passive/aggressive anthem made popular by the late Julie London. Wills puts her own contemporary stamp on the tune, cleverly morphing the intent of the lyric into a statement by a strong woman (rather than a victim’s lament). I would be remiss if I didn’t single out the joyous rendition of *If I Were a Bell* – Frank Loesser’s hit from the venerable musical *Guys and Dolls*. Wills imbues this tune with just the right amount of spice and sass.

**Lesley Mitchell-Clarke**

**Anba Tonél**

**Daniel Bellegarde**

Independent (danielbellegarde.com)

Daniel Bellegarde has enjoyed a 35-year career as a freelance percussionist primarily in Quebec. As he explains, Anba Tonél (Under the Arbor), his first album as a leader, primary arranger and composer, is the fruit of his research on the confluence of European and...
African musics in the French Caribbean. In *Anba Tonèl*, with the aid of nine musicians and five singers, he explores – through arrangements and compositions – unfamiliar musical territory to outsiders: rural French Caribbean music, the result of that hybridization. Dance music represented includes the contra-dance (square dance), quadrille, minuet-congo, and Haitian twoubadou, a popular genre of guitar-based Haitian music. The album aims to evoke the music performed by Haitian and French West Indies slaves during the 19th century and field workers in the early 20th.

Not a synth or drum set to be found here, the lead French Creole vocals by Marco Jeanty are accompanied by all-acoustic instrumentation. We hear the prominent sound of the banjo (which appears to have been played in the Caribbean before mainland North America), violin, guitar, dobro and manouha (bass kalimba-rumba box), as well as percussion instruments from the French Antilles including tambou di bass (large tambourine), ti bwa (small wooden slit drum), grag (~metal scraper) and chacha (calabash rattle).

I’m no expert on the origins or development of this music. As presented here by Bellegarde however, it has considerable range of mood and is full of danceable musical energy and charm; plus it’s sung and played with authentic- feeling élan. Andrew Timar

### Something in the Air

Eclectic: Electronics stretches the definition of Innovative Music

KEN WAXMAN

At least when it comes to exploratory music old definitions no longer apply. Only on the equivalent of a rigid Doug Ford-like populist disc will you find players insisting on one style, be it rock, noise, jazz-improv or so-called classical. Accomplished improvisers in contrast, draw on many sources to create unique musical programs, with sophisticated electronics regularly and effortlessly added to the mix.

Case in point is *Cheol-Ktot-Sae* [Steel Flower.Bird](https://www.tzadik.com/album/cheol-kot-sae-steel-flower-bird) by Korean-born, US-raised, Berlin-based cellist Okkyung Lee. Deciding to blend the Korean melodies of her youth with the spiky improvis in which she now specializes, Lee was commissioned by SWR to create this CD’s music, performed live at the Donaueschingen Festival. *Steel Flower.Bird* consists of textures that are neither wholly Asian nor Occidental, but variations on both genres. Lee’s cello strategy is aided by Korean folk opera vocalist Song-Hee Kwon and traditional Korean percussionist Jae-Hyo Chang representing one approach to the program; and experienced improvisers, saxophonist John Butcher and bassist John Edwards from the UK, American percussionist Ches Smith and Norwegian electronics player Lasse Marhaug embodying the other. No sooner are the first Korean phrases verbalized in a ghostly fashion at the beginning than they’re speedily joined by double-stopping string strokes, saxophone growls and droning electronic whizzes. Before this sequence is overwhelmed by a crescendo of rocket-ship-launching explosions from Marhaug’s knob-twisting, snarky kazoo-like tones from the saxophonist and string splaying, the narrative moves to a quieter place, where unhurried instrumental loving makes the perfect accompaniment for Song’s bel canto warbling. Smith’s vibraphone ringing and Butcher’s swirling chirps create a connective intermezzo, which is also a prelude to a similar instrumental break that features a duet between Korean and Western percussion, showcasing a two-part backbeat rather than any exoticism. Building on a slyly counterpoint propelled by Smith’s vibraphone resonations and Edwards’ chunky thumps, the piece climaxes as tongue slaps and honks from Butcher sail on top of muted vocalizing and spiccato cello string pressure. When joined by tremolo percussion stops, the music continues to echo past as applause begins. Oddly enough the subsequent encore/coda includes dynamic chording from an un-credited pianist that puts into bolder relief their shimmers and strained strokes from the cello as both instruments join for a concluding melody that sounds like the children’s round *The Worms Crawl In, The Worms Crawl Out*.

Encompassing a five-part suite and shorter features, the array of musical paths followed on Toronto-based *The Cluttertones’ Leeways* ([SnailBongBong SBB 005 robclutton.com](http://snailbongbong.com)) make the previous CD appear singularly directed. Tunes composed by bassist/leader Rob Clutton feature fine performances by the band – trumpeter Lina Allemano, guitarist/banjoist Ted Posgate, Ryan Driver on analogue synth and vocals plus Clutton – with pianist Lee Puil Ming joining for the title suite. Remarkably enough, Lee’s formalist/improv comping is no more prominent on those five tracks than the other players’ contributions. In fact it’s Allemano’s gritty, back-of-throat growls and rounded capillary exposition that make the greatest impression on *Leeways Part 2*, when backed by keyboard jumps; and a similar scenario unfolds on *Leeways Part 3*. Here Clutton agilely moves the tune forward with discursive-but-emphasized string drones, vibrating multi-string slaps and pinched sul tasto runs as Lee comp, the banjo twangs bluegrass-like and synthesizer tones tweet. Earlier on, the most fully realized group effort is *Septiembre*. Consisting of a slew of intermezzos, it highlights double-bass stoppage, buzzing electric guitar licks and high-pitched trumpet slurs, with a conclusion that’s rhythmically solid and notably kinetic.

Instructively, *Gull*, the first track, effectively adumbrates what’s to come, as crackles and flutters from the synth underscore a near-vocalized, muted trumpet tone, sometimes harmonized with a walking bass line, spiky guitar flanges and Driver’s high-pitched scat singing. Unfortunately, it is these songs that undermine the entire disc’s effectiveness. Those times when Driver mouths the impressionistic folksy lyrics in a lachrymose fashion – almost halting the proceedings – are saved from stasis by pointed trumpet obbligatos. With the skill and sophistication displayed on the other tracks, it’s unfortunate that vocalizing prevents *Leeways* from reaching the highest musical rung.

Subtract vocals, piano and double bass and add drums and In *Search of the Emerging Species* ([Shhpuma SSH 032 CD shhpuma.com](http://shhpuma.com)) provides a glimpse of how The Cluttertones would sound if tunes were trimmed even further to fangorous microtones. Consisting of Swiss musicians, trumpeter/slide trumpeter Marco Von Orelli and Sheldon Suter, who plays prepared drums, plus Portuguese stylists, guitarist-object manipulator Luis Lopes and Travassos on electronics, *Big Bold Back Bone* ([BBBB](http://thewholenote.com)) creates a single...
slab of darkened calculations where undulating pulses and metal-against-metal buffeting underlie a hard drum beat and guitar string strumming, as distant brass puffs advance the theme. Collective in execution, BBBB links Immerge to some of Morton Feldman’s compositions which stretch out without climaxing, but this quartet reveals its jazz and rock roots by, for instance, reaching a crescendo of trumpet sharpness and sighs two-thirds of the way through. With this break-through, the heart monitor-like pacing of electronics is further breached by drum clatters and a near solo from Von Orelli that speeds up into expressive whistles and buzzes, backed by ascending drum raps, until the entire performance dissolves into silence.

Much more aggressive in performance with its mixture of improvised jazz, noise, heavy rock and notated music tropes is Elliott Sharp’s Carbon, whose five selections on Transmigration at the Solar Max (Intakt CD311 intaktrec.ch) could be mistaken for metal music until examination reveals that its head-expanding rather than head-banging, Sharp’s unrestrained and mangled expositions on eight-string guitar, bass, soprano saxophone, electronics, samples and textures don’t mask his university studies in electronics and composition with Feldman and others. He manages to be both aggressive and accommodating in his solos, joined by Zeena Parkins on electric harp and Bobby Previte on drums. Nowhere is this more apparent than on Orrery, where backbeat drum rhythms and blips from electronic samples are transmogrified through tempo changes into a psychedelic blues. In similar fashion, while sturred guitar licks and irregular drum beats serrated by electric harp tension on Perihelion may resemble standard rock tropes, the conjoined patterns that slowly build up alongside them recall the perpetual drone-stretching in the works of noted composers like Charlemagne Palestine and La Monte Young. Not committed to any overriding style however, Sharp also ensures that his five compositions include contrapuntal challenges, with Parkins’ often bottleneck-style vibrations bringing in multiple note extensions, and his own flashing guitar excursions human enough so that his finger positions on the strings are almost visible.

Utilizing the brass timbres advanced by The Cluttertones and BBBB and intertwining them with electronic processing common to all these discs is Solution n° 5 (LFDS Records LFDS 006 lefondeurdeson.fr) created by the Paris-based Pavillon Rouge trio. With trumpeter Nicolas Souchal’s sometimes eloquent and sometimes expeditious flights, plus alternately growling and blasting tones from Matthias Mahler’s trombone, the acoustic improvising program is satisfied, while the wide range of Jean-Marc Foussat’s electronics that include sampling, signal processing and granular synthesis takes care of the computerized input. Not only do the stop-start loops of Foussat’s machine provide a continuous base on which the horn players can expose their sometimes brief improvisational forays, but his collection of tones and timbres balance, parallel and surprise with such intersections. Add ring modulator-like bell ringing, the replication of Jew’s harp twanging and time and pitch stretched verbalization that takes the form of blurry mumbled phrases or layered textures that build up to the breadth, but not the volume of a choir performing Gregorian chants. While some sections are obtuse and others nearly opaque, the tracks make room for fluid contrapuntal challenges among the three players, with brassy tones turning callopho-like or to atonal triplets before acceding to regularized pulses. Meanwhile, the effect of the electronic undertow is to reconcile all parts so that the sonic performance of these instant compositions is stretched to the absolute limits, without splintering, eventually wrapping up with a finalized hiss.

Each of these sessions could define modern improvising. All draw on electronic interface and nod to various strands of music without hierarchy. And except in high quality, not one resembles any of the others. 🌘

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Old Wine, New Bottles
Fine Old Recordings Re-Released

Claudio Abbado & the Berlin Philharmoniker: The Complete Recordings on Deutsche Grammophon (DG 4835183 60 CDs deutsche grammophon.com/en/ cat/4835183) Claudio Abbado’s collaboration with the Berlin Philharmonic began in 1966 when he first stood before the orchestra. Born in Milan on June 26, 1933 he was just 33 years old at the time and his name was already familiar to music lovers and record collectors around the world. He had been principal guest conductor with the London Symphony Orchestra from 1975 to 1979 at which time he was named principal conductor, the post he held until 1987, having also been appointed music director in 1984. During his LSO tenure he made many exemplary recordings for DG, most of which are still in the catalogue. My favourite version of Le Sacre du Printemps was, and probably still is, his February 1975 spectacular recording made in Fairfield Hall, Croydon. From 1982 to 1985 he was principal guest conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where DG produced many recordings. He had already recorded the Mahler Second Symphony with them in 1976 and it is the only Mahler symphony not in this new set of Berlin recordings. In 1986 he became the general music director of Vienna and at the same time music director of the Vienna State Opera. In 1988 he founded the music festival, Wien Modern. Herbert von Karajan died on July 16, 1989 and in that same year Abbado was voted to succeed him as the orchestra’s new chief conductor and music director, a position he would hold from 1990 to 2002. Abbado had already done some recording with the orchestra but now what does a record company do? They record another Beethoven symphony cycle. So it began, not in Berlin but live in Rome in the Academia di Santa Cecilia. During February 2001 they recorded the first eight, returning to the Philharmonie in Berlin for the Ninth. The difference between the two conductors is apparent. Karajan always sought the most beautiful sounds, which had its rewards, but Abbado looks deeper and reveals the sinews that support the satin exterior. I played the symphonies right through simply for hearing these warhorses anew. Why didn’t I do that when they were issued on CD? Checking the original issue, the venue for the First through the Eighth is the Philharmonie with different recording dates starting in 1999. These are different performances, except for the Ninth and are not included in this edition. The five piano concertos with Maurizio Pollini are brilliant. They also collaborate on a disc of the Schumann and Schoenberg piano concertos. The Brahms Symphonies are equally transparent and most often sound freshly minted. As an example, the opening movement of the First has a very positive feeling, missing the lumbering juggernaut often heard elsewhere. There is a Mahler Symphonies cycle minus the Second. It sounds like everything Abbado touched he illuminated without lessening the impact. There are two Prokofiev Third Piano Concertos, with Evgeny Kissin and Martha Argerich.
Guest artists in various repertoire include Anne Sofie von Otter, Thomas Quasthoff, Karita Mattila, Michael Schade, Bryn Terfel, Christine Schafer, Liya Zilberstein, Roberto Alagna, Alfred Brendel, Gil Shaham and many others including Viktoria Mullova. The repertoire includes Debussy, Dvořák, Hindemith, Janáček, Stockhausen, Berg, Mozart, Richard Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Wagner and many others. No Bach, no Vivaldi. A most interesting collection indeed.

Leonard Bernstein at Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival (Cmajor 746704, Blu-ray video cmajor-entertainment.com/movie/leonard-bernstein-at-schleswig-holstein-musik-festival-746704) is a captivating documentary of the “Teaching, Performing, Lectures and Master Course” in Salzau, south east of Kiel, to create an orchestra for the 1988 Musik Festival there. I should have written assemble, as create strictly means making something out of nothing. Not so here. The orchestra was composed of 120 eager young men and women from around the world chosen from the 1600 young musicians who competed in national auditions. In Part 1, the orchestra is working through various repertoire, particularly Le Sacre du Printemps negotiating tricky passages, working on ensemble, etc. Clearly these young musicians did not come here to learn to play. They have no technical difficulties. They are rehearsed and advised by various teachers including more than a few members of prominent orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic. In addition to the orchestral work there are times for get-togethers for duets, trios, quartets and the rest plus extra-musical frivolity and socializing. Eventually, they become an orchestra that can confidently play Le Sacre, the work from 1913 considered unplayable for decades. They are ready for the maestro.

In Part 2 Bernstein meets the orchestra and the first thing he asks is that they show him the entire orchestra playing a C-major scale from the lowest sounding C on their instrument, up and down. He is more than pleased. He guides them, always in good humor, through the thorny passages instructing them by example, often using similes and metaphors to illustrate a point. Absolutely fascinating. Watching all this, we can also learn a lot and may ourselves pay extra attention at these junctures at a performance. His last words to the orchestra, “I cannot do this to you anymore. You are fantastic.”

Part 3 is a record of the Master Course for conductors. They are there to better their ways of letting the players know exactly what they should be doing. There is some body language that we viewers in the audience can watch for, although some conductors do it mostly with their eyes. One of the conductors in the competition is Marin Alsop who was to later regard Bernstein as her mentor. There is a bonus. From the Musikverein in Vienna, Bernstein conducts the Schumann A-Minor Piano Concerto with Justus Frantz and the Philharmonic. Enthusiastically recommended to anyone with more than a passing interest in music.

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AN Israeli radio station – the public broadcaster no less – broke the longstanding and hardened, if unofficial, ban on Wagner’s music in that country by presenting the third act of Götterdämmerung to an unsuspecting public at the beginning of September. The station soon apologized, citing the pain that the broadcast might have caused Holocaust survivors. Ironically, the performance in question was a live recording from Bayreuth led by the Jewish Daniel Barenboim, long a Wagner champion.

The apology itself created another firestorm. Although the traditional arguments for banning Wagner in Israel are both Hitler’s affinity for Wagner, and the composer’s own repulsive anti-Semitism, the head of the Wagner Society in Israel, Jonathan Livny, said the ban was a mistake. Livny admitted that although Wagner’s ideology was “terrible,” the music was beautiful, and the “aim was to divide the man from his art.” This, I’m relatively sure, represents the view of many enlightened listeners all over the world, both those who love Wagner and those who hate him. Art and the artist should be separated; the work must be allowed to stand on its own merits. That is what art itself demands.

These days, interestingly, this traditional view (which is not only pernicious, but the movement has, among other things, reminded us that for many, it is perfectly legitimate to refuse to divide the artist from his or her art. Maybe they shouldn’t be divided; maybe artists and their art exist in a complicated, roundabout, mutually self-referencing cycle of meaning. Maybe allowing judgments of the two to intersect is a more sophisticated and honest view of artistic reality. Maybe the old traditional “hate the artist but love the art” is a very superficial attitude towards the power of aesthetic life. Maybe that’s only what you believe when nothing is at stake.

I must say I have more than a little sympathy for this line of reasoning. The notion that music exists in some perfectly insulated temple of pure meaning, untroubled and unconnected to the rest of the turbulent, messy activity of life robs it of its authenticity and credibility, robs it of the opportunity it has to be firmly and powerfully in the world. Music-making is deeply grounded in politics, ideology and social discourse. It always has been. To assume that there is a separate, unassailed aesthetic dimension, in which pure judgments of musical worth can be made, is appealing perhaps, but is simply an ideology that passes as unassailable truth. It’s dangerous, no doubt, and demands from us care and attention and grace, but perhaps it’s time to suggest that art can legitimately be judged on moral as well as aesthetic grounds, including the moral behaviour and actions of its creators.

That might mean one thing when we’re discussing the revival of Louis Riel, another when we look at Madama Butterfly. In Wagner’s case, if we would just be honest with ourselves, we would admit that the personality of the composer, his beliefs and his art have always been inextricably linked. We always let the overwhelming power of the music blind us to a reality we know is lurking in the background. It’s not that we don’t understand the questionable quality of Wagner’s art – it’s just that we decide not to care.

The basic bone caught in the throat of modern Wagnerians has to do with his oft-stated and repugnant anti-Semitism, a virulent anti-Semitism that we are expected to believe infected his life but left his art untainted. But surely just to state that is to play at the edges of the absurd. The Israeli novelist Amos Oz has said that all art in the end is a portrait of the hand holding the pen creating it, and surely he is right. It would be almost inhuman to suggest that an ideology and worldview so central to Wagner’s life and being could be hermetically sealed off from his work. Wagner’s anti-Semitism was not merely a prejudice, an unreasonable hatred of a group of people. It was a world view. Jews to Wagner were the ultimate scapegoat – the root cause of everything corrupted in the German world. Wagner was not just an anti-Semite; he was a primary intellectual progenitor of the Third Reich. To blithely say that Wagner was Hitler’s “favourite” composer, the way you might choose Bedřich Smetana or I might choose Michael Haydn, is to glide over this central point. Wagner was the key to Nazism.

“Whoever wants to understand National Socialism,” said Hitler, “must first understand Wagner.” From the horse’s mouth, so to speak.

And, of course, this philosophy is not just central to Wagner’s life; it is at the heart of Wagner’s art as well. In his magnum opus, the Ring, the gnomic and dwarfish Alberich and Mime are surely none other than thinly disguised, dog-whistle portraits of his ultimate Jewish scapegoat, obvious to Wagner’s 19th-century audiences, banging out a dissonant hammered song in the bowels of the tetralogy’s body. It is the curse of Alberich, the ultimate scapegoat, that haunts the Ring, and, in the end, no one, not Wotan, not Siegfried, not Brünnhilde, can escape it, a curse symbolized by the burning Valhalla. Perhaps if some intrepid director made the flames at the end of Götterdämmerung emanate from a Reichstag fire, or inscribed Arbeit Macht Frei over Mime’s demonic workshop, we would get the point. The Ring is as inherently anti-Semitic as Das Judenhum im der Musik.

So maybe our Israeli friends are not so crazy. As for the rest of us, sitting in the opera house or concert hall, askance with the man from his art,” it’s time, perhaps, for us to be neither surprised nor indignant if we find #MeToo-inspired questions disturbing our pleasure.

Robert Harris is a writer and broadcaster on music in all its forms. He is the former classical music critic of the Globe and Mail and the author of the Stratford Lectures and Song of a Nation: The Untold Story of O Canada.
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