

the
WholeNoteTM

PRICELESS

Vol 26 No 1

**THE
BEAT
GOES
ON**

9TH Annual TIFF Tips

MUSIC THEATRE Loose Tea on the boil

Once COVID's in the **rearview mirror** ...

Jazz Studies: the struggle for equity



ON THE FLY
18th annual choral
Canary Pages

SEPTEMBER 2020

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Listening Room & record reviews
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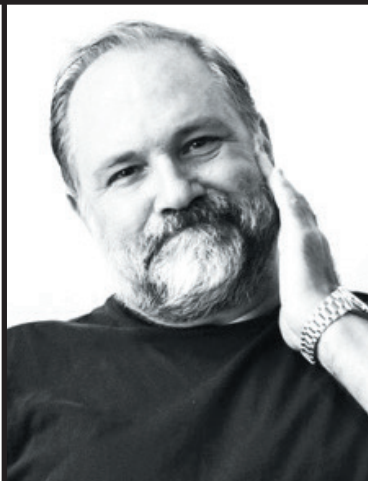
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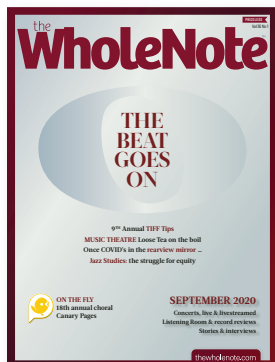
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the WholeNote

Volume 26 No 1 | September 2020

ON OUR COVERS



We chose *The WholeNote* name believing it could grow with us over time, embracing an increasingly whole, more diverse range of live music. Also there was something about the note itself – the way it sounds and looks (in western musical notation) like a heartbeat, present in us all. The images on this edition's front and back covers reflect our hope for live music to remain at the heart of what keeps us all whole. A wholenote embraces all the beats in a measure, no matter the tempo, and the metronome (or clicktrack!) helps us all stay steady and together. As long as we have a pulse we all will need music. And so the beat goes on.

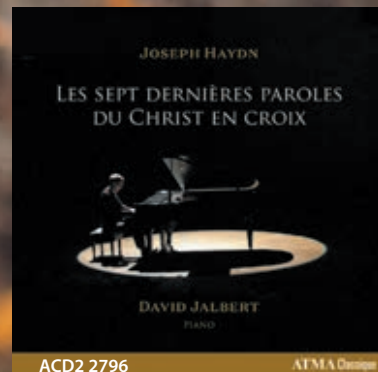
Jack Buell, Team WholeNote

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SPECIAL PRINT SECTIONS

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The 18th annual CANARY PAGES
All things choral in southern Ontario.

OCTOBER 2020 AND ON
The 21st annual BLUE PAGES
directory of music makers



PRICELESS!

Eagle-eyed readers will have already noticed that the word PRICELESS! is back in its time-honoured spot at the top right of our front cover, where a price would usually be.

It was supplanted this time last year in favour of a year-long 25th Season! shoutout. Before that it graced every cover for six seasons, commencing September 2013.

Before that, FREE was the word, all the way back to Vol 1 No 1 in September 1995. Although it must be said that in the first year we were somewhat inconsistent about including it. Everyone understood that, along with such timeless institutions as *NOW* magazine that's what controlled circulation publications were.

So from "free", to "priceless", to a year of celebrating silver linings, and now back to priceless again. But for how long? And what comes next? Those are the questions.

Looking back, at kiosk.thewholenote.com (come on you can do it!) at the very first "priceless" cover in September 2013 makes me smile, not completely wryly. It's a gorgeous cover photo of Tafelmusik's Jeanne Lamon, hard hat in hand, standing in the under-reconstruction balcony at Trinity-St. Paul's United Church and Centre for Faith, Justice and the Arts, Tafelmusik's home from day one. She is smiling too.

WORK IN PROGRESS! the story title shouts from that cover. Which, from today's vantage point – an entire world of faith, justice and the arts stood on its head – might just as well be taken as a sign of better things to come.

As to why we chose to go from "free" to "priceless" at that very moment in 2013, let's just say, it was waving a flag: cocky, jaunty, danger ahead. Take your pick.

For now the priceless flag is back. But, as the signs say, "Watch This Space". Because whatever it's going to be, it won't say "Free" again.

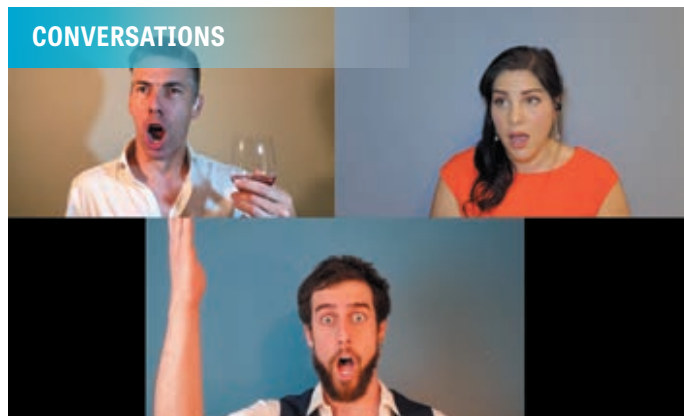
At what price *The WholeNote*? And who should pay? The answers to that are also a work in progress. No instant answers needed, but please, dear readers, give it some thought, and drop me a line.

In the meanwhile, please enjoy our "While you're waiting" stroll through 25 years of *WholeNote* covers. And a bumper crop of stories bursting with ideas.

And look at "FOUR OF A KIND" on page 59. You could help keep the PRICELESS flag waving a little longer than it otherwise might.

publisher@thewholenote.com

CONVERSATIONS



OPERA SQUARED

Anna Theodosakis

On Brott Opera's

Don Giovanni

DAVID PERLMAN

It was a phone call from Hamilton, from Boris Brott, that put me on the trail of this story. Brott is indefatigable: between May 2 and August 13 the Brott Music Festival offered up 18 online productions, none more intriguing than their virtual *Don Giovanni* which aired, on Facebook, on July 30 and remains available at brottmusic.com. "You should watch it," Brott said, so I did. Half way through I was hooked and called him back with questions. "You should talk to Anna [Theodosakis]," he said. So I did.

What follows is a highly condensed version of a half-hour telephone chat.

WHOLENOTE: I haven't finished watching all the way through, life gets in the way when you don't have to dress up. I have reached the party scene though! A lot of the virtual stuff being generated right now that tries to be a "reasonable facsimile" of live, leaves me cold. What struck me about this is you have made the medium a huge asset.

Upcoming Dates & Deadlines for our October 2020 edition

Free Event Listings Deadline
Midnight, Tuesday, September 15

Display Ad Reservations Deadline
6pm Tuesday, September 15

Advertising Materials Due
6pm Thursday, September 17

Classifieds Deadline
6pm Saturday September 26

Publication Date
Tuesday September 29 (online)
Thursday October 1 (print)

Volume 26 No 2 "OCTOBER 2020"
will list events

October 1 to November 7, 2020
and launch

The 21st Annual BLUE PAGES
for info: members@thewholenote.com

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Director Anna Theodosakis

Anna Theodosakis: Thank you, I am really glad it came across that way. We're never going to be able to recreate exactly the live experience so I wanted to use the medium of film to my advantage; but in the end actually it's kind of its own new medium. It's maybe two parts film but then another part I don't really know how to describe either. It's not a movie. Not a music video. It's its own whole other creature we were discovering as we were doing it.

When did the idea kick in of having it take place right inside the “zoomiverse”? Was there some “aha!” moment? It was really only about three weeks before rehearsals started, that Brott decided we would be going totally online. So there really wasn't very much time to prepare. I'd like to say there was a big plan but it was really going moment to moment, considering what can we accomplish as we go.

Such as? Such as when we decided it was going to be pretty much impossible to do *secco recit* [minimally accompanied recitative] remotely. I had already had an interest in the concept of really bringing the women to the forefront – not changing any of the libretto, but in the action of scenes beyond the ones they are usually in. With the recit gone, we had to fill the story gaps, which gave me the opportunity to insert the black and white monologues, which are probably the most cinematic aspect of the piece. They give the female characters a little more agency, as subjective narrators throughout. I thought about writing them myself but decided to ask the singers, as well as their covers, so six women in total, if they would collaborate, in pairs, in writing them. So we would have the clearest differentiation of voices. (And also to be honest I was running out of time on story boards, etcetera!)

And what else? Well, we were rehearsing over Zoom, all together, and then later the singers would record themselves separately. A lot of the visual interaction and intent was inspired by how we were rehearsing and found its way into the story board. So I found myself trying to think how I could use the Zoom squares the singers were in to actually help tell the story. The lower status Leporello looking up to Don Giovanni, or Giovanni looking down on him, for example. Or people placed across diagonals so there is more tension in space.

The directionality is really effective, driven by the characters' eyes all the time. I'm glad. For me as a director in live theatre, when people look at each is very important to me. Here I'd lost the dimension of depth, which I really use a lot in the theatre, but I gained this new kind of directional access I really like ... Also one of handy things about film is you can't see what's behind the camera, so post-it notes and little drawings behind the camera meant they knew exactly who was where. “Donna Elvira is up and to your left,” ... like that.

So each “home square” is the actor's own home? It's their own living space, and the singers were completely in charge of setting up their own cameras and audio recording, with me on Zoom providing advice and making sure the points of focus were there. Their own characters as well as their entire crew! Quite the feat actually.

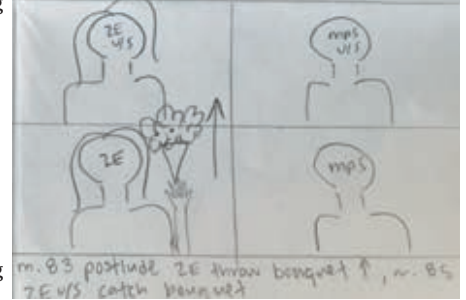
And equipment compatibility? Brott Opera was prepared to deliver smart phones or cameras to people, but it turned out everyone had at least one iPhone, and in the end everyone had audio quality we could at least work with in the sound editing, although it took some tweaking. If I was doing this again, though, one thing I would love would be for everyone to have more consistent audio and slightly more consistent lighting and backdrops.

I found the semi-coordinated off-white backgrounds in each square quite fun. Different shades for each character – a really shady shade in the case of your reptilian Don Giovanni! Yes. In Phillip's case [Phillip Addis plays Giovanni] he had a couple of lighting sources so we were able to get some shadowy mix in Act 2 as he gets closer and closer to hell. It was nice to have a little extra control over source and brightness levels at that point.

I laughed out loud at the sleight of hand – the common properties, things getting passed or tossed from square to square bouquets, the plates at the banquet, the hats. How much of this was on the fly? A lot was ideas rising while working through the moments, for sure, but honestly I was also watching YouTube and TikTok videos in preparation. I wasn't on TikTok before but I knew that people have

amazing videos there – simple but magical transitions, links like that. I was definitely most happy with the toss of the bouquet! If I get the chance to do one of these again, I'd choose some full-on comedy or farce: moving people in and out of boxes, creating motion by sudden appearance and disappearance ... you could have a lot of fun with that.

There's a lot that's not so funny in Giovanni these days. Zerlina singing to Masetto words to the effect “If it makes you feel any better to beat me up, then go right ahead.” Delivered straight it's really uncomfortable to watch. Yeah; definitely that's one among many of the scenes I struggled, as a millennial woman of this time, with how to portray. But I think it might be good that people are left feeling really uncomfortable, because I would rather the audience feel “you didn't have to do this, I don't agree with it.” So sometimes I think it's best not to censor the uncomfortable experiences and have them sit in that. And we do make choices – like at the very end of the aria when she starts singing *pace, pace* – we kind of change the perspective of where the camera is, so the audience becomes Masetto, because singing to him she is also singing directly towards us. So those are the sorts of things I find interesting as a director.



Storyboard and 'zoomiverse' for Don Giovanni

On a different track, looking at the range of work you've done on the opera and art song scene over the years – your own company Muse 9, art song, indie opera, the COC – I was thinking how this particular medium brings the giants down into the same arena as everyone else. You're completely right about the medium being an equalizer. I was speaking to the head of a university opera program – they don't have a real theatre, they work in a dressed-up gym – but other schools that do have a dedicated theatre are going to be doing virtual too this year. So it definitely equalizes things.

So what are you going to be carrying away from this? I have always been a stickler for specificity especially with focus and eyeline and intention, so working with singers over film, where even a slight eye glance speaks volumes, is a gift. And these days, at the Met and other places that are filming, it's now “ok so I'm performing for a massive house but I also have a camera right in my face.” And I personally think there's a way that, if you're acting specifically, with detail and with great preparation that you don't have to change how you act for a large hall versus a small space.

But most of all, it emphasizes for me that what is most important for an audience is relationships. You can have the dragons and the flashiness and spectacle but at the end of the day if the relationships and experiences aren't clear and important then I don't think there's much core to the experience. ●

David Perlman can be reached at publisher@thewholenote.com

**We regret to announce
the cancellation of our 2020-2021 concert season
as previously advertised.**

**We plan to present some virtual concerts.
The next is Sept 10 with**



**St. Lawrence String
Quartet
Haydn Discovery**

**We will return to presenting live performances
when circumstances allow.**

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9th ANNUAL TIFF TIPS

PAUL ENNIS



COURTESY OF TIFF

The Disciple

In this year like no other, the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) has adapted to the pandemic's parameters by making most red carpet events virtual and scaling back on how films will be presented.

TIFF's 45th edition – running from September 10 to 20 – offers both digital and in-person screenings, using TIFF Bell Lightbox and the Isabel Bader Theatre at reduced capacity to conform to measures provided by the City of Toronto and Public Health Ontario, ensuring that there will be a modicum of lineups. As well as drive-ins at CityView and Ontario Place, there will be an open air cinema at Ontario Place. A sophisticated, secure digital platform, called Bell Digital Cinema, will house most of the 50-plus films selected for TIFF 2020 enabling Festival-goers to watch Festival films at home on their television screens.

Given *The WholeNote*'s early deadline, TIFF's schedule and program notes were unavailable, so the current guide is based on a film's subject matter, a filmmaker's track record and gleanings from across the Internet.

The Disciple

"A finely crafted labour of love set in the world of Indian traditional music... *The Disciple* is a refined yet uncompromising portrait of a young artist's journey, his dreams and his loneliness, featuring some extraordinary musical performances." (New York Film Festival). Classical musicians prominent in the film include lead actor Aditya Modak, Arun Dravid and Deepika Bhide Bhagwat. In an interview on the scroll.in website, director Chaitanya Tamhane said he was drawn to the stories and anecdotes about musicians of the past, their secret knowledge and ancient wisdom. "The more I studied, listened, and attended concerts, the more I was enticed, and I realized Indian

classical music is not as simple as the perception goes – how its practitioners act and behave, for instance.

"The lead character is a young vocalist, raised and introduced to music by his father. He has grown up on stories of the past, these secrets, modern-day myths and masters, purist concepts of music, and how one should live their life in accordance with them."

For research, Tamhane travelled to cities with a vibrant Hindustani music culture: Delhi, ITC Sangeet Research Academy in Kolkata, Benaras, Pune, Ahmedabad. "I needed to form genuine friendships and build a rapport so they opened up and let me understand their inner world, and that took time. What you will see in the film is an amalgamation of insights I gained over two years."



COURTESY OF TIFF

Billy Tipton

No Ordinary Man

For decades, the life of American jazz musician Billy Tipton was framed as the story of an ambitious woman passing as a man in pursuit of a career in music. In Aisling Chin-Yee and Chase Joynt's documentary, *No Ordinary Man*, Tipton's story is reimagined and performed by trans artists as they collectively paint a portrait of an unlikely hero. Working with Tipton's adopted son Billy Jr., the filmmakers delve into Tipton's

complicated and contested legacy: how do you tell the story of someone who was hiding in plain sight yet desperate to be seen?

According to Diane Middlebrook's book, *Suits Me: The Double Life of Billy Tipton* (quoted in the April 2013 issue of *Allegro*, the magazine of the NYC musicians' union AFM Local 802), Tipton did not make a serious effort to become a recording star. He mainly earned his living

*The Inheritance**David Byrne's American Utopia*

playing dance music of the kind popularized by small jazz ensembles in the 1930s and 1940s. At his best, he sounded like Benny Goodman's piano player Teddy Wilson. He studied Wilson's recordings until he could imitate Wilson's style, and later, when he had a small group of his own, adopted the Goodman quartet's *Flying Home* as a theme song.

"At the peak of Tipton's career, every successful small-time musician was to some extent a skilled impersonator. Tipton's trio often performed *Exactly Like You*, made famous by Louis Armstrong. Tipton caught the multiple meanings of this clever title early in her career as a musician and improvised on it for the rest of her life, in undetected drag. Playing a sequence of roles historically reserved for the 'opposite sex,' Tipton demonstrated by her accomplishment that gender, unlike sex, is in large part a performance: she was the actor, he was the role. And if her first act of cross-dressing was a brilliant, problem-solving prank, she quickly found that being taken for a man provided access to almost everything she wanted – music, travel, the love of adventurous and caretaking women."

The Inheritance

TIFF Wavelengths programmer Andréa Picard previews *The Inheritance*: "Ingeniously structured from visual and sonic counterpoint, Ephraim Asili's much-anticipated feature debut *The Inheritance* is an eye-popping, jazz-infused, shape-shifter – part fiction, part documentary – fully attuned to this political and cultural moment. Shot on Super 16mm in vibrant primary colours, *The Inheritance* riffs off Godard's *La Chinoise* in palette, structure and playful didacticism

as it inventively weaves together the history of the MOVE liberation movement, the Black Arts Movement and the filmmaker's formative experiences in a Black Marxist collective. New York-based Asili, who is also a DJ, teacher and avid record collector, imbues his film with an iconography of Black artists and freedom fighters via vintage photos, books and records. An audio collage of field recordings, onscreen free jazz performances, spoken word, archival sounds and the whirring of a recording Bolex collapses time and space in a trippy and moving way. Features musical excerpts by Sun Ra and his Solar Arkestra, Max Roach and Oscar Brown Jr."

David Byrne's American Utopia, Underplayed and Bandar Band

TIFF2020 opens with Spike Lee's film, *David Byrne's American Utopia*, which documents the former Talking Heads frontman's brilliant, timely 2019 Broadway show, based on his recent album and tour of the same name. Among the many rave reviews of the Broadway show was David Rooney's in *The Hollywood Reporter*. Rooney wrote that the "sheer jubilation being transmitted by the crew of 11 prodigiously talented and hard-working musicians, backup singers and dancers of diverse ages and ethnicities, not to mention the dynamic staging, seems to demand a new kind of sensory intake.

"Hatched out of Byrne's seventh solo studio album but anthologizing material from across his output stretching back to his days as the art-rock guru frontman of Talking Heads... It's a sensational concert by any measure, but also a highly sophisticated extension of much of what Byrne has been doing over an eclectic and influential career spanning almost five decades."

While you're waiting...

Who said "At the age when most kids are practising their scales on the piano, I was learning to play the Button Boogie."? (Vol 5 no 8, page 45)



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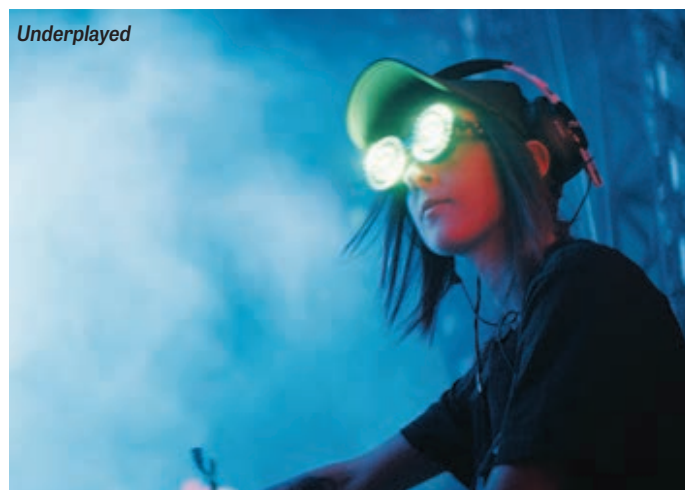


The Broadway show's running time was 100 minutes. Lee's film is listed at 135 minutes. *Vive la différence*.

New Zealand-born, LA-based director Stacey Lee's documentary *Underplayed*, about gender inequality in electronic music was shot over a period of six months with an all-female crew and (according to Lily Moayeri in *Variety*) takes us into the professional and personal worlds of established superstars like TOKiMONSTA and Alison Wonderland, newcomers like Sherelle and hardworking underground artists like Tygapaw.

Lee told Moayeri that Suzanne Ciani, Delia Derbyshire, Daphne Oram and Wendy Carlos – the pioneers of electronic music – have been tinkering away in “this almost scientific laboratory realm. As things have gotten more commercial, it's become harder for a woman to be taken seriously. There is this underlying double standard where people who do the exact same thing don't get the same level of acceptance.”

Bandar Band, Manijeh Hekmat's music-infused twist on a road movie follows a group of Iranian women singers and their entourage on a day-long journey across a flooded landscape to Tehran where they hope to enter a competition. Every road they take leads to a dead end in a film that appears to be more allegorical than Sisyphean.



Underplayed

Three Tempting Soundtracks

Ludovico Einaudi, whose recordings invariably rise to the top of the classical charts, brings his lyrical minimalism to *Nomadland*, Chloé Zhao's follow-up to her critically acclaimed *The Rider*. “Set against the grand backdrop of the American West, the film recounts a year in the life of a stoic, stubbornly independent widow – Frances McDormand, in a beautiful performance of understated grace and sensitivity – who, having spent her adult life in a now-defunct company town, repurposes an old van and sets off in search of seasonal work. In this richly textured feature, Zhao establishes herself as one of contemporary cinema's most clear-eyed and humane chroniclers of lives on the American margins” (from the New York Film Festival program note). I wonder if Einaudi's vision of the West will be more like Aaron Copland's or Ennio Morricone's.

In a 2009 interview – Patrick Lyons pointed out in an article for *Bandcamp* – the then-19-year-old Nicolas Jaar listed Erik Satie and Ethiopian jazzier Mulatu Astatke as his primary influences – heady stuff for an electronic music “it” kid whose early singles and remixes were marked by a precocious blend of dance rhythms and avant-garde approaches to structure and melody. “In the decade since, Jaar has ridden his omnivorous appetite to far-flung corners of ambient, house, psychedelic, jazz, drum & bass, noise, reggaeton, industrial, and more.” And now, he's composed the soundtrack for Dea Kulumbegashvili's *Beginning*, a Georgian film selected by the Cannes, Toronto and New York film festivals. The New York Film Festival program notes: “Her striking feature debut uses rigorous, compositionally complex frames to tell the devastating story of a persecuted family of Jehovah's Witness missionaries from the perspective of a wife and mother. *Beginning* announces a major new arrival on the world cinema scene.”

Viggo Mortensen stars in his directorial debut, *Falling*, a film he also wrote. A veritable polymath, Mortensen (who speaks seven languages) is a painter, a poet, a photographer, a publisher – he started Perceval Press with some of his *Lord of the Rings* earnings – and a musician. He composed and performed *Falling*'s piano score with occasional help from Buckethead. Peter Debruge wrote in *Variety* that *Falling* is “more deeply felt than your typical American debut... unpretentious and perfectly accessible to mainstream audiences... Drawing on his own upbringing while touching on universal themes of family and loss, Mortensen reimagines the relationship with his parents – doting mother, difficult father – through the protective filter of fiction.”

QUICK PIX

A young woman in post-partition India struggles to balance family duty and personal independence in *A Suitable Boy*, Mira Nair's six-part adaptation of Vikram Seth's bestselling novel. Anoushka Shankar's infectious contribution to the soundtrack intrigues.

Versatile American pianist and composer Dustin O'Halloran records for Deutsche Grammophon, has an ambient orchestral project on the side, is a member of A Winged Victory For The Sullen, and with his co-composer, Volker Bertelmann (aka Hauschka) was nominated for several awards for the score to *Lion*. That's enough to get my attention and put Francis Lee's *Ammonite* on my radar. Another film selected by Cannes this year, *Ammonite* stars Kate Winslet and Saoirse Ronan as two lovers in 19th-century Dorset.

From Peter Debruge's *Variety* review: "Not since the summer of 2003, when François Ozon unveiled Sapphic sizzler *The Swimming Pool* at the Cannes Film Festival, has the French director seduced audiences quite as brazenly as he does in *Summer of 85*, which was also set to premiere at Cannes, before the global coronavirus outbreak forced the cancellation of the 2020 edition."

Ozon talked about Jean-Benoît Dunckel's score in an interview with Félix Lefebvre: "I wanted music that was sexy, romantic and nostalgic; something that would remind us of the 1980s and the beginnings of electronic music. All these aspects can be found in Jean-Benoît's music. I have always enjoyed the work he did when he was in the band Air. And it turns out that in an interview where he was asked to give the title of a song he liked when he was young, he'd answered: *Stars de la pub*, [an 80s hit pop song], saying that it was a really well-produced song. I took this coincidence as a sign because it was also one of my favourite songs when I was a teenager. So I contacted him, and I explained that I wanted to use the very song he'd mentioned in my film. I gave him the script, from which he composed themes without having seen the images. It's quite extraordinary because during the editing process we used the melodies exactly as they were written."

Based in the UK, Hutch Demouilpied is a composer, sound designer and musician whose work has been praised by *The Guardian* and *Variety*. Her latest feature, *Limbo* – about a promising young Syrian musician stuck on a remote Scottish island



Anoushka Shankar contributes to the soundtrack of *A Suitable Boy*

while he awaits his asylum request – is Mark Sharrock's "funny and poignant cross-cultural satire that subtly sews together the hardship and hope of the refugee experience." When Festival head Thierry Frémaux announced *Limbo*'s selection for Cannes this year, he described it as "Wes Anderson by way of Scotland." **ON**

The Toronto International Film Festival runs from September 10 to 20. Please check tiff.net for further information.

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of *The WholeNote*.

While you're waiting...

Who said "There must have been a moment, there must have been some time when you said I've got something here."? (Vol 8 no 4, page 6)



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LOOSE TEA

Unleashed by Lockdown

JENNIFER PARR

Loose Tea Music Theatre, an indie opera and music theatre company based in Toronto, was already a vibrant, though small, presence on the Toronto scene before the pandemic hit, producing innovative socially conscious productions that pushed the boundaries of interdisciplinary performance while staying based in classical voice. With the advent of the lockdown in March, like every other theatre company, all their plans had to be put on hold. Excitingly, however, as everything stopped and the usual doors closed, new doors blew open, as if the pandemic had unleashed a new energy.



Alaina Viau

Speaking with Alaina Viau, Loose Tea's founder and executive artistic director, I was astounded by her hunger to create, and how she has embraced the enforced rest from live theatrical performance to concentrate on planning and building future initiatives for her company as well as initiating new partnerships to expand her own and her company's artistic vision.

The Loose Tea project that first caught my eye and inspired this profile is *Dead Reckoning*, a new Canadian musical by Lezlie Wade and Scott Christian. Loose Tea is usually thought of as an indie opera company, but as Viau pointed out they are officially a "music theatre"



Sara Shanazarian, Alicia Barban and Aisha Jarvis as the American Trio in *Dead Reckoning*

company, and from the beginning (in 2013) she has been experimenting with combining classical voice with other genres and media. Last season, for example, included two non-traditional productions: *Carmen#YesAllWomen* reimagined as "half opera, half not," and the Dora-nominated new "song opera" about Anne Frank, *Singing Only Softly*.

"I've been looking for a musical for Loose Tea to produce, but it had to be the right musical," Viau explained. Composer Scott Christian was Viau's music director for *Carmen* and they had begun talking about *Dead Reckoning* as *Carmen* was being written. Christian's own composing style, she says, is similar to Stephen Sondheim's, something that attracted her to the show: "It's complex and needs to be well sung. It sits in that grey area where the lines are blurred between opera and musicals."

The content also aligns wonderfully with Loose Tea's mandate: "Written for five women, it focuses on the intersection of the lives of (famed aviatrix) Amelia Earhart and 15-year-old Betty Klenck – a real-life character – the girl who received Earhart's last shortwave radio transmissions as her plane went down. It explores how Earhart was doing these amazing things herself but also influencing the next generation at the same time. It's about how these trailblazing women end up affecting the next generation of women coming up."

The work is written for two leads and a trio who act as a Greek chorus. In the words of the composer: "Both the Betty and Amelia parts are within the musical theatre soprano range, though Betty is written higher which gives a more youthful colour, whereas Amelia gets some juicy lower stuff by contrast. The trio are modelled after the Andrews Sisters and get a number of tight three-part-harmony features as well as a solo song each in the full version."

While *Dead Reckoning* was not commissioned by Loose Tea, the company had planned to do a workshop of it in May that would have culminated in a semi-staged concert performance. Of course, that plan had to be jettisoned when the lockdown was imposed. Christian and Lezlie Wade, who wrote the book and lyrics, had also lined up an earlier workshop with the famed La MaMa in New York City that would have taken place in March. It's a dramatic story as Viau tells

me: “They were three hours into New York State when everything shut down and they had to turn around and come back. One of the cast members who had flown ahead had already landed and had to get on another plane right away and come right back, as well.”

Left up in the air like this and not wanting to lose momentum, the question they all had was “What do we do now?” This led to the idea of creating a digital version and discussion of what that would mean. Like many other companies, the first option they looked at was to do a video version on Zoom, filmed in pieces at individual cast member’s houses. None of the company were thrilled with this idea, however, and when Ontario moved into Stage 3 of recovery the exciting possibility of actually filming together came up and they all jumped at the chance.

(As this was an experiment and the budget not large – though partially supported by a digital creation grant from the Canada Council – only the first 30 minutes of the whole 90-minute musical would be filmed. In effect it is the first act, and has its own story arc so that it can stand alone.)

A different animal

At this point two more big decisions were made and the project became a different animal. Viau described how they “were all very concerned about the quality of what we were going to put out. My big thing was that it needed to sound good, so we did all the recording beforehand. Scott dropped off microphones to the singers and sent them the piano track. They recorded their parts separately, he gathered them together, added a bass track and mixed everything so that it sounded good. As we filmed, they sang to the recorded track so that it would look as if they were actually singing as we filmed.”

Viau also described how Lezlie Wade, whose story, whose “baby” this show was, was also

By the end of filming in mid-August, ... the whole team was excited by what they had created that it wasn’t a “cop out” or “also-ran”, but felt instead “as if this weird situation had birthed a new thing.”



DAVID COOPER

Lezlie Wade

Scott Christian

concerned about quality and adamant that if they were going to do a film version she would need to rewrite it specifically for that medium – which she did, including complex intercutting between scenes and within songs. Wade also chose and planned the locations at which they would shoot in Niagara-on-the-Lake where she lives; the idea of filming had now grown far beyond Zoom or the recording of a live performance.

The actual filming would be done by Viau, herself. In another piece of serendipity Viau had already been experimenting with film on various productions both for Loose Tea (*Carmen*) and elsewhere (*Cendrillon* for SOPAC Ottawa, *Haus Musik* with Tafelmusik in Toronto, for example). The loan of professional camera equipment from a friend, filmmaker Patrick Hagarty with whom she had worked at Roy Thomson Hall on *Seven Deadly Sins* (when she was assistant production manager for the TSO), made it possible to aim for high professional quality in this category as well.

For the first time since founding Loose Tea, Viau would be the director of photography (DOP), but not the director of a Loose Tea show. Book writer and lyricist Wade was attached as director from the beginning, and now the two women would come together as a new team to realize the production they dreamed of. As Viau described their working relationship: “Lezlie reimagined the show completely in terms of the scenes and cuts for film, found the locations, planned the shots she wanted and where they would be, and she will have complete control on the final edit. As DOP I got on site and set up the shot with angles, lighting, actor placement and in-camera colour with my video knowledge, and suggested changes to get the best representation of her idea. As the creative producer, I am not directly involved with the nitty gritty of the editing, but will

While you’re waiting...

Who said “So on the Friday Mrs Wilkins said that if I got sick so-and-so would sing instead, And I said oh that won’t happen.”? (Vol 13 no 1, page 35)



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Back to the Future

The Struggle for Equity in Jazz Studies programs

COLIN STORY

As a first-year undergraduate at Capilano University's Jazz Studies program in 2005, I, like the rest of my cohort, was automatically enrolled in a mandatory jazz history course. It was a survey course, designed to teach us how to listen actively, to distinguish between Armstrong and Parker and Coltrane, and to develop a sense of the historical arc of jazz in the 20th century. Our very first listening example was *Livery Stable Blues*, by the Original Dixieland Jass Band.

Something of a novelty song, its name derived from the horns' imitation of animal sounds in stop-time sections, *Livery Stable Blues* has the distinction of being the very first jazz recording, released by New York's Victor record label in 1917. It also holds a more dubious distinction: all five members of the ODJB, who billed themselves as the "creators of jazz," were white.

To his credit, our instructor mentioned this unexpected fact, though we, as a class, did not investigate it further. There was much we could have considered: the circumstances behind the recording, the tricky concept of artistic ownership, the way in which Black American Music gets repackaged by white performers – from the ODJB to Elvis Presley to Justin Bieber – and profitably sold to white audiences. But we didn't; instead, we moved on to the next song, and focused on learning to correctly identify excerpts for our upcoming exam.

This experience is indicative of what is still a defining characteristic of Canadian post-secondary jazz programs: namely, that they are primarily concerned with teaching students how to be competent professional performers, and that teaching students to engage with issues of race, gender and equity within their field is outside of a program's purview. On the surface, there's an undeniable logic to this: students come to learn performance skills, and that's what programs deliver. One of the unintended consequences of this outlook, however, is an erasure of the lived experiences of jazz's canonical figures, the vast majority of whom are Black.

Rather than being examined as real people, these musicians tend to become avatars of the music they made. The present-day significance of Duke Ellington's famous 1920s residency at the Cotton Club,

make suggestions as we come to the final edit, with an overall view of the work,".

By the end of filming in mid-August, Viau said the whole team was excited by what they had created, that it wasn't a "cop out" or "also-ran", but felt instead "as if this weird situation had birthed a new thing." The plan is to release the film online around mid-September, though no exact date has yet been set. It will be streamed for free, with donations suggested to help continue the development of the piece. A watch party will be announced on Loose Tea's social media ahead of time (please see the info below). If the short film is well received the company may go on to film the whole musical. In the meantime, a full live version of *Dead Reckoning* is still planned to be part of the regular theatre season, once live performance is possible and safe again, perhaps in the 2021/22 season, after further workshopping.



Laura Larson as Amelia



Kelsey Falconer as Betty

BIPOC composer/librettist development program

Also in September, another Loose Tea initiative is being launched: a new BIPOC composer/librettist development program to be headed up by the company's new artistic director Joanna Diindiisikwe Simmons, a Saugeen Ojibwe and professional opera singer originally from Lindsay Ontario, who has performed leads with the COC and Pacific Opera Victoria. Simmons was recruited by executive artistic director Viau to take on the leadership of this program as well as other Indigenous programming which has been in development for the past year as part of the company's mandate to expand and change the face of opera. Another consequence of the enforced pandemic shutdown is that Viau has had much more time to devote to developing this and other innovative programming plans that she will be announcing later in the year.

For more information about Loose Tea, the premiere of *Dead Reckoning* and the new BIPOC composer/librettist program please see:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/LooseTEAMusicTheatre;
instagram: @looseteatheatre; twitter: @looseteatheatre;
and www.looseteamusictheatre.com

Dead Reckoning: Video Adaptation Credits

Lezlie Wade - Director, Book and Lyrics
Scott Christian - Composer and Producer
Alaina Viau - Creative Producer and Director of Photography
John Chou - Technical Assistant
Alicia Barban - Assistant Producer
Austin Check - Editor

Amelia Earhart - Laura Larson

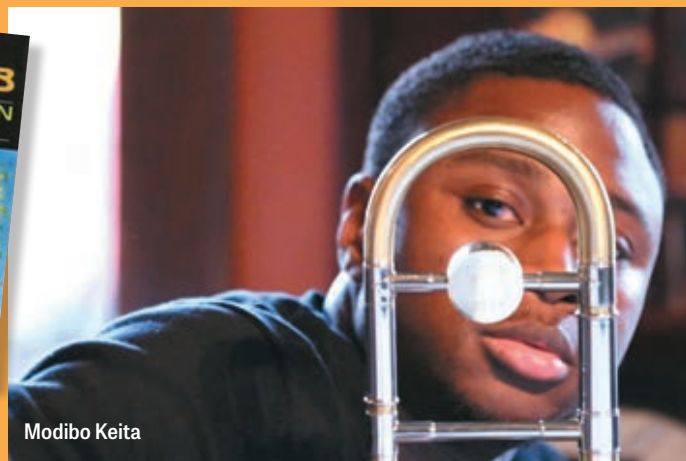
Betty Klenck - Kelsey Falconer

American Trio - Alicia Barban, Aisha Jarvis, Sara Shanazarian

Jennifer Parr is a Toronto-based director, dramaturge, fight director and acting coach, brought up at from young age on a rich mix of musicals, Shakespeare and new Canadian plays.



L to R: First pressing of "Livery Stable Blues" by ODJB, 1917; sheet music for the ODJB version under the alternate title "Barnyard Blues", from 1917, and a 1998 "Giants of Jazz" re-release of Ellington's 1929 recording.



Modibo Keita

for example – a club which admitted a whites-only audience, was decorated in exotic jungle imagery, and was disdained by contemporary Black intellectuals like Langston Hughes – remains largely unexplored. Another unintended consequence of this colour-blind philosophy: faculty members and executive staff of Canadian jazz studies programs tend to be predominantly white men. Where greater diversity is visible, it tends to be in sessional faculty, hired on short contracts for relatively low pay.

The Call for Change

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, weeks-long Black Lives Matter protests, and loud calls for changes to be made to major arts organizations, a concerted effort has been made by students, alumni, and faculty to address the inequities of Canadian jazz programs. On June 24, a call to action addressed to the Humber College School of Media and Performing Arts was posted on social media by the Humber Jazz POC Alumni Collective – Kyla Charter, Meagan De Lima, Claire Doyle and Lydia Persaud. The letter contains both questions (such as "How are you supporting your Black students?" and "How is the department addressing systemic racism?") and demands ("conduct and publicly publish an equity audit at the end of each school year" and "hire more Black professors and pay them well"). By June 29, a response was issued by both senior dean Guillermo Acosta and the Humber music faculty, with a commitment to effecting systemic change. This change includes working with the college's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce, "recruiting, retaining and

advancing more faculty and staff from Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities," and developing and allocating "more scholarships for Black and Indigenous students."

#thisisartschool

Near the beginning of July, a group of University of Toronto Jazz Studies alumni formed under the auspices of the hashtag #thisisartschool, which emerged as a way for social media users to share marginalizing experiences at post-secondary arts programs. By July 17, members of this coalition – Modibo Keita, Jacqueline Teh, Laura Swankey, Laura Yiu, RJ Satchithanathan, Belinda Corpuz, Sammy Jackson, Alexa Belgrave, Joëlle Turner and Tara Kannangara – posted a call to action addressed to U of T's Jazz Studies department, partly inspired by the earlier call to action addressed to Humber.

The U of T letter shares some similarities with the Humber letter, citing "the erasure of vital Black contributions to the arts" and "racism directed towards BIPOC students and faculty" as key issues. Unlike the Humber letter, however, which is primarily concerned with race, the U of T letter also highlights inequities related to gender and sexuality in jazz programs, including "discrimination directed towards LGBTQ+ students," "the normalization of sexually inappropriate behaviour," and the "lack of accountability for people who perpetrate these behaviours."

Keita describes #thisisartschool as a coalition, and characterizes the process of making "decisions and sharing ideas" as "very organic." Despite the "amount of people involved and the difference of opinions," and the "highly delicate and emotionally charged" topics

While you're waiting...

Who said "I wonder what that person would have thought of the person who's looking at the picture now."? (Vol 19 no 3, page 64)



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Tara Kannangara

being discussed, he told me that the group has “rarely run into major issues.” For Keita, the “concept of jazz education in itself is inherently broken”; he doesn’t see the possibility of reform within the current academic model.

In response to the issues that have been brought to the attention of the administration, the U of T Faculty of Music has formed a committee to address anti-racism, equity, diversity, and inclusion issues (AREDI). Kannangara – a sessional faculty member for the Jazz Studies program – is serving on the committee, along with full-time faculty members, graduate and undergraduate students and other sessional faculty. The Jazz Area (U of T’s formal administrative title for its jazz program) is also forming its own AREDI, which, according to Jazz Area head Mike Murley, “will provide advice on how to make our program more inclusive, providing input on such matters as curriculum, workshops/masterclasses, recruitment of students, faculty and guest instructors, and overall student experience.”

Not without challenges

The work of the committee is not without its challenges. It is easy, and not unfair, to point the finger upwards to university leadership when discussing equity issues. But, as Kannangara told me, “barriers are all around us, not just with our leadership.” Faculty and executives in post-secondary arts organizations tend to be liberal and invested in the idea of social progress; but systemic issues, no matter how severe, tend to be invisible, as if they’ve become “part of the furniture,” and introducing a new critical lens through which to see them can seem impossible.

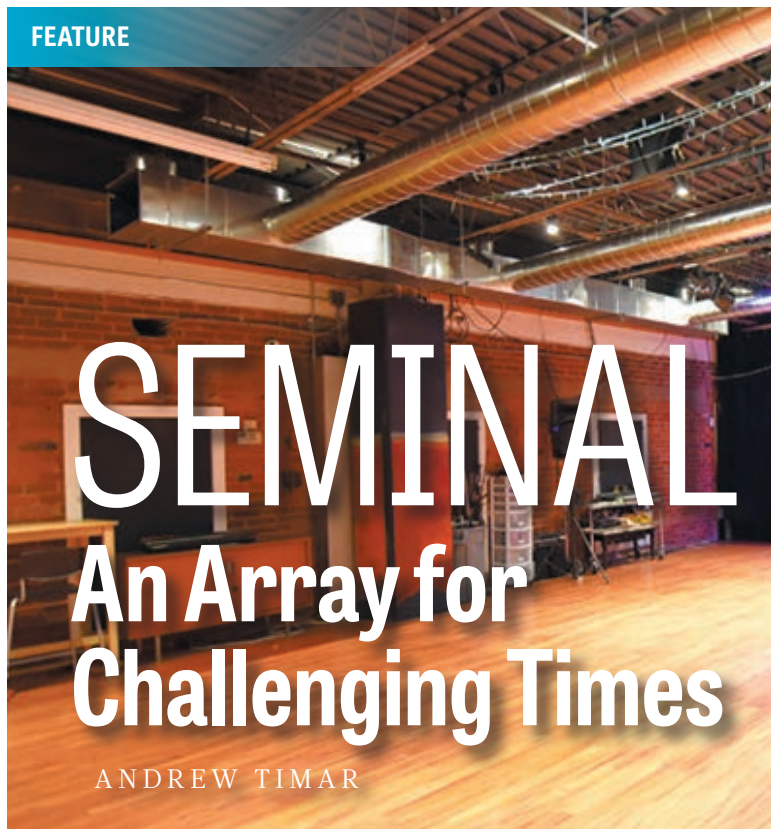
Another major challenge, as Kannangara told me, is that so-called “diversity committees” tend to have “a lack of objectivity” amongst their membership. “Having a personal stake in policy outcomes,” as she put it, “is definitely a strength in some ways.” But, “it can be difficult to be efficient when you have your own personal grievances to air.” Though sharing these stories may be a necessary part of the process, she said, it’s important that they don’t hamper the committee’s capacity to “start making significant changes to the operations of the school.”

Another invisible issue: compensation for committee members. Committee members, Kannangara maintains, “should absolutely be paid. This work is extraordinarily labour intensive and to some committee members, retraumatizing. After a lot of conversation, I believe U of T is starting to take this seriously and I believe they are working on this point.”

In one sense, it’s easy to see the quarantine of 2020 – and the uncertainty attending the upcoming scholastic year – as yet another complicating factor in the fight for equity within post-secondary jazz programs. But, as Keita put it, some “people just started caring because they had time to [care] during the pandemic.” Though it comes at a significant cost, this year has afforded us all a rare opportunity to take time to pause, reflect and reform. What 2020 will mean for the future of jazz programs remains to be seen; hopefully, it will have been time well spent. **◉**

Colin Story is a jazz guitarist, writer and teacher based in Toronto. He can be reached at www.colinstory.com, on Instagram and on Twitter.

FEATURE



SEMINAL

An Array for Challenging Times

ANDREW TIMAR

When I wrote about Arraymusic five years ago in a *WholeNote* series on Toronto concert spaces, I described it as a “seminal venue” — one that maintained a strong place as both a presenting organization and as a rental space for experimental music in Toronto. Now in the midst of the 2020 pandemic, the same remains true. Despite unprecedented challenges, Arraymusic continues to search for new ways of supporting local experimental music and its affiliated performing art forms—and to find relevance in the changing musical fabric of the city.

Array’s Early Years

Years before it managed a concert venue, Arraymusic was an experimental music ensemble and presenter dedicated to commissioning and programming “full spectrum multimedia works, electronic events, group improvisations, music and dance collaborations.” The group was launched April 20, 1972 by a cohort of University of Toronto composition students. By the early 1980s, the group’s growing activities moved to a refurbished garage on a leafy upper Annex avenue.

From 1991 to 2012 Arraymusic rented a multifunctional space in an Artspace-run building. It was among a cohort of artists and organizations which reinvented Liberty Village as an epicentre of creative sector employment. I spent many happy hours rehearsing with the **Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan** and several other groups there, as well as leading community gamelan music workshops.

By the time that era came to an end, Arraymusic artistic director **Rick Sacks** had scouted a promising new loft location in another weathered-brick industrial building in the Queen and Niagara Street area. After extensive renovations, the Array Space now comprises a 1,200 sq. ft. main studio for rehearsals and performances with a



VENUES

capacity of 60, space equipped for audio and video recording, and offices, three of which are rented out to community artists.

The Arraymusic Studio—now called Array Space—opened for business in 2013. A year later *blogTO* ranked it among Toronto’s “top five experimental music venues.” Since then, it’s gone from strength to strength.

Current Challenges

That was before the current COVID-19 lockdown slammed the brakes on live concertizing. With many music organizations having cancelled their seasons, and some struggling to keep the lights on, I reached percussionist and current Array artistic director David Schotzko at his home on a hot August afternoon to ask how Array is faring.

“The organization has grown organically over the decades, and I have

the pleasure to program our 50th anniversary season,” Schotzko says, over the phone with a smile in his voice. The spike in Array Space use over the last year or two is a reflection of heavy community need and use, he says. “That’s been an extremely positive development. Here’s how it looked by the numbers in 2018/19: according to our best figures, we hosted an impressive 660 workshops, rehearsals and concerts by 345 groups, involving 2,650 diverse artists. Last year the Space was so consistently booked that I had to take my vibraphone to my house to practise for the group shows – and I’m an Array Ensemble percussionist! Then suddenly on March 25, 2020 we had to shut the space down entirely, and lock the door behind us.”

That being said, Array is perhaps better positioned to weather the storm than some others.

“In 2012 our artistic director Rick Sacks had a vision of creating a mixed office and performance-ready venue,” Schotzko adds. “Due to Rick’s tremendous effort our rental revenue has allowed Array to grow in ways that [other new music ensembles] for instance cannot do, thanks to our initial investment in our space. Our venue has allowed us to grow in so many ways. Rick later installed high-definition video cameras with which we can livestream Array Ensemble shows. We’ve been doing that for years.”

So when COVID-19 happened, they found themselves set up in an unique position. “We didn’t have to pivot to livestream because we’ve been doing it already. As for rentals, prior to the lockdown the office and Space rental revenue more or less balanced out the expenses to run the space.”

Issues of Community

“We talk about Array as a creative hub, a community hub,” notes Schotzko. “Our vision was a place that our colleagues, peers, as well as those we don’t know yet, could all use. It was initially built on the community with roots in the experimental music and the new composition scene, but the breadth of what happens here now has



David Schotzko



Rick Sacks

While you’re waiting...

Who said “I feel that only if you know your roots can you then imagine how to create something new.”? (Vol 21 no 1, page 10)



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Array Space resident artist SlowPitchSound



Array Space resident ensemble Thin Edge New Music Collective

expanded our community even more. We're at the centre of various artistic scenes which spin around the space."

To give a sense of the full scope of Array Space activity, Schotzko names some of the groups that use it. "Our current resident artists/ensembles include many established and emerging music groups. I can think of Canadian Creative Music Collective/CCMC, Thin Edge New Music Collective (TENMC), Invocation (produced by Jay Pollard), Frequency Freaks Modular Synthesizer Workshops, Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan, The Glass Orchestra and SlowPitchSound."

And there are other regular users who call Array home, in addition to numerous occasional renters: the Toronto Improvisers Orchestra, Art of Time Ensemble, Soundstreams, the dance improv series coexists Dance (which collaborates with the Association of Improvising Musicians Toronto), the community theatre company The Purple Stage, and Straeon Acting Studios.

It's the Space itself, Schotzko says, which has allowed Array to support a wider array of artists, and a more diverse group of musical genres, music and affiliated art forms – more so than the Array Ensemble and the contemporary music program stream alone can do.

On the issue of diversifying Array's own programming, and responding to current social issues in the field, Schotzko is quite candid. "First of all I have to be extremely aware that I'm yet another white guy artistic director. Therefore I have to work extra hard to make sure that when I'm looking for projects, for composers – for music – that I consciously step outside what I already know."

"Speaking specifically about contemporary classical music, there are so many fabulous women composers from Canada and across the world that at this point it's just absolutely absurd when women composers don't make up at least half of anyone's overall programming."

"Western classical music has historically not supported artists of colour," he says. "At this point there are relatively few BIPOC composers and music-makers working in the genre. There are many [BIPOC music-makers] working in other genres, but I don't see how the Array Ensemble as a group of classically trained musicians can bring something to their music that's beneficial to it – and this is our failing."

"We need to play the work of BIPOC composers – and they have always been there – but we also need to make sure that programming their work is relevant to them and doesn't just benefit us. Because in so many ways I feel like the classical music ensemble is the *irrelevant* part of that equation."

I asked him how he intends to meet the challenges – perhaps traps – of tokenism, gatekeeping and virtue-signalling.

"In all honesty I'm not sure if I have a ready answer to that," Schotzko replies. "I don't think I'm going to know that until I mess up royally and get called out on it. When that happens, I have to try to listen and learn from my mistakes. I'm trying hard to check my privilege. I'm very lucky in that I'm married to an activist feminist professor who's very good at checking my privilege (and her own). She's used to dealing with these issues in her classroom, so she's way ahead of me here."

The immediate future

I ask about challenges facing Array in the immediate future. "The challenges are financial ... aren't they always?" comments Schotzko. "On one hand we don't have to figure out how to produce events this year, since we can livestream them and do it well. The biggest question mark is that we just don't know the extent to which we can rent out the Space, and count on that revenue stream."

Array recently ran a successful fundraiser with sustainability in mind, he says. "Our community really came together with support. We're trying to build a buffer in this way, since the next year is such an unknown." Credit should also go, he adds, to the federal government and to the additional funding programs the Arts Councils have added to help during lockdown. "We hope these exceptionally vital supports from both private and public sectors will allow us to ride out the storm."


In terms of new programming directions this season, Schotzko says he has turned to other curators with expertise in practices outside his own. "Michael Lynn has curated his concert series *Audio Pollination* at Array for many years. He's reaching out to a diverse range of co-curators with the goal to move *Audio Pollination* from a user of our Space to being an official program of Arraymusic," he says.

"I'm also excited about the other major series being added called *Situated Sounds*. It's curated by visual/installation/sound artists Mehrnaz Rohbakhsh and Kristina Guison. They're joining us as artistic associates this year, officially part of the Array programming team. The new series will be announced more fully in the coming weeks, but it will be focused on site-specific sound and installation works from a wide range of Toronto artists."

So with the fall season right around the corner and venues still locked down, what's immediately in store for the Array Space?

"Let me answer that beginning with rentals," says Schotzko. "Assuming Ontario maintains the current reopening momentum, we *could* be able to offer rentals starting in October, but on a very limited basis. Plans have not yet been finalized and I'm electing to be conservative, but it may work on a single client per full-day-only basis, perhaps capped at four people at a time. The following day will then be 'dark' so we can thoroughly sanitize everything."

In terms of Array Ensemble concerts, they are planning to announce their season in phases, allowing them to move dates around if needed. "I would be very pleasantly surprised if we could have a live audience in the Space this year. I hope I'm wrong ... but at this point I'm anticipating livestream-only programming in the near future. While we all miss playing for a live audience, our three-camera studio setup allows us to create high-quality concert videos."

Schotzko concludes on a hopeful note. "I have hope that we can all positively engage with and overcome the issues we've been talking about: upheavals due to the pandemic and also social justice and equality in the arts. I don't just want to survive only to return to the status quo. I want our institutions to survive and be better." 

Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer.

Just a bit different as choirs forge ahead

BRIAN CHANG

The Canary Pages choral directory in this issue has been a fixture of the May *WholeNote* for the past 17 years. Until this year, that is, when the magazine decided to hold it back to September, given the climate of uncertainty that has gripped the choral community since March.

Better late than never: the directory remains welcome a reminder that hundreds of choral organizations across Ontario sustain and uphold communities that celebrate art and beauty from the largest cities to the smallest communities throughout Ontario.

March feels a long time ago now. Seasons shuttered, theatres closed, rehearsals stopped, and as the shutdown continued, choirs started thinking towards the fall and onwards. If you look at the language amongst the Canary profiles, there's new terminology that has become standard – postponed, indefinite hiatus, online rehearsals, Zoom, suspended, TBD. The good thing is, the choirs and the people who make music are still around.

In my last column, I investigated some of the opinions and information being shared by organizations like Chorus America, Choral Canada and Choirs Ontario, speculating on what the future might hold for choral life. Months later, as the start of the 2020/2021 season looms, much of the uncertainty remains, across our artistic communities. But our resilient communities are forging ahead, adapting as they go.

This month I got in touch with three: Upper Canada Choristers, Reaching Out Through Music, and Achill Choral Society.



Laurie Evan Fraser,
Upper Canada Choristers

Continuing in different ways

While many choirs stopped making music together, some continued in different ways. The **Upper Canada Choristers** have continued to sing with regular Zoom rehearsals including sectionals and fun digital socials. The choir has “recently started singing together outside in small groups, socially distanced and wearing masks. I have personally tried out a variety of masks to see what works best,” shares artistic director

Laurie Evan Fraser. “We have been in regular contact with Public Health to ensure we are taking appropriate steps to keep everyone safe, and our board has developed protocols for rehearsals and performances in accordance with Public Health directives.” Importantly, Evan Fraser notes, “The fact is, singing with a mask is not a problem.”

Upper Canada Choristers are revisiting the programming they initially planned for performance in the spring, revisiting the same repertoire they initially planned for, with some adjustments. “The concert we originally had planned for last May was a departure from our usual format,” says Evan Fraser. “It would be performed without intermission, would have narration and unusual visual elements, and would depict a slice of Latin American culture from pre-Hispanic times to the present. We were excited by the possibilities, but then we had to cancel the concert because of the pandemic.”

So, the Choristers had to adjust to something different, as manifested in their upcoming October 2 performance with sister choir Cantemos.



Titled "Inti Ukana: A Latin American Tapestry" it includes guests Laura Fernandez, Antonio Mata and Bernardo Padrón. "We just couldn't give up! And have been working intently over the summer through Zoom practice sessions," says conductor Fraser. "And we expect this October performance to be every bit as exciting as if we were all in one place." The main highlight is *Misa Criolla* by the Argentine composer Ariel Ramírez, and Cantemos will perform *Apamuy Shungo*, a traditional yumbo from Ecuador – a style named after the Yumbo people who came to live in the Sacred Valley of Tulipe around 800 B.C.E. It is sung in Quichua, one of the indigenous languages spoken in Ecuador. As well, the ensemble offers the Venezuelan number *Mare-Mare*, which, while not indigenous, tells about the nomadic Kariña tribe that travelled through what is now Venezuela and the Caribbean. "Digital Performance, free, donations welcome" the announcement says. Definitely a sign of the times.



Reaching Out Through Music's virtual recital, in early July - which you can still enjoy online!

Reaching Out

Reaching Out Through Music (ROTM) executive director Virginia Gallop Evoy provided some thoughts by email to me about the adaptations the music program has made over the last few months. ROTM is an accessible music program run out of St. James Town, in Toronto's downtown core. Normally, this super-dense neighbourhood full of high-rises brings kids together to learn out of The Church of St Peter and St Simon-the-Apostle. The pandemic shutdown didn't mean a shutdown of their programming. "Our private instrumental lessons carried on with minimal interruption," she shares. The St. James Town Children's Choir and ukulele group followed with online rehearsals starting in May. "Our overriding goal was to keep our children and families engaged, musically and socially." Using technology and video, the talented teachers of the program have kept the music going. And there's more to come with new connections and collaborations.

Early in July, ROTM was able to put together a virtual recital. "With some coaching and guidance, our choristers and music students learned how to record themselves, and the various pieces were synchronized and assembled by a fabulous video editor," shares Gallop Evoy. The charming visual of a group of kids strumming away on their ukuleles on video makes it hard not to smile. The added advantage to more performances moving to a digital sphere is that they are recorded and available for enjoyment time and time again and can even reach audiences not usually accessible.

ROTM is also reaching out into their local community to collaborate with visual arts programs in St. James Town. Gallop Evoy says, "The plan is for the sounds of our choir to be combined with their children's related artwork to create an arresting video performance. We hope this initial collaboration will be the beginning of many fruitful collaborative endeavours in the community."

For a taste of how ROTM is accomplishing this, catch the Reaching Out Through Music virtual recital on YouTube. The St. James Town Choir, ukulele students, vocal students and piano students perform with appearances by special guests including tenor Asitha Tennekoon, ukulele teacher Tom Collins, pianist Jean-Luc Therrien, jazz performer and choir conductor Jacqueline Teh, pianist John Sheard and much more!

The collaborative effort has been really important to Upper Canada Choristers as well. "The biggest challenge for us in preparing for this new format is technological," Evan Fraser said. "We are blessed by our longtime affiliation with Grace Church on-the-Hill. They too are committed to community service and have agreed to be our partners moving forward to provide a place for us to connect to community venues through Zoom and share pre-recorded performances as well as do live, interactive sing-alongs." The upcoming digital performance that UCC has planned will incorporate pre-recorded video and some livestreaming. UCC even plans to have some singers and instrumentalists in person, masked and socially distant at the church.

Creating Community

More choirs may turn to this hybrid model in the coming season. Shawn Grenke, artistic director of the **Achill Choral Society**, shares a bit about what he has planned for Christmas: "We are going to be


doing an online concert with past archival repertoire. We will have a number of choir members do video introductions to the pieces from their home, and as well, if allowed, record a few pieces in small groups, wearing masks and socially distant."

The loss of the community element of music is a reminder that these organizations aren't just internally focused, every performing arts organization exists to create community. "The singers in Achill desperately miss the community of music making," shares Grenke, "and as well, the social element that is such a huge part of being in a choir and sharing the love of choral music."

But between now and the next set of digital/hybrid performances they will be figuring a way back into the communal sharing, rehearsals and creation of music. "I'm also deeply aware of the loneliness COVID-19 has caused our Achill Choir community," says Grenke. "It was a major part of the singers' weekly routine – and it still will be in September... it will just look different."

Achill and every other choir across the region is having to grapple with these same concerns in order to forge ahead.

"We have to be creative and willing to try new things if we are to survive" Evan Fraser says. "We don't have the option of putting our operations on hold until the situation improves," states Gallop Evoy. "The community needs us now more than ever... the prospects for the future of our organization seem bright."

So off we go to the start of the 2020/2021 season ... just a bit different. 

Follow Brian on Twitter @bjchang.

Send info/media/tips to choralscene@thewholenote.com.



TALLIS CHOIR

Dear Friends and Supporters of the Tallis Choir,

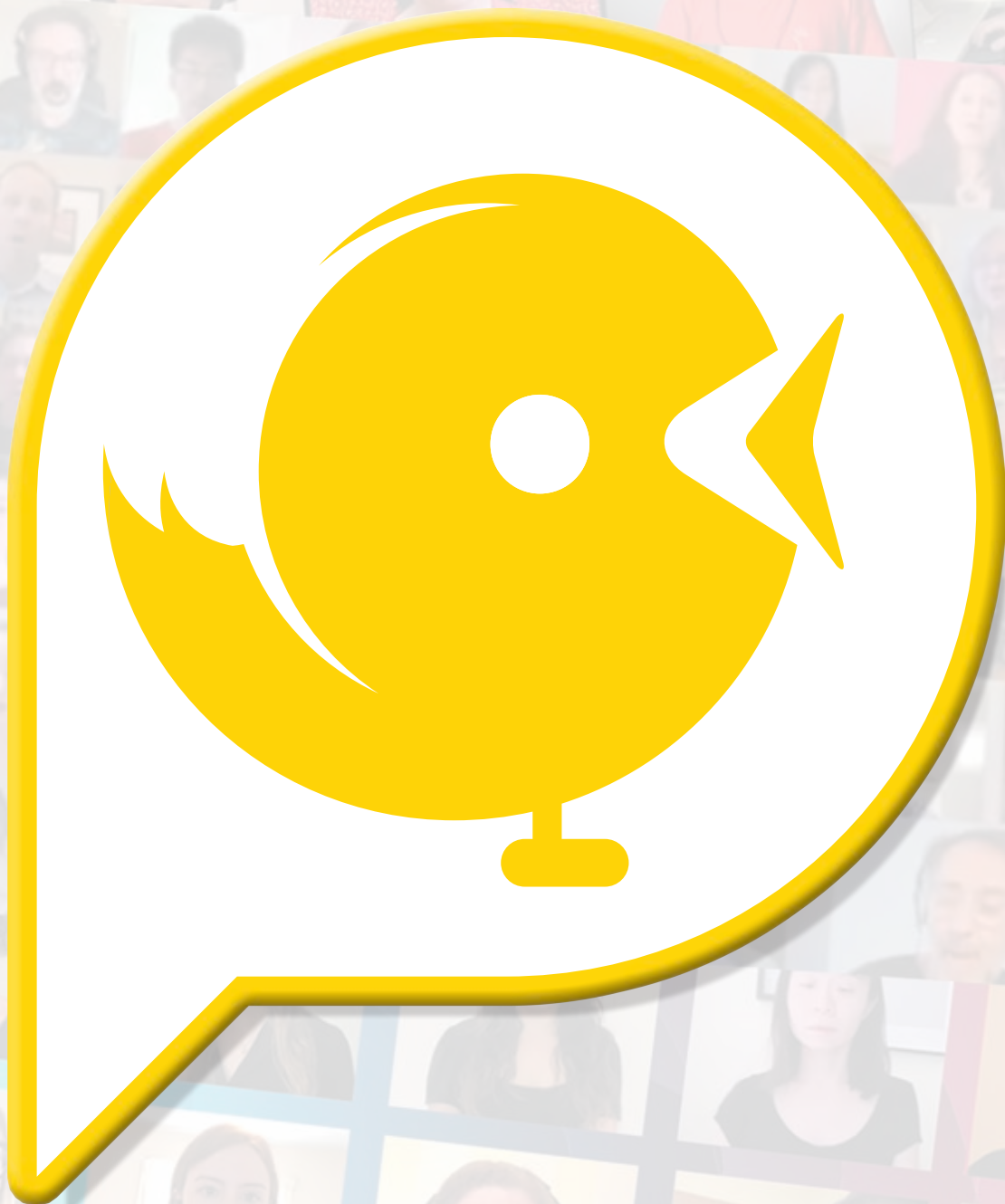
Normally at this time of year we would be gearing up for our new season and sharing the details of our concert series with you. As we all know, things are different this year. However, we want you to know that we, the Tallis Choir, are looking forward to getting back to singing and sharing our music with all of you.

Until that time, we offer you, and also our friends at The WholeNote Magazine, our very best wishes for your continued safety and good health. Stay well.

Peter Mahon
Artistic Director

the**WholeNote** **CANARY PAGES**

18th Annual Directory of Choirs



Canaries on the Fly!

Welcome to *The WholeNote's* 18th annual **Canary Pages** choral directory, which would normally have been published within last May's issue. We've been gathering profiles since March and publishing them on line as we received them. But, given the circumstances, we decided to delay publication of this print version until September, to allow choirs to a bit more time to figure out their plans.

As you'll see from the 76 profiles that follow, even with the delay much remains uncertain in the choral scene. More choirs than usual have provided a more general view, using what they had planned for the coming season as an example of what they do; fewer than usual are able to be specific about how they are moving ahead. Most important, though, by being here they are all saying "Reach out to us if we seem like the choir you might be looking for! Because we are not going away!"

The profiles here, provided by the choirs themselves, as always reflect

the richness and variety of our community's choral scene. If you're looking to join a choir, there's something for everyone, from amateur, non-auditioned choirs, to professional, kids choirs, large and small ensembles, with a wide range of genres covered.

Given the uncertainty of these times, we encourage you to visit the choirs' websites, listed here, to find out what's happening, or contact them at the phone numbers given. We will also keep adding and updating profiles on our website on an ongoing basis, so bookmark www.thewholenote.com/canary for more information whenever we receive it!

Let's hope that by next May all of us will be back in good company – once again raising our voices together, to celebrate being able to do so.

THE 2020 CANARY PAGES TEAM

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● A Cappella Niagara!

A Cappella Niagara is a vibrant male chorus performing four-part harmony in the Niagara region. As a member of our chapter you'll not only experience the fun and fellowship of singing with the chorus and maybe a quartet, but you will also spread joy through performance, enriching your life and the lives of others. We share the delight of music at the Candlelight Stroll, Santa Claus parades, senior homes, district convention, annual Corn Roast, and other events. In February, our quartets deliver Singing Valentines to that special someone. Today, barbershop singing is a lot more than old tunes - we sing a wide range of styles, contemporary songs and fine arrangements.

It's a sound that appeals to men of all ages and all walks of life. You'll find four-part harmony is a little challenging, very creative, and a lot of fun.

TIMOTHY HEALEY

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www.niagarasingers.com

● Achill Choral Society

Achill is an 80-member mixed voice, auditioned choir composed of singers who are dedicated to becoming better musicians. We have been performing since 1982, with a repertoire that includes classical, contemporary, and traditional works. Our artistic director, Shawn Grenke, is also the associate conductor and accompanist of the Amadeus Choir and accompanist of the Elmer Iseler Singers.

We normally rehearse at St. John's Church, east of Orangeville and perform two concert series a year, with performances rotating between Alliston, Bolton and Orangeville. During this time when we cannot meet physically, we will be focused on singing and performing in new and creative ways and increasing our musical skills. To learn more about Achill please email us or visit our website.

GAIL MACLENNAN

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● All Saints Kingsway Choir

All Saints Kingsway Choir provides musical leadership at weekly Sunday morning Eucharists, Festival Evensongs, community outreach projects and concerts year-round. The choir is made up of paid section leads and volunteer participants and welcomes new singers throughout the year. Recent performances include Karl Jenkins's *Stabat Mater*, Howard Goodall's *Eternal Light: A Requiem*, festival celebrations with the drumming ensemble Beyond Sound Empijah, the Michael Occhipinti Jazz Quartet, Maurice Duruflé's *Requiem* and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's *The Atonement*, both with the Nathaniel Dett Chorale. Jazz Vespers and lunch-time organ recitals round out the regular musical offerings. New members are always welcome to the Music at All Saints Kingsway family. Come

ELMER ISELER SINGERS



and be a part of a fantastic choral and instrumental creative community.

D. BRAINERD BLYDEN-TAYLOR

416-233-1125

music@allsaintskingsway.ca

www.allsaintskingsway.ca

• Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto

Enlivening Toronto's arts community for 46 years, the award-winning Amadeus Choir is a semi-professional choir of auditioned voices. Led by the dynamic artistic director and conductor Kathleen Allan, the choir champions the best of choral music through a self-produced Toronto concert series, guest performances, and special events. The choir is known for programming major classical works with orchestra, as well as works by Canadian and international composers. The Amadeus Choir actively engages in educational and community outreach through choral workshops. Regular rehearsals are held on Tuesday nights in the Don Mills and Lawrence area. Auditions are scheduled May 23 to 26. Depending on recommendations from the Ontario government, auditions may be held virtually. Please email us for more information.

ALLISON LUFF

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www.amadeuschoir.com

• The Annex Singers

Now in its 40th year, The Annex Singers is a spirited 65-voice auditioned choir with an eclectic repertoire spanning seven centuries. Under the dynamic and creative leadership of artistic director Maria Case, the choir performs three concerts annually, collaborating with a wide array of professional soloists and ensembles. Recently performed large-scale works include Fauré's *Requiem*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, and Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor*. The Annex Chamber Choir, a smaller ensemble drawn from the main choir, is dedicated to presenting gems from the chamber repertoire. We provide ongoing professional development to all choir members and encourage young singers with a sponsorship program. Rehearsals are held Monday evenings at St. Thomas's Anglican Church, 383 Huron St. Please visit our website to arrange your audition.

JOANNE EIDINGER

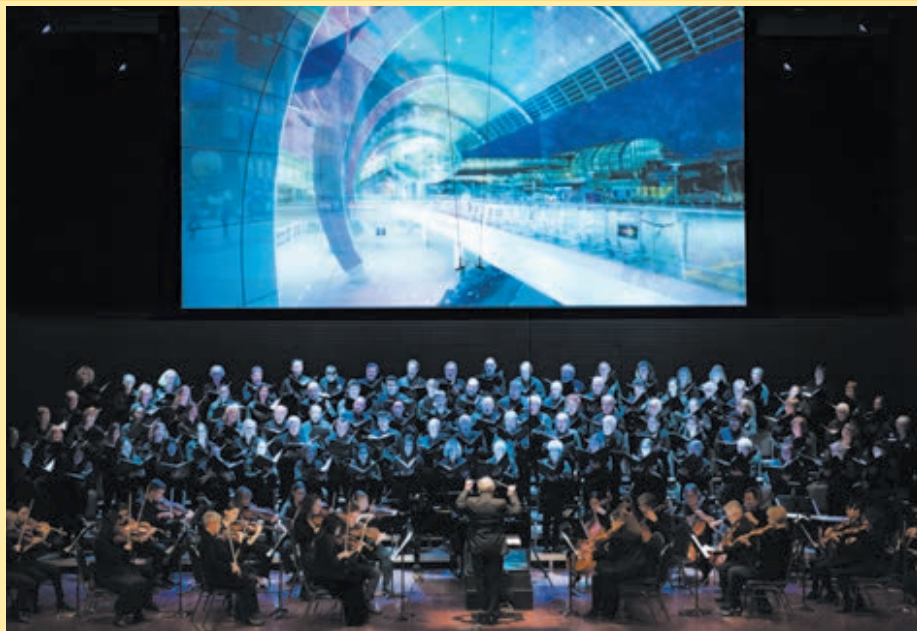
416-458-4434

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• Avanti Chamber Singers

Named Promising New Adult Ensemble in the 2019 Choral Canada National Competition for Canadian Amateur Choirs, Avanti Chamber Singers, under the direction of Dr. Rachel Rensink-Hoff, is a community-based SATB chamber choir based in Niagara. We are dedicated to presenting intimate choral performances of exemplary quality in genres ranging from the Renaissance to present-day, emphasizing the works of living composers.



CHORUS NIAGARA

Our concerts typically feature an eclectic range of old and new musical styles, from small-scale compositions to extended choral works. We strive to build an enthusiastic audience base through inspired thematic programming. We offer three concerts each season as Ensemble-in-Residence at Brock University with additional performances in collaboration with area ensembles and festivals.

TIM STACEY

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www.avantisingers.com

• Bel Canto Singers

Bel Canto Singers is a four-part community choir with singers of various ages. Under the guidance of our accomplished Music Director, Leanne Piller, members enjoy the rewards and challenges of a varied repertoire including classical masters, Broadway show and movie tunes, opera choruses and pop songs. Traditionally, rehearsals are held on Tuesday evenings, 7pm to 9:30pm, from early September through May at Scarborough Bluffs United Church, 3739 Kingston Road. Presently, all of our in-person activities are suspended until further notice. We will return to rehearsing and performing in concerts as soon as it is safe to do so. At that time, experienced and committed choristers will be welcomed to join us. Please visit our website for updates.

KAM

belcantomembership@gmail.com

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• Canadian Celtic Choir

Founded in 1996, conducted by Paul Grambo (also emcee) and accompanied by Jean Willadsen, the Canadian Celtic Choir is a London-based SATB choir of more than 50 voices that has built a solid reputation as one of the most in-demand choirs in SW Ontario. Our repertoire features

songs primarily from Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales, and the Canadian Maritimes. Recipients of the Mayor's Award from the City of London for our cultural contributions to the city, we won the Most Popular Classical Choir at the Forest City London Music Awards in 2015. The Choir plans a tour every three years (next tour in 2023). Our two most recent CDs are: *A Celtic Noel* (2013), and *Celtic Inspiration* (2014) and are available from our website. Our conductor emeritus is William "Bill" Zadorsky (retired June 2020).

IAN DAVIES

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• Canadian Children's Opera Company

As the only permanent children's opera company in Canada, the CCOC is committed to providing young people opportunities to develop their voices, build performance and musicianship skills, connect with opera and theatre professionals, and reach their full potential by learning about themselves and the world around them through storytelling and music. We commission, produce, record and tour new operas, with children as both the principal performers and main audience. The CCOC regularly collaborates with other leading arts organizations, including acting as the children's chorus for the Canadian Opera Company. Spread across 6 chorus divisions plus an outreach program, hundreds of young people ages 4 and up receive unparalleled performance experiences and age-appropriate vocal and dramatic training annually.

KATHERINE SEMCESEN

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• The Cellar Singers

The Cellar Singers is a 40-voice mixed choir based in Orillia. For over 50 years, the choir has delighted audiences in Simcoe and Muskoka with choral masterpieces grand and intimate. Under the direction of gifted choral specialist Mitchell Pady, the choir presents four main concerts each season. Rehearsals are open to all and are held Wednesday evenings, 7:15pm, at St. James' Anglican Church, Orillia. Visit us on our website, or Facebook.com/TheCellarSingers or Twitter/@cschoir. For more information, contact us at our email or at 705-718-4124.

REBECCA CAMPBELL
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• Choralairs Choir of North York

The Choralairs are a non-profit, charitable, 50-member, four-part harmony adult choir who sing a variety of popular, jazz, folk, Broadway show tunes and seasonal songs. Directed by our talented team of Peter Ness as conductor and Asher Farber on keyboard, the choir requires no auditions, just a love of singing and the ability to carry a tune! Our rehearsals are on Tuesday evenings from September to June at Edithvale Community Centre on Finch Ave. West. We have been singing for seniors for over 57 years and perform regularly at senior citizens' residences in the GTA. New members are welcome. However, due to COVID, our starting date has not been determined. Please check our website for updates and information.

ELAINE
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www.choralairschoir.com

• Chorus Niagara

Chorus Niagara, the Power of 100, is a passionate group of singers of diverse ages and walks of life. As the Niagara region's premier auditioned symphonic chorus since 1963, Chorus Niagara performs classic choral masterpieces, innovative new modern, and seldom-heard works, providing a showcase for emerging Canadian talent. Chorus Niagara attracts singers of all ages through its Chorus Niagara Children's Choir (CNCC), Side-by-Side High School Chorale (SXS) and Robert Cooper Choral Scholars program (RCCS). Chorus Niagara performs in the beautiful, state-of-the-art Partridge Hall in the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre in downtown St. Catharines. Our artistic director is Robert Cooper, CM. View our flash mob with over 52 million views on YouTube. Visit our website, and for our children's choir: www.chorusniagaracc.com.

DIANA MCADOREY
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www.chorusniagara.org

• Chorus York

Chorus York is an amateur performance community choir based in Richmond Hill. We perform three to four concerts per year and sing a variety of choral music, from Bach to Broadway. We are diverse in age and culture, but we all share a love of fine choral music. Recent concerts include "Celebrate the Season," a program of seasonal songs, and "Romantic Melodies," a program of love songs for Valentine's Day. Our 2020-2021 season will run from September to June, and end with a collaborative concert with the Richmond Hill Philharmonic Orchestra in June. Auditions run throughout the year, and new members are always welcome. Please send inquiries to info@chorusyork.ca.

MARY-LOU MONTGRAIN
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• Church of St. Mary Magdalene

Steeped in musical heritage and assisted by a generous acoustic, the Church of St. Mary Magdalene offers a music program strongly rooted in the tradition established by Healey Willan. Every Sunday, at the 11am Solemn Mass, the Gallery Choir sings a mass and motet from the west gallery, while the Ritual Choir sings the Gregorian propers from the east end. Both choirs rehearse on Thursdays.

At the 9:30am Sung Mass, the SMM Singers sing a motet and lead congregational singing. Membership is informal: rehearsals are at 9am directly before the service; regular attendance is not mandatory. One Sunday per month at 4:30pm, the meditative Solemn Evensong and Benediction are sung, preceded by an organ recital at 4pm.

For information, please contact the director of music, Andrew Adair.

ANDREW ADAIR
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andrew.timothy.adair@gmail.com
www.stmarymagdalene.ca

• The Church of St. Peter and St. Simon-the-Apostle

Music is central to worship at St. Peter and St. Simon and is rooted in the rich liturgical tradition of the Anglican Church. The Adult Choir enjoys a repertoire from medieval chant to 21st-century anthems, motets and spirituals. With approximately 25 voices including a professional core, many of its members have had extensive choral training or as instrumentalists and solo singers. The choir provides musical leadership at the Sunday 10:30am weekly worship service including full mass settings and seasonal evensong services. Carol Services are presented for Advent and Christmas. Annual concerts feature major works, with soloists and instrumental ensemble accompaniment. In August of 2019 the choir travelled to the UK to sing for one week residencies at both Gloucester and Chichester Cathedrals.

ROBIN DAVIS
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• Common Thread Community Chorus

Common Thread: Community Chorus of Toronto is a non-audition chorus which promotes a sense of community by performing joyful and empowering music. All voices are welcome! We believe that everyone can sing and that together we can make beautiful music. We sing music that celebrates the dignity of all people and their struggles to create a better world. We sing for recreation, for reverence, for learning and laughter, for struggle, for hope and for understanding. We sing for social justice and to build community.

HELEN NESTOR
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www.commonthreadchorus.ca

• Cummer Avenue United Church Choir

Cummer Avenue United Church Choir consists of a group of volunteer singers supported by a number of professional section leaders. The choir provides strong and vibrant musical leadership in worship each Sunday morning at 9am, 12 months of the year. A wide range of musical styles are included in the repertoire, and in addition to full choir anthems, various ensembles and solos are presented by members of the choir. On selected Sundays, the choir presents extra choral music such as traditional carols at Christmas and a cantata at Easter. Rehearsals are held Thursday evenings from early fall to early spring and on Sunday mornings all year. Due to extensive renovations of our church site, we are temporarily worshipping with the congregation of Willowdale/Emmanuel United Church just a few blocks south at 349 Kenneth Avenue.

TAYLOR SULLIVAN
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• DaCapo Chamber Choir

The 24-voice DaCapo Chamber Choir was founded in 1998 in Kitchener-Waterloo under the direction of Leonard Enns. The mission of the choir is to identify, study, rehearse & present outstanding choral chamber works of the past 100 years and to champion music of Canadian and local composers. In November 2018, the choir released its 3rd CD, NewWorks, with selections received through the first 10 years of its national choral composition competition.

Although the 20/21 season remains uncertain, the choir will continue to release archival recordings online and plans to complete their 3-year "Road to Refuge" program in May - presenting the concert that was cancelled due to COVID-19 in May 2020.

For the most recent updates to the choir's plans, please visit their website and check out their music on their YouTube channel!

SARA MARTIN

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• Duly Noted

Duly Noted is a Toronto-based a cappella ensemble, singing everything from madrigals to Shawn Mendes. We are currently 10 women strong but have had up to 12 members and as few as 8. One of our primary mandates is to support charities while sharing our love of singing. To date we have raised over \$14,000 for local GTA charities. Find out more about us and when we are performing on our website.

JENNIFER KIRNER

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www.dulynotedtoronto.com

• Echo Women's Choir

Celebrating its 29th year, Echo is a 50-voice, non-auditioned community choir open to women from all walks of life. Echo performs at city-wide grassroots events, and traditionally holds fall and spring concerts. Echo aims to build community with a strong, varied and vibrant singing culture. Repertoire includes music from worldwide village singing traditions and newly commissioned music. Echo keeps membership fees accessible to all. This fall term, beginning on Tuesday, September 8, Echo will present a series of 3 online mini-sessions (4 weeks) and create virtual recordings, and the occasional Saturday singing outing. All are welcome. To join us, register on our website.

ALAN GASSER

416-779-5554

info.echo@gmail.com

www.echowomenschoir.ca

• Elmer Iseler Singers

Elmer Iseler Singers is a 20-voice professional chamber choir based in Toronto and founded in 1979. Directed by the acclaimed Lydia Adams, the Singers are known for tonal beauty and interpretive range, and valued for their contributions to masterclasses and workshops with schools and community choirs. Their unique "Get Music! Educational Outreach Initiative" mentors conductors, music educators and students. EIS has 15 recorded CDs featuring Canadian music. EIS with TSO was 2019 Grammy-nominated and JUNO awarded for a collaborative CD. Touring in Canada is a major part of the Elmer Iseler Singers' activities, offering both concerts and workshops to Canadian audiences. Weekly rehearsals are on Mondays and Tuesdays in preparation for our Toronto Series. During COVID-19, singers of all voices are invited to audition by video.

JESSIE ISELER

416-217-0537



ENSEMBLE VOCAL LES VOIX DU COEUR

info@elmerisellersingers.com

www.elmerisellersingers.com

• Ensemble vocal Les voix du cœur

Les Voix du Cœur is a vocal ensemble of more than 40 amateur singers that, for 25 years, has offered lively concerts showcasing the richness of French popular songs from Canada and abroad. Our shows present choral singing and cabaret style numbers, combining music, theatre and dance in a highly entertaining performance. The only group of this nature in the GTA, we reach an ever-growing public, and we play a dynamic role in the French-speaking cultural community in Toronto. Please visit our website to discover who we are and what we do, all in French!

LES VOIX DU COEUR

evlesvoixducoeur@gmail.com

www.lesvoixducoeur.com

• Etobicoke Centennial Choir

Etobicoke Centennial Choir (ECC) is a welcoming, inclusive SATB community choir. We strive to enrich the lives of our choristers and community through inspired performances of diverse choral repertoire, ranging from classical masterpieces to contemporary compositions and popular music. ECC offers amateur singers a challenging and supportive choral music experience, facilitated by our professional music director, accompanist and section leads. As a result of public health guidelines related to the global coronavirus pandemic, the 2020-2021 season will be like no other in ECC's 54-year history. We plan to offer virtual rehearsals on Tuesday evenings, working on both repertoire and vocal training. If conditions permit a safe return, we hope to perform a concert in late spring 2021. Please check our website for updates.

LAUREN MAYER

416-433-5495

info@etobicokecentennialchoir.ca

www.etobicokecentennialchoir.ca

• Exultate Chamber Singers

Exultate Chamber Singers is an auditioned group of 28 skilled singers who enjoy performing a variety of chamber choir repertoire, both a cappella and accompanied, including many works by Canadian composers. The choir is under the direction of artistic director Mark Ramsay and will be celebrating its 40th anniversary this season! In addition, the choir commissions new works, collaborates with guest artists, and supports aspiring young music professionals with singing and conducting opportunities. Rehearsals take place on Tuesdays from 5:45 to 7:45 pm at St. Thomas's Anglican Church, 383 Huron St. Please contact Exultate for audition information.

VIVIAN MOENS

416-971-9229

info@exultate.net

www.exultate.net

• Georgetown Choral Society

GCS, with some 80 amateur singers, has been delighting audiences since its formation in 1971. Our rehearsal and performance home is the Christian Reformed Church in Georgetown, Ontario. Our choral director, Christopher Dawes, is a freelance professional musician and is among Canada's leading church musicians, concert organists and choral accompanists. He performs across a wide spectrum of the Toronto music scene and occupies a range of musical leadership positions. GCS is a registered charity performing a variety of musical genres, including classical, pop and folk, and from sacred to secular, at a level normally associated with professional groups. It has performed at Toronto's Roy Thomson Hall, the Ford Centre in North York and the Mississauga Living Arts Centre. It has also performed in Holland and Ireland.

LAURENT THIBAUT

647-203-7795

lthibault@cogeco.ca

www.georgetownchoral.ca

• Grace Church on-the-Hill Choirs

The choir of Grace Church on-the-Hill proudly embraces our excellent Anglican choral tradition while looking towards the future for new inspiration. Our choirs for both adults and children sing weekly from September to June. Our children's choirs provide the ideal learning environment for young musicians, and we have funding available to subsidize the cost of music lessons for our children! Choristers of all ages develop lifelong friendships, self-esteem, and the joy of coming together to sing. We take a choir tour every year. Some tours are small, like a day trip to Niagara-on-the-Lake, and some tours are larger, such as our two-week tour to sing in cathedrals in Dublin and Oxford in 2016. We welcome new members every September.

SARAH HICKS

416-488-7884

music@gracechurchonthehill.ca

www.gracechurchonthehill.ca

• Grand Philharmonic Choir

The Grand Philharmonic Choir, under the artistic direction of Mark Vuorinen, brings the enchantment of choral music experiences to our community. Our singers range in age from 7 to 80 years old and participate in one of four choirs: the adult main choir; the adult chamber choir; the youth choir; or the children's choir. We sing in Kitchen-er's acoustically superior Centre in the Square and in local church buildings. Through these performances, we strive to transform our community into a more harmonious and peaceful place.

ADMINISTRATOR

519-578-5669 x5290

info@grandphilchoir.com

www.grandphilchoir.com

• Harbourfront Chorus

Did you know that choral singing improves health and happiness? You are invited to join Harbourfront Chorus, a non-auditioned community choir. We perform a wide range of music that spans from early Renaissance music to contemporary popular songs. Rehearsals run Tuesdays from 7:45pm to 9:15pm at the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre, located at the south-east corner of Queens Quay W. and Bathurst St. Our season runs September through May. The 2020/21 season begins Tuesday, September 15.

ALBERT WONG

416-392-1509

harbourfrontchorus@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/harbourfrontchorus

• Healey Willan Singers

The ensemble was originally formed as a youth choir to celebrate Dr. Willan's 125th anniversary in 2005. Since 2007, the choir has reinvented itself into a women's ensemble and has become one of the finest women's ensembles in the city. Rehearsals run from September to April on Saturday mornings

from 10:15am to 12:30pm. This season, the choir will perform Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria* with orchestra on December 5, 2020. On April 24, 2021, the ensemble will end their season with a concert of music chosen by the choristers in celebration of our 15th anniversary season. Auditions are held throughout the year. Apprentice conductor program is also available. Rehearsals and concerts are held at the Church of St. Martin in-the-Fields, located at 151 Glenlake Avenue (near Keele and Bloor Street West in Toronto).

RON CHEUNG

416-519-0528

healeywillansingers@yahoo.ca

www.healeywillansingers.com

• Jubilate Singers

The Jubilate Singers, a community choir of about 40 voices directed by Isabel Bernaus, specializes in music from a variety of traditions and time periods, sung in original languages. We normally feature a non-auditioned main chorus and an auditioned chamber choir and present three concerts a year, with additional community appearances. This year we are becoming a virtual choir, with online rehearsals on Tuesday evenings, open to anyone interested. We will learn some new repertoire, sing some favourites, and work on vocal skills through occasional workshops and guest clinicians. We will also take our famous Jubilate potlucks online, and use other social activities to build and maintain a sense of community until we can all come together again in person. Call us for more information!

PAULINE MCKENZIE

416-223-7690

pkenzie3@gmail.com

www.jubilatesingers.ca

• King Edward Choir

Founded in 1952 by Jean Dobson, Barrie's King Edward Choir today is a group of 50 dedicated musicians encompassing all voices, striving to present a repertoire that is broad and engaging to both chorister and audience: recent years have seen performances of works by Britten, Mozart, Bernstein, Vivaldi, Mark Sirett, Stephanie Martin, Imant Raminsh and Ruth Watson Henderson, along with offerings of Renaissance motets, Spirituals, folk songs and show tunes. The choir frequently collaborates with other artists and groups, and enjoys community sing-outs. Rehearsals for our three annual performances take place Monday nights, and new members are welcome at any time. Under the direction of interim conductor, Leanne Edwards, KEC continues to plan for a new season!

PETER SULLIVAN

070-5739-7281

pesullivan71@gmail.com

www.kingedwardchoir.ca

• Leaside Chancel Choir

The Leaside Chancel Choir provides musical leadership at weekly Sunday morning service at 10:30am, community outreach projects/events, and concerts year-round. The choir is made up of paid section leads and volunteer participants, and welcomes new singers throughout the year. Recent choral works have included *Requiem* by Eleanor Daley and *The Seven Last Words* by Heinrich Schutz. Rehearsals take place on Thursday evenings from 7:30pm to 9:30pm, and offer an opportunity to develop musicianship through vocal instruction, while being a part of an open and welcoming community. In addition, our Junior Choir provides the ideal learning environment for young musicians. The Junior Choir rehearses Thursday evenings from 6:30pm to 7:15pm. For more information, contact Matthew Boutda, director of music.

MATTHEW BOUTDA

647-981-3705

mattboutda@hotmail.com

www.leasideunited.org

• London Pro Musica Choir

London Pro Musica is an auditioned, mixed-voice choir based in London, Ontario, Canada. LPMC is an inclusive and multi-generational, member-managed adult choral organization under the professional leadership of Markus Howard, dedicated to engaging audiences by providing and promoting artistic excellence in the London area and beyond, through education, outreach and high quality performances of choral music. We perform an extensive range of classical music - from the medieval to the contemporary - both for accompanied and unaccompanied voices.

NANCY KNOWLES

519-914-5769

marketing@londonpromusica.ca

www.londonpromusica.ca

• Lyrica Chamber Choir

Founded in 2000 by the late Natalya Gurin and directed since 2005 by Steve Winfield, Lyrica Chamber Choir of Barrie strives to present eclectic and evocative programs of excellent choral chamber music. The 40 singers of Lyrica demonstrate a strong desire to present artistically varied choral programs with a high degree of musicianship to the community of Barrie and surrounding area. Recent highlights include performances of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Messe de Minuit pour Noël*, Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*, Ola Gjeilo's *Dark Night of the Soul* and Josef Rheinberger's *Missa in G "St. Crucis" Op. 151*. Professional soloists and instrumental musicians regularly join Lyrica for performances. Our accompanist, Brent Mayhew, enhances the choir's performances.

STEVE WINFIELD

705-722-0271

steve.winfield@sympatico.ca

www.lyricachoir.ca

● MCS Chorus

MCS Chorus, a chamber choir of 35 auditioned voices, is Mississauga's only adult choral organization committed to the choral classical repertoire. MCS Chorus offers a diversified season of extensive community engagement events and ticketed concerts performed with chamber orchestras, instrumental ensembles and soloists. This wide range of programming contributes a strong and unique voice to the cultural fabric of the city. MCS is dedicated to bringing the choir's performances into the communities of Mississauga under the dynamic leadership of artistic director Mervin William Fick.

SANDY

905-278-7059

info@mcschorus.ca

www.mcschorus.com

● Men of Note

The Men of Note four-part non-auditioned male voice choir of over thirty strong, based in Stouffville, Ontario, has recently celebrated twenty years of song. Our main desire is to have fun singing. Always hoping to grow, we invite men of all ages with a similar passion to join. We rehearse every Monday night at the Stouffville United Church, 34 Church St., Stouffville. Choir members hail from across the GTA, from Toronto to Uxbridge. Men of Note is built on a foundation of Fellowship, Community Service and a quest for musical excellence. Our goal is to provide music across many genres, to entertain locally and to develop musical connections with other choirs, both across Canada and abroad. Check out our website for more.

GORD BIBBY

416-509-5249

info@menofnote.com

www.menofnote.com

● Milton Choristers

This dynamic four-part community choir has entertained audiences in Halton Region and beyond. The 50-member choir performs two major concerts per choir year, often including premier guest soloists and musicians. We also enjoy performing at numerous local events. Our director, Rachel Cleland, is expanding our already varied repertoire. From classical to contemporary, sacred to secular, we sing it all. Rehearsals are Tuesday nights from 7:30pm to 9:30pm from September to June. A love of singing, some sight reading and a sense of humour are all you need to become a Milton Chorister.

BILL MCLEAN

905-875-1730

info@miltonchoristers.com

www.miltonchoristers.com



MCS CHORUS

● Mississauga Festival Chamber Choir

Mississauga Festival Chamber Choir (MFCC) was formed in 2008 as a smaller branch of the large ensemble, Mississauga Festival Choir (MFC). This 26-voice, auditioned choir delights audiences with intimate and challenging works of music, their most recent being *The Wound in the Water* by Kim Andre Arnesen with string orchestra. MFCC performs an annual concert, as well as various performances throughout the season, serving as an ambassador for MFC. They reach out to the community in a variety of venues from the Port Credit Library to Hammerson Hall. All experienced choral singers are now welcome to audition, as it is no longer a requirement to sing with MFC to be part of Mississauga Festival Chamber Choir.

JENNY JOHNSTON

416-986-5537

choiradmin@mfchoir.com

www.mfchoir.com

● Mississauga Festival Choir

With over 150 singers, Mississauga Festival Choir is the largest and most spirited community choir in our city. Our Mission is to enrich lives through music by way of performance, education and outreach, while valuing excellence in choral music. Under the leadership of David Ambrose, MFC also host three subsidiary choirs: Mississauga Festival Chamber Choir, an auditioned group which explores intimate and challenging works; Resonance, a non-auditioned choir for youth and young adults aged 15 to 28 directed by Bob Anderson (resonance.mfchoir.com), and Raising Voices - an intergenerational choir of music lovers to provide the therapeutic value of music to people with Alzheimer's and dementia and their caregivers.

JENNY JOHNSTON

416-986-5537

choiradmin@mfchoir.com

www.mfchoir.com

● The Nathaniel Dett Chorale

The Nathaniel Dett Chorale is a 21-voice SATB professional choir based in Toronto, dedicated to performing Afrocentric music of all genres, including classical, spiritual, gospel, jazz, folk and blues. Founded by artistic director D. Brainerd Blyden-Taylor in 1998, the NDC is Canada's premier performer of Afrocentric composers and a touchstone for the education of audiences and communities regarding the full spectrum of Afrocentric choral music. The mission of the NDC is to build bridges of understanding, appreciation and acceptance between communities of people through the medium of music. The Chorale has a three-concert season in Toronto, tours extensively each season and has released several CDs and DVDs. The Nathaniel Dett Chorale is artist-in-residence at the Harriet Tubman Institute for Research.

D. BRAINERD BLYDEN-TAYLOR

(416) 712-7740

info@nathanieldettchorale.org

www.nathanieldettchorale.org

● Novi Singers Toronto

Led by accomplished musical director Matthew Jaskiewicz, Novi Singers Toronto perform an ambitious multilingual repertoire including classical sacred and secular, jazz, cabaret, and opera. We enjoy an ongoing collaboration with Toronto Sinfonietta, distinguished soloists and guest musical ensembles.

Our 2019/20 season began with a successful gala concert, "Freedom Reborn: 30th Anniversary of the Fall of Communism", and the eagerly anticipated sold-out "Christ is Born" annual Christmas concert. In March, we regretfully postponed the rest of the season, while continuing to meet virtually for fellowship and song.

NST welcomes new members with a commitment to excellence, and offers opportunities to enhance musical skills at Wednesday evening practices (8pm, 71 Judson Street, Etobicoke) and occasional

Saturday workshops.

KRIS RUMIAN

905-848-1885

novisingerstontoronto@gmail.com

www.novisingerstontoronto.ca

● Oakville Choir for Children & Youth

For 26 years, Oakville Choir has provided exceptional music education and leadership training to young people. We believe providing a fun, safe and educational space for youth to express themselves encourages them to find their voice and use it for good in this world. Currently, we offer a collaborative and comprehensive choral music education program to nearly 300 young people, exploring a wide range of repertoire, diverse musical programming, and high standards of performance. We are proud of the choral collaborations that we have created with other arts and community organizations, both locally and internationally through our touring program. We continue to focus on empowering all youth to use their voice to lead, connect, learn, and build confidence in our community, developing leaders one voice at a time!

KATHERINE HAMILTON

905-337-7104

info@oakvillechildrenschoir.org

www.oakvillechoir.org

● Oasis Vocal Jazz

Oasis Vocal Jazz, Toronto's longest-running close harmony ensemble, has been making a unique contribution to the city's artistic life since 1985. Influenced by pioneers Lambert, Hendricks and Ross and inspired by modern-day masters of the genre such as New York Voices, Take 6 and Toronto's own Cadence, we enjoy sharing our love of vocal jazz with a wide range of audiences. Whether performing in community or corporate events and charitable fundraisers, or putting on our own concerts backed by some of the city's top jazz instrumentalists, we have always valued both the pursuit of musical excellence and the joy of making music with each other. We are always looking for new voices to add to our blend. For more information, contact us. Why not become a fan of our Facebook page?

ALAN GOTLIB

416-500-7040

info@oasisvocaljazz.com

www.oasisvocaljazz.com

● Oriana Women's Choir

Oriana Women's Choir is an auditioned ensemble of 30 - 40 amateur upper-voice singers who perform at a high artistic standard. With artistic director Mitchell Pady, Oriana explores the possibilities in choral music for the female voice, collaborating with diverse artists to push the boundaries of typical expectations for upper-voice ensembles. We foster the creation of Canadian choral music, regularly commissioning works from Canadian composers for upper voices. In rehearsal we are focused but

friendly, and maintain an inclusive, respectful and supportive environment. Oriana meets on Tuesday evenings - we are starting our season virtually, working together on musical skills and repertoire in preparation for resuming in-person rehearsals and performances once possible. We welcome potential new singers at any time.

CHOIR ADMINISTRATOR

416-346-7918

info@orianachoir.com

www.orianachoir.com

● Orpheus Choir of Toronto

Orpheus seeks to celebrate the transformational power of choral music as an agent of social change and a passionate medium of artistic expression. The 65-voice choir, under artistic director Robert Cooper, champions the new and unusual in choral performance, commissioning and introducing new works and performing overlooked masterpieces. Working frequently with living composers and singing a wide range of repertoire styles in concerts with high production values, Orpheus has introduced audiences to many accessible works from leading contemporary composers. Orpheus supports young emerging vocal talent through its highly respected Sidgwick Scholars Program and Vocal Apprentice Program for high school singers. We welcome enthusiastic singers for an "expect something different" experience.

HELEN COXON

416-530-4428

info@orpheuschoirtoronto.com

www.orpheuschoirtoronto.com

● Pax Christi Chorale

Pax Christi Chorale delivers stirring performances with great polish and total conviction. Under the leadership of artistic director David Bowser, the award-winning choir aspires to build on its strengths and accomplishments to achieve new levels of performance and audience engagement. Collaborations with outstanding guest artists and partners give audiences and performers a deep appreciation for choral masterworks and new Canadian music. The Pax Christi Chamber Choir placed first in its category in Choral Canada's 2017 national competition for amateur choirs.

Pax Christi Chorale has moved its activities online for the 2020/21 season. We warmly welcome audience members and choristers from all backgrounds and walks of life. Visit our website for more information on audition and concert information.

CYNTHIA HAWKINS, INTERIM

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

executivedirector@paxchristichorale.org

www.paxchristichorale.org

● Peterborough Singers

The Peterborough Singers was founded in 1993 under the energetic and creative leadership of director Sydney Birrell. We are an auditioned 100-voice choir of adults and youth which

attracts members and audience from Peterborough, the Kawarthas, and around the Lakeshore. We are committed to featuring new talent and each season introduce one or more emerging soloists. We perform four concerts each year: a Yuletide concert, Handel's *Messiah*, an oratorio, and one concert dedicated to music outside the box of regular classical programming. This season we will be performing the songs of Paul Simon, and we are fortunate to have a director, choir members, and friends who are adept at musical arrangement. Rehearsals are held Wednesday evenings from September to May in Peterborough. Auditions take place in May and September.

PEG MCCracken

705-745-1820

singers@peterboroughsingers.com

www.peterboroughsingers.com

● Resonance

Founded in 2016, Resonance is the newest member to the Mississauga Festival Choir family directed by award-winning conductor, Bob Anderson. Resonance is a non-auditioned choir for youth and young adults ages 15 to 28. Each season they have performed their own concert, as well as collaborating in concerts with several choirs and ensembles around the Greater Toronto Area. Their most recent performances were with the Toronto Symphony, the Mississauga Symphony, A Few Good Men, and the Elmer Iseler Singers. For information visit their website.

JENNY JOHNSTON

416-986-5537

choiradmin@mfchoir.com

resonance.mfchoir.com

● Schola Magdalena

Schola Magdalena is a six-voice ensemble singing medieval polyphony, chant, and new music for women's voices. Ensemble-in-residence at the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, Toronto, we have recorded two CDs (available on iTunes) and have toured from Chicago to Chicoutimi, from Waterloo to Waupoos. Our past season centred around touring and holding workshops with amateur singers interested in learning about Gregorian chant and the music of Hildegard von Bingen. In the coming year, we look forward to a return to Prince Edward County. For details, please visit our website, our Facebook page, or check out our Bravo Video on YouTube.

STEPHANIE MARTIN

416-256-9421

stmartin@yorku.ca

www.scholamagdalena.ca

● Serenata Singers

Serenata Singers is a 60-voice, four-part community seniors' choir who rehearse during the day. This fall we begin our 45th year, under the guidance of our accomplished Choral Director, Leanne Piller. Serenata's repertoire covers a wide

range of music, including classical, show tunes, pop, and folk. Traditionally, rehearsals are held on Wednesday mornings from September to May at Wilmar Heights Centre, 963 Pharmacy Ave., Scarborough. Currently, due to COVID-19, our plan is for rehearsals to continue in the fall in a virtual format. When it is safe to do so, we will return to choral singing in person. Anyone interested in joining the choir is encouraged to visit our website for further information.

CHARLOTTE

charlotte.judd55@gmail.com

www.serenatasingers.ca

• Shevchenko Choir

The Shevchenko Choir, with the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra, constitutes the Shevchenko Musical Ensemble. Although its roots lie in the Ukrainian community, through its 70-year history, the choir has evolved into a multicultural choir with a repertoire of folk songs and classical works reflecting the diversity of our society. The choir presents an annual choral concert, participates in 'Singing Together' with other community choirs and appears with the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra as part of the full ensemble.

A non-audition choir, it rehearses Sunday mornings (10am to 12pm) at Borochoy Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. Both choir and orchestra are under the artistic direction of Alexander Veprinskiy, graduate of the Lviv Conservatory of Ukraine.

ALEXANDER VEPRINSKIY

905-763-7516

veprinskiy9@hotmail.com

www.shevchenkomusic.com

• Society of Singers

The Society of Singers is a non-auditioned SATB choir that rehearses Wednesdays from 1pm to 3pm at Blythwood Road Church (80 Blythwood Rd). Under the direction of pianist/composer Peter Ness, we sing a wide repertoire of music ranging from classical hymns to traditional ballads to show tunes to swing numbers. We perform one or two afternoon concerts per month at Toronto seniors' residences, where we are always much appreciated. If you love to sing and are looking for a happy, relaxed choir that is still serious about music, you are warmly invited to drop in to any Wednesday rehearsal or to contact us (by email, preferably) for more information.

SOCIETY OF SINGERS

647-202-1800

societysingers@gmail.com

www.societyofsingers.ca

• SoundCrowd

SoundCrowd (www.soundcrowd.ca), Toronto's first large-scale a cappella ensemble, is the brainchild of artistic director Scott Pietrangelo. The group made its concert debut in 2016 alongside former Barenaked Ladies front-man Steven Page at Toronto's Danforth Music Hall. Since then, it



ST. JAMESTOWN CHILDREN'S CHOIR

has been featured guests on a national TV show (The Social), created viral music videos, appeared together with other notable Toronto-based a cappella groups (Cadence, Countermeasure, Retro-city), sang backup for Jonathan Antoine (Britain's Got Talent), opened for Disney's a cappella sensation DCappella, and performed at Carnegie Hall with choirs from around the world under the direction of Deke Sharon (Pitch Perfect, The Sing Off). SoundCrowd is releasing its debut album, *All Voice No Limits* on June 13, 2020.

SCOTT PIETRANGELO

647-970-1397

info@soundcrowd.ca

www.soundcrowd.ca

• St. JamesTown Children's Choir

We're online! St. James Town Children's Choir (SJTCC) welcomes kids in grades 1 and up, from St. James Town and surrounding area. Additionally, we offer instruction in piano, violin, ukulele and singing. Choir and Ukulele choir is free. Private lessons fees scaled to income. ROTM artistic staff are all professional musicians, and have extensive experience working with children's choirs and instrumental instruction. Over the years, the SJTCC has enjoyed many opportunities to perform in our community and throughout the city. SJTCC has sung with professional choirs, at sports events, in senior's facilities, in schools and community events, and, recently, collaborated with The Canadian Opera Company in its *Hansel & Gretel* opera. The repertoire is secular, diverse, inclusive, fun and musically enriching.

VIRGINIA EVOY

416-421-8518

ed.rotm@gmail.com

www.reachingoutthroughmusic.org

• St. Michael's Choir School

Since 1937, St. Michael's Choir School has served the Archdiocese of Toronto by educating and training the boys' choirs that sing every weekend at St. Michael's Cathedral. Founded by Monsignor J.E. Ronan, St. Michael's Choir School is unique in offering both an enriched academic program, including extended French instruction, integrated with a lively ministry of sacred music. Choirs from St. Michael's Choir School perform annually on tour and at many local concerts and events. During the school year, they sing three weekly Masses at St. Michael's Cathedral. School alumni are active in Toronto and beyond, performing in choral groups, operas and more. St. Michael's Choir School accepts boys Grades 3 to 12. For audition information please visit www.smcs.on.ca/auditions or contact Wanda Thorne at admissions@smcs.on.ca.

WANDA THORNE

647-232-5598

thorne@smcs.on.ca

www.smcs.on.ca

• Tempus Choral Society

Tempus Choral Society is a very welcoming, 100-voice SATB un-auditioned community choir based in Oakville, led by director Brian Turnbull. Our repertoire encompasses contemporary, Broadway, Great American Songbook, gospel, classical and jazz. Last year, we celebrated our 20th anniversary. We love to travel and to reach out to our community. Tempus has sung Handel's *Messiah* at Lincoln Center, performed Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* at Carnegie Hall, part of an international choir of auditioned singers. In 2015, Tempus4Us (our 60-voice children's choir) and Tempus Jazz Choir were formed, with help from an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant. After a successful 2018 European singing tour, we look forward to another adventure soon. New members are heartily welcomed in September and January; please visit our website.

KATHY DIXON, MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR
416-200-1731
membership@tempuschoralsociety.com
www.tempuschoralsociety.com

• Toronto Beaches Children's and Youth Chorus

TBCYC, founded in 2006 by artistic director Bronwen Low, with drama instructor Joanne Mitchell, has grown from a membership of 30 to over 150 children and youth (JK and up) from all over Scarborough and Toronto's East End. TBCYC welcomes all, regardless of ability, offering a high quality musical and dramatic experience within an atmosphere of fun and hard work. Each year, choristers are involved in concerts and events throughout the city. In the spring, they perform a fully staged musical production at a professional theatre. Select past shows: *Shrek Jr*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Oliver*, and *Fame*. Past touring highlights include singing in Nashville at the Grand Ole Opry, the 2016 DCINY festival performance at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center as part of the 2019 Serenade Choral Festival in Washington, D.C.

BRONWEN LOW
416-698-9864
info@tbcyc.com
www.tbcyc.com

• Toronto Chamber Choir

Building on 50 years of concert performances, the Toronto Chamber Choir of around 30-40 skilled singers has held a prominent place in Canada's early music scene since 1968. It specializes in Renaissance and Baroque repertoire, collaborating regularly with Toronto's rich pool of period instrumentalists, but also with forays into other periods. Four concerts per season (two Saturday evening concerts, two Sunday afternoon "Kaffee-musiks") explore our repertoire through narration, often with a multimedia component.

Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings at St. Patrick's Parish Hall with occasional Saturday "retreats." Auditions for new volunteer members are held anytime by arrangement with the director. We also run the Toronto Chamber Consort section lead program and an apprenticeship program with Rosedale School of the Arts.

LUCAS HARRIS
416-763-1695
musicdirector@torontochamberchoir.ca
www.torontochamberchoir.ca

• Toronto Children's Chorus

In 2020/21, the award-winning Toronto Children's Chorus marks its 43rd concert season and its 14th year under artistic director Elise Bradley, MNZM. The Chorus comprises a family of choirs: KinderNotes for children aged 3 to 6 (no audition required), four Training Choir levels, Main Choir (five ensembles) and Toronto Youth Choir (ages 16 to 30). The Chorus welcomes singers at its Midtown and North York locations. Each year, more than 400

choristers develop skills in vocal technique, sight-singing, music theory and performance. The Main Choir offers master classes, recording and touring opportunities, and guest performance experiences, including with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Tafelmusik and Opera Atelier.

BONNIE O'SULLIVAN
416-932-8666 x225
bonnie@torontochildrenschorus.com
www.torontochildrenschorus.com

• The Toronto Choral Society

The Toronto Choral Society (TCS) was founded in 1845, to foster a positive musical environment that enables members to learn and develop both musical ability and choral repertoire. The TCS aims to be an integral part of the community, presenting works from traditional choral repertoire while exploring music of our multicultural nation. We have performed our last three Christmas Concerts to sold out audiences at Koerner Hall. Our rehearsals begin in September and continue until May on Wednesday nights 7:30pm to 9:30pm at Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. (Due to current conditions our 2020 season will rehearse on a virtual platform). We would, under normal conditions, be performing a minimum of 3 concerts a year. (Again this year TBD). If you would like more information please go to our website.

DEBBY NEILL BLYTH
416-499-3000
dblyth@sympatico.ca
www.torontochoralsociety.org

• Toronto Classical Singers

Toronto Classical Singers is the only choir in the country dedicated exclusively to the great choral/orchestral repertoire. Now in its 29th season, the organization continues to celebrate and contribute to the glorious tradition of choral music in Canada. Known for its unique musical point-of-view, the choir features lesser-known and rarely performed pieces as well as the beloved vocal/orchestral repertoire. Led by founding conductor Jurgen Petrenko, the choir has a long-standing partnership with Talisker Players who accompany the choir in their presentations of the great choral masterpieces. Auditions are usually held in September however, this year we are inviting interested singers to contact us through our website. When we can resume our rehearsal/production schedule, our audition coordinator will be in touch.

KATHLEEN PAYNE
416-986-8749
kathleenpayne@sympatico.ca
www.torontoclassicalsingers.ca

• Toronto Concert Choir

The Toronto Concert Choir is a reincarnation of the Oakham House Choir, which was based at Ryerson University for 35 years. Like its predecessor, it will specialize in large-scale choral

masterpieces and will be accompanied by the Toronto Sinfonietta chamber orchestra. We hope that our first major concert after the pandemic, at Knox Presbyterian Church, will feature Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. We will also be performing on campus for the Ryerson community. Membership, which will number about 90, will be open to Ryerson students, alumni, faculty and staff, as well as to singers from outside the university. The choir will be led by its founding music director, Matthew Jaskiewicz. For more details, please visit our website. Experienced choristers are invited to contact us by e-mail for information about openings.

MATTHEW JASKIEWICZ
416-578-2546
torontoconcertchoir@gmail.com
www.torontoconcertchoir.ca

• The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir

The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2019 and plans to continue sharing great choral music throughout 2020/21 and the pandemic – starting with online programming and adding in-person opportunities when health and safety permit. The 100-voice choir includes a professional core, auditioned volunteers, and apprentices (aged 17 to 22). Spring and Fall 2020 see choristers involved in virtual choir projects and virtual choir and orchestra projects. For the 2020/21 season, the Choir is under the artistic leadership of Associate Conductor Simon Rivard. The Choir's international search for a new artistic director is temporarily on hold during the pandemic.

ADMINISTRATOR
416-598-0422
admin@tmchoir.org
www.tmchoir.org

• Toronto Mozart Choir

The Toronto Mozart Choir is an auditioned ensemble designed for our times and supported by an expert technical team enabling performances of live concerts, live-streamed concerts and/or virtual concerts according to government directives related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings and, when impossible in person, are held online with live direction and instruction with artistic director David Bowser, interspersed with pre-recorded rehearsal video segments. We always make time for a virtual social gathering at the end of each rehearsal for those who wish to participate.

With the agility to modify our rehearsals and concerts to changing circumstances, the Toronto Mozart Choir offers an uninterrupted opportunity for singers to make great music. For more information visit our website.

LAWRENCE PEDDIE
416-996-5331
lawrence.peddie@m Mozartproject.ca
www.torantomozartchoir.ca

• The Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir

The Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir (TWMVC) was established in 1995 when its founding member and first president, Gwyn Roberts, gathered together a group of like-minded individuals of Welsh heritage, who sought to kindle the spirit of Traditional Welsh Male Voice singing in their adopted country. The TWMVC proudly draws on the great Welsh tradition of singing hymns and songs born of the mountains and valleys of Wales. At the same time it emphasizes a multicultural context in its broad repertoire which also includes spirituals; operatic arias, Canadian folk songs as well as Broadway show tunes and contemporary music. Our blend of traditional and contemporary music, all sung off book in accordance with tradition, appeals to a broad audience.

With the current situation we all have now, our concerts have been put on hold, until we receive clearance to resume our concert schedule. Please visit our website www.welshchoir.ca for all updated information. We are seeking new members to join.

ALAN SADEGURSKY

647-389-8084

alansadegursky@yahoo.ca

www.welshchoir.ca

• Upper Canada Choristers

The Upper Canada Choristers is a mixed-voice community choir with a diverse membership that interweaves fun with the commitment to musical excellence and vibrant community service. Performances feature collaborations with international choirs, local children's choirs, and professional instrumentalists and singers. Cantemos is an auditioned a cappella latin ensemble within UCC. Lead by Artistic Director, Laurie Evan Fraser, the choirs perform three diverse choral programs annually. Weekly rehearsals for the Main Choir are Monday evenings from 7:30–9:30 PM at Grace Church on-the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Rd. Cantemos rehearses on Saturday mornings from 10:30am to 12:30pm at 2700 Bathurst Street. The choirs sing up to 20 concerts annually in a variety of community venues.

LAURIE EVAN FRASER,

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

416-256-3809

lef@uppercanadachoristers.org

www.uppercanadachoristers.org

• Vesnivka Choir

Vesnivka Choir, established in 1965 by founding artistic director Halyna Kvitka Kondracki, is an award-winning women's ensemble whose repertoire consists of Ukrainian liturgical, classical, contemporary and traditional folk music. The choir's regular concert season comprises three major concerts, one of which is an annual Christmas concert. Vesnivka, together with its partner the Toronto Ukrainian Male Chamber Choir (TUMCC), often accompanied by local professional



TORONTO CONCERT CHOIR

musicians. The choir also sings Christmas and Easter Liturgies. Singers are welcome; rehearsals on Tuesdays, 7:15pm to 9:15pm (4 Bellwoods Ave., Toronto). Male singers are welcome to join TUMCC who rehearse on Mondays, 7:30pm to 9pm (2445 Bloor St. W., Toronto). Concert schedule, rehearsal times and venues all subject to change during COVID-19 pandemic.

NYKOLA PARZEI

416-246-9880

ikomorowsky@gmail.com

www.vesnivka.com

• Victoria Scholars Men's Choral Ensemble

A past winner of the Canada Council Healey Willan Grand Prize, CBC Radio National Competition for Amateur Choirs, and one of Canada's finest male choral ensembles, the Victoria Scholars treat audiences to a wide range of music, from Medieval plainchant and works from the baroque, renaissance and romantic eras through to contemporary and newly commissioned works from some of Canada's best-known composers. Along with an annual three-concert series in Toronto, the Scholars have toured nationally/internationally, performed with international vocal soloists, and have released five acclaimed recordings, including most recently, "Songs of Love". If you are an experienced musician with excellent sight reading abilities and would like to join us, please contact us. For updates on the upcoming season, please check our website.

JERZY CICHOCKI

416-476-4078

admin@victoriascholars.ca

www.victoriascholars.ca

• Village Voices

We are a community choir in Markham. Village Voices has served the community for 31 years. It is an SATB non-auditioned choir of approximately 55 members. The choir gives two concerts

a year, in December and May. In addition, we also do outreach concerts at seniors' residences in Markham and surrounding areas. Our repertoire comprises works of contemporary Canadian/North American composers, such as Ola Gjeilo, Eleanor Daley, Jake Runstead, Jeff Smallman, etc., as well as old favourites. We rehearse once a week from September to May at Markham's United Presbyterian Church under the baton of our music director, Shirley Madden. More information is available on our website or by email.

DEB YOUNG

905-294-7373

info@villagevoices.ca

www.villagevoices.ca

• VIVA Singers Toronto

VIVA is a vibrant community of singers and educators committed to equity, excellence, and the belief that every voice matters. VIVA empowers children and adult singers in seven choirs through innovative choral pedagogy and performance experiences. Vital choir components highlight VIVA's philosophy: the TD Inclusion Program for singers with disabilities; and the Choral Mentoring & Leadership Program for aspiring conductor-educators.

VIVA's youth choruses include: Preparatory (ages 4-6), Junior (ages 6-10), Main (ages 9-16), and Senior Treble (ages 13-16). The Every Voice Matters Chorus welcomes teens and adults with disabilities. Adult choirs include the Community Choir (SATB; non-auditioned) and Chamber Singers (SATB; auditioned). Auditions and assessments are held regularly throughout the year.

CHARLOTTE BURRAGE

416-788-8482

info@vivayouthsingers.com

www.vivasingers.toronto.com

• VOCA Chorus of Toronto

The VOCA Chorus of Toronto is a dynamic, auditioned ensemble which performs eclectic repertoire (including arrangements by our artistic director, Jenny Crober) in collaboration with some of Canada's finest artists. Each season consists of two major concerts, cabarets and workshops with guest clinicians, as well as community performances. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings at Eastminster United, near Chester subway. We hope to be presenting our "Star Songs" concert program (featuring a world premiere by Cree composer Andrew Balfour, along with works by Halley, Lauridsen, Daley and others) at both Roy Thomson Hall (part of RTH's Noon Hour Choir and Organ Series) and at Eastminster United. Director: Jenny Crober. Accompanist: Elizabeth Acker. Guests: Colleen Allen, sax; Shawn Grenke, organ; Jamie Drake, percussion.

JENNY CROBER
416-931-8224
crober.best@gmail.com
www.vocachorus.ca

• Voices Chamber Choir

Entering into its 25th season, Voices Chamber Choir has firmly established itself as one of Toronto's finest chamber choirs. The choir has received awards and recognition from across Canada and at an International Competition. As part of our anniversary season, the choir will reprise our very first Christmas program on December 12, 2020. Antonio Caldara's *Stabat Mater* will be performed for our Lenten presentation on March 27, 2021. The season will close with J. S. Bach's monumental work *Mass in B minor* with orchestra and soloists on May 29, 2021. Voices rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings from 7:30pm to 10:00pm at St. Thomas's Church, 383 Huron Street, Toronto. Auditions are available throughout the year. Apprentice conductor program is also available.

RON CHEUNG
416-519-0528
voiceschamberchoir@yahoo.ca
www.voiceschoir.com

• Voices Rock Canada

We have a rock choir for everyone! Started as a children's choir, VRC has grown to include 2 adult choirs, 3 children's locations, a female physician's choir and a senior's daytime program. Since March 2020, we have had a very active on-line rehearsal presence through Zoom. This has (and will) include rehearsals to tracks, musicianship classes, fun karaoke nights and creating virtual videos, one of which has gone viral. We continually monitor the pandemic situation and have 2 options moving forward for our choirs. The most heart-warming thing about our choirs is the community - we are an inclusive, warm and loving group. As a result of this, 95% of our choir re-registered for the Fall. We truly are rock choirs for the 21st Century - ages 9-99! Join Us today! Our artistic director is Anthony Bastianon.

CHERYL BOWER
416-833-4431
cheryl@cherylbower.com
www.voicesrockcanada.com

• West Toronto Community Choir

We are a mixed-voice, secular community choir serving Roncesvalles, Parkdale, the Junction and surrounding communities. Our group performs 2 major concerts per season as well as guest appearances at other community events, such as Roncy Rocks and the Roncesvalles Community Tree Lighting Ceremony. Music is a mix of contemporary choral, folk tunes, and musical theatre, with a few pop tunes thrown in. Our vibe is fun and social, with a focus on community engagement and shared music-making. We have a mix of seasoned choristers and novices, and there are no auditions. We value the diversity of gender, age, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, education, and political perspective and are open to all. Rehearsals take place on Monday evenings 7:15pm to 8:45pm at Roncesvalles United Church.

TAYLOR STRANDE
647-388-3604
westtorontocommunitychoir@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/groups/
westtorontocommunitychoir

• The Yorkminstrels Show Choir

The Yorkminstrels Show Choir is an SATB choir, founded in 1974 as an arm of The Yorkminstrels musical theatre company. We sing mostly Broadway music, with oldies, contemporary and seasonal songs added to the mix. With our repertoire, costumes and movement, the show choir has evolved into a unique group. We take entertainment into the community, doing occasional concerts throughout the season at seniors' residences, and for condo/church/synagogue groups and fundraisers. Rehearsals are held on Wednesday evenings at Cummer Lodge in North York, from September through June. A simple audition is required; note-reading is not essential. We are a warm, fun-loving and welcoming group, so if you enjoy singing, learning harmony and performing, we invite you to join us!

SANDI HORWITZ
416-229-9313
horwitz@rogers.com
www.theyorkminstrelsshowchoir.weebly.com

• Young Voices Toronto

Founded in 1986, Young Voices Toronto is the Children's Choir-in-Residence U of T, led by artistic director Maria Conkey - experienced conductor, clinician, and pedagogue. YVT instills the joy of singing and builds confidence in children, by teaching techniques of healthy singing and rudiments of music. We engage choristers through diverse repertoire, movement and interaction, infusing performance with meaning that connects to their hearts and audiences. YVT's motto 'More Than Music' inspires and educates children musically while building a community beyond singing. YVT's senior ensemble tours annually and travelled to Germany and Austria in July 2019. Choristers range in age from 4 to 18. Vocal placements begin at age 7. There are five choir levels. Rehearsals take place weekly on Tuesday and/or Thursday in the Bloor West area.

GENA NORBURY
416-762-0657
manager@youngvoicestoronto.com
www.youngvoicestoronto.com

Thank you for taking a gander at this year's Canaries!

If you are looking for a specific group of songbirds, visit our directory online, at **thewholenote.com/canary** where you can do more browsing, or conduct a more focused search – by genre, geography, audition type, gender, age range, skill level and more.

PANDAMIT!

STEVE WALLACE

It's almost impossible to believe that this most Twilight Zone of summers is rapidly drawing to a close. How did September come so fast despite many of us enduring so many long, empty and isolated days? Days upon days of not working, of not going out much save when necessary, of not seeing people, except on a computer screen or in brief "Dare we?" encounters. Indeed, with everything still pretty much upside down and our sense of normalcy and time in tatters, it's hard to even say what the passing of summer means anymore. More on this later, but it reminds me of one of the many wonderfully droll lines from the great relief pitcher Dan Quisenberry: "I've seen the future; it's a lot like the present, only longer."

A Blizzard of Cancellations

In the old days, during inevitable patches when work was slow (we didn't know what slow was), musicians would jokingly say "I looked in my gig book the other day and got snow blind" – as in too many blank, white squares, a blizzard of empty dates. It's like that now, only the vast white spaces are interspersed with dates that have been scratched out, looking like little scruffs of dirt poking through the snow. And COVID-19 has brought a new gig convention: the courtesy cancellation, when a bandleader calls or emails the other musicians they'd booked on a job to tell them it's been cancelled.

This has happened so often between March and well into the fall that we all just (rightly) assume that every gig is off, but it's still the considerate thing to do, plus it gives everyone a chance to commiserate and indulge in some gallows humour. As in, "You thought you were busy? I've cancelled way more gigs than you!" And even rare new bookings have to be taken with a large grain of salt. Recently my old friend Georgia Ambros called to hire me along with guitarist Reg Schwager to play at her 85th birthday party on August 29. She explained that it would be held outside in the back courtyard of her building and that it would be small, with people spread out. I was delighted to hear from her and accepted. But a couple of weeks later she called saying she'd have to cancel because the other tenants were nervous about a gathering, and I wasn't all that surprised. She offered to pay me anyway, bless her, but I flatly refused, saying we'd just have to do it later when things are safe.

Time On My Hands

For me personally, the unending Groundhog Day of life-with-COVID increased with my decision to retire on July 17 from the Law Society of Ontario, where I had worked in the Great Library (actually its real name) for nearly 29 years. (Yes, I finally stopped listening to the advice many have given me over the years after hearing my bass playing – "Don't give up your day job.") I'd been seriously mulling over retirement from the library for about a year, and as my long-suffering wife put it: "It only took a pandemic crisis for him to make up his mind." I really enjoyed working in the august old place and somehow found a way to fit the jazz life into the straight workaday world. No wonder I'm a bit schizoid.

Now that my jazz life has been severely curtailed – along with everyone else's – it may seem odd to decide to have even more time on my hands, but in the end I obeyed the almost palpable message that seemed to come from deep inside me: when push came to shove and the Great Librarians moved toward reopening, I just didn't feel like doing it anymore. The four months off during lockdown were like a rehearsal for retirement and, while I generally hate to rehearse – it's cheating, after all – I took to the free time like a duck to water.

Of course, as it has with so many aspects of life, the pandemic made the decision seem surreal – I was retiring from a place I hadn't set foot in for four months. Normally there would have been a party, a chance



WILLIE KING

to say goodbye to my colleagues, the ritual of cleaning out my desk of personal belongings and walking out the door for the last time. But there was none of that; it was as if I was retiring from.... thin air. And while it's generally a good thing, retirement has made it even harder to tell what day it is: in a good week, every day is Saturday and in a bad one, every day is Monday.

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Mark Micklethwaite, Steve Wallace and Mark (Merv) Eisenman, shaking out the covid cobwebs at John and Patti Loach's home. Hear *Body and Soul* from that session at youtu.be/qnLn-ydOdUQ



JOHN LOACH

Getting Back On the Horse

With even more free time I grew determined to be more active and was itching to play. As if reading my mind, drummer Mark Micklethwaite, who has taken John Sumner's place in Mark Eisenman's trio, emailed Merv (Eisenman) and me with a loose plan for doing some recording and maybe trying to drum up some work and touring in the future once it was safe. He had some good ideas and we all agreed that in the meantime we should get together to play and shake the cobwebs off at Merv's house the following week. I looked forward to it, but with no small trepidation: I'd done some practising but hadn't played with anybody for real since early March. Would I be up to it? Would my softer hands do what I wanted them to? Would my back hold up? The morning of, putting the cover on the bass, carrying it out of the house and loading it in the car – which I've done countless times – seemed weirdly foreign, like I was sleepwalking.

After exchanging greetings and some jazz banter, the music began without any planning or so much as a word. Mark Micklethwaite simply started playing time with brushes at a medium tempo and I fell in, walking a blues in – what else? – B-flat. Eisenman was nowhere near the piano so the two of us just continued swinging until Mark joined us at the top of a chorus; then off we sailed. We must have played that blues for 10 or 11 minutes, but nobody was counting. In fact, as is always the case when jazz players are really locked in and concentrating, really listening to one another and building, the notion of a clock simply disappeared. It felt just great to be playing with these two again; there's an unspoken musical consensus amongst us, a trust which I had deeply missed. And even without any people listening, there was sweat and intensity, everyone was playing their best because we hadn't done it for so long, we were almost afraid of failing. It was as if someone had flipped a switch or plugged the jazz intravenous into our veins after months off; it was the most satisfying musical experience I'd had in a long time.

Mind you, a medium blues in B-flat is relatively simple, but on the other hand its starkness means there's nowhere to hide, especially in a trio, and I felt like we passed the test. Perhaps more importantly, it was fun, a lot more fun than practising. It wasn't all smooth sailing for me, though, I noticed definite signs of rust and fatigue as we played faster tempos and tunes with more complex harmonies. I'd lost some speed and dexterity and sometimes I stumbled on solos when my fingers couldn't quite catch up to my ideas, or vice versa. I realized I needed to practise more and with greater intensity, but now I had the motivation to do so.


We've played once a week ever since but switched locales when John and Patti Loach generously offered their house as a venue. It's a great place to play with a terrific piano and good acoustics, plus John wanted to experiment with recording the drums, as most of the recording he's done hasn't involved drummers. It helps a lot that Micklethwaite is such a sensitive player with good dynamic control.

John also had some video cameras set up and has posted some of the videos on YouTube. Here's one of our earlier efforts, *Cherokee*, which has the advantage of no camera coverage of the bassist, who has a face made for radio and a rear end made for a wide-angle lens:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=oR1okJACL_I

Returning to the coming end of summer ... it used to mean going back to school and still does, sort of. And there's the rub. With everything still up in the air and the real possibility of a surge in the virus coming with flu season; and with cooler weather on top of a bunch of people suddenly in close proximity again, the return to school is fraught with anxiety and uncertainty, to say the least. I'll be teaching an ensemble and some private lessons again at U of T, which, at least in the jazz department has left the choice of in-person or virtual teaching up to individuals. Most of the classes will be taught online, but it's trickier with private lessons and especially ensembles. I'm grappling with the decision and for now have opted for teaching my ensemble and the two private students who aren't bassists in person, and the two bass students online. This could all change suddenly if things get worse so I'm negotiating the never-ending technological learning curve as a back-up plan. Old dog, new tricks.

Pandamit

The title for this article came about as follows: Back in late May there was a knock on my door and when I opened it I was very pleasantly surprised to see Pat Williams, a staunch jazz fan and friend for many years. It was great to see her and I asked her in but she demurred, saying "I'm parked illegally across the street and I have a lot more of these to deliver," handing me a black T-shirt with PANDAMIT written in big block letters. It broke me up and she said "Georgia Ambros had them made up and we're giving them to our musician friends." And I thought, with humour and people like this, maybe, just maybe, we'll be okay after all. 

Toronto bassist Steve Wallace writes a blog called "Steve Wallace jazz, baseball, life and other ephemera" which can be accessed at [Wallace-bass.com](https://wallace-bass.com). Aside from the topics mentioned, he sometimes writes about movies and food.



ANNA MALANDRINO

How to Get Back to the Concert Hall? **Adapt. Adapt. Adapt.**

MATTHEW WHITFIELD

If the past seven months have taught us anything, it might be that the post-COVID world will move at a different pace than that which came before. Everyday decisions previously motivated by personal, social, and economic factors are now tempered by input from public health officials and other medical professionals attempting to contain and control the transmission of this new and deadly pathogen, resulting in exceedingly cautious and temporally conservative steps forward that have made dining at a restaurant feel like a momentous occasion. While social interactions and public spaces continue to reopen, at least for the time being, those things that were previously taken for granted and assumed to be perpetual have been reframed by the pandemic and forced to undergo a societal reevaluation through a new kind of cost-benefit analysis.

For public performers and those who make their living within arts organizations, these public health interventions have appeared as doomsday prophecies, requiring unprecedented quick action and the changing of entire business models in mere weeks or months. Although soloists and smaller groups are able to pivot relatively quickly and efficiently, larger organizations – such as orchestras – face a more daunting challenge, having to implement novel guidelines and codes of conduct that ensure the safety of their performers and prospective audiences as the possibility of reopening draws closer. As September approaches and new seasons launch, how are arts organizations grappling with, and managing, these new and essential factors?

Tracking Tafelmusik's Turnaround

Tafelmusik is the go-to ensemble for many early music fans in Toronto, combining scholarly research and historically informed knowledge with cutting-edge programming and decidedly modern presentations. When the world shut down in March, the orchestra quickly downsized and modified its programming by cancelling the remainder of its in-person season and starting Tafelmusik@Home, a set of concerts performed by core members of the orchestra and hosted virtually from their salons and living rooms. Since then, a number of other programs have been put in place and are ready to launch this fall, including digital concerts and in-depth panel discussions. According to a recent media release, the 2020/2021 season, “headlined by a combination of pre-recorded and livestreamed programs that will be rehearsed and performed according to current public health guidelines, offers the beauty of Tafelmusik concerts while ensuring the health and safety of musicians and audiences.”

By now, much of this vernacular and many of these concepts will seem unnervingly normal – the digitization of a formerly communal medium has, for our own safety, become commonplace, despite its limitations and inherently impersonal nature. Carol Kehoe, Tafelmusik's executive director, shared her thoughts on what the short-term future might look like for large cultural organizations: “Until there is a vaccine and the dire consequences of COVID-19 are diminished, public activity will always be subject to risk. Performing arts organizations like ours – that have depended on large numbers of people to gather in a confined space to watch a live performance – are directly threatened if people see the risk as too high and choose not to attend. How we adapt to this new reality is the challenge, but at



TAFELMUSIK

Elisa Citterio, David Costello, and Marco Cera in Jeanne Lamon Hall at work on *Elisa's Midsummer Night's Dream*, a short film by Marco Cera, which conjures an imaginary return to the stage. It was filmed June 1-4, 2020 at Trinity-St. Paul's Centre observing physical distancing requirements with all musicians filmed individually, but the full orchestra brought together by movie magic.

Tafelmusik, I'm confident we'll be around to find new ways to engage the public in our wonderful music.”

Part of this process of adaptation involves that skill for which Tafelmusik has become renowned: finding innovative and original ways of moving ahead by looking back in time. In the same media release quoted above, the orchestra announces that they will consider returning to live-audience concerts in January 2021, a huge step forward and a significant move towards the old normal that requires immense flexibility from the entire organization. A significant part of this flexibility is thorough, multifaceted preparation, which the orchestra is currently undertaking through the purchasing of PPE, communicating with its musicians, and creating a series of

www.sweetwatermusicfestival.ca



The Goldberg Variations in an original orchestral arrangement by music director Elisa Citterio was originally scheduled for a world premiere earlier this spring – a major highlight of their season – before the pandemic shut everything down. In their own homes, Tafelmusik musicians recorded the first and final variations (no. 1 and no. 30), which Citterio scored for strings, winds, and continuo, and presented it online

internal protocols that will guide the orchestra through its stages of reopening.

According to Kehoe, “Our main-stage series programs between February and May 2021 as originally announced in March remain largely unchanged, although we are looking into back-up concerts for filming/recording should live concerts still not be prudent and given challenges of working with larger ensembles or non-local artists... Our goal is to be as flexible as possible. When we made the decision to reimagine the 20/21 season, we based our discussions on three key criteria: [that] whatever we did would protect the health and safety of our musicians, staff and patrons; [that] we would comply with government public health and safety regulations; [and that] we would respect our patrons and community by providing them with access to the beauty and joy of music, even when in-person concerts aren’t possible. We’ll adapt as we can to ensure our artists can work and our art endures.”

Perusing Tafelmusik’s fall brochure, one may be forgiven for believing that circumstances have already returned to the way they were last season, for the programming is as characteristically vibrant and enticing as any other year. *Mozart Together*, scheduled to be streamed on October 1, will be the first time that the orchestra’s musicians perform on stage together since March and will undoubtedly be an emotional and stirring season debut. Shortly after, on October 22, *Passions of the Soul* explores the heights and depths of the early music canon through works by Bach, Locatelli, Lalande and Telemann, while *A Tafelmusik Christmas*, on December 10, promises choruses and chorales from seasonal favourites, including Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio* and Handel’s *Messiah*.

TAFELMUSIK



Carol Kehoe

As for patrons ...

At this point in the column I usually insert a paragraph encouraging you, the reader and audience member, to consider attending some of the concerts contained in this issue of *The WholeNote*, and this month is no different. With so much incredible programming more readily accessible than ever before, you can enjoy world-class live music from the comfort of your home and every ticket, currently virtual but eventually in-person, makes a concrete and profound difference to the stability of arts organizations and those who work within them. Reviewing Tafelmusik’s schedule over the next

three months, it appears that the orchestra is capable of handling the pandemic’s challenges quickly, effectively and efficiently – but such drastic adaptation is not without some difficulties. “While it may appear that Tafelmusik has escaped the current situation relatively unscathed, it is far from business as usual within our organization,” said Kehoe. “Layoffs, reduced work schedules and other sacrifices have been made by artists and staff alike so that we may remain stable for the next 12 months.”

“Patrons who participate during this crucial season will be supporting the welfare of our artists and staff, ensure wider community access to the comfort of music in these deeply unsettling times, and help to ensure Tafelmusik’s survival into the future. We want to take a moment to recognize the support of our subscribers and donors, who are the foundation upon which we are building this new future. In a time of great challenge, they have chosen to put their faith in us, our team, our artists, and our music. We are deeply grateful for their support.”

Matthew Whitfield is a Toronto-based harpsichordist and organist.

CEE and Exploded Ensemble in the studio, preparing for their collaborative concert at Carnegie Mellon University Feb 2020.

Lessons Learned from the CEE's COVID-Era Experiences

DAVID JAEGER

A significant event in the history of the Canadian Electronic Ensemble (CEE) took place during the last week of February, 2020: the nearly 50-year-old ensemble was engaged by Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) School of Music for a four-day residency at their Pittsburgh campus. It was one of the most ambitious and impactful tours in the long history of the CEE, a live-electronic music group that Jim Montgomery and I co-founded in 1971, together with David Grimes, who left in 1986, and the late Larry Lake (1943 – 2013). The current membership includes violinist, synthesist, composer Rose Bolton; pianist, synthesist, composer John Kameel Farah; synthesist and composer Paul Stillwell; synthesist and composer David Sutherland, as well as Jim and me. The significance of the residency, which felt at the time like it was opening up new audiences, soon revealed itself as having prepared the CEE members for a creative path through a pandemic.

The residency was organized by CMU assistant professor of Musicology, Alexa Woloshyn, who is Canadian. She created a plan that had CEE members working closely with CMU students in masterclasses, lecture demonstrations, composition workshops, and of course, live performance. "Pittsburgh and CMU have vibrant electronic music communities," said Woloshyn. "I thought it would be great to learn from the CEE's almost 50 years of experience in electronic sound-making and collective improvisation. The week was energizing for the students. I witnessed new and renewed interest in improvisation, modular synthesis, electronic composition and collaboration."

Woloshyn partnered with several of her CMU colleagues, including composer Jesse Stiles, professor of Sound Media, who directs an innovative student performance group known as the Exploded Ensemble that also works in the live-electronic music medium. The two ensembles rehearsed together and it became clear from the outset that both groups operated with similar and compatible procedures and musical languages. Stiles and Woloshyn had the idea to invite the extraordinary violinist and composer Pauline Kim Harris to join in the sessions.

Stiles wrote, "CEE visited Exploded Ensemble rehearsals several times to share their methodologies for electronic sound-making as

well as their approach to improvised performance. They would set up their various mountains of rigs beside those of Exploded Ensemble and very quickly a vast neural network of audio and control cables sprawled across our rehearsal space. With roughly 20 musicians blasting out electronic sound it would be easy for matters to devolve into sonic chaos – but the Canadians were able to guide the students that comprise Exploded Ensemble through a thoughtful approach to performance that balanced listening and responding. This yielded



Dr. Alexa Woloshyn

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CEE in the Media Lab at Carnegie Mellon University. Left to right: John Kameel Farah, David Jaeger, Jim Montgomery, Rose Bolton, Paul Stillwell. David Sutherland is missing - he took the photo!

performances with exhilarating dynamics that swept between quiet fields of spatialized chirps and squeaks to tremendous waves of drone and thrilling thunderous noise. A few days later, when the students walked onstage with CEE and Pauline, they did so with confidence and eager excitement. That concert was one of the finest performances in which Exploded Ensemble had ever participated."

At that final concert, the two ensembles played together, and the CEE performed two of its own works, including a homage to Larry Lake, in which the CEE improvised variations on a signature Lake gesture. Lake's *Psalm* for solo oboe and electronic tracks was performed by oboist Hanna Senft, a gifted graduate student. And the impressive undergraduate violist Sara Frankel delivered a brilliant performance of my *Sarabande* for viola and live electronics. We departed Pittsburgh on February 28 feeling gratified that we had left a positive impression with the students and buoyed with the connection our music had made. Paul Stillwell said, "The success of our recent trip to Carnegie Mellon University shows that we are relevant to both longtime fans of electronic music and younger students of the craft."

Just a few days after our return to Toronto, we learned that the CEE was the last foreign group to be allowed to visit the CMU campus, as international borders began to harden, and then to close. But the feeling of such a fabulous visit lingered with us, and with it, a sort of creative momentum. Jim Montgomery wrote in his blog on the CEE website, "As the reality of social isolation and physical distancing set in, we decided to try doing some music while maintaining our isolation. The result: the Pass the Track (*PtT*) project."

Building on the buzz – "Pass the Track"

John Kameel Farah, who has had a thriving international solo career, describes what happened: "I felt unable to make solo music because of the stress and isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic, which left me feeling very little creative inspiration. I thought maybe the answer would be instead to be creative in a collaboration, so I asked Paul Stillwell to send me some electronic sounds to work with. He sent me a beautiful synth drone and I added piano over it. Then we passed it to other members of the CEE and each added another layer. After that was done, we had enjoyed it so much that we thought to do more tracks, but with each starting with a different person, each adding in a different sequence. Each got the chance to be first, last and in the middle."



John Kameel Farah



Rose Bolton

The biggest challenge, if you were a 'starter' was to try to leave enough musical space so that three or four musicians could make a meaningful contribution without feeling the space had already been taken up, or without the whole thing becoming an over-flowing cacophony."

Rose Bolton further pointed out that, in the collaborative method we used, "The process of layering on tracks revealed that the person who puts down the first track in the piece, often sets the tone, shape and sound of each movement. So how each movement sounds, is greatly affected by the musical sensibility and choices that the first person has done."

As accustomed as the CEE members were to collective composition, this was a fresh approach to collaboration, born out of the COVID lockdown, and the results were highly satisfying. It seemed that those few days on the CMU campus, steeped in intensive interaction with both students and faculty, had energized the CEE and had the members constantly engaged in demonstrating, analyzing and explaining how their music works. And it had helped to refresh the CEE's own processes with a clarity among the members of the group, enabling us to immediately jump into the creative opportunity that the pandemic presented. No click tracks were needed as the *PtT* pieces came together – just the free flow of layer after layer of freshly minted electronic music that blended smoothly and naturally.

David Sutherland wrote, "When the CEE was founded, electronic music was pretty much confined to electronic music studios in universities. In 1978 Brian Eno released *Music for Airports* and called the music ambient. Today there are thousands of people around the world who make ambient electronic music and they have no connection to universities. This expansion of interest in electronic music has both created a much larger audience than existed in the 1970s and in some ways made our music less exceptional."

"What surprises and delights me is how well the recordings of the past stand up in today's music, and how well we can still play together. In some of the later tracks, there is some really outstanding playing that would stand on its own compared to much of the music produced today. Then you have everyone else adding to the whole and, where I thought there wasn't any more room, someone has found just the right thing. I find that quite remarkable and inspiring."

There are now six episodes of *PtT*, pieces that range widely in terms of style, temperament and duration. Two of the pieces are accom-

panied with digital animation, the skillful work of Paul Stillwell, who also did the audio mixing. The full set of six pieces is due for fall release on the CEE's Bandcamp page: thecee.bandcamp.com. People can have a preview right now, however, on YouTube at youtu.be/asGiXXoyC10 (*PtT* 1) and youtu.be/oD7QPcUcVJ4 (*PtT* 5). **o**

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

Creative (E)mergings in these days of isolation

WENDALYN BARTLEY

In these days of limited performances, for this month's column I decided to take up a suggestion made by my ever-inventive editor at *The WholeNote*, and write a story related to some aspect of my own creative work during this time.

On New Year's Day of 2020, I had awoken with the inspiration to start a video-audio blog, something that is very new for me. Titled *Earth Soundings*, my original vision was that for each blog entry I would select a particular natural environment in which to take photos and videos, and then create the soundtrack in response to the images and my experiences in each specific environment. My overall intention in creating these short nature-based videos was to invite people to take a brief pause in their day to remember and attune to their connection with the Earth, the elements and all beings. A short time of reflection or meditation. At the heart of the project: my desire to contribute in one way toward the restoration of our relationship with nature, for I believe that one of the root causes behind our climate crisis is due to our cultural disconnect from nature.

The guideline I set for myself for these blog posts was to take the photo and video footage on specific days of celebration, connected to either cultural holidays or days on the Earth calendar related to the passing of seasons or phases of the moon. For the music I would select various members of the wider community to collaborate with me. Initially, I released these videos on my Facebook page *Earth Soundings* (facebook.com/wendalynvoice), again on days significant in the calendar. The videos are also available on my website soundingherwisdom.ca/earth-soundings.

Enter COVID-19

A key point to the story I'm telling here is to reflect a micro-view of what has happened in the larger story of the creative performing arts since isolation, lockdown and distancing have become a fact of life. How do we adapt when we don't have the same freedom of movement and when live collaborations are not as easy as before? For the first two videos, I proceeded as envisioned, but by the time I was ready to create the next two, COVID-19 had arrived. I was now going to have to find a different approach to creating the soundtracks.

I had begun taking footage for my first video right away on January 1, often considered a turning-point day in people's lives, with resolutions for change and new behaviour. I chose Grenadier Pond in High Park at sunset as my location and began work creating a sequence with the videos and photos, returning a few days later for some extra shots I wanted to include.

Shortly after completing a draft sequence, I visited writer and singer Michelle Tocher who was eager to do some vocal improvisations with me using her new shruti box. We had such a great time together that I was inspired at that moment to invite her to collaborate with me for the soundtrack. The sounds we had made together ideally captured the feeling of the images. We planned a recording session together and recorded one of her original songs along with some free improvisations, which I edited to the image sequence. I posted the video on February 4 to celebrate the season of Imbolc, the cross-quarter day in the Celtic calendar to mark the



MARGARET IRVING

The writer, sounding to a tree on the Toronto Island

midway point between the winter solstice and the spring equinox.

Inspired by my experience with Michelle, I invited another friend with whom I've collaborated vocally for many years, Deborah Brodey, to be my collaborating partner for the second video. I returned to High Park to take the footage on the day of the full moon known as the Snow Moon, February 8, and this time headed to one of the forest areas where I focused on trees and fallen logs in the snow – their shapes and shadows in the bright sunlight, as well as some close-ups of tree bark. For the recording session with Deborah, I created five different drones that we improvised to, while watching some of the raw video footage. I then edited these vocal improvisations to create a musical sequence to which I edited the images. It was posted on March 8 to celebrate International Women's Day.

A few days later on March 11, COVID-19 was declared a world pandemic, and everything changed.

By that time I'd got to Woodstock!

On that day, I happened to be in Woodstock, Ontario, the town I grew up in, living part-time in my family home. I decided to stay put rather than return to the city. When it came to the *Earth Soundings* blog, my major question was how to approach the soundtrack. Collaborating as I had been doing was no longer possible, especially since singing with others was portrayed as one of the riskier activities. I turned instead, to resources I had on hand: the old out-of-tune piano in my family home, the same piano I learned on as a child and teenager. I improvised a series of chords on this new partner, rekindling a connection with my younger self. I then processed those recordings through a drone-making tool in my computer, disguising to some



The more it changes, the more it changes!


JACK MACQUARRIE



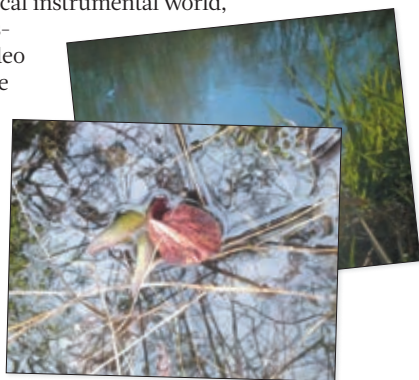
degree the funky tuning. For the video footage, I went to another childhood friend, the local Thames River, at the time of the spring equinox. The image sequence takes the viewer from winter into spring, beginning with images of frozen and thawing ice, then turning to flowing river water reflections interspersed with a few budding signs of spring. It was posted on April 8 at the full moon in Libra.

For the soundtrack to the fourth video, I turned to my own relationship with nature. I undertook two separate video shoots just as spring was beginning to really kick in. The first, on April 24, was a couple of days after Earth Day along a country road that featured a bog and small streams. The second set of images was taken on Beltane, the Gaelic May Day festival, May 4, again at the Thames River. The video progresses from the small bog and culminates in unusual footage that I captured at the Thames with the sunlight's reflection flashing intensely on the river, almost like a strobe light. While gazing at the flashing sunlight I found myself in deep communion with the natural world around me. Using my voice, I translated this natural phenomenon into sound, and the resulting improvisation became the foundation of the soundtrack with additional material I improvised on the Heintzman piano. The special part of the music for me were the recordings of frogs and birds I made along the shores of the river. When I mixed all the elements together, the soundtrack became for me a full integration between the natural world, the musical instrumental world, and my internal self-expression through voice. The video was posted on June 5 for the Strawberry Full Moon.

The fifth video is still in process. The video footage was taken at the time of the summer solstice at the mouth of the Humber River in Toronto at sunrise. I focused on the water itself – the various currents created by the meeting of the river and Lake Ontario, the sunrise on the water, along with floating wildlife. For the music, I invited a colleague from my sound-healing trainings, Muriel Reymond from Chicago, to collaborate with me. I created a drone sequence that went through various chord changes and sent her the file through email. She recorded three takes in a recording studio and sent back the tracks. I'm currently in the process of editing this material and am planning for release on Labour Day, September 7.

In moving from a normal creative approach with collaborators, I experienced unintended expansions to the original idea. This is of course something that occurs naturally, but when it is imposed from the outside, it requires a shift in mindset that can either be embraced or resisted. As each performer, presenter and creator struggles with how to move forward, finding the gold in the need to find new ways of creative expression can often bring about unanticipated discoveries. 

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



September 1, 2020 is fast approaching, and that date has quite some significance for *The WholeNote*. It was 25 years ago on September 1, 1995 that the very first edition of *The WholeNote* was introduced to Ontario's music lovers. As for my association with this magazine, it was 14 years ago, on September 1, 2006 that my first Bandstand column appeared. I asked myself: "What has changed?" The answer: "What hasn't?"

In that very first column I started by mentioning: "The Canadian National Exhibition has just opened for another season." It won't be open this year. I also stated: "For most of us that event is the harbinger of changes soon to come; shorter days, cooler weather, vacations over, back to school, and for many, back to band rehearsals after a summer recess." No band rehearsals any time soon. Then I stated: "For others in the band community, it heralds the end of a busy round of park concerts." No park concerts this year.

So that leaves us with two questions. What were our community bands able to do this summer? Where does it leave our bands for the months to come?

Silent hope

Starting with question one, we have received some news from a few bands, but mostly it has been silent hope for better days to come.

The first good news came from Steffan Brunette, director of the Uxbridge Community Concert Band. As was mentioned in last month's Bandstand, members of the UCCB produced an excellent performance of Nimrod from Elgar's *Enigma Variations* with no rehearsals or concerts and with all members playing at home. This summer should have been the Uxbridge Community Concert Band's 28th season, and as a summer-only group, the membership drive for the season usually begins in February and March. However, the encroaching sense of worry around COVID-19 meant that the band's executive was simultaneously working on plans A and B and plan C, the worst case scenario. This simply was to accept the fact that the summer season would be cancelled.

Brunette, however, was not ready to give up. Instead, he really expanded his boundaries.

In May, with physical rehearsals already impossible, thoughts turned to how the band's membership could maintain some ability to make music. As he said: "Our community musicians come to community bands for various reasons, but most are there for the social aspect, and to feel the reward of contributing to the group's artistic goals. Depending on the individual's musical expertise, there might be a desire for personal improvement, or to explore new repertoire. We wanted to find a way to get our membership involved in a musical project that brought them some of the satisfaction of the regular season."

His solution? UCCB had already, as mentioned earlier, produced an excellent version of Nimrod a few months earlier. Why not invite members of other bands to join in for another recording? Accordingly, he has extended an invitation to community musicians in the surrounding area to participate in a free online "virtual band" project over a period of a few weeks. The selected composition for this project is *Fields of Honour*, by Canadian composer William A. Mighton. As Brunette said, "Because borders are no longer an issue, the UCCB sent out invitations to neighbouring community bands in Port Perry, Newmarket, Markham, Whitby and Pickering. We are happy to be playing along with musicians from further afield."



Newmarket Citizen Band's Connie Learn, president, and Linda Guenther, vice-president, with the brand new set of Ludwig timpani from Cosmo Music.

Online Recordings

Nobody in the band world is being precocious enough to predict a date when band rehearsals and concerts might return to normal. In the meantime, if regular rehearsals can't be resumed, what are the alternatives? Perhaps, as Stefan Brunette's UCCB has done, individual community bands will offer to host virtual performances of one or two pieces at a time, allowing musicians from a wider geographical range to sign up and participate. The first goal should be to keep our community music alive, performing and growing.

Since most bands and band members are not familiar with online recording techniques, I decided to speak to Stefan Brunette regarding his experiences during UCCB's two projects to date during COVID-19, and have included a few of his useful comments here:

First is his point that while most online virtual ensembles usually feature highly experienced musicians comfortable learning and performing their parts individually. In a community band, such as the non-auditioned UCCB, some players learn their parts by imitating players in their vicinity. Over the course of several rehearsals, this kind of rote learning allows such a player to learn enough to participate in the concert. So before making a virtual recording UCCB had to think of a way that allowed musicians whose reading skills were lower to still feel they were a part of the band, and to allow the entire group to have a sense they were playing with others.

Second, a lot of online projects use a foundational track upon which other elements are layered, in most cases, some kind of click track, or an actual drum track. In pieces without a steady tempo, though, or with changeable tempo, the foundation needs to be a visual one. For UCCB's first online recording of Nimrod they recorded a silent conductor video, prefaced with tuning pitches. Players were given two weeks to perform their parts aligned with the conductor video. These phase one recordings were adjusted as necessary to ensure that they all landed on the necessary beats, making for a rather ugly first recording, with gaps in certain tracks to force matches to the conductor. As Brunette says, wryly: "If only such a tool could be used for live performances too!" The Phase one track, with all parts aligned, was sent back, mixed and as single parts, to the players (along with feedback for individuals who needed assistance with various passages). They were asked to resubmit a recording while playing along with the phase one background on their headphones. Now all players could finally perform with the band, with no one left out!

Just as I was about to put this month's Bandstand to bed, I heard from Susan Baskin to tell me that "something nice had happened". The Virtual Band Performance that her North York New Horizons group created was posted on the New Horizons Music International website. You can find the international site at newhorizonsmusic.org, and Baskin's North York Band website is at newhorizonsmusicnorthyork.ca.

Cohesion and Camaraderie

These kinds of conscientious approach to virtual performance could certainly alleviate some of the dismay, but one major component of being a regular member of any band is the social component. While many groups have some members gathering occasionally with various forms of Zoom sessions, the true face-to-face social component is missing. No form of fancy technology is going to replace that socializing.

So, what can bands do to keep some kind of cohesion and camaraderie? As the executive of the Newmarket Citizens Band put it: "The business of running a community band continues even during a global pandemic." Recently they announced more than one event to

celebrate.

The first was the arrival of new timpani to replace the band's timpani which had been in service for some 60 years. On July 8, president Connie Learn, vice-president Linda Guenther and percussionist Lawrence Moule took delivery of their new set of Ludwig timpani, with a brief ceremony on arrival, after which they were then installed in the NCB's storage space – thanks to the staff at Newmarket's Department of Recreation and Culture! Certainly something to look forward to: the first time the new timps see active service.

As if that wasn't enough, in 2022, the Newmarket Citizens Band will be celebrating their 150th Anniversary as the oldest continuously operating community band in Canada. The local newspaper, the Newmarket Era, recently published a front-page article featuring the band, their history and their plans to commemorate this very important milestone. While COVID-19 has temporarily curtailed their rehearsal and concert activities, they have four anniversary projects on the go. As explained in the article, they are looking for photos, memorabilia, artifacts and family and community connections to help tell their story. To see that article go to: www.yorkregion.com/news-story/10125215--community-treasure-newmarket-band-preparing-for-150th-anniversary

Bunny Graf

Over the years, the name Graf has been mentioned many times in this column. Musician, bandleader and arranger Eddie Graf, who passed away in 2017, his wife Bernice ("Bunny") and his son Lenny Graf have all been mentioned many times. As I wrote in the October 2018 issue of *The WholeNote*, Eddie Graf married Bernice O'Donnell at 9am on New Year's Day 1945. Eddie had been the leader of an Army Show band, and Bunny had been a singer and dancer with the band.

They had chosen to be married "at the earliest hour on the first day of a new year when the promise of a long life filled with joy and happiness was strongest." It is with heavy heart that we report that Bunny passed away peacefully in her sleep, on Saturday, May 2, 2020 at Sunnybrook Veterans long term care. 🕯

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

Three bandleaders on **then, now,** and **next**

COLIN STORY

While most club performances are still off the table for musicians, relaxed physical-distancing guidelines have meant that artists have been able to return to some form of live gigs. Near the end of August, I interviewed three different bandleaders – Joanna Majoko, Jenna Marie Pinard and Allison Au – about their recent performances, their quarantine experiences, and moving forward into “the new normal.”

The Artist: Joanna Majoko

The Performance: Live-to-air concert for JazzFM, as part of the TD Toronto Jazz Festival Summer Concert Series, July 24

The Band: Joanna Majoko, vocals and percussion; Jeremy Ledbetter, keyboards; Andrew Stewart, bass; Larnell Lewis, drums

Finding balance in quarantine:

“Thankfully, quarantine has not affected my ability to create or practise. It’s been a blessing to have had this time to create a harmonious work environment here at home, and to set up a small home studio and explore and diversify my musical interests, such as getting more comfortable and experienced with recording as well as trying my hand at vocal mixing. I don’t think I would have explored these avenues had it not been for quarantine. The only major aspect quarantine has affected is my ability to perform.”

On the experience of returning to the stage after quarantine:

“This was not my first performance since quarantine began, but it was my first as a bandleader. It felt surreal, it felt like a gift, it was an all-body experience. I remember feeling quite emotional and that was primarily due to the musical exchange with my amazing friends – Larnell, Andrew, and Jeremy. We brought all the energy and creativity we could conjure up because who knows when the next opportunity will come – at least that was the mindset.”

Looking ahead:

“I’ll be part of the Kensington Market Jazz Festival, 2020 airing online this November 7 and 8. We actually just pre-taped last week at the Handlebar in Kensington Market. I’ll be joined by Andrew Marzotto on guitar, who happens to be my favourite guitarist in Toronto for many reasons, but the most important is how well we gel musically. He’s such a free spirit on the guitar, it’s exciting to improvise and explore with him in performance.”



SEAN STORY

Joanna Majoko

The Artist: Jenna Marie Pinard

The Performance: Live concert at The Emmet Ray, August 15

The Band: Jenna Marie Pinard, vocals; Jay Yoo, guitar

Embracing the unexpected while missing live music:

“I had planned a trip in March to visit my parents in Montreal and I ended up staying there for four months. I hadn’t intended being there for more than a week, so I didn’t have access to my piano, my journals or gear. I will say that it was surprisingly refreshing to take time away from the hustle and bustle of the artist lifestyle and connect with family. Quarantine has affected my creativity in many ways, but the biggest trouble for me is that I am heavily inspired by live music, and having not seen a show in months, I’ve found it challenging to get the creative juices flowing. I normally watch a couple of shows on a given night, feel extremely inspired and go home to write lyrics or compose... live streams or archived performances just don’t give me that same fulfillment.”

On firsts:

“My first live performance since quarantine was just last Saturday at The Emmet Ray! Jazz in Toronto is a lovely organization led by Lina Welch and Ori Dagan and they’ve partnered with The Emmet Ray for a series of live performances and live streams. Andrew and the staff at The Emmet Ray did a great job of setting up the space; the performance area has sheets of plastic separating musicians from the audience. Admittedly it was quite strange to sing through a plastic screen, but it felt incredible nonetheless.”

Reconnecting with collaborators and audiences:

“In November I came out with a duo album with my longtime friend and collaborator Jay Yoo. I have been absolutely longing to play with him again, and the moment Ori asked me to be a part of the series, I knew that Jay and I would perform as a duo – my soul had been craving it for months! We play a mixture of modern arrangements of jazz standards and original music. I absolutely love to sing in all formations, especially with the bands that I lead, but there’s truly nothing like playing duo with Jay. Hearing the audience clap and laugh, and seeing them smile as well as actively listen, was extremely energizing for me. In fact, it’s been four days since the live performance and I’m still riding that high.”



Allison Au

The Artist: Allison Au

The Performance: Recording session, August

The Band: Allison Au, saxophone; Todd Pentney, piano; Jon Maharaj, bass; Ethan Ardelli, drums

A deadline-free quarantine experience:

"I tend to work really well having deadlines in mind when tackling a new project, so the quarantine has affected the drive with which I typically tend to work. That said, having no deadlines to work towards has also decreased the stress I typically work with. It has been a fantastic challenge and reminded me to cherish the creative process; an aspect of my pre-quarantine approach to work that I believe, like many of us, I had lost sight of."

Lessons learned:

"This quarantine has affected my outlook on the quality of the music I create. I had a deep period of reflection during all of the social upheaval the pandemic exposed over the past few months. More than ever, I want to create music that I love, that means something to me, that is creative and that strives to explore new ground in some way."

The new and the old, in studio:

"I conducted a short studio session. The studio I rented had rigorous health protocol in place. I had to fill out and sign two separate forms confirming that I did not present any COVID-19 symptoms and confirming that I would abide by all of the studio's rules for having my temperature taken upon arrival, wearing a mask while not playing, and frequently using hand sanitizer placed strategically throughout the studio. None of these things affected my performance. It was truly wonderful to play music with others in a studio setting. And as soon as we started the session, I was flooded with positive emotions and a strong reminder as to why I love what I do." 🎧

Colin Story is a jazz guitarist, writer and teacher based in Toronto. He can be reached at www.colinstory.com, on Instagram and on Twitter.



Jenna Marie Pinard

In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

● **Alleycatz**
2409 Yonge St. 416-481-6865
alleycatz.ca
All shows: Call for cover charge info.
● **The Blue Goose Tavern**
1 Blue Goose St. 416-255-2442
thebluegoosetavern.com (full schedule)
● **Bloom**
2315 Bloor St. W. 416-767-1315
bloomrestaurant.com (full schedule)
All shows 7pm 19+. Call for reservations.
● **Burdock**
1184 Bloor St. W. 416-546-4033
burdockto.com
Ticket prices vary by show, but typically \$10-\$20; check website for individual show prices.
● **Cameron House**
408 Queen St. E. 416-703-0811
thecameron.com
● **Castro's Lounge**
2116 Queen St. E. 416-699-8272
castroslounge.com (full schedule)
All shows: No cover/PWYC
● **C'est What**
67 Front St. E. (416) 867-9499
cestwhat.com (full schedule)
All concerts are PWYC unless otherwise noted.
● **Emmet Ray, The**

924 College St. 416-792-4497
theemmetray.com (full schedule)
All shows: No cover/PWYC
● **Grossman's Tavern**
379 Spadina Ave. 416-977-7000
grossmantavern.com (full schedule)
All shows: No cover (unless otherwise noted).
● **Hirut Cafe and Restaurant**
2050 Danforth Ave. 416-551-7560 hirut.ca
● **Home Smith Bar - See Old Mill, The**
● **Jazz Bistro, The**
251 Victoria St. 416-363-5299
jazzbistro.ca (full schedule)
● **Jazz Room, The**
Located in the Huether Hotel, 59 King St. N.,
Waterloo. 226-476-1565
kwjazzroom.com (full schedule)
Attendees must be 19+. Cover charge varies (generally \$12-\$25)
● **Lula Lounge**
1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307
lula.ca (full schedule)
● **Manhattans Pizza Bistro & Music Club**
951 Gordon St., Guelph 519-767-2440
manhattans.ca (full schedule)
● **Mezzetta Restaurant**
681 St. Clair Ave. W. 416-658-5687
mezzettarestaurant.com (full schedule)

● **Monarch Tavern**
12 Clinton St. 416-531-5833
themonarchtavern.com (full schedule)
● **Nawlins Jazz Bar & Dining**
299 King St. W. 416-595-1958
nawlins.ca
All shows: No cover/PWYC.
● **Nice Bistro, The**
117 Brock St. N., Whitby. 905-668-8839
nicebistro.com (full schedule)
Live jazz and dinner, \$45.00 per person. Dinner from 6pm and music from 7pm to 9pm.
● **Old Mill, The**
21 Old Mill Rd. 416-236-2641
oldmilltoronto.com (full schedule)
The Home Smith Bar: No reservations. No cover. \$20 food/drink minimum. All shows: 7:30-10:30pm unless otherwise listed.
● **Only Café, The**
972 Danforth Ave. 416-463-7843
theonlycafe.com (full schedule)
● **Pilot Tavern, The**
22 Cumberland Ave. 416-923-5716
thepilot.ca
All shows: 2:30pm. No cover.
● **Poetry Jazz Café**
224 Augusta Ave. 416-599-5299
poetryjazzcafe.com (full schedule)

● **Reposado Bar & Lounge**
136 Ossington Ave. 416-532-6474
reposadobar.com (full schedule)
● **Reservoir Lounge, The**
52 Wellington St. E. 416-955-0887
reservoirlounge.com (full schedule).
● **Revolucion, La**
2848 Dundas St. W. (416) 766-0746
larevto.com (full schedule)
● **Rex Hotel Jazz & Blues Bar, The**
194 Queen St. W. 416-598-2475
therex.ca (full schedule)
Call for cover charge info.
● **Salty Dog Bar & Grill, The**
1980 Queen St. E. 416-849-5064
thesaltydog.ca (full schedule)
● **Sauce on Danforth**
1376 Danforth Ave. 647-748-1376
sauceondanforth.com
All shows: No cover.
● **The Senator Winebar**
249 Victoria St 416 364-7517
thesenator.com (full schedule)
● **Tranzac**
292 Brunswick Ave. 416-923-8137
tranzac.org (full schedule)
3-4 shows daily, various styles, in three different performance spaces. Mostly PWYC.

the WholeNote LISTINGS

Event listings in *The WholeNote* are free to all eligible music presenters.

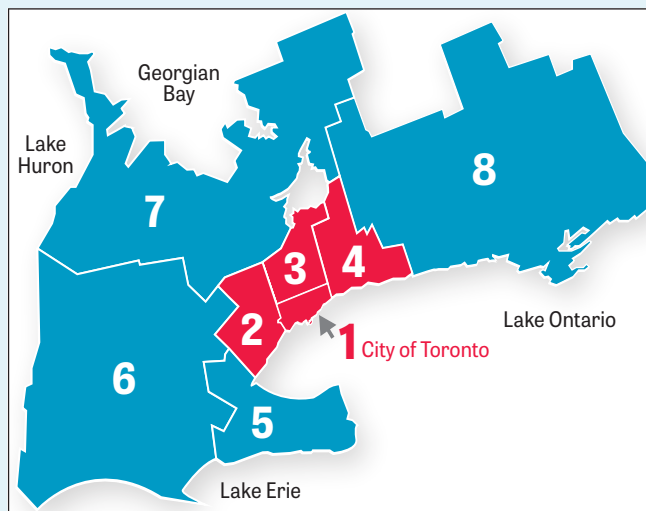
Under ordinary circumstances the listings in the magazine are arranged in five sections: **GTA** and **BEYOND GTA** (concerts); **MUSIC THEATRE**; **CLUBS**; and what we call our **ETCETERAS**, (all kinds of date-related musical events that don't fit the other 4 sections).

But these are not ordinary circumstances. So right now **GTA** and **ETCETERAS** are all you will find here, mostly in the area of online and livestreamed concerts, fundraisers, masterclasses, etcetera. Our listings are being updated online on a weekly basis, so our website **thewholenote.com** is the place to be, to keep up with online events as well as live listings as they start to come back, and new seasons as they are announced.

Most of our online listings can be searched in various ways – by date ranges, types of music and geographic zones (see map to the right). These expanded **ETCETERAS** are still a work in progress!

Visit thewholenote.com/justask for performance listings, and thewholenote.com/etcetera for online activity.

All further inquiries should be addressed to our listings editor John Sharpe at listings@thewholenote.com or 416-323-2232 x27. **(Please note we do not take listings information over the phone.)**



HOW TO LIST:

Send event information

- by using the convenient online form at thewholenote.com/applylistings
- by email to our listings editor, John Sharpe at listings@thewholenote.com

DEADLINES:

Listings for an upcoming print issue need to be submitted by the listings deadline stated in the **Dates and Deadlines** at the foot of page 7 of every issue. For the coming issue (covering October 1 to November 7), the deadline is September 15. Listings received after deadline will be posted to the online listings as soon as feasible.

Listings may also be submitted in advance for an entire concert season. Inquire to listings@thewholenote.com

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Stand up and be counted with a profile in *The WholeNote*'s 21st annual Blue Pages

None of us know when the 2020/21 season will go ahead, or what it will look like, but we'll be ready when you are.

- ▶ **Listings for individual concerts or entire seasons, online right away, and then in print.**
- ▶ **WholeNote Blue Pages profiles will be published in October for members who are ready. Additional profiles will be published in November and December. These can also be changed online as your plans evolve. Contact members@thewholenote.com**

THE WHOLENOTE: MEMBERSHIP AND DIRECTORIES – HELPING US SUPPORT WHAT YOU DO

Concerts in the GTA

Monday September 7

● 12:15: **Music Mondays.** *Diar Ensemble.* Syrian and Arabic music. Songs from traditional Arabic and Andalusian heritage. **Online streaming.** Visit musicmondays.currentseason.html for links.

Sunday September 13

● 1:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Sunday Interludes Series: Anwar Khurshid & Friends.* Mazzoleni Concert Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. Free.

Monday September 14

● 12:00 noon: **Music Mondays.** *Tanya Willis Quartet - Welcome Back to the 20s.* **Online streaming.** Visit musicmondays.currentseason.html for links.

Monday September 21

● 12:00 noon: **Music Mondays.** *Duo Concertante.* Works by Bach, Beethoven, Smetana, Carmen Braden (new work) and Ian Cusson (new work). Duo Concertante (Nancy Dahn, violin; Timothy Steeves, piano). **Online streaming.** Visit musicmondays.currentseason.html for links.

Saturday September 26

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix Series: SongBird North.* Temerty Theatre, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$40.

Sunday September 27



Ladam Ensemble

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1PM
MAZZOLENI CONCERT HALL
Argentine tango, Serbian folk and dance traditions, Persian classical repertoire, and progressive rock.

Free tickets will be available starting Monday, September 21. 416.408.0208
www.rcmusic.com/performance

● 1:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Sunday Interludes Series: Ladam Ensemble.* Mazzoleni Concert Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. Free.

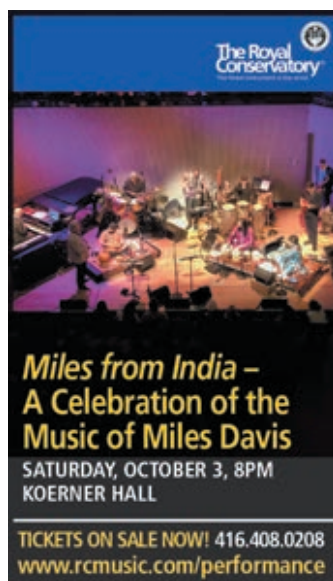
Monday September 28

● 12:15: **Music Mondays.** *Mozart's Genius.* Chopin: Ballade No.1 in g; Mozart: Kegelstatt Trio for violin, piano and clarinet K498; and works by Lewin and Schumann. Alex Toskov, violin/viola; Peter Toskov, piano; Goran Gojevic, clarinet. **Online streaming.** Visit musicmondays.currentseason.html for links.

Friday October 2

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *RCO Concerts Series: Trevor Pinnock Conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra.* Mozart: Symphony No.39 in E-flat K543; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No.5 in E-flat Op.73 "Emperor". Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$25-\$60.
● 7:30: **Upper Canada Choristers.** *Inti Ukana: A Latin American Tapestry.* Cantemos Latin ensemble; Hye Won Cecilia Lee, piano; Laura Fernandez, emcee. Guests: Bernardo Padron and others; Laurie Evan Fraser, conductor. **Online streaming.** Visit uppercanadachoristers.org for information.

Saturday October 3



● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Jazz From Around the World Series: Miles from India - A Celebration of the Music of Miles Davis.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$45-\$110.

Sunday October 4

● 1:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Sunday Interludes Series: Fern Lindzon.* Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. Free.

Monday October 5

● 12:15: **Music Mondays.** *A Mediaeval Musical Pilgrimage.* Works by Hildegard von Bingen and others. Andrea Gerhardt & Michael Franklin, musicians. **Online streaming.** Visit musicmondays.currentseason.html for links.

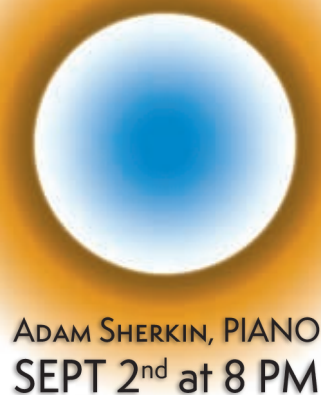
Online, Streamed, ETCetera

ETCETERAS are musical events other than live performances. Excuse all the links! for interactive browsing visit thewholenote.com/liveonline

NOTE: All times are Eastern Time unless otherwise noted.

COMING SOON

LUNAIRE LIVE II: THE CORN MOON



● **NEW!! The Piano Lunaire.** *Lunaire Live: Corn Moon.* Sep 9 at 8pm. The Full Corn Moon is a unique occurrence in the calendar and one we're particularly thrilled about celebrating. Pianist Adam Sherkin performs music by Franz Liszt, Lowell Liebermann, Frederic Chopin and himself. Donations are welcomed. Please visit universe.com/

events/lunaire-live-ii-the-corn-moon-tickets-toronto-XNS56F for more information.

● **NEW!! Tafelmusik.** *Mozart Together.*

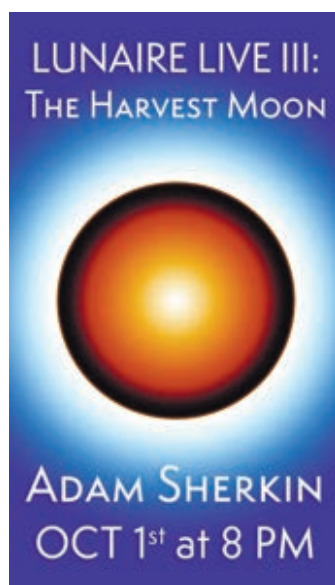
Oct 1 at 8pm online. Following many months of isolation and remote music making, the musicians of Tafelmusik gather for an emotional return to the concert stage. Filmed at Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, this opening program of the reimagined 2020/21 season is devoted to chamber music originally intended to be played in private homes and salon gatherings among friends and family. Scored for two to eight instruments, these intimate works — almost all of them new to our musicians — capture the immediacy and connection we've all been craving. On display will be a more playful side of titans like Mozart, Beethoven, and Boccherini, including a movement from Mozart's famous Sinfonia concertante in E-flat Major in an unusual arrangement for six string instruments, along with music by Michael Haydn, Dručeký, Spenger, and Spohr — classical composers eclipsed by these giants. An unforgettable homecoming. For more information, visit tafelmusik.org

● **TD Toronto Jazz Festival.** *Summer Concert Series: A Live-to-Air Weekly Series on JAZZ.FM91.* Running from **July 3 to August 28**, each weekly performance will air live on JAZZ.FM91, **every Friday from 5 pm to 6 pm.** From now until the spring of next year, the Festival will be offering a variety of ways to support musicians, and for the public to experience live music, through efforts such as the Summer Concert Series, because we know there is nothing better than live music.



Share your details so we can publish them!

● The lineup for the TD Toronto Jazz Festival Summer Concert Series: **Aug 28:** Donnybrook



● **NEW!! The Piano Lunaire.** *Lunaire Live: The Harvest Moon.* **Oct 1 at 8pm.** Pianist Adam Sherkin performs. Donations are welcomed. Please visit universe.com/events/lunaire-live-iii-the-harvest-moon-tickets-toronto-B7DHFR for more information.

● **NEW!! The Upper Canada Choristers.** *Inti Ukana: A Latin American Tapestry.* A live-streamed performance on **Oct 2 at 7:30pm.** With conductor Laurie Evan Fraser, pianist Hye Won Cecilia Lee, Cantemos Latin ensemble, M.C. Laura Fernandez; guest artists including Bernardo Padron. Visit uppercanadachoristers.org, call **416-256-0510** or email info@uppercanadachoristers.org.

ONGOING

● **Arts@Home.** A vibrant hub connecting Torontonians to arts and culture. Designed to strengthen personal and societal resilience through the arts. Visit artsathome.ca to learn more about this exciting collaborative initiative.

● **Kevin Barrett.** *Live from Lockdown.* **Every Friday** Kevin Barrett does a live-streamed set of solo guitar tunes, coming directly from lockdown in his studio in Kensington Market, Toronto. The show is timed so that West Coast residents can sit in for a late lunch (1pm PDT), people in Toronto/Ottawa/NYC can join in the late afternoon (4pm EDT) and friends in Edinburgh and throughout the UK can kick off their Friday night (9pm BST/UTC+1; later in Europe ...). Watch for special requests and dedications, birthday shout-outs, and a few opinions. But, mostly, lots of music! Tune in to Kevin's Facebook page on Friday [here](https://www.facebook.com/kevbarrett). If you can't join live, the video will be available afterwards on Kevin's page. And each week's episode is archived on his YouTube channel at youtube.com/playlist?list=PLX5pfx-Eb_cgNAMKTNHgPiNATLYfRk30

● **Canadian Brass:** welcomes friends around their virtual fireplace for learning and laughs. All events take place at facebook.com/canadianbrass

● **Classical Jukebox** Founded as a response

to the days of COVID-19 social separation, this site is designed to provide you the ability to sing and perform your favorite classical pieces from the comfort of your own home, with accompaniments by organ and piano accompanist, Matthew Larkin. In addition, Classical Jukebox offers another service - assisting with the creation of Virtual Choirs and virtual choir videos for those missing that collaborative and artistic outlet in their lives. Further information can be found at classicaljukebox.ca

● **Harbourfront Centre.** *Summer Music in the Garden at Home.* **Every Sunday at 4pm and Thursday at 7pm.** Just as our gardens come to life again, so too does the music of Toronto. Harbourfront Centre's Summer Music in the Garden series is virtual this year, bringing the sounds of the Toronto Music Garden right to your home. Featuring artists from Ontario, Quebec and around the world. Music by Bach, Ravel, Borodin and Telemann are accompanied by meditative raags and ancient lute techniques. Sign up for reminders at harbourfront.live to remain up to date on concerts and even a few surprises. For information 905-973-4000 or visit harbourfront.live

● **Kingston Symphony.** *Finale of Beethoven's Third Symphony (Eroica).* Forty members of the orchestra perform the finale of the Eroica, Beethoven's Symphony No. 3 while in isolation in their homes. To view the virtual performance, visit youtu.be/F2eVauBqIAY. For more information on the Kingston Symphony, please visit kingstonsymphony.ca

● **Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony.** *Friday Night with the KWS.* Online broadcasts of archival concerts every **Friday at 8pm.** Select broadcasts will feature video and others will be audio-only. Content for each concert will be announced each week via KWS social media platforms. Visit facebook.com/kwsymphony and youtube.com/user/kwsymphony/videos

● **Koerner Hall.** *Concerts from Home.*

There are more than 25 classical, jazz, and roots music concerts currently available online. Check out the available items at rcmusic.com/performance/live-from-koerner-hall-concert-livestream

● **Danny Michel.** *Live From Lockdown* Sundays. A weekly live, interactive online concert on **Sundays at 3pm**, on ZOOM from his studio in the woods. Unlike Facebook live, fans can see each other; interact, chat, play along & be a part of the show. Buy a ticket for \$7.00, get a private link in your email and join the party on Zoom (free download available at danny-michel.com)

● **Opera Revue.** *Isolation Series.* Comic operatic duo Danie Friesen and Claire Harris film and record operatic parodies as well as legit opera and art song for a weekly release. Join us **every Saturday**. For info email operarevue@gmail.com

● **Orchestre Métropolitain.** *Live stream of Beethoven Symphonies Nos. 1-8.* On the websites of Orchestre Métropolitain and Bourgie Hall over the course of the summer of 2020. Visit orchestremetropolitain.com/en/ and mbam.qc.ca/en/bourgie-hall-news

● **Ottawa Chamberfest.** *Chamber Chats: At Home / Chez vous.* **Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2pm.** Hosted by celebrated broadcaster/writer Eric Friesen. Interactive episodes



GILBERTO PRIOSTE

Toronto Operetta Theatre's *Beautiful Helen* (April 2018) at torontooperetta.com.

combine chat with pre-recorded and live performances and feature guest artists and lecturers from all over the world. For information: 613-234-8008. Visit the website at chamberfest.com

● **Recollectiv:** Currently holding on-line meetings. A unique musical group made up of people affected by memory challenges caused by illness (such as dementia) or brain injury (stroke, PTSD, etc.) and their care partners. Volunteers of all ages also form part of the band, making this a positive intergenerational experience for all. Participation is free with pre-registration. Contact info@recollectiv.ca for meeting times, information and registration.

● **Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts.** *a-P-art {of}* performance series, every Thursday at 7:30pm at facebook.com/rhcapa

● **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir.** *Tafelmusik at Home* is a new online concert featuring solo and duo performances. Be sure to stay until the end for live Q&A sessions with featured musicians. These concerts are \$5, \$10, \$20 Choose-What-You-Pay, allowing you to pay what you feel is the value of the concert. Join them for this new way to experience the beauty of Tafelmusik at tafelmusik.org

● **Toronto Botanical Garden.** *Music in the Garden Series.* The first concert will launch on Thursday, July 16 at 7 p.m. with a new performance released every Thursday at 7 p.m. until Labour Day. All concerts can be viewed via the Toronto Botanical Garden's website [here](https://torontobotanicalgarden.ca/edwards-summer-music). More concerts to be released later this summer. Virtual performances and further information can be found at torontobotanicalgarden.ca/edwards-summer-music

● **Toronto Consort.** *Explorer: Discovering the World of Early Music.* *Explorer* is a blog for the curious; a place of learning, sharing, and community. This all-new offering will present an assortment of curated content in a range of formats, like original short- or long-form articles, original video and audio recordings, and educational content on relevant topics relating to Early Music, history, and world music, as they relate our beloved repertoire. Visit torontoconsort.org for further

information.

● **NEW!! Toronto Operetta Theatre.** An archival video of Toronto Operetta Theatre's production of Jacques Offenbach's *The Beautiful Helen* (*La belle Hélène*) performed from April 27 to 29, 2018, Jane Mallet Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, Toronto. Enjoy the video at youtu.be/sp7SeL_OsQ

● **NEW!! VOICEBOX|Opera in Concert.** *Archival Video Project: Fierabras by Franz Schubert.* Schubert's opera had its Canadian premiere in 2019. If you missed our full production, please take a look at our gift to you with this video of excerpts featuring an amazing cast under the masterful conducting of Kevin Mallon and the Aradia Ensemble. It is a rare opera at its highest degree of excellence in performance. In the midst of wars between the Frankish Christians and Spanish Moors of the late 700s, conflicts are brought to an end with the intercession of a younger generation, where love conquers all. See the video at youtu.be/TuijnVDMMMW

WORKSHOPS

● **NEW!! Toronto Early Music Players Organization (TEMPO).** *Online Workshop.* **Sep 13 from 1:30 to 3:00pm.** We are very fortunate to have Alison Melville, a long-time friend of TEMPO and Toronto's leading recorder player, for our first online workshop. She has become a leader in offering online courses on her own and as part of Amherst Early Music Online. Please visit the TEMPO website at tempotoronto.net for more information on how to participate online.

● **NEW!! Toronto Early Music Players Organization (TEMPO).** *Online Workshop.* **Oct 4 from 1:30 to 3:00pm.** Lawrence Lipnik will be leading our October event. Lawrence has performed with many acclaimed early music ensembles from ARTEK and Anonymous 4 to Piffaro and the Waverly Consort, and is a founding member of the viol consort Parthenia and vocal ensemble Lionheart. He teaches recorder and viol on Amherst Early Music Online. Please visit the TEMPO website at tempotoronto.net for more information on how to participate online.

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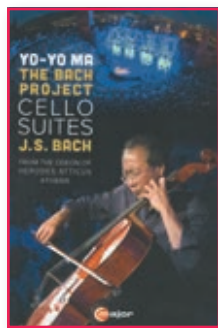
Inquiries by email only to classad@thewholenote.com

Editor's Corner

DAVID OLDS

As *The WholeNote* celebrates the stellar achievement of 25 years of publication, I note that the DISCOVERIES section has entered its own 20th year. There have been a number of changes since our first modest column back in July 2001 with just 13 discs reviewed by eight writers. In the interim we're had contributions from 125 reviewers and, with the current issue, have covered more than 8,800 CDs and DVDs. In recent years we've seen an enormous growth in the number of independent releases, physical and digital, primarily by jazz and contemporary artists, as evidenced in our burgeoning Jazz & Improvised and Modern & Contemporary sections. But all sectors remain very active and we receive two or three times the number of discs we actually have room to cover. A large part of my job entails collating and prioritizing the enormous number of releases that arrive each month. It's a daunting but satisfying task, especially when it comes to matching selected titles with appropriate writers, some of whom have particular interests and specialities and some who constantly amaze me with the breadth of their knowledge and eclecticism.

Looking back at the first edition of DISCOVERIES it was interesting to note that Bruce Surtees' first review was of an EMI reissue of Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* with the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra under the direction of János Ferencsik. In his Rimsky-Korsakov review further on in these pages Bruce relates an anecdote about advice given to a fledgling record producer: "Look for the composition that has the most recordings and make one more." I chuckled when I realized that Bruce has reviewed 12 different recordings of *Gurrelieder* for *The WholeNote*, evidence that the old adage still applies. But *Gurrelieder* is far from the most reviewed title in our archives. Other greatest hits include *The Goldberg Variations* tied with *Das Lied von der Erde* and *Winterreise* at 18 versions each, Bach's *Six Suites for Solo Cello* (15), Mahler's *Symphony No. 2* (12), the complete *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and *Pictures at an Exhibition* (11), and *Le Sacre du Printemps* and *Symphony Pathétique* with ten...



I took a bit of a cheap way out last issue writing, "What to say about yet another recording of the *Bach Cello Suites*?" in regards to Alisa Weilerstein's release. I'm about to do it again with **Yo-Yo Ma The Bach Project** (Cmajor 754408 naxosdirect.com), but in this instance I feel excused by the fact that Ma does the talking for me. The two-DVD set includes one with an outdoor concert performance of all six Bach suites and a separate disc of Ma speaking about Bach, the suites, and their importance in his own life. It's quite an extraordinary extrapolation of his thoughts about Bach as scientist and psychologist/philosopher. He is very articulate and thoughtful, and his ideas are both intriguing and enlightening.

The website bach.yo-yoma.com tells us that "In August 2018, Yo-Yo Ma began a two-year journey to perform Johann Sebastian Bach's six suites for solo cello in 36 locations around the world, music that is among the first he ever learned when he began playing the cello at age four. The project is motivated not only by his six-decade relationship with the music, but also by Bach's ability to speak to our shared humanity at a time when our civic conversation is so often focused on division. For Yo-Yo, Bach's 300-hundred-year-old music is one extraordinary example of how culture connects us and can help us to imagine and build a better future, but he believes there are many, many more. And for Yo-Yo, culture includes not just the arts,

but everything that helps us to understand our environment, each other, and ourselves, from music and literature to science and food. The Bach Project explores and celebrates all the ways that culture makes us stronger as individuals, as communities, as a society, and as a planet. Alongside each concert, Yo-Yo and his team partner with artists and culture makers, cultural and community organizations, and leaders from across sectors to design conversations, collaborations, and performances. These public events and creative experiences are different in every location; they aspire to local relevance and global significance; they demonstrate culture's power to create positive change; they inspire new relationships, connect partners across locations, and ask us all to keep culture at the centre of our efforts to build a shared future."

This DVD set is Ma's fourth release of the suites. The first dates back to 1983 on vinyl for Columbia Records and subsequently released on CD. I don't think it has ever been out of print. The second was his reimagining of them in collaboration with artists from a variety of fields for the TV series *Inspired by Bach* produced by Toronto's Rhombus Media in 1997, later released on DVD by Sony Classical. It is a lasting legacy of this series that the city acquired The Toronto Music Garden, on the waterfront, designed by Julie Moir Messervy when plans to build it in Boston fell through. The third iteration was a studio recording in 2018 released on CD by Sony as *Six Evolutions – Bach: Cello Suites*.

This CD release was a direct precursor to *The Bach Project* represented here by live concert footage of one of the 36 recitals that took place between 2018 and 2020 over six continents featuring Ma's current interpretation of the suites. It was recorded on June 30, 2019 in the open air at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, a stone Roman theatre structure completed in 161 CE on the southwest slope of the Acropolis of Athens, Greece. The set is stunning with the stage backlit by a wash of purple light on the Acropolis and the surrounding terraces filled to their 5,000 seat capacity in the evening darkness. The audience is silent, in rapt attention until breaking into thunderous applause at the end of each suite.

The DVD is edited so that we hear the entire cycle without breaks (although there are cues for each movement for selective viewing). In a way this is a shame because during the applause after each suite we see Ma bend down to pick up a microphone to address the audience, but never get to hear what he says. This is especially unfortunate after

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Senyshyn Plays Chopin & Liszt Concertos
Yaroslav Senyshyn

"Ashkenazy, Rubinstein, and Argerich...Senyshyn belongs in this august company...On all counts, a terrific release." – Jerry Dubins, *Fanfare*

the second suite, because during the last movement the audio is interrupted by a strange metallic noise that is unexplained in the booklet. With the help of the distributor's publicist – thanks Paula Mlyn – I was able to find out that, as sometimes happens on a hot summer night, it was not a mechanical sound but actually a cicada that had landed on the microphone. Knowing that put me in mind of Josquin's *El grillo è buon cantore*, one of my favourite Renaissance madrigals. Now I know that a cricket and a cicada are not the same thing, but I think this cicada, inspired by the music, was aspiring to be a "good singer" as the song says. We can see Ma smiling in recognition at the sound as he continues undaunted and undistracted through the final two minutes of the *gigue*, but I would dearly like to know what he shared with the audience after that! Obviously the show went on with no retake and we are presented with an outstanding non-stop performance of nearly two and a half hours of music, played flawlessly from memory. It was during my years as a music programmer at CJRT-FM that I became familiar with Josquin's madrigal, and also at that time that I got to meet Yo-Yo Ma. The occasion was the filming of Atom Egoyan's *Sarabande*, the dramatic film of the *Suite No.4* from the *Inspired by Bach* series. I heard there was a call for extras for the scenes that were being shot at The Royal Conservatory and I was happy to find myself chosen. In the holding room in the morning the charming cellist appeared and introduced himself to each extra, mostly RCM students, and asked something about each of us. There were shoots both morning and afternoon, and over the lunch hour he welcomed many of the cello students to play his cherished instrument, which I believe was the 1712 Davidoff Stradivarius. What a kind and generous soul. At the end of the day he turned up in holding again and not only spoke to everyone, but actually remembered what he had learned about us earlier in the day. He is truly a remarkable and gracious man, and I'll let him have the last word. "The shared understanding that culture generates in these divisive times can bind us together as one world, and guide us to political and economic decisions that benefit the entire species. We are all cultural beings – let's explore how culture connects us and can help to shape a better future."



American **Gabriela Lena Frank** (b.1972) is currently composer-in-residence with the Philadelphia Orchestra who will premiere a major orchestral work of hers in 2021. Featured on the *Washington Post's* list of the "Top 35 women composers in classical music," Frank was also 2017 composer-in-residence at the **Willamette Valley Chamber Music Festival**. **Her Own Wings** (brightshiny.ninja/her-own-wings) grew out of this collaboration, and includes the world premiere recording of *Milagros* (2010), plus Frank's acclaimed string quartet, *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*.

Identity has always been at the centre of her music. Born in California to a mother of mixed Peruvian/Chinese ancestry and a father of Lithuanian/Jewish descent, Frank explores her multicultural heritage through her compositions. Comprised of eight short movements for string quartet, *Milagros* was inspired by Frank's mother's Peruvian homeland. She writes: "It has been a remarkable, often difficult, yet always joyous experience for me to visit, again and again, this small Andean nation that is home to not only foggy desert coasts but also Amazonian wetlands. Usually a religious and marvellous occurrence, *milagro* here refers to the sights and sounds of Peru's daily life, both past and present, which I've stumbled upon in my travels. While probably ordinary to others, to me, as a gringa-latina, they are quietly miraculous." Composed in 2001, *Leyendas* draws inspiration from the idea of *mestizaje* as envisioned by the Peruvian writer José María Arguedas, where cultures can coexist without the subjugation of one by the other. As such, this piece mixes elements from the Western classical and Andean folk music traditions.

Recorded in the unique acoustic of a winery barrel room, the performers are Willamette Festival founders Sasha Callahan (violin) and Leo Eguchi (cello) who are joined by violinists Greg Ewer (*Milagros*) and Megumi Stohs Lewis (*Leyendas*), and violist Bradley Ottesen. The warmth and clarity of the recording combined with these stunning and nuanced performances makes this a disc to treasure.



The **Koan Quartet** has just released its debut recording, **J.M. Beyer – String Quartet IV** (koanquartet.bandcamp.com). Johanna Magdalena Beyer was a German-American composer born in Leipzig in 1888. The quartet's website tells us that she was an important experimental composer of the 1930s who worked closely with Henry Cowell, Percy Grainger and Ruth Crawford,

and wrote the first known work scored for electronic instruments by a female composer (*Music of the Spheres*, 1938). Beyer died of ALS in 1944 and her work would have been completely forgotten were it not for Frog Peak, a composers' collective, who made her scores available through research and volunteer score copying. There is no record of *String Quartet IV* having been performed within Beyer's lifetime. It is composed in a very intimate, almost post-Romantic style which differs from some of the other works in her collection.

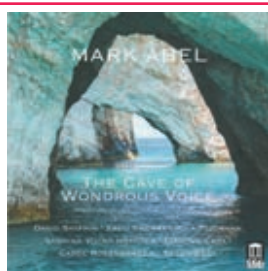
Koan Quartet, a subset of the Los Angeles experimental performance group Southland Ensemble, brings years of experience presenting thoughtful and meticulously researched performances of rarely heard works to their interpretation. This is an important addition to our understanding of a significant and nearly forgotten voice. The music is playful at times, with hints of children's melodies, but also dark and contemplative, especially in the second movement. The performance is well balanced and the recorded sound pristine. **🎧**

What we're listening to this month:

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Pivotal Arc
Quinsin Nachoff
Nachoff's fearlessly innovative genre-bending works featuring Nathalie Bonin, Molinari String Quartet, Mark Helias, Satoshi Takeishi, Michael Davidson, conductor JC Sanford.



The Cave of Wondrous Voice
Mark Abel
Abel's first chamber album features David Shifrin, Fred Sherry, Carol Rosenberger, and Grammy winner Hila Plitmann premiering a Marina Tsvetaeva song cycle.



BORJONER
Aimee-Jo Benoit with Trio Velocity
BORJONER is an album of loosely arranged, somewhat improvised selection of tunes closest to the heart of Aimee-Jo's musical journey.



Sounds of Brazil
Angela Turone & Chris Platt
Vocalist Angela Turone and guitarist Chris Platt explore the diverse and beautiful music of Brazil and seamlessly intertwine this influence with their jazz roots.

BANG ON A CAN

A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

RAUL DA GAMA

Bang on a Can was founded in 1987 by three American composers who remain its artistic directors: Julia Wolfe, David Lang and Michael Gordon. During the current COVID-19 crisis, particularly devastating in New York City, the renowned Bang on a Can Marathon, a celebration of the best and latest contemporary music from the Big Apple, has migrated to the internet, morphing from an annual live event into periodic streaming blasts. There have been three six-hour iterations so far (May 3, June 14 and August 16) and plans are to continue these online activities until performances for live audiences can fully resume. You can stay apprised of future events at bangonacan.org.

Michael Gordon – Anonymous Man
The Crossing; Donald Nally
Cantaloupe Music CA 21154 (cantaloupemusic.com)

Meredith Monk – ..M...EM...O.R...YG.A....ME....
Meredith Monk & Vocal Ensemble; Bang on a Can All-Stars
Cantaloupe Music 21153 (cantaloupemusic.com)

Singing in the Dead of Night
Eighth Blackbird
Cedille Records CDR 90000195 (cedillerecords.org)

David Lang – Love Fail
Lorelei Ensemble; Beth Will
Cantaloupe Music 21158 (cantaloupemusic.com)

David Lang – Love Fail
Quince Ensemble
Innova 056 (innova.mu)

The human voice, one of the first instruments in our world (there are likely others, such as interstellar “noise”), has rarely been glorified in better circumstances than in the five recordings mentioned above. Perhaps this is because in all of the recordings in question the purest of sound – that of the human voice – has been pushed to both define exactly what it means to give praise to the arts melodically, harmonically and rhythmically. But each of these works also redefines polyphony – within the continuum of music – in the grand manner. Coincidentally (or perhaps not at all) members of the ineffably brilliant musical New York City cooperative, Bang on a Can, have been associated with each of the recordings and this means, of course, that you can expect the unexpected in the most sublime sense of the term.

Musicians such as Meredith Monk, Julia Wolfe, Michael Gordon and David Lang are – together and separately – proverbial forces of nature. They represent everything that is transcendent about human vocal-astics. Impossible leaps in register, manipulating breathing whether nasal, throat or diaphragmatic, weaving voices (using harmony and electronic manipulation) into diaphanous musical fabrics of breath-taking beauty or simply singing with lustrous simplicity and honesty are just some of their many phenomenal characteristics. And then there is the interpretation – or sometimes using the non-interpretation of the works to deliver the finest quality of music and

musicianship – which catches us off guard. This is something that happens across all of the works and recordings in question.

Michael Gordon’s *Anonymous Man* deals with the existential loneliness of community. The music describes both the discovery and effects that something like that could have on the human sensibilities. Gordon’s work comprises the music and accompanying narratives that, when sung solo or in ensemble, speak to the existential angst of Gordon’s character as the *Anonymous Man*. The music startles and the words constantly enliven it through their beautifully bizarre and almost neurotic sensitivity to feeling and experience. The musicians

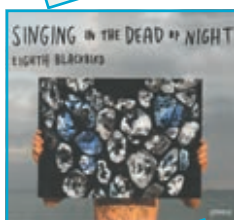
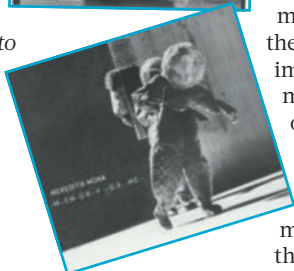
of *The Crossing*, conducted by Donald Nally, capture all of Gordon’s angst by investing the music with just the right amount of drama and emotion – which is also often delightfully deadpan. The textural light and shade of music in *On That Terrible Beautiful Morning* is perfectly judged in terms of both phrasing and intonation.

Meredith Monk’s work on *Memory Game* is a traversal through the topographical landscape of the mind and is somehow viewed through the spatial and the horological. Just as you would need a small leap of imagination to see hour in horology, but could nail the meaning by envisioning the study of time and the art of making timepieces, in Monk’s case you are drawn forwards and backwards in time by playing the proverbial *Memory Game*. The members of Bang on a Can bring with them instruments to evoke a kind of musical séance in the fullest and most magical sense of things supernatural and brilliantly entertaining. In these nine pieces the listener is led slowly through subtly changing mental-musical scenery. There are often deliberately comical (spoken, sung and instrumental) effects. Slowly, like a brilliant jigsaw puzzle these brightly coloured musical fragments evoke a *Memory Game* that is dismantled and reassembled in constantly hypnotic patterns.

The eighth stanza of Wallace Stevens’ poem *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* describes metaphorical antecedents of the dizzying exploits of the ensemble Eighth Blackbird who make music by means of “...noble accents/and inescapable rhythms...” While not strictly speaking a vocal recording, the album, *Singing in the Dead of Night*, is certainly creatively and evocatively a singing one. Although it is David Lang, Julia Wolfe and Michael Gordon of the formidable group Bang on a Can, who have splintered the iconic Beatles song, *Blackbird*, by reimagining it in five fractured segments of the original lyric in a somewhat darker realm than its original creation, Eighth Blackbird must also be credited with its most magical reconstruction. Instruments – specifically the exquisite manner in which they have been played – don’t simply recreate the whispers, murmurs, moans and groans of the human voice as well as the proverbial flutterings of the blackbird of the Beatles song, but, in fact, propel the music into a proverbial orbit.

Finally, David Lang’s deeply introspective almost operatic meditation *Love Fail* fuels the endeavours of two accomplished chamber groups – the Lorelei Ensemble and the Quince Ensemble. The release of both concurrently is probably a coincidence but to imagine that this fact may not do either release any favours would be a fallacy. Both releases are superb and recommend themselves for different reasons. The Lorelei’s a cappella version affects with a performance that is forthright and deeply moving; unravelling in the ensemble’s wonderfully flexible approach, creating imagery that befits something of great density and import as well as something delicate and light. Quince Ensemble’s performance adds minimalist instrumentation and is equally profound, bringing wonderful shape and motion to the simpler pieces and musical clarity to the most dense.

Together these five recordings offer a rare and uplifting musical repast in this time of great consternation and stress. **●**



STRINGS ATTACHED

TERRY ROBBINS



The compositions by French and non-French composers on **Silhouettes**, the new CD from violist **Dana Zemstov** and pianist **Anna Fedorova** (**Channel Classics CCS 42320** channelclassics.com) purportedly were all inspired by French poetry, a link that seems tenuous at best and in some cases non-existent, but when there's playing as rapturous and ravishing as this, who cares?

The 1919 *Sonata* by Rebecca Clarke opens the CD, and what an opening it is – flowing, passionate, intense and finely nuanced playing from both players in a gem of a work that combines Debussy and Ravel influences with an English mood. The “French connection” is a quote from Alfred de Musset that Clarke wrote on the opening page.

The first of three effective transcriptions of short pieces by Debussy – *La plus que lente* – precedes the 2007 *Suite Op.51* by Netherlands composer Arne Werkman, its *Allemande*, *Branle*, *Pavane* and *Tarantella* movements providing Baroque form for modern musical content. Debussy's *Clair de lune* is followed by Darius Milhaud's four-movement *Sonata No.1 Op.240* from 1944, another work that glances back at the Baroque style. Based on unpublished and anonymous themes of the 18th century, it has a really lovely third movement *Air*, later arranged by the composer for viola and orchestra. The rhapsodic and impassioned 1906 *Concert Piece* by the Romanian composer George Enescu precedes the final Debussy transcription, *Beau Soir*, providing a beautiful ending to an outstanding CD.

Both performers have technique, tone and musicality in abundance, but it's a long time since I've heard such beautiful viola playing in particular, Zemstov displaying a wide range of tonal colour without any hint of the nasal quality that you sometimes encounter in viola recitals.

There's more excellent duo work featuring viola on **Threaded Sky**, the new CD from the **Miller-Porfiris Duo** of violinist **Anton Miller** and violist **Rita Porfiris** (millerporfirisduo.org/store). Their *Divertimenti* CD was enthusiastically reviewed here in May 2017, and this latest recital of short works easily lives up to the same standard.



Three works by American composer Augusta Read Thomas – her complete violin-viola duo music – form the first half of the disc. *Rumi Settings* was written in 2001, its four movements – *Dramatic*, *Resonant arpeggio*, *Suspended and Graceful* and *Passionate* – inspired by the 13th-century Persian poet. *Double Helix* from 2011 was

originally for two violins; *Silent Moon* was premiered in 2006.

Krzysztof Penderecki's *Ciacconna in Memoria Giovanni Paolo II* from 2005 was the last movement of his *Polish Requiem*, a work that took 25 years to complete. Originally for string orchestra it was transcribed for violin and viola by the composer in 2009, the Miller-Porfiris Duo returning some of the omitted voices to the transcription here. *Angel Fire* by the Asian-American composer Bright Sheng has four movements, the third based on a Chinese folk song.

Finally, the very brief *The Weight of Shadows* from 2019, by the Iranian-American composer Mani Mirzaee, uses santoor mallets and not bows to produce sound, bouncing the light Persian hammers on the strings with a dulcimer-like effect.



Niv Ashkenazi: Violins of Hope is a celebration of the artistic and educational project founded by Israeli luthier Amnon Weinstein and his son Avshalom in which instruments that were owned by Jewish musicians before and during the Holocaust are restored and played in the best concert halls by the world's best players, the latter including Shlomo Mintz and Daniel Hope (**Albany Records TROY1810** albanyrecords.com).

Violinist Ashkenazi and accompanist and fellow Juilliard graduate **Matthew Graybil** first became involved with Violins of Hope in 2017, and Ashkenazi is the only violinist to hold an instrument from the collection – in this case an early 20th-century Eastern European or German violin – on long-term loan. For this CD he chose Jewish repertoire that covers the instrument's lifetime.

Robert Dauber's *Serenade* (1942) makes a beautiful opening to an excellent recital that comprises Bloch's *Nigun* (1923), John Williams' *Theme from Schindler's List*, Julius Chajes' *The Chassid* (1939), Sharon Farber's recent *Bestemming: Triumph*, Szymon Laks' *Trois pièces de concert* (1935), George Perlman's *Dance of the Rebbitzten* (1929), Ravel's *Kaddish* (1914) and Ben-Haim's *Berceuse sfaradite* (1945) and *Three Songs Without Words* (1952).

It's easy to understand why the Weinstein family has such trust and faith in Ashkenazi's commitment and performance: he clearly has an emotional bond with this instrument, lending all of these short pieces a beautifully distinctive and idiomatic sound.

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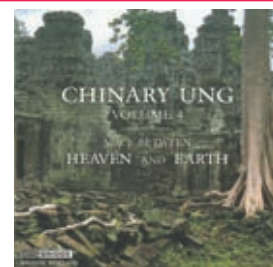
Invisible Ritual
Jennifer Curtis and Tyshawn Sorey
Invisible Ritual is a document of the unique synergy between composer/performer/improvisers Jennifer Curtis and Tyshawn Sorey, under the auspices of the International Contemporary Ensemble.



George Crumb Edition, Vol. 19: Metamorphoses (Book I)
Marcantonio Barone
Vol. 19 Complete Crumb Edition, recordings supervised by the composer, is made up entirely of *Metamorphoses Book I*, Crumb specialist, Marcantonio Barone, piano.



New England Trios
Joel Pitchon, Marie-Volcy Pelletier, Yu-Mei Wei
Trios by American composers Leonard Bernstein, Ronald Perrera & Walter Piston. Bernstein's 1937 trio – one of his earliest works – is dance-like, bluesy, jazzy.



Chinary Ung, Vol. 4: Space Between Heaven and Earth
Chinary Ung
Award-winning Cambodian/American composer Ung's music is suffused with modal and microtonal inflections, drones, elaborate, expansive, and even a languid approach to musical-time.



World-premiere recordings of French Romantic guitar sonatas by Antoine de Lhoyer, Louis-Ange Carpentras and Alexandre Alfred Rougeon-Beauclair are featured on **Napoleonian Guitar Sonatas**, with Montreal guitarist **Pascal Valois** (**Centaur CRC 3733 naxosdirect.com**).

Valois is dedicated to reviving enthusiasm for the guitar's role during the Romantic

era, performing 19th-century repertoire on period instruments and employing contemporary stylistic practices, including improvised ornaments and cadenzas. One such practice here is that of not using right-hand fingernails, the bare fingertips resulting in a much softer and smoother sound. The guitar used is a French model built in the late 1820s by the Mirecourt luthier Cabasse-Bernard.

While the Carpentras *Sonate brillante Op.1* (1816) and the Rougeon-Beauclair *Sonate Op.4 No.1* are both for guitar solo, in the two de Lhoyer *Sonates pour la guitare avec un violon obligé Op.17* (c.1801) Valois is joined by Montreal violinist **Jacques-André Houle**. The violin, though, tends to distract from, rather than enhance the guitar writing, especially being set so far back in the balance – presumably not to overwhelm the softer instrument.

Valois' playing is accomplished, clean and sensitive throughout music that offers a fascinating insight into the early 19th-century classical guitar world.



The **Diogenes Quartett** is the central ensemble on the new CD **Max Reger Clarinet Quintet & String Sextet**, being joined by clarinetist **Thorsten Johanns** in the *Clarinet Quintet in A Major Op.146* and by violist **Roland Glassl** and cellist **Wen-Sinn Yang** in the *String Sextet in F Major Op.118* (**cpo 555 340-2 naxosdirect.com**).

Despite the advanced tonal nature of his music, Reger had a strong affinity with earlier

musical eras in addition to his deep Romantic roots, and the equivalent works by Mozart and Brahms were clearly the inspiration for his own *Clarinet Quintet*. Despite being completed in 1915 the work shows no influence of the Great War, a contemporary review of the October 1916 premiere referencing “the deep, holy peace of a mild autumn evening, which the last rays of the setting sun dress in gold.” Shades of Brahms indeed.

The large, complex *String Sextet* from 1910 is full of the features that have tended to make Reger's music misunderstood and under-appreciated over the years, but is a deeply satisfying work with a really beautiful slow movement.

Playing throughout is of the highest quality on a terrific CD.



There's another CD of the **Franz Schubert 3 Sonatas (1816)**, this time with violinist **Peter Sheppard Skærved** and Julian Perkins on square piano (**Athene ath 23208 naxosdirect.com**).

Skærved always excels not only in his playing but also in his exploration of and critical approach to the original musical sources, and this CD is no different, with 12 pages of fascinatingly detailed and informative notes illuminating every aspect of the

performances. The German violin is by Leopold Widhalm I (1722–1776) with a very early Tourte bow probably from around 1770–80. The square piano is by Clementi & Co., London, 1812.

Skærved's playing here is warmer than in some of his period performances; he's not afraid to use vibrato, but a clear sense of period style is always present. The keyboard obviously lacks the fuller sound we might be accustomed to, but the tonal subtlety and nuance more than compensate. The performers admit to viewing the score as “a map that offers options rather than answers,” resulting in some interesting choices on repeats and frequent moments of surprise, particularly at the end of the *Sonata No.2 in A Minor* where, following the short, sharp final violin chords, the piano resonance is left to die away for fully 13 seconds.



Peter Sheppard Skærved is also the first violinist in the **Kreutzer Quartet**, the performers on **Edward Cowie: Three Quartets & A Solo**, a new CD of music by the multi-disciplined English composer born in 1943 (**Métier Records msv 28603 naxosdirect.com**).

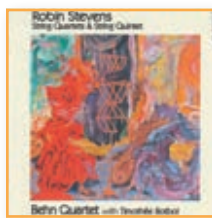
An author, lecturer, academic, visual artist, natural scientist, conductor and

composer with two doctorates including studies in physics and mathematics, Cowie produces music which is a fusion of science, the natural world and visual arts. “I am more inspired,” he says, “by natural history than by musical history.”

Certainly the natural world is central to the quartets here: the two single-movement works, *No.1 “Dungeness Nocturnes”* from 1969 and *No.2 “Crystal Dances”* from 1977, and the four-movement *No.6 “The Four Winds”* from 2012, with the North, East, South and West winds representing the four seasons. It's difficult music to describe, with an obviously contemporary sound but not completely dissonant despite a general lack of melodies and overtly tonal writing, and with a scurrying, restless feel that invokes insects and birds and is quite nocturnal at times.

The solo work *GAD* was written in 2017 for Skærved at his request, and addresses the composer's almost lifelong suffering from generalized anxiety disorder.

All you need to know about the performances is that Cowie says that “no composer could ever be served, illuminated and translated by better or more brilliantly insightful players than the Kreutzer Quartet.”



Another British composer whose name and music seem new to me is represented on **Robin Stevens String Quartets & String Quintet**, with the **Behn Quartet** and cellist **Timothée Botbol** (**Divine Art dda 25203 naxosdirect.com**).

For Stevens (b.1958), the *String Quintet in C Minor* from 1980–81 was his first major composition, revised in 2018 for this

recording. It features lush melodic writing with a truly lovely slow movement. As the composer notes, “unconscious references to, and near-quotes from, 20th-century music abound.”

In his early 30s Stevens was stricken with post-viral fatigue, a debilitating illness that kept him out of work for 17 years and limited his compositional activity to experimental miniatures. On regaining full health in 2007 he began a PhD in Composition, producing a major work in each of his six post-graduate years. The single-movement *String Quartet No.1* uses “a handful of ideas, which are subjected to contrapuntal development of considerable complexity” in a work of “unremittingly dissonant harmonic language.” The *String Quartet No.2*, “*Three Portraits*” has three continuous sections – *Impulsive One*, *God-Seeker* and *Arguer* – followed by a brief *Epilogue*.

A bequest has enabled Stevens to begin recording his considerable catalogue of works; if future performances are of the same high quality as these then his music will certainly be well served.



Finally, if you're interested in contemporary concertos for viola then you should know that the latest CD of music by the Scottish composer **James MacMillan, Symphony No.4 & Viola Concerto**, features soloist **Lawrence Power** with the **BBC Philharmonic** under **Martyn Brabbins** in a terrific performance of the concerto written for Power in 2013 (**Hyperion CDA 68317 hyperion-records.co.uk**).

It's a three-movement work with an ominous, uneasy first movement, a central movement of a devotional character with a lovely main theme and occasional “primal scream” outbursts and a sparkling finale with decided hints of Barber's *Violin Concerto* at the end.

It's a significant addition to the contemporary repertoire and discography. **●**

Beethoven – Lieder; Songs
Matthias Goerne; Jan Lisiecki
Deutsche Grammophon 483835
(deutschegrammophon.com/en)



► A new disc featuring baritone Matthias Goerne and pianist Jan Lisiecki is a heartily welcomed release in what has become a much-curtailed Beethoven anniversary year. This album showcases oft-neglected songs: music that is sometimes given a wide berth by performers opting for more standard cycles from the lieder repertoire. But unlikely corners of the repertoire require unlikely artistic partners as champions and this recital is a case in point for such declarations.

Goerne (b.1967) is, doubtless, one of the most considerate, insightful and committed lieder singers of his generation. He seems to veritably live and breathe this repertoire, always delivering an incredible depth of expression and narrative. Lisiecki (b.1995), while not especially known for his collaborative activities, brings a similar brand of devotion to his art, embracing – with equal measure – the composer whom he interprets, and the listener to whom he performs. This is the common ground between Goerne and Lisiecki and proves an ideal starting point for a wondrous creative match.

Character and conviction are paramount to the poetry and the expression thereof in these songs. Goerne commands every turn and surprise as the well-seasoned pro that he is. Lisiecki follows suit, offering his own arsenal of colours and tonal insights within some rather off-the-beaten-path piano parts. Lisiecki plays the supportive role, never overpowering nor taking the reins too willfully. It's everything one could look for in a supportive musical partner. Thrilling results indeed, as "youth and experience unite."

Adam Sherkin

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Adam Sherkin

Gaspare Spontini – Fernand Cortez
Schmunck; Voulgaridou; Lombardo;
Margheri; Ferri Durà; Orchestra e Coro del
Maggio Musicale Fiorentino; Jean-Luc
Tingaud
Dynamic DYN-37868 (naxosdirect.com)



► In 1803, the 28-year-old Gaspare Spontini, having already composed 15 operas (!) in his native Italy, moved to Paris. There, as "Gaspare," he became a favourite of Napoleon and Josephine, who

commissioned *Fernand Cortez* (1809) as wartime propaganda. The contra-historical libretto by Étienne De Jouy and Joseph-Alphonse d'Esménard depicted Cortez as a Napoleon-like heroic conqueror, benevolently "liberating" the "oppressed" Mexican people while rescuing his lover, the Mexican princess Amazily, and his brother Alvar as they were about to be sacrificed by the Mexican High Priest.

Fernand Cortez was a sensational hit, soon performed throughout Europe. In 1817, Spontini revised it, shifting scenes and adding the role of Montezuma. Today, however, the once-celebrated composer and his 24 operas are all but forgotten. This 2019 Florence production of the original version was its first staging in nearly two centuries.

Heading the excellent cast are steely toned tenor Dario Schmunck (Cortez), the thrilling chocolate-voiced soprano Alexia Voulgaridou (Amazily), tenors David Ferri Durà (Alvar) and Luca Lombardo (Amazily's warrior-chieftain brother Telasco), baritone Gianluca Margheri (Cortez's comrade-in-arms Moralez) and bass-baritone André Courville (High Priest).

Conductor Jean-Luc Tingaud propels the energized score throughout the opera's three hours, including two extended ballet sequences. In its dramatic vocal lines, bold orchestration, epic scenario, considerable length and vivid imagery (the Spaniards' historically appropriate silver-grey armour contrasting with the Mexicans' colourful costumes), *Fernand Cortez* anticipated the operas of Berlioz (who admired it) and Meyerbeer. It's an important – and entertaining! – operatic landmark.

Michael Schulman

Verdi – Simon Boccanegra
Luca Salsi; Marina Rebeka; René Pape;
Charles Castronovo; Wiener
Philharmoniker; Valery Gergiev
Unitel 802608 (naxosdirect.com)



► Verdi's 21st opera about a 14th-century corsair who became Doge of Genoa had a difficult time. It failed at its 1857 premiere but Verdi never to give up, revised it drastically for La Scala in 1881 where it was vindicated, but the opera never

caught on with the public until 1977 thanks to Claudio Abbado and the stereo era. This present reincarnation is from the hands of German director Andreas Kriegenburg who brought it into the present with its political turmoil, civil unrest, urban chaos etc., featuring people dressed uniformly in dark suits running around with smartphones. The set is architectonic, stark and monumental

in black and white and fills the wide stage of the Grosses Festspielhaus admirably while creating a sinister and foreboding effect. Now and again we catch a glimpse of the Ligurian Sea in blue that's picked up in the colour of Amelia's dress, the only colour in the set.

Conductor Valery Gergiev, to whom the director dedicated the show, concentrates on the inner life and conflicts of each character and the lyricism of the music, although the latter gathers excitement and tremendous dynamics especially in the council chamber scene – a gripping focal point of the opera featuring Verdi's masterful ensemble writing. The cast is superb: Luca Salsi is a strong but conflicted Simon Boccanegra with a warm lyrical voice. His *pianissimo* singing of the word *figlia* after the famous *Recognition Duet* is quite incredible. As his daughter Amelia, Polish soprano sensation Marina Rebeka, is a genuine treat and very strong in the high registers. American tenor Charles Castronovo is a youthful, passionate Adorno, her lover. Basso profundo René Pape, as Simon's nemesis, is a dignified, noble Fiesco, with an impressive vocal range.

A memorable musical experience with strong emotional impact.

Janos Gardonyi

Mahler – Das Lied von der Erde
Gerhild Romberger; Robert Dean Smith;
Budapest Festival Orchestra; Iván Fischer
Channel Classics CCS SA 40020
(prestomusic.com)



► "Is it really bearable? Will it not drive people to self-destruction?" Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) asked of Bruno Walter in 1909 concerning his latest work,

Das Lied von der Erde. In truth, few works of art are so life affirming as this supposed "final farewell," especially so when it receives such a compelling interpretation as we have here from the incomparable Budapest Festival Orchestra in this stunningly well-produced studio recording. Scored for large orchestra and two vocal soloists, it is in all but name Mahler's Ninth, and, as he presaged at the time due to his ill health, possibly final symphony. The vocal soloists include the American Heldentenor Robert Dean Smith, who shows some evident strain in the heavily scored *Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde* that opens the work (not an unusual occurrence in this taxing movement). Elsewhere he is much more at ease, lending a winsome charm to the delicate *Von der Jugend* and convincingly swaggering his way through *Der Trunkene im Frühling*. The German contralto Gerhild Romberger, best known for her lieder and oratorio performances, sings with a subtle intensity and purity of tone well suited to her more intimate selections, including

the autumnal *Der Einsame im Herbst*, a rollickingly lively *Von der Schönheit* and the prolonged and deeply moving finale, *Der Abschied*. This album brings Iván Fischer's estimable survey of the Mahler symphonies to a close, with the notable and deliberate omission of the Eighth and incomplete Tenth symphonies.

Daniel Foley

Zemlinsky – Der Zwerg
Philip; Tsallagova; Magee; Mehnert;
Orchestra and Chorus of the Deutsche
Oper Berlin; Donald Runnicles
Naxos 2.110657 (naxosdirect.com)



▶ Watching Alexander von Zemlinsky's one-act opera *Der Zwerg* (The Dwarf; 1921), I was soon persuaded of his dramatically relevant gifts: attractive melodic contours, compelling dialogue and ensembles, enchanting orches-

tration. This DVD features strong individual and group contributions, plus Tobias Kratzer's innovative staging. The latter includes an added Prologue with Arnold Schoenberg's *Accompaniment to a Cinematographic Scene* (1930) music, adding historical and biographical context.

Given the plot of Oscar Wilde's fairy tale *The Birthday of the Infanta*, one expects the unexpected; the Dwarf is a surprise "birthday present" to entertain the Infanta Donna Clara who ends up both playing with and mocking him. In Kratzer's modern-dress version the Dwarf exists in two guises: a singer/composer (tenor David Butt Philip) and a speaking actor of small size (played by Mick Morris Mehnert). This choice is highly effective, with brilliant coordination between the two cast members, and also with two women leads who have to interact precisely with each. Vocally, I was taken with both Philip and stellar soprano Elena Tsallagova as Donna Clara, while the warmth and concern her attendant Ghita (Emily Magee) conveys contrasted effectively. I recommend the women's fine flower chorus with glittering harp and percussion near the opening; soon trendy choristers are manoeuvring their pink phones to take selfies with the Infanta! Later, music-induced feelings warm between the Infanta and the Dwarf; do not miss Zemlinsky's soaring lyricism as vocal lines and complex instrumental harmonies entwine.

Roger Knox

Korngold – Violanta
Annemarie Kremer; Michael Kupfer-
Radecky; Norman Reinhardt; Orchestra
and Chorus Teatro Regio Torino; Pinchas
Steinberg
Dynamic 37876 (naxosdirect.com)



▶ Vienna, 1914: the exotic, erotic and ecstatic sonorities of *Salome* and *Der Rosenkavalier* are in the air and the Strauss-admiring 17-year-old Korngold inhales and transforms them into his own personal style, composing

both the comedy *Der Ring des Polykrates* and the tragedy *Violanta*. In 1916, Bruno Walter conducts the operatic double-bill's world premiere in Munich; that same year, performances follow in Vienna and 11 German cities.

Violanta opens with spooky, harmonically indeterminate ninth-chords spanning over four octaves; the suspenseful, feverish atmosphere will continue throughout the one-act opera's 82 minutes. Soprano Annemarie Kremer is convincingly ferocious as Violanta, persuading her husband Simone (baritone Michael Kupfer-Radecky) to murder Alfonso (tenor Norman Reinhardt), the seducer she blames for her sister's suicide. But when Alfonso arrives, Violanta admits to herself, and to him, that she has always loved and desired him. They join in a rapturous duet before Violanta, shielding Alfonso from Simone, is pierced by Simone's sword and dies.

Hans Müller's libretto was set during Carnival in 15th-century Venice. Surprisingly, *Violanta* wasn't staged in Italy until this January 2020 Turin production, needlessly updated to the 1920s by Pier Luigi Pizzi, typical of today's breed of opera directors who simply can't leave well enough alone. Pizzi's set and costumes, though, are suitably lurid – black, white and blood red.

Bravo to conductor Pinchas Steinberg, who draws from the 11 vocal soloists, chorus and orchestra a truly impassioned performance of Korngold's impassioned, hyper-Romantic, very, very beautiful music.

Michael Schulman

Shostakovich – Symphony No.13 "Babi Yar"
Oleg Tsibulko; Russian National Orchestra;
Kirill Karabits
PentaTone PTC 5186 618 (naxosdirect.com)



▶ In the absence of a memorial marking the scene of one of the many great atrocities committed by the Nazis in

WWII, Dmitri Shostakovich erected his *Symphony No.13, "Babi Yar"* (1962). Initially, Shostakovich set only the title poem by his younger compatriot Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Later, he encouraged the poet to provide more, ending up with a total of five movements, all of them choral settings.

This is post-Stalin Shostakovich, a time when the composer allowed his musical utterances to be "modern," encouraged by the "Khrushchev Thaw." His choice to set a poem that more or less accuses his compatriots of anti-Semitism was nonetheless full of personal risk, given how poorly the poem had been received by critics and the Russian public. Disturbing echoes can be found when one reads the text in today's context, as nationalists again repeat the phrases that disguise hate. The music that accompanies the part of the text echoing Anne Frank's diary is heartrending.

On this recording the chorus, orchestra and soloists are uniformly excellent. Oleg Tsibulko has the classic Russian basso voice, warm and powerful. The recording was made in a studio, but one hears a reverberant hall. At times overbearing, as one might expect given the subject matter, there are lighter moments. The second movement, for example: *Humour* is a celebration of how mirth and mockery always triumph over tyranny; it's a scherzo where Shostakovich pulls out all his favourite tricks.

The text of the other poems veers between subversion and sloganeering, treading a line between orthodoxy and rebellion. The most interesting is the final poem, *A Career*. Its ambiguity is matched quite cleverly to the most tonal and tuneful music in the symphony. Trust Shostakovich to loose the arrows of irony toward an unsuspecting target.

Max Christie

After Silence
VOCES8
Voces8 Records VCM129
(voces8aftersilence.com)



▶ Multiple-award winning British vocal ensemble, VOCES8, has just released a two-CD collection rife with diverse works from Bach, Mahler, Monteverdi, Byrd,

Britten, Dove, Fauré and more. Known for their eclecticism, the ensemble performs in a cappella format, in collaboration with a wide variety of orchestras and specialized ensembles, as well as with noted soloists. The title of this ambitious project refers to a quote from Aldous Huxley, "After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible, is music".

The program here is divided into four sections: *Remembrance*, *Devotion*, *Redemption* and *Elemental*, with each

containing enervating, multi-influenced compositions. Produced by Adrian Peacock and under the artistic direction of Barnaby Smith, the recording utilized the stunning natural acoustics of the Chapel of Trinity College at Cambridge, St. George's Church in Chesterton and St. John the Evangelist in Islington. The uber-gifted members of VOCES8 include sopranos Andrea Haynes and Eleonore Cockerham; altos Katie Jeffries-Harris and Barnaby Smith; tenors Blake Morgan and Euan Williamson and basses Christopher Moore and Jonathan Pacey.

Remembrance begins with the sombre beauty of Orlando Gibbons' *Drop, Drop, Slow Tears*, which initiates the emotional four-song exploration of the depth and nature of grief and loss. Through each track, the ensemble exercises not only magical dynamics, but a breathtaking relationship to A440 and heavenly intonation. The vocal blend and control of the respective vocal instruments here is nothing short of incomparable. *Devotion* examines filial, venal, sacred and romantic love as illustrated in Monteverdi's heart-rending madrigal *Lagrima d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata*. *Redemption* and *Elemental* contain a nearly unbearable amount of beauty, but an exquisite track is Mahler's *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*. In short – *After Silence* is perfection.

Lesley Mithchell-Clarke

CLASSICAL AND BEYOND

L'Unique – Harpsichord Music of François Couperin

Jory Vinikour
Cedille CDR 90000 194
(cedillerecords.org)



► The harpsichord is one of those instruments that simultaneously fascinates and confounds, its plucked-string effect and resulting sound so unlike any

other keyboard instrument that it is without parallel in the realm of modern instruments. Its players, too, can be considered atypical, collecting birds' feathers to harvest and refine the quills, thereby crafting the plectra that pick at each individual string, and exploring repertoire that has often been cast aside by the more conventional pianoforte crowd.

Such is the case with the harpsichord music of François Couperin, a master of Baroque keyboard music whose works have long remained in a niche category – the *Ordres* performed by harpsichordists and the *Masses* by organists – frequently recorded but less often celebrated in wider musical circles. Vinikour's recording demonstrates once again why this is so: Couperin's harpsichord music

is inherently and essentially crafted for that specific instrument, its unique percussiveness and relative lack of resonance.

It is this exclusive reliance on the harpsichord that makes these works so fascinating; in addition to being expressive, articulate and strikingly beautiful, Couperin's conception of these pieces is so specific, both in the written score and resulting sound, that they simply do not work as well on any other keyboard instrument, a point reinforced by Vinikour's measured approach to the *Sixième, Septième* and *Huitième Ordres*.

Couperin, as with much of the French Baroque, can sound frenetic and indecipherable if tempi are taken too briskly and ornamentation loses its melodic intentions. Fortunately for us, Vinikour never loses sight of the melodiousness of Couperin's music, resulting in nearly 80 minutes of utterly delightful early music.

Matthew Whitfield

Froberger: Complete Fantasias and Canzonas

Terence R. Charlston
Divine Art DDA25204 (naxosdirect.com)



► So rarely does it happen that performer, composer, instrument and instrument maker(!) equitably join in artistic synthesis. This new record,

featuring period instrument specialist Terence Charlston, is a fine specimen of expertise and craftsmanship, with each of the above components keenly harmonized.

Today, there remain aspects of Johann Jacob Froberger's art that are unknown to the public at large. The Middle Baroque composer's contrapuntal works, in particular, are relegated to small circles of listeners and scholars – neglected, despite their ingenuity. Charlston understands this all too well. He looks not only to the impressive compendium, the *Libro Secondo* (an autograph manuscript dating from 1649), but to a fitting choice of instrument: a copy of a South German clavichord, the MIM 2160, as reconstructed by contemporary keyboard maker, Andreas Hermert.

Charlston has chosen this instrument for its timbral possibilities and expressive range, even citing a lute-like tonal profile. Infamous for *pianissimo* playing, the clavichord in general has long been commended for its intimate, (even private) character, lyrical and sensitive in its response to the player's touch. Bemusingly, it even boasts *vibrato*, of a kind.

But not a single note of this disc ever sounds too private or too furtive. In the hands of Charlston, his clavichord soars and expands before our very ears. Through this incantation of counterpoint, in turns both exotic and familiar, Charlston reveals a depth

of humanity on par with the great polyphonic achievements of J.S. Bach.

Adam Sherkin

Beethoven – The Piano Concertos Stephen Hough; Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra; Hannu Lintu Hyperion CDA68291/3 (hyperion-records.co.uk)



► Performing – and recording – the complete cycle of Beethoven's piano concertos is a remarkable achievement for any pianist, at any stage in their creative life.

But a recent release from Hyperion Records offers a singular synthesis of extraordinary solo playing, exceptional conducting and exquisite orchestral performance. Breathing vibrant, surprising avidity into all of this is Stephen Hough, with his customary elan. Hough is a tireless artist, devoted to his craft and to the betterment of our 21st-century musical world. At this autumnal stage in his career, he is beloved and with good reason: his inheritance is of that rare and reverent keyboard tradition dating back to Beethoven's time.

Presumably, the British pianist has been performing these piano concertos since his youth and yet, much of the disc's material suggests a re-envisioned approach, a wide-eyed zeal for such canonic works, always tempered, deferential and selfless. Hough brings his experience to bear: such thrilling artistry glistens through every last note – and silence – on the record. We the listeners are gladdened beneficiaries.

Highlights include both final movements of the *Second Concerto in B-flat Major, Op.19* and the *Fifth* ("Emperor") in *E-flat Major, Op.73*, where Hough's superb taste and jovial character are on full display; he relishes such jauntiness with embellishments and good-natured glee. (In fact, he composed his own cadenza for the first movement of the second concerto.) Also of remarkable note is the *Allegro moderato* (first movement) of the *Concerto No.4 in G Major, Op.58*. Hough's carefully synchronized reading of this music is a departure from the norm and a welcome one at that! His lyrical lines skip and soar, caper and cajole with earnest delight. After all, isn't this music at once both so very humane and cosmic?

Admirably, Stephen Hough is donating 100 percent of sales from this new album to the charity *Help Musicians*. An active and noted writer, he recently released an anthology of essays, *Rough Ideas: Reflections on Music and More* (2019). It is published by Faber & Faber in the UK and by Farrar, Straus and Giroux in North America.

Adam Sherkin

Liszt; Thalberg – Opera transcriptions and fantasies

Marc-André Hamelin
Hyperion CDA86320
(hyperion-records.co.uk)



► This remarkable new issue from Hyperion records could be subtitled “Tribute to Italian Opera” because all four masters, Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini

and Verdi are well represented. In the heyday of the Second Empire, Paris was the centre of the universe for presenting grand opera and these composers had success after success, conquering the public with beautiful melodies. There were also some of the greatest pianists around who wrote paraphrases or fantasies inspired by these melodies and thereby spread the wealth, making these operas ever more popular.

Case in point: the rousing tune *Suoni la tromba e intrepido* from Bellini’s *I Puritani* was so popular that a certain countess invited some of the best pianists of Paris to compose and perform variations on it, asking Liszt to organize and contribute to the contest. Some of the other invitees were Chopin, Czerny and Sigismund Thalberg (Liszt’s principal rival in virtuoso pianism). The contest featured rapid alternations of figuration, headlong scales in thirds for one hand or two and hair-raising leaps and many other virtuoso technical feats in each participant’s unique style. Liszt cleverly prepares the ground so the theme emerges gradually from an ominous (minor key) mood into the major key glorious *fortissimo* theme. He also concludes the set with his own *Molto Vivace quasi prestissimo* and wins the contest easily.

Four more paraphrases follow: from Donizetti’s *Don Pasquale* (Thalberg), Verdi’s *Ernani* (Liszt), Rossini’s *Moïse in Egitto* (Thalberg) and Bellini’s *Norma* (Liszt) performed with astounding virtuosity and true Romantic abandon by Marc-André Hamelin. The Canadian pianist of world renown performs on a Steinway grand and let me assure you it will sound as if the piano were in your living room.

Janos Gardonyi

Senyshyn Plays Chopin & Liszt Concertos Yaroslav Senyshyn; Czech National Symphony Orchestra; Oliver von Dohnányi Albany Records TROY1777 (albanyrecords.com)



► Frédéric Chopin and Franz Liszt are two of the great pianistic giants of the 19th century. Their contributions to the solo and concerto genres redefined the limits of writing and

performing for the piano, resulting in almost 150 years of unbroken popularity and affection from both artists and audiences alike. This disc of Chopin and Liszt concertos features the “Number Twos:” the former’s *Concerto No.2 in F Minor*, and the latter’s *Concerto No.2 in A Major*, both interpreted by Canadian pianist and Simon Fraser University professor Yaroslav Senyshyn, with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra.

Chopin and Liszt were masters of harmonic and melodic craftsmanship, embracing and extending the reaches of chromaticism and lyricism to create strikingly beautiful material, such as that contained on this recording. Both concertos are lush and expressive – Romantic in the best possible way – requiring a depth of pathos and flash of dexterity from both Senyshyn and his orchestral colleagues, challenges that are ably and satisfyingly met.

This expressionistic sentimentality, however triumphant or angst-filled, however loud or soft, is fulfilled within defined limits; these are not the thunderous, string-breaking interpretations that can benefit Prokofiev and Ustvolskaya, but rather finer approaches that suit these more delicate pieces. Even when the Liszt concerto threatens to erupt beyond its natural limits, it is held in place by a desire for beauty that permeates every moment of these marvellous essays in concerto form.

While the material is unlikely to be new to many familiar with the piano repertory, this disc is nonetheless highly recommended for its pure, unfiltered perspective of these much-loved concerti. The pursuit of artistic truth over vapid virtuosity and its soul-stirring sincerity make this recording a fine addition to every piano-lover’s collection.

Matthew Whitfield

Light & Darkness – Works by Franz Liszt Martina Filjak Profil Edition Hanssler PH18074 (smarturl.it/light-darkness)



► It isn’t often that you come across a recording so good that you not only want to recommend it to everyone but also gift copies to everyone you meet. The Croatian pianist

Martina Filjak’s *Light & Darkness – Works by Franz Liszt* is one of these discs. Not only does her performance rise to the demanding level of Liszt’s pianism, but in the programming of the repertoire you will find a challenging attempt to paint a vivid picture of Liszt’s multifaceted character and personality at the heart of which was an unbridled virtuoso genius. Liszt’s attraction to Palestrina and early polyphony, and the extraordinary opulence of Ottoman Empire culture is well-documented here as is his attraction to spirituality and asceticism later in life.

To remain true to all of the above and interpret the often diabolical intricacies of Liszt’s music requires uncommon virtuosity and wisdom. Filjak has both qualities in spades. The young pianist has the technical prowess to deal with Liszt’s pyrotechnics and yet knows how to enter the introspective core of *Miserere d’après Palestrina* – one of a set of ten works based on the poems of Alphonse de Lamartine – and the *Ballade No.2 in B Minor*. Her revelation of the mesmerizing range of tones of *Deux Légendes* is brilliant. Filjak emerges as a complete Lisztian, turning what in other hands sounds merely exhibitionistic into a discursive stream of consciousness of the highest order.

Raul da Gama

Rimsky-Korsakov – Capriccio Espagnol; Russian Easter Festival Overture; Scheherazade Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra; Vasily Petrenko LAWO LWC1198 (naxosdirect.com)



► Some years ago, the owner of a new record company asked an experienced A&R man, “How do you know what to make?” The answer? “Look for the composition that has the most

recordings and make one more.” It seems that advice is still being heeded, not only in repertoire but also with conductors.

Three so often recorded staples are given new life in these performances directed by Vasily Petrenko who is not to be confused with the Petrenko in Berlin, Kirill. Vasily has

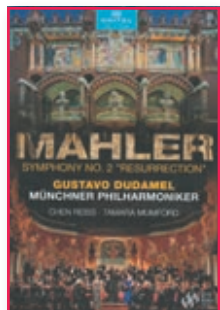
been conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra since 2009 and conducts and records with other orchestras earning enthusiastic reviews. He now has 52 CDs out there, including 16 devoted to Shostakovich.

The immediate exuberance of the *Alborada* opening of *Capriccio Espagnol* is a real attention-getter and sets the level of enthusiasm expected from the orchestra throughout the program. The *Russian Easter Festival* moves from Saturday's religious zeal to Easter Sunday's celebrations. I certainly did not expect to linger on any passages in *Scheherazade* and yet listening to this familiar favourite afresh was an unexpected pleasure. This finely detailed performance demonstrates why Rimsky-Korsakov was regarded by his peers as Russia's supreme orchestrator.

As to be expected, the sound is state of the art.

Bruce Surtees

Mahler – Symphony No.2 “Resurrection”
Chen Reiss; Tamara Mumford; Münchner Philharmoniker; Gustavo Dudamel
Unitel Edition 802808 (naxosdirect.com)



► Filmed in Barcelona's incredibly ornate Palau de la Música Catalana, this DVD commemorates a singular performance of Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony presented on June 27, 2019. Mahler envisioned

this massive work as a sequel to his first symphony, though it took an unusually long time by his standards to complete. It opens with an epic funeral march, originally a freestanding tone poem titled *Totenfeier* (Funeral Rites) from 1888. Following a pause (Mahler stipulated a seldom observed five full minutes), the lighter second and third movements provide a striking contrast to the extreme tension of what has gone before; the second is a genial, folksy *Ländler* while the third is a darkly ironic *Scherzo*. Dudamel's direction here is stylish, supple and very Viennese. Things take a truly cosmic turn in the finale of the work (conceived in 1894) with the appearance of mezzo-soprano Tamara Mumford introducing her emotive *Ulrich* vocal solo, setting the stage for a truly cataclysmic conclusion which storms the gates of heaven itself in a riveting performance featuring the multiple choirs (situated some three stories above the orchestra on either side of a sadly non-functioning organ), thunderous brass passages both on stage and off and the soaring exhortations of soprano Chen Reiss, all united in a thrilling promise of a life beyond death.

The crack video team employs a phalanx

of six cameras, with many shots resorting to extreme close-ups, as the stage is crammed with over 100 musicians and an audience of some 2,000 rapt souls in attendance. The sound is quite vibrant owing to the many ceramic and glass surfaces of the venue. The Munich Philharmonic plays tremendously well and, most impressively, Dudamel conducts the entire 90-minute performance from memory! It's quite the occasion, and a celebration that we shall not likely see again for quite some time.

Daniel Foley

Soleriana – Joaquín Rodrigo Chamber Orchestra Works
Orquesta de la Comunidad Valenciana; Joan Enric Lluna
IBS Classical IBS-82020 (ibsclassical.es)



his international hit *Concierto de Aranjuez*, much of his work, including a dozen other concertos and over 170 additional compositions, remains largely unknown. The title of the CD is *Soleriana* – not only the title of the first work represented, but also a noun of *gravitas profundo*, one used frequently by Rodrigo to describe “purity of the Spanish cultural heritage, undiluted by European influence.” Although Rodrigo was closely identified with European neo-classicism of the 1930s, he imbued his works with many indigenous elements of traditional Spanish forms, particularly dances. This recording presents works composed between 1926 and 1953, and is performed by the noted Orquesta de la Comunidad Valenciana, under the skilled baton of Joan Enric Lluna. The exquisite recorded performance took place in front of an enraptured audience at the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia.

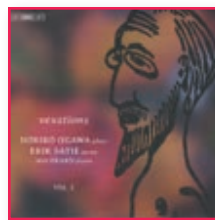
The title work is comprised of *Entrada*, where tender bassoons and oboes are joined by complex Baroque patterns utilizing all the colours of the ensemble; the regal, stirring *Fandango*; *Tourbillon* with its superb use of vigorous, passion-filled and insistent cellos and basses; and *Pastoral*, which is almost spiritual in its musical purity. Imagery of stunning, natural sites is embedded in the music, and the final movement, *Passepié* features delicious entanglements of strings and woodwinds.

Two additional pieces are both breathtakingly beautiful celebrations of musical dance motifs and structure: *Tres Viejos Aires de Danza* and the closing, *Zarabanda Lejana y Villancico*. This fresh, invigorating and masterfully performed project is both an acknowledgment of an overlooked artist and

a marvelous celebration of Spanish culture.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

Erik Satie – Vexations
Noriko Ogawa (1890 Érard Piano)
Bis BIS-2325 (naxosdirect.com)



► Erik Satie – a true forerunner of the Impressionist school or an accomplished but eccentric dilettante? Nearly 100 years after his death, the composer

from Normandy – bearded and bespectacled – continues to be a source of controversy. His music always demonstrated a particular diversity of styles, all of which reveal a strikingly original musical personality – and this BIS recording of *Vexations* performed by pianist Noriko Ogawa on an 1890 Érard instrument, is yet another example of his eclecticism.

The set reputedly dates from the early 1890s. Typically, Satie provided no information about it, the only source being a scribbled single-page manuscript discovered after his death. From the outset, it's clearly evident that this is music like no other. The score begins with a single-line 18-note theme which is then repeated, this time used as a bass line for two voices above it moving in tritone harmony. Following a repeat of the single-line theme, the harmonization is then inverted. According to Satie's instructions, the sequence is to be repeated 840 times! Nevertheless, Ogawa has opted for a more manageable repetition of a mere 142, bringing the length of the performance to a practical 80 minutes. She successfully varies her interpretation through shifts in dynamics and articulation, and in all, delivers a poised and sensitive performance. The result is music which is haunting, unsettling and after a while, possibly even hypnotic.

So, is the final result mesmerizing or futile? Indeed, that would be up to the listener to decide. If you're seeking something light and melodic to relax to on a summer's evening, this isn't it. On the other hand, the ambience created is perfect for quiet reflection or meditation – all we need are the candles and incense!

Richard Haskell

Serenata
Caroline Léonardelli
CEN Classics CEN1022
(carolineleonardelli.com)



► Canadian JUNO-nominated classical concert harpist Caroline Léonardelli describes her third recording as a “homage to her Italian heritage.” Her detailed,

conscientious research culminates in this all-solo, Italian-based harp-repertoire release featuring composers from the 19th and early 20th centuries, a time when the modern version of the concert harp was being introduced. The compositions touch on such influences as fantasies, studies, suites, classical, opera arias and folk/popular music. Léonardelli performs them all with subtlety, virtuosity and incredible dedication.

Title track *Serenata Op.51 No.6* (1910) by Alessandro Longo is an uplifting classical harp work with contrasting high notes and lower pitched lines, glissandos and slight rubatos at the ends of phrases. Luigi Tedeschi's slower *Etude Impromptu Op.37* (1906) is stylistically more Romantic with high clear pitches and sensitive melodic movement. Giovanni Caramiello bases his *Rimembranza di Napoli Op.6* (1877) on two Neapolitan folk songs. The detached effect going into the infamous song *Santa Lucia*, with its high-pitched ringing middle song section, will make one want to listen to the harp instead of trying to sing along! Two Gaetano Donizetti opera arias are featured, one arranged by Albert Zabel and the other by John Thomas. Both become harp arias without words while remaining very true to Donizetti's original works. Virgilio Mortari's two pieces feature more contemporary colours and chromatic melodies.

Léonardelli is an expressive, smart, devoted harp soloist. Both harp fans and those new to this instrument will enjoy her performances.

Tiina Kiik

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

Samuel Andreyev – Iridescent Notation
Dina Pysarenko; Maren Schwier; Ukho Ensemble Kyiv; Luigi Gaggero
Kairos 0015002KAI (kairos-music.com)



► In this latest release from Canadian composer Samuel Andreyev (b.1981), the virtuosic Ukrainian Ukho Ensemble Kyiv and guest solo-

ists expertly deliver a collection of chamber works that highlight an artistic voice of

obvious contemporary importance – a voice well beyond its years in maturity and control of expressive intent.

This disc begins with the title-track work, a piece in seven movements for soprano and ensemble, with text by well-known English-Irish poet Tom Raworth. Here, the strong ensemble writing expertly punctuates elegant beacons that complement the soaring soprano part remarkably well. The extended techniques (unusual ways of playing the instruments) used throughout are decidedly modernist in their application, but the utility of these procedures is not used merely for surface effect: the resultant atmosphere heightens the quality of the text setting through highly creative musical pronouncements. A big standing ovation must go to soprano Maren Schwier for an incredible display of vocal acrobatics and control of colour, in what is quite a challenging work for the voice.

With a collection of works that make use of many impressive jagged gestures that never seem to disappoint despite their frequency, there is a brilliant moment of contrast on the disc in a piece titled *Nets Move Slowly*. Yet. This piece is mysterious and elegant as it unfolds throughout pulsing hypnotic panoramas. Expectations are not redirected through punchy instrumental interjections, but through abrupt yet gentle shifts in mood – a quality that produces beauty through lucidity.

With a collection of successful and sophisticated works, it is no wonder Andreyev continues to make his mark on the contemporary music world. We all look forward to more exciting music from this young talent.

Adam Scime

Belvedere
Jon Siddall
Independent (jonsiddall.com)



► Veteran Vancouver-area composer, guitarist, pianist and music producer Jon Siddall from his website: “I write slow music. With my new album *Belvedere*

I've returned to that approach. The music develops, but slowly, or maybe hardly at all.” Siddall's music could also be tagged minimalist or experimental ambient, genres that Siddall has deep roots in: his teachers have included leading maverick composers James Tenney (York University, Toronto), Terry Riley and Lou Harrison (California).

Siddall plays four of the *Belvedere* tracks on electric guitar, electric bass, mandolin and electric piano. The fifth track, *Hello Snowflake*, is played on the gamelan degung of West Java, Indonesia performed by the eight musicians of Gamelan Si Pawit, Siddall's Vancouver group.

Degung, a kind of tuned percussion ensemble, also features a solo suling (bamboo

ring flute). In this score however, Siddall chose not to use the suling and kendang set (barrel hand drums), but rather adds two kacapis (plucked West Javanese zithers). The result: exclusively struck and plucked sounds which naturally decay each at its own rate, evoking a non-pulsed, unhurried, contemplative mood.

Siddall's rock guitar background shines through in *Bliss Curve* and in the spacious *Belvedere* for electric guitar trio. *Clementine Mandala*, for vintage Fender Rhodes (electric piano), is constructed of a long ascending melody performed at different speeds, superimposed in various ways, a texture common also in gamelan music.

The composer writes evocatively, “Belvedere – is a vista, a beautiful view [to leisurely contemplate]. This album ... invites immersion into that space. It's music for dreamers, music to dream with, music with which to awaken calm.”

Andrew Timar

Quinsin Nachoff – Pivotal Arc
Nathalie Bonin; Molinari String Quartet; Quinsin Nachoff; JC Sanford
Whirlwind Recordings WR4761
(quinsin.com)



► Composer and saxophonist Quinsin Nachoff has been merging formal composition and an expansive jazz vocabulary since conjoining a string quartet and a jazz

group on his 2006 debut *Magic Numbers*. However, the blurring of traditionally distinct musical categories has reached its high point in the three compositions heard on *Pivotal Arc*.

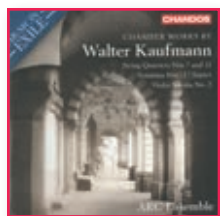
The CD's major work is Nachoff's *Violin Concerto* for soloist Nathalie Bonin, a 46-minute work in the traditional three-movement format. Fusing elements of Berg and Stravinsky and occasionally reminiscent of William Russo's music, the work is written in a heterodox personal idiom for an ensemble that includes the Molinari String Quartet, seven brass and woodwinds, and a jazz-based rhythm section with bassist Mark Helias, drummer Satoshi Takeishi and vibraphonist Michael Davidson providing special propulsion. Conducted by JC Sanford, the performance brims with life, with Bonin bringing a special animation to its tango and Balkan-suffused elements and a cadenza that mingles composed and improvised materials.

Nachoff's *String Quartet* is filled with dense harmonies and sudden explosions, eschewing any immediate references to the elements of jazz. Each of the four movements is based on a different lead voice, the device contributing to each segment's distinctive quality. The concluding *Pivotal Arc*, more traditional in its harmonic language, is also the piece that brings improvisation to the fore, from Helias'

elegiac *arco* solo to Nachoff's own tenor saxophone oration, pensive, expressionist, rhapsodic by turn, whether etched in abrasive split tones or soaring highs.

Stuart Broomer

Chamber Works by Walter Kaufmann ARC Ensemble Chandos CHAN 20170 (chandos.net)



► This, the first-ever CD devoted to the music of Walter Kaufmann (1907–1984), is the latest in the *Music in Exile* series by Toronto's ARC Ensemble (Artists of The

Royal Conservatory), showcasing unheralded composers who fled Nazi Europe. In 1934, the Czech-born Kaufmann left Germany, becoming director of European music for Bombay's All India Radio, composing, conducting, playing viola and piano in chamber ensembles and researching Indian, Nepalese, Bhutanese and Tibetan music. Moving to Canada in 1947, he served as the Winnipeg Symphony's first music director (1948–1958) before teaching ethnomusicology at Indiana University.

Although Kaufmann composed prolifically throughout his career, including six symphonies and over 20 operas, each piece on this disc dates from his years in India. *String Quartets Nos. 7 and 11* receive visceral performances from the stellar foursome of violinists Erika Raum and Marie Bérard, violist Steven Dann and cellist Thomas Wiebe. Raum and pianist Kevin Ahfat collaborate in *Violin Sonata No. 2*; clarinetist Joaquín Valdepeñas and Ahfat perform *Sonatina No. 12* (originally for violin and piano); violinist Jamie Kruspe and cellist Kimberly Jeong join the ensemble in *Septet* for three violins, viola, two cellos and piano.

These are substantial works, in which plaintive solemnity alternates with emphatic, syncopated dances, all heavily imbued with Indian modal, melodic and rhythmic sequences. I found this engrossing mix of European and Asian traditions richly rewarding and hope that this superb CD will inspire more recordings of Kaufmann's music. I'd love to hear them.

Michael Schulman

In Lights Starkly Different Drew Whiting Innova Recordings innova 032 (innova.mu)



► American saxophonist Drew Whiting's wide-ranging musical expertise performing on soprano, alto, tenor and baritone

saxophones, combined with his interest and dedication to contemporary electronic music, make his release featuring seven recent sax/electronics compositions memorable.

In *Lights Starkly Different*, composer Robin Julian Heifetz created loud and hyper-digital sounds using REplayPLAYer software and later processed with GRAM Tools. Chance and notation drive the piece as the tenor saxophone's fast flourishes and tones ground the background electronic crashing, echoes and intense atonal effects. More unsettling sounds in Ed Martin's *Break*, as Whiting plays baritone loud/soft contrasts, wailing atonalities and pitch slides against intense electronic washes and crashes. In *Ötzi* (named after a 5,000-year-old mummy) composer Alexis Bacon's recorded rocks and metal noises make eclectic clicks, crashes and walking sounds against the tenor sax.

For the Fallen, by Judith Shatin, has its slower, lyrical, emotional soprano sax lines lock into electronics created from recordings of Italy's Capana dei Caduti (Bell for the Fallen). Love the multiple contrapuntal saxophone lines in John Mayrose's *Random Access*, as Mayrose uses live electronics to layer Whiting's alto sax (stored in RAM) for effects. In Jeff Herriott's *As brightness is smeared into memory*, the reflective romantic soprano sax part is closely connected to electronic washes. Nathan Edwards' *Saudade Study*, with tonal ambient tenor sax and delay/reverb effects is sad, thought-provoking emotional moods music.

This is contemporary music at its best as Whiting breathes and plays saxophone in contrasting intensities and styles with diverse electronics effects.

Tiina Kiik

Forward Music Project 1.0 Amanda Gookin Bright Shiny Things BSTC-0135 (brightshiny.ninja)



► It is the highest level of artistry that can realize a message, a story or an emotion while seeming to have not performed it at all. This was my takeaway from my

introduction to cellist Amanda Gookin.

Forward Music Project 1.0 is a collection of seven pieces for solo cello and electronics ranging in length from five to 12 minutes by seven culturally diverse women composers. I rarely found myself thinking of the stunning level of execution; I was so immersed in the inspired delivery of these seven miniature works of art. Beginning with Natalie Joachim's *Dam mwen yo*, a picturesque blending of the voices of Haitian women lovingly embraced with cello, to the dynamic and powerfully joyous final track of Jessica Meyers's *Sverve*, each work outlines themes

of the cross-cultural injustice and suffering of women. From one track to the next I was moved by the stunning technique that beautifully unified the collection. Gookin keeps the unique and accessible collaboration on message by including the voices of the composers themselves, available as short descriptive introductions in their own voices on YouTube, thus keeping this album refreshingly free of ego. But the music itself warrants attention regardless of the storytelling.

"For mothers. For sisterhood. For brave storytellers and quiet listeners. I sing, I gasp, I fight, I breathe life into the work of these fearless artists. I founded *Forward Music Project* for you. And you are not alone."

I was woefully ignorant of Amanda Gookin before this inspired listen, but I have surely become among her greatest fans. A significant and most welcome collaboration for the times.

Cheryl Ockrant

Mark Abel – The Cave of Wondrous Voice David Shifrin; Fred Sherry; Hila Plitmann; Sabrina-Vivian Höpcker; Dominic Cheli; Carol Rosenberger; Sarah Beck Delos DE 3570 (naxosdirect.com)



► California-based composer Mark Abel explains in the liner notes that his father was a "devotee" of such classical chamber music composers as Mozart, Brahms, Beethoven and

Dvořák, which clearly influenced his emotionally driven compositions grounded in modern and classical styles.

Abel is renowned for his vocal works. His exciting song cycle *Four Poems of Marina Tsvetaeva* features four Russian poems translated to English for the first time by Alyssa Dinega Gilliespie. Soprano Hila Plitmann sings with dramatic clarity, musicality, tuning and high pitches. Carol Rosenberger (piano) and Sarah Beck (English horn) support with technical/musical control as the words and music are one.

Diverse tonal and stylistic storytelling is featured in Abel's chamber works. *Intuition's Dance* features Rosenberger and clarinetist David Shifrin playing contrasting happy bouncy faster, and slower spooky lyrical sections. Cellist Fred Sherry joins them in the three-movement *Clarinet Trio* in which they each are almost soloists, especially in *Taking Flight*, with its energetic pulsing opening, and upbeat jazz-flavoured closing.

Another wordless musical story suggesting "the subconscious mind's journey through the course of the day" is *The Elastic Hours*, performed by violinist Sabrina-Vivian Höpcker and pianist Dominic Cheli. *What Friday Brought* opens with a positive end-of-the-work-week mood until stuff happens with moody tremolos, and held notes.

Saturday's Circumference is a driving tonal duet featuring intermittent happy toe-tapping and slower reflective sections.

Abel is a compositional master of intriguing contemporary music.

Tiina Kiik

JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

Life is a Gong Show

Songs of Tales

Roots2boot Recordings (roots2boot.com)



► A bewitching collaboration born from the minds of four talented jazz musicians from across Canada, this debut CD is a simple yet complex musical hodge-

podge of eclectic rhythms and meandering melodies brought together by great musicianship. Saxophonist and keyboardist Petr Cancura; Jean Martin on drums, vibraphone and electronics; Jesse Zubot on violin, bass, congas and synths; and Gordon Grdina on oud, guitars and bass, together produce a very apparent likeminded flow of creativity and expression. What really makes this album stand out is the instrumentation featuring the pairing of saxophone and violin that often play main melodic strains together; the tracks take on a unique modernistic quality yet still with a touch of authenticity. Throw the electronics into the mix and you have a truly pleasurable avant-jazz-pop-jazz album.

The record starts off with a picturesque opening track, *Traure*, which calls to mind a scene from a western with a classic cowboy staredown which reflects the fact that partial inspiration for this album is taken from film music. *Burning Bright* takes on another tone altogether, leaning more towards jazz with rhythmic complexity, sax and vibraphone melody and a hint of uncertainty stirred in. The album ends with *Mary Go Round*, a track that conjures up the image of a vast expanse, a melancholic and haunting violin and acoustic guitar theme bringing the scenic musical journey to a close. A truly interesting and inspiring album.

Kati Kiillaspea

Borjoner

Aimee-Jo Benoit and Trio Velocity
Independent (aimeejobenoit.com)



► Famed vocalist Aimee-Jo Benoit's newest release featuring Trio Velocity can be described as "an album of loosely arranged... tunes closest to the heart

of the [artist's] musical journey." The tracks are a collection of songs written by renowned musicians from various corners of the musical universe, ranging from Kurt Cobain to Paul McCartney and Burt Bacharach. Benoit's unique soft-yet-defined timbre combined with instrumentation featuring upright bass, drums and piano enables these arrangements to have an interesting and refreshing twist. Each track has its own story to tell and the vocalist herself expresses her love of storytelling by "using a variety of vocal techniques to convey the narrative inherent in [each] song."

Benoit's interpretation of Cobain's *All Apologies* stands out for highlighting the main recognizable riff while replacing the melancholic tone of the original song with a much more positive one through the use of Sheldon Zandboer's soft and melodic piano theme. *This Flight Tonight* is an energetic and pleasing interpretation of Joni Mitchell's classic tune carried forward by Simon Fisk on bass and Robin Tufts on drums, within which you can hear hints of Mitchell's timbre peeking through in Benoit's vocal styling while she still makes the tune completely her own. For those in search of a refreshing take on modern classics with just the right amount of character mixed in, this album is a perfect listen.

Kati Kiillaspea

Rise and Shine

Grant Stewart Quartet

Cellar Music CM110419 (cellarlive.com)



► A discussion I frequently have with fellow jazz musicians regards what percentage of a musician's time is best allocated towards paying homage to

the tradition, versus innovating. I'm generally of the camp that stresses innovation and modernity, but I have much respect for those who masterfully devote themselves to keeping a more classic style of improvised music alive, with the caveat that this is executed in the most genuine and immaculate way possible.

What could be a better way to accomplish this goal, than to record at the Meccasque Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey locale that has accommodated countless sessions for Prestige, Blue Note, Impulse and CTI, among other record labels? Jazz is a style of music that frequently negates the technicalities of where it's recorded ("it's all about the notes, man!") but a listener would be hard pressed not to notice the unique sound Rudy Van Gelder's studio imparts, even today, four years after the late engineer's passing. The thought crossed my mind how perfectly both Grant Stewart's musicianship and the aforementioned studio fit the mandate of Cellar Music – "timeless, swinging, heartfelt, and

resonant."

Returning to my earlier musings on tradition versus innovation, it strikes me that there is a certain level of commitment necessary to make a recording in 2020 that harkens back to the jazz of the 50s and 60s sound "timeless." Grant Stewart, along with his stellar band and excellently balanced repertoire, demonstrate this commitment to its fullest extent, making *Rise and Shine* a treat to listen to.

Sam Dickinson

Night Devoid of Stars

Daniel Hersog Jazz Orchestra

Cellar Music CM051119 (cellarlive.com)



► Three words come to mind when listening to *Night Devoid of Stars*: sophisticated, assured and grooving. Daniel Hersog is based in Vancouver,

as are most of the excellent musicians in his orchestra, but the album features two special guests: New York saxophonist Noah Preminger and pianist Frank Carlberg (director of the New England Conservatory Jazz Composers' Workshop Orchestra). Hersog's compositions contain many textures and techniques, incorporating contrapuntal movement between horn sections, extended passages with flute and muted brass voicings, other times opening up to feature soloists.

The opening song, *Cloud Break*, begins with a four-note rising fanfare which is thrown around between brass and wind sections, takes on a minor variation and some counterpoint that leads into a free-wheeling trumpet solo from Frank Turner that is both loose and swinging. *Motion* begins with some fine gospel piano from Carlberg, and after the band enters to state a theme, he embarks on a solo grounded in solid rhythm with just enough notes to impart feeling and innuendo without hubris. After a brief ensemble interlude, Preminger lays down a solo that demonstrates why he won a *Downbeat* award. He begins with a sparse and wistful melody, his lines become more fluid, he and Carlberg perform some off-rhythmic riffing, and then he throws in a few angular and aggressive patterns before the band's outro and Carlberg's calm ending.

Night Devoid of Stars is full of complex and surprising moments like these. In fact, the title has to be slightly ironic because there are many stars on this album: Hersog's compositions and arrangements, his featured guests and the very fine jazz orchestra.

Ted Parkinson

Still I Rise
Derrick Gardner & the Big dig! Band
Impact Jazz IJ002
(derrickgardnermusic.com)



► Derrick Gardner's musical journey began in Chicago, where both his parents were musicians and educators, moved to New York for more study, then around

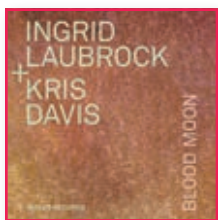
the world as he played in the Count Basie Orchestra and other groups. Since 2011 he has held the Babs Asper Chair in Jazz Trumpet at the University of Manitoba's School of Music in Winnipeg. For *Still I Rise*, an album he composed and arranged, he gathered musical friends and family from the past two decades (from the United States, several players local to Winnipeg and others, like Curtis Nowosad who was originally from Winnipeg but has been making a name for himself in New York).

Soulful Brother Gelispie, is dedicated to drummer Randy Gelispie, and contains excellent solos from guitarist Kasey Kurtz, Mark Gross on soprano sax and Nowosad on drums. *Melody for Trayvon* (dedicated to the teen slain in a "neighbourhood watch fiasco" in 2012) is slower and pensive, reminiscent of Mingus' *Goodbye Porkpie Hat*. *Push Come da Shove* begins with a meditative introduction, then shifts gears when the band enters with a grooving blues riff, and full sax and brass ensemble sections work into a sophisticated trumpet solo by Gardner.

The title piece starts rolling immediately with ensemble sections, some contrasting figures between saxophones and brass and then into an up-tempo solo by Gardner and a trombone solo by his brother Vincent. The closer, *Heavens to Murgatroyd!*, is a playful tune which includes cartoon samples and DJ Stop sounds all over a solid 3/4 time groove. Gardner's orchestrations are expressive and contain full-on band sections as well as more restrained segments. All pieces are between seven and 15 minutes which gives the soloists time to stretch out so we can hear their individual personalities. *Still I Rise* swings from beginning to end.

Ted Parkinson

Blood Moon
Ingrid Laubrock; Kris Davis
Intakt CD 345 (intaktrec.ch)



► German saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock and Canadian pianist Kris Davis met more than a decade ago as newcomers to the New York jazz world. They

soon developed a trio, Paradoxical Frog, with drummer Tyshawn Sorey and have collaborated in various projects, including Laubrock's Anti-House quintet and her orchestral *Contemporary Chaos Practices*. In recent years, each has achieved considerable prominence, recording frequently and topping international jazz critics polls. This state-of-the-art dialogue at chamber music dynamic levels demonstrates why.

Davis' opening *Snakes and Lattice* introduces a partnership of virtuosos as they fly through a complex series of glissandi and tremolos, leaping registers and shifting tempos, all delivered with a kind of playful aplomb. There's more of the same in Laubrock's *Whistlings*, music in which dexterity is not an end but a gateway to new terrain, soprano saxophone and piano so close as to suggest a single musician.

Much of the music here is simply beautiful, but often in fresh ways. Laubrock produces sonorities of rare lustre, while Davis' clouds of limpid notes blur Debussy and Second Viennese School. Their inventiveness and sense of detail are evident in Davis' *Flying Embers* in which Laubrock's quiet long tones and subtly shifting pitches fuse with the sustained hum of the piano strings. Laubrock's *Maroon* moves toward form: initially balladic, it moves through a sustained free exchange, eventually arriving at two distinct voices, a lyric saxophone and an insistently percussive, mechanistic piano.

Stuart Broomer

The Jerry Granelli Trio plays Vince Guaraldi & Mose Allison
Jerry Granelli Trio
RareNoiseRecords RNR120
(rarenoiserecords.com)



► Drummer Jerry Granelli will turn 80 this year and he's had a long and varied career in music, from San Francisco in the 1960s to Nova Scotia since the 1990s.

His stellar contributions there have included a fine Haligonian trio with saxophonist Don Palmer and the late bassist Skip Beckwith. Here Granelli revisits the 1960s when he worked with pianist/composer Vince Guaraldi (including his famous *Peanuts* soundtracks) and the singer/pianist/songwriter Mose Allison, whose light Southern drawl and distinctive creativity somehow fused roots blues and modern jazz.

Granelli's choice of partners here is inspired, creating a consummate balance of polish, energy and invention. Pianist Jamie Saft, perhaps best known for playing multiple keyboards on John Zorn projects from lounge to noise, plays with both verve and drive; bassist Brad Jones leads as adeptly as he accompanies, playing two improvised

duets with Granelli, *Mind Prelude 1* and 2. Guaraldi's masterful pop tunes bracket the session, opening with a buoyant *Cast Your Fate to the Wind* and closing with *Christmas Is Here*, at once wistful and radiant.

Mose Allison's songs get the bulk of the attention, with the trio's combination of rhythmic force and playful post-modernism standing in for the missing lyrics. The roots-evocative *Parchman Farm* goes from a modal approach to a weirdly abstract Saft solo interlude in which blues and soul phrases mix freely with pointillist abstractions, while *Your Mind Is on Vacation* is tightrope-dancing improvisation heading for a melody.

Stuart Broomer

Inside Rhythmic Falls
Aruán Ortiz w/Andrew Cyrille; Mauricio Herrera
Intakt CD 339 (aruan-ortiz.com)



► Pianist/composer Aruán Ortiz has spent half his life in Cuba and half in America, his work linking two strong traditions. One is that of the composer/

pianist as rhythmic/harmonic explorer and sound sculptor, connecting to Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, Herbie Nichols, Cecil Taylor and Andrew Hill. The other is the wellspring of Cuban music, a conduit of African roots into jazz, at least since percussionist Chano Pozo collaborated with Dizzy Gillespie in the 1940s.

Ortiz's solo CD *Cub(an)ism* explored the dual vision of painter Wilfredo Lam; *Inside Rhythmic Falls* extends recent trio recordings but does so with a difference: it's a percussion trio, setting the piano in conversation with two very different drummers: Andrew Cyrille, best known perhaps for a decade-long partnership with Cecil Taylor, but whose 60-year career began by recording with Coleman Hawkins and includes explorations of his Haitian roots; and Mauricio Herrera, who sings and plays Cuban vernacular percussion, some reaching back to Africa: changüü bongos, catá and cowbells.

The music is filled with a special mystery and a rare vitality: the former raises queries about methodology; the latter silences them. The cross patterns of *Lucero Mundo* include speech-like vocals as well as the calm elaboration of complex rhythms, while *Marimbula's Mood* is suffused with hypnotic ambiguity. *Conversation with the Oaks* is abstract musing, à la Taylor and Hill, with Cyrille supporting multiple paths; the concluding *Para ti Nengón* celebrates hybridity, adding three vocalists for a popular Cuban song.

Stuart Broomer

Irrationalities
Petros Klampanis
Enja Yellow Bird YEB-7797
(petrosklampanis.com)



► The personal, profound and eloquent utterances grow organically into and out of this extraordinary music by contrabassist Petros Klampanis together with the

brilliant young pianist Kristjan Randalu and the drum wizard, Bodek Janke. *Irrationalities* has luxuriant and mystical music, played with intimately expressed feelings and emotion.

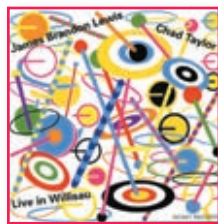
All three musicians have proven their versatility on numerous occasions and their coming together here again, at the bassist's behest, to play his atmospheric music seems to be a divinely fortuitous event. The music that ensues on the recording is something to die for. It is fastidiously conceived and sensuously played. Not a single semiquaver is out of place as Klampanis, Randalu and Janke traverse what seems like one musical epiphany after another.

The performance on *Seeing You Behind My Eyes* is enigmatic. The two parts of *Temporary Secret* are beguiling and *Blame it On My Youth* is simply breathtaking. A rare kind of intimacy and shared enjoyment is all over the performance. Compositions are idiomatically interpreted and every improvisational phrase is seized as if to capture the most ephemeral aspects of musical creation – and that too, with consummate ease.

This music is natural and inspired. Klampanis' powerful virtuosity rumbles with gravitas from the very first bars that he plays. Unusual, even through the darkest tones of his bass, is the manner in which he is able to make it all work, while offsetting Randalu's wispy elegance and quiet charm and Bodek's whispered gentility throughout.

Raul da Gama

Live in Willisau
James Brandon Lewis; Chad Taylor
Intakt CD 342 (intaktrec.ch)



► Heir to unabashed reed/drums experimentation, Americans James Brandon Lewis (tenor saxophone) and Chad Taylor (percussion) equally emphasize links to the

jazz tradition on this exemplary Swiss festival set. Lewis, whose gripping ability to invest animated improvisations with multiple variations on extended reed techniques from call-and-response vamps to inflating glosso-lalia, is substantially encouraged by Taylor's

coordinated strategies. The drummer's substantial rhythmic sophistication is further extended with jolts of mbira (thumb piano) plinks when the program warrants it.

In essence that means that the nine-track set gets more gripping as it evolves. Alongside socking drum beats, the saxophonist ratchets through every manner of altissimo cries and subterranean honks, melismatic slurs and mocking phrases as the two redefine a Coltrane line and their own originals. Later Mal Waldron's obscure *Watakushi No Sekai*, positioned with cymbal crackles and reed-shattering sparkles is interpreted as movingly as is a quietly genial version of Duke Ellington's famous *Come Sunday*. Finally the two respond to vociferous audience acclaim with an encore of a reconstituted *Over the Rainbow*, featuring hide-and-seek divulging of the melody among stuttering reed split tones and percussion clip-clops. But the concert's most telling track and an acknowledgment of departed improvisational masters, is a screaming near-R&B version of Willisee featuring drum shuffles and yakkity-sax variations. This same tune was performed on the same stage in 1980 with equal energy and skill by its composer, tenor saxophonist Dewey Redman, in a duo with drummer Ed Blackwell.

Ken Waxman

A uiš
Jubileum Quartet
NotTwo MW 1005-2 (nottwo.com)



► Four adept improvisation arbiters from four countries assembled for a program of unadulterated improvisation at the Jazz Cerkno festival recently and *A uiš*

is the enraptured result. The title means "and you go" in Slovenian, which sums up the mutual respect and lack of arrogance each displays towards the others' talents.

Tenor saxophonist Evan Parker was present at the birth of the genre more than 50 years ago; French bassist Joëlle Léandre and Catalan pianist Agustí Fernández arrived a little later. All have been in fruitful partnerships with one another as has Slovenian percussionist Zlatko Kaučič, whose 40th anniversary as a musician was being celebrated. Throughout this single 45-minute improvisation the four are always in sync, yet constantly projecting individual tropes: Parker's circular breathing expressions; Léandre's dramatic command of pressurized twang and arco sweeps; Fernández's judicious key positioning that encompasses internal string plucks and kinetic keyboard agitation; and Kaučič's prudent theme patterning that bolsters without bombast.

The piece's texture unfolds with collective logic at the same time as acerbic peeps and sympathetic echoes evolve from single sound

strands to multiphonic emphasis. Yet the transitions, as well as focused solos and duos, arrive and depart with such subtle competence that narrative flow is never disrupted. Rapturous applause at the finale demonstrates not only why the performance is another exemplar of free music but also confirms each quartet member's immense and ingenious talents.

Ken Waxman

POT POURRI

Delicacies in the Garden of Plenty
Sarah Peebles; Kyle Brenders; Nilan Perera
Independent
(secondharvestca.bandcamp.com)



► Concerned about Canadians impacted by COVID-19, Toronto-based experimental musicians and composers Sarah Peebles (shō, electroacoustics), Kyle Brenders

(saxophones) and Nilan Perera (altered electric guitar) joined forces to help. Earlier this year they released their album *Delicacies in the Garden of Plenty*, proceeds from which benefit Second Harvest, Canada's largest food rescue charity.

The eponymous tracks one and four are free improvisations by the trio performed at Ratio, the intimate former downtown Toronto performance space. They feature Perera's delicate experimental electric guitarism, Brenders' saxophonic exploration of "the interaction of intentionality and surprise," and Peebles' chordal performances on shō, the Japanese mouth organ. The slowly evolving music of *Delicacies...* is a testament to the trio's improvisational skill, deep listening and generosity of shared spirit.

The inner two tracks are hybrid soundscape-electroacoustic works by Peebles, featuring the sound of birds, amphibians, insects and water from Aotearoa/New Zealand, masterfully mixed with occasional shō and electroacoustic interpolations. The nearly 20-minute *In the Canopy – Meditations from Paparoa and Kapiti Island* (2005/2020) is the album's standout work. Deeply informed by Peebles' long involvement with sound ecology and biodiversity, she uses her beautiful field recordings of nature sounds and studio-made electroacoustics, layering and extending them into a compelling musical statement.

In addition to learning from the voices of the land, Peebles points out that her approach in the work was informed by indigenous Maori concepts reflecting spiritual dimensions. In this music we get a rare glimpse of the sort of eloquent, non-hegemonic sonic dialogue possible between nature and humans. It's an impressive feat even when

constructed in the recording studio for our listening pleasure.

Andrew Timar

**Of Shadows
Kamancello
Independent (kamancello.com)**



► Last year I reviewed *Kamancello II: Voyage*. I noted that the portmanteau word Kamancello was invented to serve as the name of the Toronto-based

bowed-string instrument duo of Kurdish-Iranian kamanche player and composer Shahriyar Jamshidi, and classically trained Canadian cellist and composer Raphael Weinroth-Browne. Weinroth-Browne is also a member of the progressive metal band Leprous. And his motoric metal cello chops occasionally emerge in his Kamancello contributions.

Describing their music as “East-meets-West,” rendering “improvised performances [that] transcend genres and cultural boundaries,” they take us on another epic musical journey on their new six-track album *Of Shadows*. As on the previous outing, improvisation is front and centre. The duo proudly states as much on its Bandcamp page – “recorded live at Union Sound Company in Toronto ... all of the music on this album is fully improvised and unedited” – lending the musical dialogue an organic quality. Yet there are also well-developed modal-melodic frameworks and formal structures shaping the improvis into a coherent musical narrative.

Individual tracks in *Of Shadows* often commence quietly without pulse, then slowly develop a polyphonic texture through a fluent dialogue between these two sensitive musicians building themes and dramatic tension. Listening to this new album reinforced an appreciation of the timbral differences between the mellow deep cello sound and that of the thinner, higher tessitura kamanche, distinctions effectively exploited by the duo. Yet again, it was the perfect music to accompany my inner journey this evening.

Andrew Timar

**Sounds of Brazil
Angela Turone; Chris Platt
Independent (chrisplattmusic.ca;
angelaturone.com)**



► Angela Turone and Chris Platt, like so many of us around the globe, have become smitten with Brazilian music. Although there is a deep, rich musical culture in that

country that goes beyond bossa nova, that well-known style is the focus of the Toronto-based duo's debut album, *Sounds of Brazil*. Bossa nova has a light, breezy air to it which belies the complexity of the music and the skill required to master it, which Turone and Platt do, with a little help from some friends.

Turone beautifully handles all the piano playing and singing – much of the latter in Portuguese – and her warm, pure vocals really suit the style. Platt does all the deft guitar work, most prominently on nylon string. The duo covers standards by Jobim, de Moraes and others – several from the classic Getz/Gilberto album, which essentially introduced bossa nova to North America – with a few jazz standards and lesser-known gems too. There's plenty of collaboration with local talent, including ethnomusicologist and keyboardist, Gordon Sheard, who produced the album. Andrew Downing's cello work shines on many tracks, in particular on the haunting *Chega de Saudade*. On the sprightly *Doralice*, everyone's agility is on display, in particular Chase Sanborn on trumpet and John Nicholson on flute doubling Turone's vocal gymnastics. The standout, for me, is *Lendas Brasileiras* by Guinga. Gorgeous. The final tune – featuring percussionist Helio Cunha – ventures into samba territory and since that style epitomizes the renowned pre-Lent celebrations in Rio, *A Festa Do Divino*, is a fitting closer to this fine album.

Cathy Riches

**Soul Singer
John Finley
Vesuvius Music (johnfinleymusic.com)**



► Vocalist and composer John Finley's impressive career includes more than 50 years of navigating the heady waters of blues, popular music,

gospel and soul. During that time, not only has Finley established himself as a compelling and vibrant performer, but also as a fine composer and noted crafter of hit tunes. He has shared the stage with an array of top-flight artists, including the Rolling Stones and The Temptations. After an extended stay in LA, Finley returned to his native Toronto in 2018 and subsequently released perhaps the finest recording of his soulful career.

Brilliant producer/arranger Lou Pomanti is a driving force behind this project, having co-written two tunes and performed on piano, organ and keyboards. The fine cast of musicians also includes Marc Rogers on bass, Larnell Lewis and Davide Drenzo on drums, John Findlay and Sam Pomanti on guitar, William Carn on trombone, William Sperandei and Tony Carlucci on trumpet and Alison Young on Saxophone.

Nearly all 11 compositions on this album were penned or co-penned by Finley, and first at bat is *Let Me Serenade You*. Gospel motifs saturate this soulful, B3-driven tune and Finley's well-lived-in, elastic tenor swoops and dips through this joyful track, replete with exquisitely placed horn lines and swinging, rhythmic, background vocals. Other highlights include *GO*, an uber-cool journey into a deep cave of funk and also the enervating closer, *Who Will the Next Fool Be* – a languid, down-home blues tinged with just the right amount of ennui, vigour and regret by Finley. This exceptionally conceived, produced, written, arranged and performed album is one of the most musically and emotionally satisfying recordings that I have had the chance to experience this year.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

**Breath & Hammer
David Krakauer; Kathleen Tagg
Table Pounding Records
(tablepoundingmusic.com)**



► Alchemy is an attempt to turn base metal into gold. That's a bit like what clarinetist David Krakauer and pianist Kathleen Tagg have done with this release. Issuing

a call for raw material, in the form of song ideas, from their various musical friends, they then gave each a treatment blending electronic with acoustic effects. You wouldn't know it from listening, but each track is a mosaic of multiple electronic bits.

The Hammer is Tagg, an adept performer/engineer of the prepared piano who uses her experience in contemporary extended techniques to expand the instrument, unlocking its potential for sounds well beyond convention. Breath is supplied by Krakauer, who is possibly best known for his mastery of the klezmer style, although that is just one of the several musical hats he wears. Per *The Wall Street Journal*: “Krakauer... moves so seamlessly between different genres... you'd almost think there's no appreciable difference between jazz, klezmer and formal classical music.”

You might categorize this as a jazz-coloured klezmer album, the experience elevated or transformed by virtue of the novel sounds produced by the two musicians. Both engage in beat-boxing, bouncing bops of sound out of the bodies of their instruments. Tagg gets inside the lid and draws a plectrum across the strings beyond the bridge, sending shivers up the spine. Soft-shoe breath effects alternate with pop bottle hoots in the intro of *Rattlin' Down the Road*. *Demon Chopper* is great rapid-fire fun. Listen and wonder: “How'd they do that?”

Max Christie

Something in the Air

Novel instrumental partnerships
create out-of-the ordinary
sonic agendas

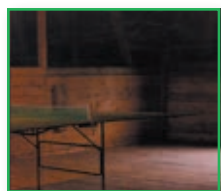
KEN WAXMAN

Just as innovation in jazz, notated and popular music rewrote precepts about harmony, melody, pitch and rhythm during the 20th century, so were the shibboleths about instruments' interconnections remade. With even newer attitudes in the 21st century, pairing two instruments' supposedly dissimilar timbres is no longer outrageous, but can lead to appealing sounds.



Consider for example, **Invisible Ritual** (**Tundra Records TUN 014 newfocusrecordings.com**) that joins Americans **Jennifer Curtis** (violin) and **Tyshawn Sorey**, who plays percussion and piano. Curtis' background includes playing old-timey music and membership in the contemporary chamber group ICE. Sorey composes for ensembles such as ICE as well as gigging as a jazz drummer with the likes of Myra Melford. The pair stretch boundaries

only slightly during expected chamber music violin-piano configurations here. But while there's a near rococo feel when the pianist sticks to prudent and deliberate patterning and the fiddler sweetens textures to the quasi-baroque, other sequences such as *Invisible Ritual III* and *Invisible Ritual V* are invested with dynamic animation. A heavier touch encompassing key clip and clinks from the piano adds swing intimations further propelled by impetuous violin glissandi and, especially on the second tune, triple-stopping variations and col legno taps. Contrast is more markedly defined when percussion is involved. Starting with a folksy exposition, gong-like reverberations and arco string strokes add to the reflective mood. The same sort of savvy is brought to faster numbers. Kinetic steeplechases are propelled by chunky drum rumbles and cymbal echoes from Sorey as Curtis, jumping from strained squeaks to pizzicato plucks on the fiddle, references the heads as they create new distinctive melodies. There's even a point on *Invisible Ritual VIII* where the blend threatens to create a Balkan-style dance rhythm. Versatility and cooperation is most obvious on *Invisible Ritual IV*, where Sorey's beat stretching and ruffs complement Curtis' dynamic moves back and forth from spic-cato to arco, often during the same line. As he slaps cymbal and snares, she heads into hoedown territory and then turns to tough tremolo sweeps to face down the ferocious clip-chop percussion challenge.



The challenge on **Andersabo** (**Johs & John 1 johnchantler.bandcamp.com/album/andersabo**) on the other hand, would appear to be how to prevent timbres from the synthesizer and pump organ played by Australian **John Chantler** from overpowering Dane **Johannes Lund**'s bass saxophone tones. Shrewdly, it isn't an issue. For

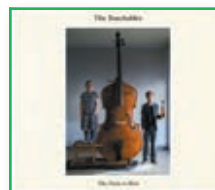
no matter how inflated the keyboard textures become to attain a near hypnotic continuum, Lund's almost continuous reed glissandi judder at the same speed and with the same intensity. Even on the extended *Back of the House* which moves the program to prestissimo, the two stay perfectly in sync. The subsequent brief *Open Field* and *Forest* climbs from barely audible buzzes to climax with scratchy and shrill surges. However the concluding *Under Barn Floor* manages to display both hushed and bold textures without breaking the chromatic line.

As the pressure from tremolo pump organ runs and currents blown from the saxophone without key motion augment, textures bleed together into a solid mass. Eventually though, programmed samples of what could be the sound of waves hitting the shore plus mechanized clanks, whistles and whooshes from the synthesizer penetrate the solid sound block, while preserving calming drones. Although recorded in a residence in rural Sweden which gives the disc its title, the profound control exhibited here doesn't reflect the rustic location, but contemporary minimalism.



Another variant of unusual keyboard-woodwind pairing occurs on **Cell Walk** (**Songlines Records SGL 1631-2 songlines.com**) between **Wayne Horvitz**'s piano and electronics and **Sara Schoenbeck**'s bassoon. Both are American and have worked in the circles around John Zorn and Anthony Braxton.

Trying to avoid the expectations raised by these formal chamber music instruments though, the tracks, recorded in Vancouver and Brooklyn, include both compositions and improvisations. Not that the separation is obvious. Most tunes, no matter the tempo, depend on Schoenbeck's flexible expansion of the low-pitched double reed's characteristics and their symmetry with Horvitz's fluid, but sometimes standard keyboard contours. Mostly the briefest tracks are gentler, vivace and buoyant, intermission riffs for the darker compositions. Some, like the title track, an almost church-like dirge, are legitimately gloomy, since the mournful melody was composed by Horvitz to honour the recently deceased Cecil Taylor. Others, such as *No Blood Relation*, are more calculating, as piano patterns vibrate alongside the bassoon's heavy tones. After the turnaround, she supplely recaps the theme. Well reasoned, *Ironbound* gets its pressurized motion from the bassoonist's dissonant colouring that increases tension at the same time as the pianist ranges over the keyboard to maintain horizontal pacing while creating multiple theme variations. Tougher and more notable are *The Fifth Day* and especially *We Will Be Silk*. Longest of the set, the first tune is mid-range and concentrated, with reed snarls and piano clinks harmonized as they repeat the melody that climaxes during a section where Schoenbeck's slurs and Horvitz's elevated key tinkles move the interpretation along unexpected avenues without losing the theme. A flat-out improvisation, *We Will Be Silk* is built on contrasts between the bassoonist's hard nasal strains and the pianist's internal string and soundboard plucks and clicks. Since this improvisation's finale is as clear and solid as any other track, it would have made the session more imposing if the program had been looser to produce more tracks like it.



Although they're from the same instrumental family almost no one has previously created a duo matching the tiny piccolotto violin and the giant octobass until **The Touchables** came along. On **The Noise is Rest** (**Conradsound CNRD 328 conradsound.com**) Norwegians, fiddler Ole-Henrik Moe and bassist Guro Skumsnes Moe range through eight improvisations that not only reach the far boundaries of treble and bass tones, but also easily create textures that squeeze past what's expected from string sets. Mixing wood-rending pulls, taut string pressure and spic-cato drones, the two also maintain a discordant continuum throughout. Often the piccolotto shrills reach such elevated pitches that it could be electronic voltage being pushed into the improvisations. Ocean-liner-whistle vibrations from the octobass regularly descend to such a sunken state that passing tones bond into multiphonics, filling every crevice of the audio space. A track such as *Peace Ghost*, which in itself is wilder and louder than those that precede it, includes such sharp, shimmering violin timbres that the resulting echoes are almost brass-like, whereas *Byalullalandbird*'s slick mid-range bass glissandi sound with such fluidity that the closest resemblance would be to low-pitched reed split tones. By the final *Deserted Desert*, wide-ranging col legno strokes and pointillist screeches from both instruments combine with triple-stopping piccolotto shrills and moderated arco string buffing from the

octobass. Eventually a calming climax is attained as tension-diffusing air currents complete the arrangement.



If the other CDs highlight unexpected and unprecedented extended acoustic techniques, the Viennese duo on **Jardin des Bruits** (Mikroton CD 91 mikroton.net) extend the intonation still further. That's because the electric guitar interludes of **Burkhard Stangl** are mated with the sounds of Paris streets and subways that were

recorded, collated and modified by turntablist **dieb 13**. Over the course of 20 (!) tracks that range from a few seconds to nine minutes dieb uses found sounds such as human voices, footfalls, car horn blasts and the regularized thump of road traffic as leitmotifs. Alternately he weaves the textures into an outpouring of crackles, static and voltage tremors to aurally reflect certain areas around the French

capital. Simultaneously he alters their sonic properties by replaying the sounds at various speeds as well as adding vinyl-sourced noises. Meanwhile Stangl's warm finger-style plucks add the human element. Not that the guitar approach is Arcadian though, except on tracks like *Jardin des Plantes* where soothing strings intersect with the noises of children. The truthfully titled *Noisy Track* on the other hand is almost eight minutes of Stangl mobilizing his most distorted Hendrix-styled fuzz tones that catapult timbres within the accelerating stylus-on-turntable crackles and buzzes created by dieb. Reaching a crescendo of Hawaiian-styled fretting, guitar lines cut through the static and then slowly fade. Elsewhere, the two variants of *Gezirpe* (stagnant water) unroll with single treble notes from the strings alongside aviary and insect-like whistles and chirps. Throughout, collision with sampled gongs, rumbles, clatters and screeches and well-thought-out, descriptive string patterns confirms that an illuminating sound picture can be built up from onomatopoeic suggestions. Plus the disc provides one more instance of unforeseen duos creating exceptional programs. **O**

Old Wine, New Bottles

Fine Old Recordings Re-Released

BRUCE SURTEES



The late **Isaac Stern** exhibited the highest level of musical taste and a charisma on stage, qualities that uniquely come through in his recordings, particularly those from his early years. The young Stern was a highly first-class violinist and virtually one of the best in history. He had a lush, beautiful incandescent sound, perfect intensity and power. He concentrated on music for its

own sake and generally did not present fireworks displays although he was perfectly capable of doing so. On **Isaac Stern - The Complete Columbia Analogue Recordings** we find him featured more in the repertoire of the likes of Mozart, Schubert and Brahms. He was also deeply involved in chamber music which was a big part of his activities. As a young man he was one of the busiest musicians anywhere and was in high demand as a guest artist by the likes of the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Boston Symphony, and distinguished conductors such as Bruno Walter. He was also to be heard in chamber music festivals including the now legendary Casals Festival in Prades. Stern regularly appeared with the most respected musicians such as Dame Myra Hess, William Primrose and David Oistrakh. His early (November 1951) recordings with Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic playing the Brahms and Sibelius Violin Concertos remain the most impressive performances compared with anyone else, even his own later recordings of these works. His programs were the epitome of serious musical thinking and were influential on violinists who followed. As an example, programs by such artists such as Kreisler, Elman and even Heifetz could include concertos in which the orchestral part was played by the accompanying piano. This convention was eliminated in Stern's recitals, setting an example, and today it is gone.

Stern was born in Kremenchuk, Ukraine in 1920 and was brought to San Francisco as an infant. His mother was a singer and he began musical studies at home. He studied violin with Naoum Binder and Louis Persinger, making his debut at the age of 11 with the San Francisco Symphony. His New York debut was on October 11, 1937. His tour of Russia in 1956 was a triumph. There was a story going

around many decades ago that I first heard in Australia. It concerns a group of young string players in San Francisco playing for pleasure in their home. A passerby who turned out to be Isaac Stern, heard them and asked if he might join them. He did. True or apocryphal, it is a nice story.

As a centenary tribute, Sony has issued Stern's analogue recordings in a 75-CD set containing all those wonderful Columbia mono and stereo riches, carefully and knowingly prepared from the original sessions. Checking the dates on the genesis of each disc, Stern's first recording was on April 26/30, 1945 in Columbia's New York studios playing Beethoven's *Violin Sonata No.7 in C Minor, Op. 30 No.2*. The pianist was Alexander Zakin, Stern's accompanist from 1940 to 1977. On the same disc is Mozart's *Violin Concerto in G Major, K216* recorded with Stern also conducting a chamber orchestra on March 28, 1950. This is the most musically exquisite performance one could ever hope to hear.

These are all irreplaceable performances from his vast recorded repertoire of the most beloved concertos, sonatas, melodies et al., and here are just a few reminders: five CDs from the Casals Festival at Prades featuring, in various combinations, Dame Myra Hess, Alexander Schneider, Paul Tortelier, Milton Thomas, John Wummer, Eugene Istomin, Milton Katims and Madeline Foley. Lalo's five-movement *Symphonie Espagnole in D Minor* is conducted by Eugene Ormandy coupled with the Max Bruch *Concerto No.1*. There are Prokofiev's First and Second Violin Concertos conducted by Leonard Bernstein, and the Brahms Double Concerto with Leonard Rose, Bruno Walter conducting the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York before they became the New York Philharmonic.

So well-remembered is the trio of Isaac Stern, Leonard Rose and Eugene Istomin who recorded the complete Beethoven trios between 1965 and 1970 and the complete Brahms trios in 1964-70. Here they all are in pristine sound. Also the Stravinsky Violin Concerto with the composer conducting, from 1961. Even in this syncopated, jaunty piece the signature Stern sound beams. Add the "Concert of the Century" in Carnegie Hall on May 18, 1976 featuring Bernstein and the NY Philharmonic, Rostropovich, Horowitz, Fischer-Dieskau and the Oratorio Society of New York.

LEON FLEISHER

(July 23, 1928 – August 2, 2020)

The Music is the Star

PAUL ENNIS



Profil has issued a ten-CD set of notable performances conducted by Jascha Horenstein, **Jascha Horenstein Reference Recordings (Profil Edition Hänssler PH19014 naxosdirect.com)**. Horenstein was born in Kiev in 1898 and died in London in 1973. His family moved to Vienna in 1911 and in 1916 he was studying at the Vienna Academy of Music, including compos-

ition with Franz Schreker. In 1920 he went to Berlin and became an assistant to Wilhelm Furtwängler. In the 1920s he conducted the Vienna Symphony and the Berlin Philharmonic. He became music director of the Düsseldorf Opera in 1929, getting out in 1933 ahead of the Nazis. He moved around, travelling as far as Australia before settling in New York in 1939. In 1947, he returned to Europe and conducted in Paris, Vienna, Bamberg and also Baden-Baden, the home of the Sudwestfunk Broadcasting Company whose SWF Symphony Orchestra was second to none. In his last years he was conductor of the LSO.

Perhaps because he was not connected to any one orchestra, the major record companies effectively had no interest in preserving his performances or they would have done so. In the 1960s and 1970s many avid in-the-know music lovers and collectors relied upon smaller independent companies to deliver Horenstein recordings. Vox issued a few, as did Unicorn, Music and Arts, and Koch, and the BBC issued some of their own. For this edition, Profil has selected 22 first-class Horenstein recordings.

Outstanding performances include Liszt's *A Faust Symphony* with the choral ending; also Wagner's *A Faust Overture* both from the SWF orchestra and chorus. Other highlights include the *Eroica* with the Vienna Pro Musica and an extraordinarily powerful *Death and Transfiguration* with the Bamberg SO. No less impressive are the Mahler First and Third Symphonies and *Kindertotenlieder* (Heinrich Rehkemper) and the Bruckner *Eighth*. A list of the works would be too long but here are the composers: Bruckner, Mahler, Hindemith, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Ravel, Bartók, Janáček, Wagner, Brahms, Liszt, Beethoven and Richard Strauss. Orchestras are the LSO; Pro Musica, Wein; SWR Symphony, Baden-Baden; Colonne Concerts Orchestra, Paris; Orchestre Radio Symphonique, Paris; the Berlin State Opera Orchestra; the ORTF and the Bamberg Symphony. Soloists are Claudio Arrau, David Oistrakh, Vlado Perlmutter and Ivry Gitlis.

Horenstein conducted every work as if it were the most interesting and important composition ever before him. He demonstrated a concentration and focus that breathed new life and dimension into the most familiar works. The tuttis are organic. His commanding performances are persuasive and consistently engaging. ●

Leon Fleisher devoted his life to the piano, first as the foremost American pianist of his generation. The much-lauded collection of LPs he recorded in the 1950s and 60s was capped by a matchless collaboration with George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra. Then, in 1965, he found it difficult to use the fingers of his right hand, a condition diagnosed as focal dystonia, restricting his repertoire to pieces written for the left hand. But his musical reach grew in other ways – conducting and teaching.

Based in Baltimore at the Peabody Institute from 1959 on, he also taught at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia (1986–2011) and in Toronto, where he was one of the cornerstones of the Glenn Gould School, occupying the Ichnatowycz Chair in Piano. In his late 60s, Fleisher regained the use of his right hand with botox and rolfing treatments and resumed limited concertizing and recording (as detailed in the 2006 Oscar-nominated short film, *Two Hands*, available on YouTube).

One measure of the man can be gleaned by the memorable masterclasses he gave during his frequent visits to Toronto (of which I was fortunate to audit 27, between November 2014 and April 2019). They were inspirational and memorable, strewn with anecdotes and words of wisdom. All in the service of bringing the notes on the page, the composer's intentions, to the fore. "In our celebrity-based culture we are not the stars. We are indispensable, [we're] needed to bring the music to life," he said. "[But] the music is the star."

Fleisher always sat in the front row of Mazzoleni Hall, aisle seat on the left side, with the score on a music stand in front of him. When a student finished their presentation Fleisher stayed seated, silent for a long moment. He then asked the student if they had any concerns about what they had just played – anything that Fleisher might help with. I remember one student voicing concern about his nerves prompting Fleisher to illustrate a case of nerves by one of the greatest composer/pianists of the 20th century.

Fleisher was five years old at the time and had been taking piano lessons for six months. His mother took him to hear Rachmaninoff at the War Memorial Concert Hall in San Francisco. After the concert, his mother dragged him backstage to meet the great musician, who suffered from nervous tension whenever he was onstage. Fleisher's



JOANNE SAVIO

memory was clear: “He was very tall, short haircut, face lined like the map of Russia.” In a heavy Russian accent, Rachmaninoff asked Fleisher, “You, pianist?” A pause. “*Bad business ...*”

Fleisher’s conclusion: “There are bad nerves and good nerves. How much of what I want to do will I be able to communicate? That’s the good nerves.”

At one masterclass I attended, on November 29, 2014, Fleisher was into the second piece of the morning masterclass when Brahms’ *Piano Quartet in C Minor Op.60* triggered a recollection: “I had the pleasure once – and it really was a *pleasure* – of playing this with three guys named Jascha [Heifetz], Grisha [Piatigorsky] and William [Primrose].” What did he remember? That there was no piano in the green room in the hall in San Francisco, which upset Fleisher, prompting Piatigorsky to calm his nerves: “Leonski, warming up before the concert is like doing breathing exercises before dying.”

The next day after listening to Rebanks Fellow Jean-Sélim Abdelmoula play Beethoven’s penultimate piano sonata, *Op.110*, Fleisher mused: “It suddenly occurred to me that Beethoven has innumerable ways of expressing his final journey into heaven. I’m getting to that point myself,” he said. “How does one face the end of this life and the beginning of the next?”

When Fleisher was nine, the legendary pianist Artur Schnabel invited him to be his pupil, first in Lake Como, Italy, then in New York. “For ten years I studied with one of the great teachers of the 20th century – for two years after, I was absolutely lost until I discovered that everything he taught me was lodged in my cerebellum and it was just a matter of uncovering it,” he said. “One of the ways to do this is by singing the notes and the rhythm (and deciding whether the consonant is soft or hard). Singing gives you a much clearer idea of what you’re facing.”

For 60 years Fleisher continued a musical legacy traceable directly back to Beethoven through Schnabel and Schnabel’s teacher Theodor Leschetizky who studied with Carl Czerny, Beethoven’s pupil.

Schnabel references were plentiful in Fleisher’s masterclasses, especially when discussing music by Beethoven and Schubert. Looking back over my records, I see that on April 21, 2017, a student playing Brahms’ *Intermezzos Nos. 4-6, Op.116* triggered Fleisher’s analytical instincts before he settled into a surprising Schnabel anecdote. “We work in two dimensions simultaneously: sound – loud and soft and everything in between – and time, which can be strict or with a degree of flexibility. I think time is the more difficult dimension to work in because the pulse can easily become mechanical sounding. A curious thing – Brahms’ music flows at a specific personal rate – it flows more like lava than water. And there’s a richness and a warmth to it.”

And then the anecdote: “My teacher, Schnabel, let it drop very casually one day in a lesson, that he had known Brahms. Brahms had a habit in Vienna on Sunday of going into the Vienna woods with a basket for a picnic. The little Schnabel went along one day. Brahms asked, ‘Are you hungry?’ before [commencing eating]. And after he asked, ‘Have you had enough?’ – and that was his conversation with Brahms.”

At that point, Fleisher got up and moved to the piano, accompanying the student in the upper octaves of Brahms’ fourth intermezzo, but with his left hand. It was truly inspirational. And with his singing, he coached a much better performance. “Good. That was a good sound. And now the memory of something

so fragile – when a phrase is repeating it’s not necessarily an echo but a chance to do it more beautifully. It’s a memory, very fragile. If you do too much it will disappear – be very still.”

Another tack he took with a student was to ask “To what extent were you successful in doing what you tried to do?” – an opening gambit designed to encourage scrutinizing the score and elevating the student’s performance. He never missed a chance to make one of his favourite points: “Music is a horizontal activity that goes through all sorts of adventures – everything has to be part of the entire *arc* – it is filled with vertical events like beats in a bar – the danger is that it is filled with coffin nails.”

Fleisher’s pedagogy was filled with aphorisms. “Playing beautifully is not necessarily beautiful music.” Or “A metronome is a machine; it has nothing to do with music.” And “Romantic means playing long notes short and short notes long.” He always deferred to the score: “You are the actor; the music is the director.” And paradoxically (discussing Schubert’s *Sonata D958*): “In time you can build the structure with slight rhythmic distortions. Great art in a sense always involves healthy distortion.”

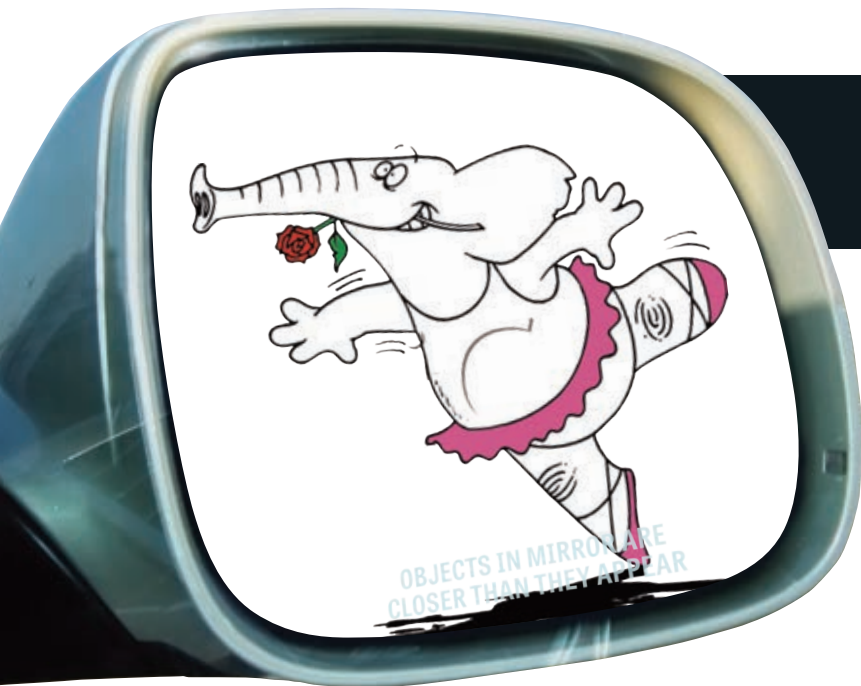
Other comments reflected Fleisher’s playful mind: he once described Beethoven’s markings in the fourth movement of his *Sonata No.13 “Quasi una fantasia”* as not just accents – “Beethoven has a habit of poking his elbow into your ribs.”

And his analytical prowess: “Of music’s three elements, rhythm is the most important. Harmony – because you can make thousands of harmonies with melody – is next. Melody is the least important.” And: “You’re made up of three people: Person A imagines how the piece should be before they play – their ideal, their goal; Person B actually performs it; Person C listens to Person B and if it’s not what A intended, C tells B who makes adjustments. This is a constant aspect of performance.”

And above all his delight in it all: To a student on February 11, 2018 after the first movement of Beethoven’s *Sonata No.11, Op.22*: “You leave me speechless ... I don’t come here to be blown away but when I am, it’s a great pleasure.” A few minutes later, the student smiled as she played the second movement accompanied by Fleisher’s left hand at the top end of the piano. ●

To experience Fleisher’s inimitable approach, watch his March 31, 2004 masterclass on YouTube from Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, with the 17-year-old Yuja Wang playing Schubert’s Sonata No.19 D958 when she was a student at the Curtis Institute.

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.



REAR VIEW MIRROR

COVID's Metamorphoses

ROBERT HARRIS

I think it's becoming clear that, at least here in North America, the unimaginable is going to be a reality.

There just aren't going to be any major live performing arts events for us to go to for a year. Maybe longer. The Toronto Symphony has cancelled its entire planned season; Music Toronto the same. The COC has cancelled its productions at least until January, as has the National Ballet. No *Nutcracker* in Toronto for the first time since 1955.

But the shade of the pandemic hasn't just denied us opportunities to witness performances. Beyond all the artistic and financial consequences of the virus, three major musical organizations in Toronto in the midst of institutional renewal have had those plans severely upended. Gustavo Gimeno will have to wait a year before he can conduct the TSO as its new music director from the podium in Roy Thomson Hall. The next general director of the COC, to replace Alexander Neef in September 2021, might not have a season to produce for some time, and the fascinating new spirit that Elisa Citterio has brought to Tafelmusik has been forced into relative hibernation just as it was blossoming. The virus burrows deeper and deeper into our lives as it continues unabated.

And so it is becoming clearer that the long-term effects of the disease are taking on increasingly radical proportions. We have underestimated the significance of the pandemic repeatedly since it first made its appearance. We continue to do so, and I shudder to think what will happen when a second wave of the virus comes smack up against our regular flu season. With each passing day, the potential for the virus to seriously disrupt and change central aspects of our lives increases. We're not going back to normal, I think. That normal is a thing of the past.

So what might that mean for classical music?

Potentially a great deal. We have forgotten through numb repetition that the conventions of classical music we adhere to and revere are more or less arbitrary: that they have changed over the centuries a great deal, and are always a response to relatively mundane conditions surrounding music's performance spaces, audience composition, economics – the complete day-to-day enterprise of getting it made. A pretty cogent argument can be advanced that the symphonic and operatic music we love and cherish today, mainly that of the late 18th and 19th centuries, was created because of an increase in size of performing venues, an increase in size which was itself a response to the changing economics of classical music and the need for larger middle-class audiences to replace disappearing aristocratic patrons.

This in turn led to new instruments of increased volume, new techniques of playing (to impress other than the cognoscenti) eventually new forms of composition. It's a complicated and subtle chain, but a very real one, even if it flies in the face of our Romantic ideas about genius and inspiration. Form follows function, as they say. Or, to be Marxist about it – the means of production of music, based on the economics of the production of music, create the music itself. Not the other way around.

So, with that in mind, what happens if the ramifications of COVID-19 create another revolution in the way we listen to and pay for classical art, not just for a season or two, but forever. What happens if those palaces of music – our symphony halls and opera theatres, with their 2,000 closely packed seats and relatively small lobbies, become complete white elephants? How will we pay for our symphonic and operatic art? And what kind of art will we need if the spaces where it is performed become more intimate, and the expected price to pay for access to those spaces substantially higher? What do we perform? What do we write? What instruments do we need for these conditions; what instruments no longer work? What techniques

Form follows function, as they say. Or, to be Marxist about it – the means of production of music, based on the economics of the production of music, create the music itself. Not the other way around.

do we teach students to play them?

And more significantly, what role will the music play in society altogether? Although we are losing the power of this trope as we march through the 21st century, it's clear that classical music in the 19th and 20th centuries, was the music most emblematic of the rising bourgeoisie, the middle class. For that class, classical music was presented as an all-encompassing, powerful art form, symbolized by opera and the symphony orchestra (both of which were extremely populist in the late 19th century) that was intended to provide a highest-common-denominator unifying aspect to society. And that identification of classical music with the middle class continued right through to the invention of mass 20th-century technologies.

We forget now (if we ever knew it) that classical music was right at the heart of the emerging populist recording and radio industries in the first decades of the 20th century. The first million-selling record

was by Caruso; the NBC Symphony was a staple fare of radio listening for all of North America several times a week in the 1930s and 40s (it's how my parents, for example, and others of their generation, learned to love classical music, by listening to it on the radio – after Amos 'n' Andy and before *The Lone Ranger*). The massive classical hall was the symbol of this unifying power of classical music. So what happens when those venues disappear, if they do? What happens to that unifying ability of classical music? Yes, you can argue that the above-mentioned unifying, big-tent social mandate has been lost to classical music for some time now, and it's a valid argument. But what takes its place? Who do we now think classical music is for? Which is another way of asking *what* do we think classical music is for?

I have no answers to any of these questions, and it's possible that my imagining their necessity will be entirely misplaced. Maybe a vaccine for COVID-19 will save the day, the threat will be eliminated, and we all happily go back to our former lives and habits, with this past year just a weird collective hallucination. But even if that is the case, I'm pretty sure that the experiences we've been going through over the past few months are going to have some impact on the classical world, beyond the immediate cancellations and displacements. Maybe international travel becomes permanently changed, so that the highly international nature of top-tier classical soloists and conductors is compromised. Maybe the many – some successful, some less so – virtual concerts will spark some new ideas for audience creation and interaction within the classical world. Maybe some other, completely unanticipated aspects of the performing conditions of the past few months will spark something interesting.

I have to admit I'm sort of hoping for at least a mini-revolution. I've hated the ultra-conservative nature of the classical world ever since I first discovered it in my early teens. To me the world of classical music is, and has always been, a revolutionary, explosive, intellectually and emotionally devastating art form – demanding a complete and frightening commitment from the listener, with the possibility always just around the corner, in the next phrase, or bar, or movement, of a complete, refiguring, disturbing revelation.



Busking outside Roy Thomson Hall – a musical ecosystem.

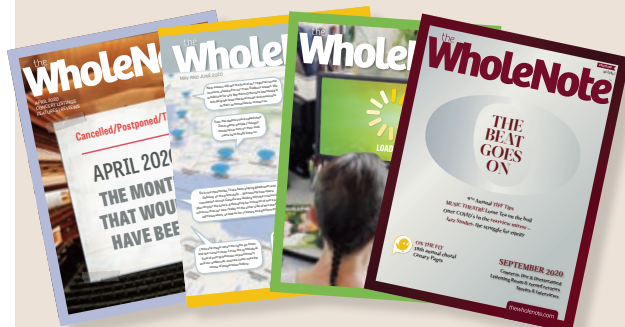
COSMO CONDINA NORTH AMERICA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

If COVID-19 forces us to recover that game-changing nature of classical music, it will be a miraculous transformation – one good thing, among a host of horrible ones, about it. Until then, I guess we're stuck with our virtual offerings, the occasional outdoor concert, and a deep yearning to go back to the symphony, ballet and opera. Whether we ever will is, I think, up for grabs. **●**

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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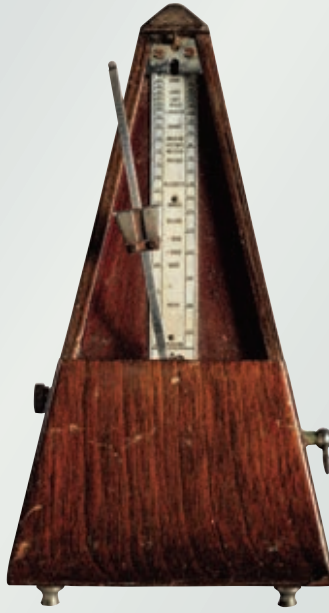
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