

# the WholeNote™

Volume 26 No 8  
SUMMER 2021



Events by date, live and livestreamed  
Stories & interviews  
100 recordings reviewed  
Listening Room



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# the WholeNote

Volume 26 No 8 | June 21 – September 14, 2021

## ON OUR COVER

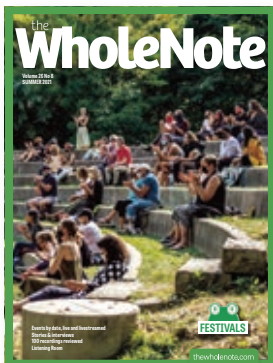


PHOTO: DAHLIA KATZ

### *Dance in High Park, September 2020*

The thing I'll never forget is the feeling of hearing and seeing applause, and a standing ovation. That kind of tangible human celebration, consensus (despite the physical distance). The shared gratitude for the hard work on and off stage to provide uplifting performance experiences during the weirdest time in the pandemic... it's like I could SMELL hope coming up from under the soil. This summer it's actually going to bloom.

— Dahlia Katz

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WholeNote Media Inc.

Centre for Social Innovation

720 Bathurst St., Suite 503, Toronto ON M5S 2R4

PHONE 416-323-2232 | FAX 416-603-4791

**Publisher/Editor in Chief | David Perlman**

[publisher@thewholenote.com](mailto:publisher@thewholenote.com)

**Chairman of the Board | Allan Pulker**

[directors@thewholenote.com](mailto:directors@thewholenote.com)

### EDITORIAL

**Managing Editor | Paul Ennis**

[editorial@thewholenote.com](mailto:editorial@thewholenote.com)

**Recordings Editor | David Olds**

[discoveries@thewholenote.com](mailto:discoveries@thewholenote.com)

**Blog/E-Letters | Sara Constant**

[editorial@thewholenote.com](mailto:editorial@thewholenote.com)

**Social Media | Danial Jazaeri, Colin Story**

[social@thewholenote.com](mailto:social@thewholenote.com)

**Listings Editor | John Sharpe**

[listings@thewholenote.com](mailto:listings@thewholenote.com)

### SALES, MARKETING & MEMBERSHIP

**Concert & Event Advertising / Membership | Karen Ages**

[members@thewholenote.com](mailto:members@thewholenote.com)

**Production & Operations / Advertising Art | Jack Buell**

[jack@thewholenote.com](mailto:jack@thewholenote.com), [adart@thewholenote.com](mailto:adart@thewholenote.com)

**Classified Ads | classad@thewholenote.com**

**Website/Systems Support | Kevin King**

[systems@thewholenote.com](mailto:systems@thewholenote.com)

### CIRCULATION

**Chris Malcolm & Sheila McCoy**

[circulation@thewholenote.com](mailto:circulation@thewholenote.com)

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

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### WRITERS IN THIS ISSUE

Wendalyn Bartley, Paul Ennis, Meghan Gilhespy,

Robert Harris, Jennifer Parr, David Perlman,

Colin Story, Andrew Timar

### CD Reviewers

Larry Beckwith, Stuart Broomer, Max Christie,

Daniel Foley, Raul da Gama, Janos Gardonyi, Richard

Haskell, Scott Irvine, Tiina Kiik, Kati Kiilaspea, Roger

Knox, Barry Livingston, Pamela Margles, Lesley

Mitchell-Clarke, Cheryl Ockrant, David Olds, Ted

Parkinson, Ivana Popovic, Allan Pulker, Cathy Riches,

Terry Robbins, Michael Schulman, Michael

Schwartz, Adam Scime, Andrew Scott, Melissa Scott,

Adam Sherkin, Bruce Surtees, Andrew Timar, Yoshi

Maclear Wall, Ken Waxman, Matthew Whitfield

### Proofreading

Paul Ennis, John Sharpe, Sara Constant

### Listings Team

Ruth Atwood, Tilly Kooyman, John Sharpe,

Gary Heard, Colin Story

### Design Team

Kevin King, Susan Sinclair

### Circulation Team

Lori Sandra Aginian, Wende Bartley, Beth Bartley &

Mark Clifford, Jack Buell, Sharon Clark, Manuel

Couto, Paul Ennis, Robert Faulkner, Soudy Gaeeni,

Terry Gaeeni, James Harris, Micah Herzog, Jeff

Hogben, Bob Jerome, Chris Malcolm, Luna Walker-

Malcolm, Sheila McCoy, Lorna Nevison, Garry Page,

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**For Volume 27 No.1  
SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2021**

### Free Event Listings

NEW! Weekly online updates  
6pm every Tuesday for  
Friday posting

**Print edition deadline**  
Midnight, Monday August 30

**Display Advertising, reservation  
deadline**  
6pm Tuesday August 31

**Classifieds deadline**  
6pm Saturday Sept 4

**Publication Dates**  
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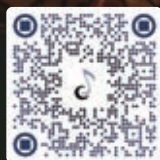
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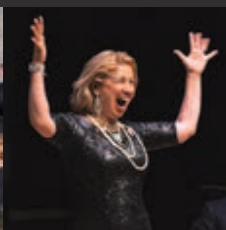
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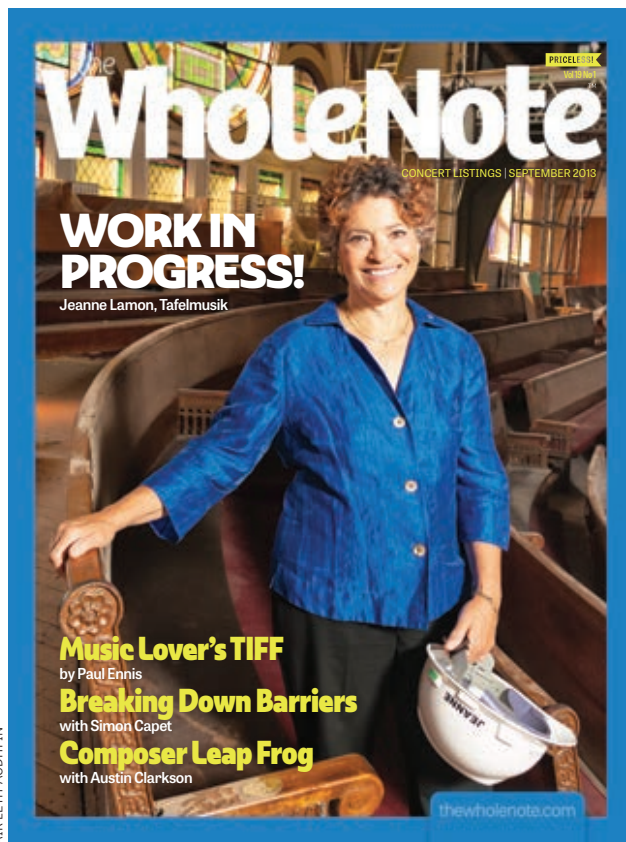


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FOR OPENERS | DAVID PERLMAN



"I've been walking around in a fog this week, trying to process Jeanne Lamon's passing. Such a vital force in my life and the lives of so many others. I hope you've managed to celebrate her in this edition?" Larry Beckwith

## Remembering Jeanne Lamon

Very few of our readers who became faithful followers of Tafelmusik during almost four decades under Jeanne Lamon's musical direction, will be hearing about her all-too-sudden death here. The shock waves have spread, and, as Larry Beckwith says in his note, you are likely, like us, in a bit of a fog, trying to process her passing.

As for celebrating her in this edition, it all feels a bit too soon and sudden and sad and raw for that – a bit presumptuous even – at a time when those whose musical lives were most closely intertwined with hers, need most to speak, and are doing so.

We took this cover photo (hard hats all round!) for a September 2013 story in which Larry Beckwith, himself a long-time member of the Tafelmusik Choir, chatted with Jeanne about what lay ahead. What jumps out at me is how she is setting the tempo for what she sees ahead, looking with clear eyes not just to life for Jeanne after Tafelmusik, but life for Tafelmusik after Lamon. You can find it in our archive at [kiosk.thewholenote.com](http://kiosk.thewholenote.com) (Vol. 19).

And [tafelmusik.org/watch/video/allegro-concerto-2-violins-d-minor-bwv-1043](http://tafelmusik.org/watch/video/allegro-concerto-2-violins-d-minor-bwv-1043) takes you to a moment of music from *House of Dreams* – music it took her particular kind of leadership to elicit from her brave and merry little band.

For now we mourn. Let the moments of celebratory remembering begin, so tears of joy can follow.



## The craft that will see us through

*"You have to understand that no one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land."*

**T**hat line of poetry smacked me between the eyes early in 2018. It is from a poem, "Home" by Somali-British poet Warsan Shire, London's first Young Poet Laureate. I heard it in the context of a Tafelmusik concert titled *Safe Haven*, created by ensemble member Alison Mackay, "exploring the influence of refugees on the music and culture of Baroque Europe and Canada today."



In that one line of poetry those two worlds, 400 years apart, collided: waiting on beaches for frail craft in search of safety and giving back to the places where they found safe haven as much as they got. The 400-year-old version of it fits nicely into a settler version of history. The 21st-century eastern Mediterranean version, maybe not so readily for the people already settled here.

It was an interesting construct, but what did it take to transform it from a notional exercise into a raw truth that could not be rationalized or equivocated – into a truth we accepted no matter how uncomfortable? Part of it, as in Warsan Shire's poem, was the indelible memory for most of us of one photograph, three years earlier, of one child lying dead on an eastern Mediterranean beach – Alan Kurdi – that defied abstraction, gave a name and a face to a truth, and took inaction off the table as an option.

How many more children's graves will have to be found, here, today, for the truth to take general hold the same way?

Wendalyn Bartley's conversation with Claude Schryer this issue digs into a parallel point: how do you practise your craft at something with an esoteric name like "acoustic ecology" in the face of a climate crisis demanding action? "Valorizing nature" is part of the answer, Schryer says.

"Valorizing art" is the other part, I'd say. It means artists taking all those tricks of the trade they've learned these past 16 months – new ways to get their voices out there; to feel alive; to work together; maybe even make a difference or two. And now's the time to lash all those newfound competencies to the mast of some big truths that need to be shouted to the treetops.

So here we are, dry land maybe in sight: stowaways, refugees, hostages, passengers and crew (depending on the craft we're in).

Thanks as always for reading what we have made. It's bristling with wit and grit and inventiveness. (Oh, and music.)

Hang in. We intend to do the same.

[publisher@thewholenote.com](mailto:publisher@thewholenote.com)

## Worth the (virtual) drive ... ? That's the big question

**S**o here we are again, on the cusp of summer, with what has to be the most eccentric collection of listings information ever assembled for the festivals section of our summer print issue.

### Listings

In other years, we'd have painstakingly separated out summer festival/series listings from one-off concerts. And we'd have had separate sections for GTA and Beyond GTA listings. And for concerts, music theatre, clubs, workshops, etc. This year? Gone.

Gone too is our most fundamental principle: that we *only* list events that have a live musical component.

What you get instead is a reflection of the ways our musical community is coming up with to stay in touch with you, their audiences.

So, for the time being anyway, it means that, rather than our print listings being the wheelhouse of what we do, it's our online weekly listings updates that give you the best chance of keeping up. Sign up for our weekly listings updates, and every weekend we send you updated listings covering the following six weeks or so, reflecting everything we found out since the Tuesday before (including changes and cancellations). Good news.

It's good news for musicians and presenters too. If a musical event fits our niche (and our range is getting wider), it qualifies. As long as it is a public event, with a specific date and start time attached to it, it can be live, livestreamed, on-demand ... or any combination of these.

Bottom right hand corner of our website homepage is where you sign up.

See **Green Pages**, page 24

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DAHLIA KATZ

*Dream in High Park – hoping to begin at the end of June in the High Park Amphitheatre.*

# Such Canny Stuff as Dreams Are Made Of

JENNIFER PARR

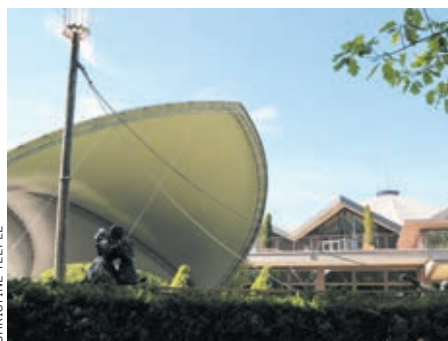
Just as the Stratford Festival's stunning new Tom Patterson Theatre has been completed and is ready to be filled with eager actors and audience members, the exigencies of the ongoing pandemic are keeping its doors closed and forcing performances outdoors in an uncanny – or canny? – echo of the Festival's roots.

Almost 70 years ago, in the summer of 1953, the dream of a young returning soldier who had fallen in love with the theatre he had experienced in Europe, came to exciting life in the very first Stratford Festival Theatre. That magical first stage, designed by Tanya Moiseiwitsch and envisioned by the first artistic director Tyrone Guthrie, sheltered under the canvas of the famous Stratford tent, kept whole though rain and shine by tent master Skip Manley for that groundbreaking first season.

Now, after an unprecedented year without any live performance at all by the renowned classical theatre company, an innovative new season will begin, not indoors, but in



PETER SMITH COMPANY



CHRISTINE TEEPLE

The 1953 stage and canopy, Stratford Festival (above), Stratford's new Festival Theatre canopy.

two tents, or more accurately, under two beautiful new canopies outside the Tom Patterson and Festival Theatres.

The primary reason for having performances outdoors is, of course, the need to make everything as safe as possible for both performers and audiences while the global pandemic continues. The exciting thing is that this has led to a reimagining by the company of what is possible and what is most essential.

Fuelling those lists is the very basic hunger for live performance that we all share whether onstage or in the audience, or both – that electric connection that sparks between those onstage and those in the seats, whether during a Shakespeare play, Broadway musical, new play, or cabaret. To make this possible, everything has been streamlined. The season has been cut down to include two Shakespeare plays, two modern classics from the first programmed season, two new plays, one of which is a musical, and very excitingly for musical theatre fans, five cabarets curated and performed by a wonderful mix of some of the Festival's – and Canada's – top musical theatre performers.

In contrast to the usual repertory system, each show will have a unique (small) cast who can be "bubbled" together in rehearsal and performance. Each show will also be no longer than 90 minutes and will play without an intermission. As anyone



who has edited a play will know, this means focusing in on the essential story, and from what I have heard, this has led to exciting experimentation with each production, many led by younger directors who have taken part in the Michael Langham (directors') Workshop. *Romeo and Juliet*, renamed *R + J*, for example, inspired by the truism that love is blind, is being reimaged by director Ravi Jain as a love story that takes place in an "up-to-the-minute modern world of sound and music, a world that challenges the identities we construct when we use only our eyes." I am excited to see how this focus on sound and music will illuminate a story that we all know so well.

The one full musical in the season, *I Am William*, also plays with something we think we all know well – who actually wrote the plays we know as Shakespeare's. First developed at Théâtre Le Clou, the text by Rébecca Déraspe (in an English translation by Leanna Brodie) and music by Chloé Lacasse and Benoit Landry will transport us to an imaginary alternate history where brilliant young writer Margaret Shakespeare and her brother William (who wants to be an actor) take us on an exciting, fun and enlightening journey through the dangers of Elizabethan London.

The cabarets are an exciting innovation, too, exploring a wide variety of themes and styles of song and story: *Why We Tell the Story: A Celebration of Black Musical Theatre*, created and directed by Marcus Nance; *You Can't Stop the Beat: The Enduring Power of Musical Theatre*, curated and directed by Thom Allison; *Play On! A Shakespeare-Inspired Mixtape*, curated by Robert Markus, Julia Nish-Lapidus and James Wallis; *Freedom: Spirit and Legacy of Black Music*, curated and directed by Beau Dixon; and *Finally There's Sun: A Cabaret of Resilience*, curated and directed by Sara Farb and Steve Ross. Each cabaret will run for about two weeks.

Just seeing those names you can tell that – like the Festival's filmed solo cabaret series *Up Close and Musical* that debuted earlier this year – this cabaret series puts the artist front and centre, bringing new voices, new visions, and new stories onto the Festival's stages

#### Dream in High Park

Another dream from the past is also resurfacing this summer, thanks to the demands of pandemic safety protocols and the vision of its artistic programmers. In 1983, Dream in High Park began with a popular production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, what would become a longstanding tradition of Shakespeare plays being performed outdoors in the heart of High Park. After some years the name of the summer season was changed to Shakespeare in High Park, but this year the name is changing back to the original, just as the programming is changing to go far beyond Shakespeare to include everything from stand-up comedy to dance, to film to new theatre, to music, to children's theatre and new musical theatre.

Just as the Stratford Festival is responding to our hunger for live performance, the Canadian Stage Company is also addressing that hunger by transforming its summer season – inviting performing arts companies from around the GTA to share the outdoor stage, thereby matching the great accessibility of its pay-what-you-can performances with as wide-ranging as possible an offering of live performance.

As artistic director Brendan Healy expands: "the name (Dream in High Park) really encapsulates the fundamental spirit of the park. The amphitheatre is a space for our city's imagination and dreams (...) where stories come to life and (...) we get to dream up worlds together while surrounded by this stunning natural environment."

One of the Dream in High Park offerings that I have been looking forward to seeing since I saw an excerpt at an earlier workshop is the new musical *Blackout*, with a book by Steven Gallagher and music and lyrics by Anton Lipovetsky. In many ways this is a perfect choice for this summer park season in the way it eerily mirrors the isolation we have all been feeling over the past 15 months. Inspired by the real blackout in Toronto in August 2003, when millions of people were left stranded in the dark and unable to reach or connect with their loved ones, it interweaves three separate stories taking place on that August night. The excerpt I saw (*Cygnus*), was both incredibly moving and life-affirming.

# Music TORONTO

## VIRTUAL CONCERT SERIES

July 22, 2021 at 7:30 pm

### Juilliard String Quartet

August 26, 2021 at 7:30 pm

### From the Collingwood Summer Music Festival

Mayumi Seiler, *violin*

Angela Park, *piano*

Cris Derksen, *cello*

September 23, 2021 at 7:30 pm

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Blackout's Steven Gallagher and Anton Lipovetsky

### Porchside

*Blackout* in High Park is being produced by The Musical Stage Company, adept at meeting the demands of producing during the pandemic with some wonderfully inventive initiatives. One of the most popular of these is the series of Porchside Songs. Four different concerts, small enough to fit on a regular porch, each created and performed by a team of two artists, are available to be booked to perform on your porch or in your backyard for the low cost of \$395.50. (The entire fee goes to the artists involved.) Following all provincial safety protocols, the audience size is capped at the current provincial limit and the company works with the hosts to make sure that everyone involved is safe.

The series was wildly successful last year and has been expanded this year from three to four new choices: *Sad Lady Songs!*, conceived and performed by Sara Farb and Britta Johnson (some songs from Johnson's new musical *Kelly v. Kelly*, which has been postponed twice thanks to the pandemic, will be in the concert); *A Crack in the Wall*, conceived by Jewelle Blackman (*Hadestown*) and performed by Blackman with Evangelia Kambites, offering storytelling songs from Nat King Cole to Gnarls Barkley; *Fam Jam*, conceived and performed by brother and sister Jake and Gabi Epstein who take the audience on a rollicking journey from family road trips to the stages of Broadway and the Stratford Festival; and *Just My Re-Imagination*,

Katherine Cullen in *Stupidhead!*

conceived and performed by Saccha Dennis (*Come from Away*) and David Atkinson, offering classic songs sung with a jazz and bluesy twist.

I was hoping that there would be a showcase of some kind for those of us not fortunate enough to book a private concert, but unfortunately, that is not in the current plans. With luck these shows will come back, or be filmed, so that we can at least experience them in that pandemic way we have become used to. In the meantime, some neighbourhoods are enjoying a great live performance treat.

### Outside the March. Alley Jams

Taking a cue from Porchside Songs, acclaimed immersive theatre company Outside the March is offering porch performances of the one-woman musical comedy *Stupidhead!*, created by Katherine Cullen and the ubiquitous Britta Johnson. Based on Cullen's own experiences growing up with dyslexia, *Stupidhead!* is part stand-up comedy, part musical and all about "learning no matter who you are, you are not alone." A success at Theatre Passe Muraille in 2017, the show has been reimagined for touring to porches and also as a live radio broadcast as well as for upcoming onsite productions.

Last summer, neighbourhoods beyond porches in the East End were enlivened by Alley Jams – live, impromptu jam sessions (with safety protocols) performed at various outdoor sites, organized

# This summer we're coming out to play



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by actor and musician Donna Garner. This summer, Alley Jams will be joined by a new rehearsed musical theatre concert series, CanJams, a rehearsed show performed by six actor-musicians from Garner's company Garner Theatre Productions. The CanJams will be performed in public parks around the city as soon as the reopening protocols allow.

It is encouraging that even as protocols keep changing, our performing arts companies remain constant in their endeavours – dreaming up ways to get actors and audiences together for some reinvigorating outdoor live performances this summer. 🎭

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

## CONTACT INFORMATION

As we go to press (June 24), Ontario is still in Step 1 of the provincial reopening plan. Once the province moves into Step 2, outdoor performances can commence. As soon as the province makes clear what size audiences will be possible in Step 2, the companies mentioned here will be able to make tickets available for sale. For up-to-date information on each company or series of performances, please see the links below, and/or follow the companies on social media.

### Stratford Festival

[www.stratfordfestival.ca/landingpages/2021Season](http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/landingpages/2021Season)  
1-800-567-1600.

### Canadian Stage Dream in High Park

[www.canadianstage.com/shows-events/dream-in-high-park](http://www.canadianstage.com/shows-events/dream-in-high-park)  
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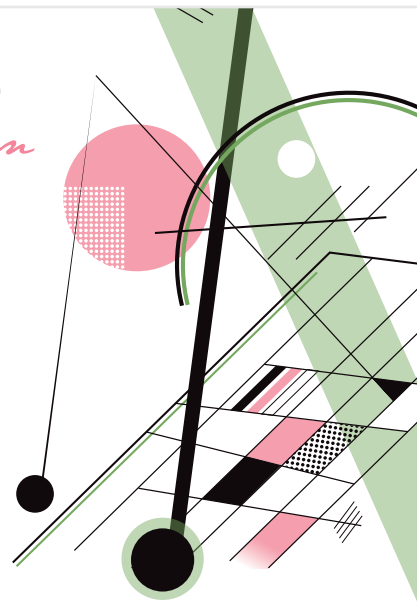
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# Resilient Creativity at TSM and TSO

PAUL ENNIS



A recording session at the Palais Montcalm in Quebec City: Jonathan Crow and Philip Chiu performing Beethoven Sonatas for this summer's festival.

Toronto Summer Music's 16th edition – *New Horizons* – will be entirely virtual this year, with a combination of free livestreamed and pre-recorded hour-long concerts from July 15 to August 1. “For three weeks in July, *New Horizons* looks beyond the challenges of the pandemic, and forward to a better future,” said TSM artistic director, TSO concertmaster Jonathan Crow. “We celebrate this summer with a wonderful assortment of music from both past and present, showcasing the resilience and creativity of our featured artists.”

This year's festival was launched on June 7 over Zoom with Crow performing Reena Esmail's solo violin piece from 2020, *When the Violin*, while standing at the foot of an empty Walter Hall. Inspired by Hafiz's poem – *When the violin can forgive the past, it starts singing... When the violin can forgive every wound caused by others, the heart starts singing* – and based on a Hindustani raag, it begins mournfully, expanding into four emotional minutes of mesmerizing beauty. It was a subtle nod to the series of five filmed concerts comprising the complete cycle of Beethoven's ten Sonatas for Piano and Violin that Crow and pianist Philip Chiu will present along with five new compositions. *When the Violin* is the featured contemporary work in the first of their traversal, July 18, along with the first and fifth sonatas, filmed at Salle Raoul-Jobin in the Palais Montcalm (Quebec City).

Sonatas Nos. 3 & 7, with Kevin Lau's *if life were a mirror*, will be

presented July 19; on July 25, the program consists of Sonatas Nos. 2 & 9 “Kreutzer”, with Jessie Montgomery's *Peace*; Sonatas Nos. 6 & 8, with the world premiere of Alice Hong's *for all is not lost*, comprise the July 26 recital; and Sonatas Nos. 4 & 10, with the world premiere of Gavin Fraser's *like years, like seconds*, play August 1. All were filmed at Koerner Hall and, as will be the case with most concerts in the festival, will be free and available to view for a week after their initial performances.

As if to acknowledge how Beethoven's music was upended by the pandemic in the 2020 festival where it was to be the focus, the Bonn *vivant* looms over several other programs in the 2021 edition. Through Beethoven's Lens, filmed at Koerner Hall and presented July 30, shows the influence of the composer's singular *Septet in E-flat Major* on works written almost 200 years apart by Franz Schubert and Kelly-Marie Murphy. The world premiere of Murphy's TSM commission, *Artifacts from the Auditory World*, will be performed by Andrew Wan (violin), Barry Shiffman (viola), Emmanuelle Beaulieu-Bergeron (cello), Michael Chiarello (bass), Miles Jaques (clarinet), Neil Deland (French horn) and Darren Hicks (bassoon). Jaques, Deland, Chiarello and Hicks will also join with the Rosebud Quartet for a performance of Schubert's iconic *Octet in F Major*.

According to TSM's program note, composers in the Romantic era were often inspired, one way or another, by Beethoven's music.



Kelly-Marie Murphy



(Brahms, for one, began writing string sextets in part because he felt too intimidated by Beethoven to write more string quartets.) All the pieces in the program, Romantic Inspirations – livestreamed from Walter Hall on July 23 – feature their own tip-of-the-hat to the master. Philip Chiu performs Louise Farrenc's *Souvenir de Huguenots* before joining with Adrian Fung to play Wagner's *Albumblatt "Romance"* for cello and piano. Schubert's *Auf dem Strom* follows, sung by tenor Asitha Tennekoon with Deland and pianist Michael McMahon. And the concert concludes with Brahms' *String Sextet No.2 in G Major, Op.36* which Donald Tovey called "the most ethereal of Brahms' larger works." Mayumi Seiler and Crow (violins), Juan-Miguel Hernandez and Rémi Pelletier (violists) and Rachel Mercer and Fung (cellists) perform it. (At the end of the June 7 Zoom launch, Crow took questions from the audience and said that he was looking forward to the Brahms sextet – and particularly playing with violist Hernandez for the first time.)



Juan-Miguel Hernandez

A well-crafted festival program links works, and programs, on several levels, some of which only become apparent once the festival gets rolling and its strong intellectual foundation comes into play. Here's another example: Charles Richard-Hamelin, whose sensitive touch always serves the composer's vision (not the pianist's ego), opens the festival with a livestreamed recital from Koerner Hall on July 15, performing Mozart's *Fantasia in C Minor, K475* and *Piano Sonata No.14 in C Minor, K457* as well as Preludes by Chopin. (Richard-Hamelin's new Chopin Preludes CD is reviewed in this issue's DISCOVERIES section.)

Then, the next night, July 16, the justly celebrated Gryphon Trio performs Valentin Silvestrov's hauntingly beautiful *Fugitive Visions of Mozart*, a world premiere by Toronto-based composer Bruce A. Russell and Beethoven's *Piano Trio in D Major, Op.70, No.1 "Ghost"*. The nickname was supplied by Beethoven's student, Carl Czerny, who was reminded of the ghost of Hamlet's father by the piece's second movement.

Other programs play up the New Horizons theme. On July 28, the New Orford String Quartet's Homage concert (filmed at Koerner Hall) honours the musical influences in our lives as they figure in three in-the-moment works: Samy Moussa's *Quartet*, Dinuk Wijeratne's *A Letter from the Afterlight* and Caroline Shaw's *Ent'ra'cte*. Concluding the concert is Mendelssohn's *String Quartet No.2 in A Minor, Op.13* – all about being in love – written when he was 18, in the year Beethoven died.

The festival's title concert, dubbed New Horizons – livestreamed from Koerner Hall on July 27 – features three stellar musicians, two of whom (violinist Kerson Leong and cellist Stéphane Tétreault) have ties to Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Orchestre Métropolitain. The third, harpist Angela Schwartzkopf, has already won a Juno Award. Leong performs Ysaÿe's *Violin Sonata No.2 for solo violin* – he gave us a taste of his dynamism and searing power playing it during the Zoom launch; Schwartzkopf performs Monica Pearce's *attach*; Leong and Schwartzkopf team up for Saint-Saëns' *Fantaisie for Violin and Harp Op. 124*; Tétreault performs Saint-Saëns' *Le Cygne* (The Swan); Leong and Tétreault



Angela Schwartzkopf

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From the 2019 TSM Academy: left to right: Alessia Disimino, violin; Jialiang Zhu, piano; Andrew Ascenzo, cello; Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt, viola (Dover Quartet).

finish with Ravel's *Sonata for Violin and Cello*. It's the kind of unusual programming that is second nature for TSM.

Leong, Tétreault and Schwartzkopf then join Boris Brott and his National Academy Orchestra for a concert livestreamed from Koerner Hall on July 29 that showcases two Azrieli Music Prize winners – Kelly-Marie Murphy's *En El Escuro Es Todo Uno: a Double Concerto for Cello and Harp* and Avner Dorman's *Violin Concerto* – Bruch's moving *Kol Nidrei* and Mendelssohn's indelible *Violin Concerto in E Minor*, Op.64.

### Welcome Academy news

The festival will also feature the return of the TSM Academy for Emerging Artists after a one-year hiatus. The TSM Academy offers exceptionally gifted young chamber musicians and singers ("Fellows"), on the cusp of professional careers, a full scholarship to study and perform with guest artists ("Mentors") during the TSM Festival in a series of reGENERATION concerts on July 17, 24 and 31. Fittingly, it's where more unusual works may often be found.

There are six Art of Song Fellows (four singers and two pianists); the Art of Song Mentors are soprano Adrienne Pieczonka, baritone Russell Braun and pianists Michael McMahon and Steven Philcox. (Pieczonka and Philcox will appear in recital on July 20, livestreamed from Walter Hall.) Among the 12 Chamber Music Institute Fellows are six violinists, three violists and three cellists. Chamber Music Institute Mentors include violinists Andrew Wan, Annalee Patipatanakoon, Jonathan Crow and Mayumi Seiler, violists Barry Shiffman, Juan-Miguel Hernandez, Rémi Pelletier and Sharon Wei, cellists Brian Manker, Rachel Mercer and Roman Borys and pianists Jamie Parker and Philip Chiu.

A highlight: TSM Academy Fellows will celebrate the music of Bach alongside mainstage TSM Festival artists in a concert livestreamed from Trinity-St. Paul's Centre on July 21. Included in this eclectic selection from Bach's works for strings and voices are the *Cello Suite No.3 in C Major* (performed by Rachel Mercer), the *Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor* and the *Brandenburg Concerto No.3*.

Any life on the horizon right now would be a welcome sight. *New Horizons* promises much more than that.

### TSO


Mid-June brought welcome news on another front. The long-awaited reunion between the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and its patrons is at hand, with a date on November 10, 2021, the first of 30

varied programs running through June of 2022, and overlapping with the start of a year-long celebration of the TSO's 100th season, which will start in the spring of 2022 and extend into the 2022/23 season.

It will be a gradual re-engagement. The first four months of the new season will feature hour-long concerts without intermission, and with musicians performing works that accommodate smaller ensembles on stage in order to maintain physical distancing. Among these, two mid-November programs, conducted by music director Gustavo Gimeno, stand out. The first showcases the orchestra's strings performing works by three leading contemporary composers – Caroline Shaw, Dinuk Wijeratne and Kelly-Marie Murphy – along with immensely popular pieces by Mahler and Schoenberg. Later in the week, the spotlight shines on the TSO's winds, brass and percussion. Symphonic works with a greater number of musicians and longer concerts will commence in the spring, beginning in late March with Jukka-Pekka Saraste conducting Sibelius *Symphonies 7 & 5*.

Visiting Canadian and international soloists that caught my eye include Timothy Chooi (Tchaikovsky violin concerto), Kerson Leong (Samy Moussa violin concerto), Angela Hewitt (playing and conducting Bach's second keyboard concerto and Mozart's 12th), James Ehnes (Beethoven violin concerto), Jan Lisiecki (Prokofiev's second piano concerto), Barbara Hannigan (the world premiere of Zosha Di Castri's new work for soprano and orchestra) and Daniil Trifonov (Beethoven's Emperor Concerto). Conductor emeritus Peter Oundjian and conductor laureate Sir Andrew Davis add their batons to the celebratory season.

Gimeno is also harnessing the individual forces of the orchestra. In January, concertmaster Jonathan Crow will lead Bach's Brandenburg Concertos and More, featuring principal oboe Sarah Jeffrey, principal trumpet Andrew McCandless, principal bassoon Michael Sweeney, principal cello Joseph Johnson, flutist Leonie Wall and principal flute Kelly Zimba. TSO musicians also performing as soloists in the season include associate principal clarinet Eric Abramovitz and clarinetist Miles Jaques (Mendelssohn *Concert Piece No.2*), Crow (Beethoven *Romance No.2*), principal double bass Jeffrey Beecher (Missy Mazzoli *Dark with Excessive Bright*), principal trombone Gordon Wolfe (Jordan Pal Scylla: *Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra*) and Zimba (Nielsen *Flute Concerto*).

Welcome back. 

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



# VALORIZING NATURE

## Sound Ecology and the Climate Emergency

WENDALYN BARTLEY



Hildegard  
Westerkamp,  
Banff 1992

PETER GRANT

**A**lthough there is a lot of focus these days on the pandemic, we are all at some level aware that lurking in the background is a much bigger issue for which there is no vaccine – the climate crisis with the threat of rising seas, worsening storms, runaway fires and more. These issues are increasingly becoming the focus for many artists of all disciplines, myself included. How do we continue working as creative people with all the impending disasters just around the corner? What relevance does the next orchestral composition or sound improvisation have in light of the issues we're collectively facing?

I recently approached one of my composer colleagues, Claude Schryer, whom I originally met when we were both graduate students in composition at McGill University in the 1980s, for his thoughts on all this. Schryer has been involved for years in issues related to the relationship between sound, listening, musical composition and the environment, an area that has become known as “acoustic ecology”. This particular field of ecological awareness, encompassing both artistic practice and academic scholarship, was originally born on Canadian soil out of the work of composer R. Murray Schafer and his colleagues in the World Soundscape Project (WSP) during the 1970s.



Claude  
Schryer

SABRINA MATTHEWS

Later, in 1993, a conference was held at the Banff Centre for the Arts called The Tuning of the World, the title of Schafer's influential book published originally in 1977. Schryer was instrumental

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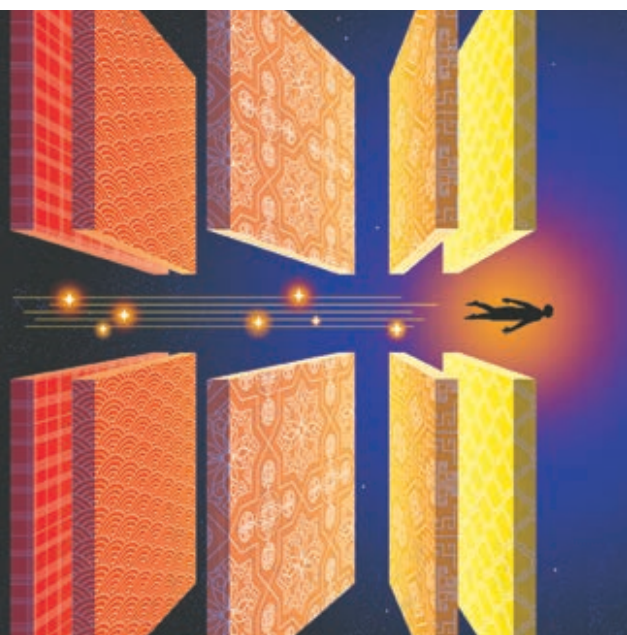


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Hildegard Westerkamp

ANDREW CZINK

in behind-the-scenes organization of the conference, but, as he points out to me, it was a group effort that brought about a watershed moment: the birth of the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology (WFAE) and its Canadian spin-off called the Canadian Association for Sound Ecology or CASE.

Soundscape composer Hildegard Westerkamp was one of the key members of the World Soundscape Project (WSP) in the 1970s, and during the 1980s had often mentioned the idea of a conference to Schafer, as a way of following up with all the contacts they had made over the years. It took until the 1990s, though, at the initiative of Michael Century, director of the Banff Centre's Media Arts Division, to finally get the ball rolling. At initial planning meetings a few years prior to the festival, Westerkamp took on the creation of a Soundscape Newsletter to help bring together the far-ranging community and create an audience for a potential conference. Sent to the large mailing list that had grown over the years, the response to it was very enthusiastic, and a conference date was set for August 1993,

with Calgary-based composer Tim Buell getting involved in the organization of it, along with Schryer.

### Birth of the World Forum

Throughout the conference, daily early morning meetings, facilitated by both Westerkamp and Schryer, were held to discuss the idea of creating a structure that would provide continuity and connection for those present after the conference was over, as well as for others on the mailing list. With people having travelled from the USA, Europe, Australia and of course from Canada, enthusiasm was riding high, and by the end of the week the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology had been created.

Being in the midst of a national park in the Rocky Mountains of Alberta, the Banff Centre is surrounded by an abundance of wildlife. As Westerkamp recalls, just as the vote was completed to create the Forum, a knock was heard on the window. It was an elk. Everyone laughed and agreed: "We have confirmation."

Schryer took on the initial role of coordinator of the World Forum. Part of the vision was that different countries would create their own individual chapters, but with Canada already having a lot of momentum via the WSP, it wasn't until 1996 that CASE, the Canadian sound ecology chapter came into being. Fittingly, the vision took shape during a world soundscape workshop held at the Haliburton

Forest & Wildlife Reserve, the wilderness location where Schafer created his annual collaborative *Wolf Project*.

Schryer became the founding president of CASE, with composers Gayle Young, Tim Knight and Schafer as collaborators.

Canada has been uniquely positioned as a leader in the field of acoustic ecology and soundscape composition, Schryer says, with many Canadian sound artists and academics taking a leading role in the further evolution of the field. In 2018, during a conference in Germany celebrating the 25th anniversary of the World Forum, many participants remarked on the great impact that the WSP, The Tuning of the World and the subsequent WFAE has had internationally.

### The Carry-Over

Our conversation shifted to the topic of how Schryer has taken his involvement in these organizations and awareness of environmental sound into his creative work. During his studies at McGill he learned and developed his craft of electroacoustic and instrumental composition. However his passionate interest in the combination between art and environment has been there from day one. "With my music training, I just kept expanding further into sound-related fields that were more and more broad, expanding into acoustic ecology, radio, interdisciplinary work and cross-sectoral work like arts and health. Sound has always been my base and a way for me to enter other fields and to collaborate, either with other artists or with practitioners in other fields such as scientists."

His career as a composer and sound ecology activist temporarily came to a standstill in 1999, he says, when he took a job at the Canada Council, leading the Inter-Arts Office where he became involved in developing policy for this new artistic practice. However, in 2016 he felt the need to go back to creative work and integrate it with his practice in Zen Buddhism.

Based on his passion for meditation and stillness, he created a series of 175 three-minute audio and video portraits called *simplesoundscapes* ([www.simplesoundscapes.ca](http://www.simplesoundscapes.ca)). "I just loved doing that. I was recording interesting moments from places all around the world, three minutes of a moment that were often interesting in very minute ways."

When that project came to completion in July 2019, Schryer decided to become more involved in the climate change movement "because of the obvious need for us all to be involved," he said. He began spending more of his time, both the Canada Council and in his personal life, working at a social level on the production of environmental projects. "We need to change the way we live so let's think about how we produce artistic events," he says.

Then, in May of 2020, he started the *conscient* podcast, and during its first season he was "hungry to explore the relationship between awareness, art and environmental action." With the second season beginning in March 2021, the conversations are now focused on accepting reality and ecological grief. "I call it a shared learning journey, educating or re-educating myself and sharing as I go."

The first episode of season two is called *reality* and mixes quotations from various authors, recordings from his *simplesoundscapes* collection, and excerpts from a 1998 soundscape composition titled *Au dernier vivant les biens*. Calling on his skills as a composer, this new direction has become "a journalistic project that's about raising awareness and looking at how artists can play a larger role in what we're calling climate emergency. It's not just climate change, it's a climate emergency which is part of the larger ecological crisis that includes biodiversity."





In September 2020 he chose to leave the Canada Council so he would have time and resources to invest in projects of this nature. With *conscient*, he says, he can give a voice to artists and climate workers to speak about the ideas they're developing, the concepts, theories and actions being taken. "That seems very concrete to me, and is what I'm planning to do for the rest of my life."

Currently he's also involved with an emerging national project called SCALE – Sectoral Climate Arts Leadership for the Emergency, a coalition of arts and climate workers doing projects internationally, exploring how the arts can play a role. "People are doing similar things in different parts of the country and now we can align our efforts and put some pressure on the decision makers, inform artists on tools that are available to reduce their footprint, and create a series of activities that will help advance the arts and cultural sector's contribution to the climate emergency."

### Re-engagement

And so we come back to the question that prompted me to contact him in the first place: What relevance does the next orchestral composition or sound improvisation have in light of the issues we're collectively facing?


"There are all kinds of ways that artists, including musicians and sound artists, can contribute and it's up to those individuals to see where they want to put their energies and where they think they're most useful to society. Sometimes it's in their art practice, and sometimes it's more about the way an arts organization operates and the environmental footprint that is created. We should not be wasting anything, such as one-time use theatre sets, but we should be focusing on what's important – connecting with people and getting the artwork out there. It doesn't have to be about touring around the world the way that we used to. Maybe there are other ways to get the word out there. That's where we're at now."

"So how do *you* approach the issue of our deep alienation as a society from nature and the environment?" I ask. He replies by speaking about how deep the disconnect is, "going back hundreds of years through the different doctrines and European ways of seeing the world and the idea that we control nature."

The way we have been educated in the Western world is to take nature for granted, that it's there to be exploited, he says. "We have to change that. We have to see ourselves as part of nature. Trauma comes up a lot in my *conscient* interviews. The Western world is so traumatized in its relationship to nature. It's lost touch, it's flailing."

So how do we re-engage with nature? "I don't think there's an easy solution, other than valorizing nature, rethinking who you are, re-educating yourself, changing the systems on the longer term; and listen to Indigenous voices who have always had a relationship with nature that has been symbiotic as opposed to oppositional or exploitive."

Take the time to listen to the people he has featured in his *conscient* podcasts, he suggests – "to what they are saying and the struggles they are engaged in."

Part of the task ahead, as musicians and sound artists, is to help cultivate new artistic forms and practices that deal with the issues and require action, as we collectively face the ever-growing climate emergency ahead. 

**Wendalyn Bartley is a Toronto-based composer and electro-vocal sound artist. [sounddreaming@gmail.com](mailto:sounddreaming@gmail.com).**

Below: screen captures from Claude Schryer's *simplesoundscapes* series




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TRENZA DEL SUR MEDIA

# Existential dread as the music threatens to go public again

ANDREW TIMAR

**A**t uneasy moments, I often look to nature and the human imprint in it, in a search for equanimity. In 11 years with *The WholeNote*, I have repeatedly begun my musings with a description of the view from my window of the busy midtown Toronto park across the street.

As I sipped my coffee this sunny morning, a coach's shrill whistle and shouts grabbed my attention. It gladdened my heart to see the little league taking over the baseball diamond for the first time in a year. The sand infield was prepped well over a month ago, but today is as early as the provincial pandemic "Three Steps to Reopening" rules allow for organized activity. The groomed green outfield highlights the kids' yellow jerseys and white knickers as they warm up. And just beyond, behind the tall chain link fence, the community tennis courts are full once more with bouncing singles and doubles.

I've been dragging my heels all week trying to get my head around a story about what the Ontario live public music scene for the balance of this summer might look like. I've done my research. But stepping back from the data I've gathered, one unanswered question keeps getting in the way: despite what has been planned, what will actually get to happen? It's an uneasy feeling.

Just this past week, I found myself sharing this feeling of dis-ease with Sean Williams, an American musician, researcher and writer currently working as a professor of ethnomusicology at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington; she had some helpful advice. "You recognize that the exact thing you're feeling is what all the rest of us are feeling, right? Existential dread combined with worries about our collective ability to be public again has made millions of us hesitant to even go to a shop, let alone a live concert."

## Small World's Global Toronto 2021

Prior to my chat with Williams, I had just attended Small World's GT21 conference (virtually of course) in the third week of June, titled

"Global Toronto Re-imagines and Shapes a Better Future for the Music Sector." It was run by a staff of 11, and was bigger than ever, with a motto proclaiming "Rooted in Toronto and operating through a global lens."

Logging into sessions all week, I listened to myriad topics straddling the globe. Just a sampling: EDI (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion), Indigenous-settler relations, interrogating the idea of genre, as well as professional development sessions. A TikTok masterclass and discussions of post-pandemic streaming strategy were also on the agenda.

The numbers GT21 published after the wrap illustrate its increased scope this year: there were 17 international delegations and 1118 participants from over 70 countries. They could access 103 events and 232 virtual meetings, and view performances by 22 spotlight artists; and "2,720 new connections made."

Far more people than would likely have been able to attend a live event.

## Baby steps

But in the wider frame of things, my uneasiness persists. I can't even figure out how I can visit my kids and toddler granddaughter in a distant city before we're all fully vaccinated and feel safe again. So when can I begin to rehearse with a large ensemble or orchestra and gig in front of a live audience? After a year and counting, and largely out of work, how will performing artists function in the post-pandemic world? And who will sit or stand, shoulder to shoulder, to watch and hear us play?

The yellow jerseys in the outfield in the park across the road from my house surely signal a return to normality, doesn't it? Yet the live performing arts sector is struggling, still locked down for the most part. It's looking like the fall, or even next year, before venues will be able to reopen with full live houses – if they can hold on that long.

So it looks like summer festivals will be largely online again, having had a year to learn how to do it better. As Neil Middleton of the Vancouver Symphony recently wryly commented, "We've spent centuries perfecting the delivery of live presentations, and about a year figuring out how to make it work online."

Let's look at a few other heartening examples of how people are making a virtue of the virtual.



### TD Sunfest

London Ontario's acclaimed world music festival TD Sunfest is among those which have successfully pivoted online. It has a 2021 lineup of 30 musical acts for its four-day virtual festival running July 8 to 11. Sixteen international performers from Europe, the Caribbean, South America, East Asia and Africa will share their music online.

"This will be a warm-up for what's going to happen next year," said Alfredo Caxaj, TD Sunfest founder and co-artistic director, promising a return to a live festival in 2022.

**Toronto Caribbean Carnival 2021:** keeping the spirit alive and the heart beating. For the second year in a row the summertime outdoor staple, Toronto Caribbean Carnival (TCC), has announced that it "will not happen in a full capacity... due to the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 and due to government and travel restrictions."

Billed as "North America's largest street festival," drawing an overall attendance of some two million from across North America, it showcases Caribbean dance, performance and food culture each summer. While its keynote parade is curbed for this year, the TCC announced, in a virtual media launch, a month-long local restaurant Carnival Eats Passport. It leads up to a food truck crawl taking place on July 31 and August 1 accompanied by live pan music and masqueraders, subject to ever-evolving provincial gathering mandates, of course.

"We want to keep the spirit of the Carnival alive," said Toronto Caribbean Carnival's communications manager Andrew Ricketts. There's no question that food, hospitality and ritual pageantry is central to TCC's culture so the plan is some consolation; however, TCC's spirit dwells in people massing to the beat of music in the street. As Ricketts keenly observed, "the bands are the heart of the festival."

### Arts in the Parks

Toronto Arts Foundation's mid-June announcement of how Arts in

the Parks events will play out this summer also reflects the uneasiness of the moment. On May 14, the City of Toronto extended from July 1 to September 6, the cancellation of "all City-led major mass participation events, festivals, conferences and cultural programs, and all City permits [for them] ... through September 6, 2021... [including] arts events in parks."

That leaves Arts in the Parks (AIP) with only one clear option: to launch its online subsidiary program Arts in the Parks Anyplace in July. The AIP website promises, "Online performances and interactive digital events throughout the summer ... We've been talking with our communities and artists and we're again working together towards creative solutions to postpone planned events or re-imagine them to be safe for participation in the near future."

AIP is still holding out hope for possible later live events however. It goes on to state that, "small park events, with strongly implemented health and safety guidelines, may be able to proceed in August ... in accordance with the Province's Three-Step reopening framework."

(Ontario's "Three Steps to Reopening" notwithstanding, many performers, companies and venues feel these steps still leave them in the dark due to the lack of clarity and predictability. Then there's the issue of indoor versus outdoor performances. Each presents a distinctly different reopening scenario. The question of how to plan for the unspecified health and safety rules and compliance measures when they do reopen also remains frustratingly open.)

### Labyrinth Ontario

One of the partners AIP has been talking with is Labyrinth Ontario (LO), the Toronto not-for-profit organization with the bilateral goal of "promoting the study and enjoyment of global traditions of modal music." No stranger to my stories in *The WholeNote*, LO's ambition is "to develop Southern Ontario as a global hub for performance, research, and innovation in modal music traditions of Asia, Europe, and Africa..."

EVE EGOYAN plays ERIK SATIE | SILVERVEST | SO LONG 7 | ADREAN FARRUGIA  
TOGETHERNESS! | EYEVIN TRIO | CHIMERA | TITANIUM RIOT | SEE THROUGH 4  
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**HAMILTON 2021**





Araz Salek

LO's contribution to Arts in the Parks, is creating a video series, filming music performances coupled with artist interviews in parks across the city, similar to its successful project last year, viewable on its website and YouTube channel. LO will also produce several small-scale outdoor summer concerts around the city, and will present small groups ("nimble ensembles") to smaller Ontario towns, details TBA.

LO's biggest news this year so far, however, is the launch of its Labyrinth ensemble (LE), a dream of LO's founding artistic director Araz Salek. After an open call and a series of auditions, it has just released its roster of 14 musicians plus a lead singer, with expertise among them in close to 20 instruments in more than a dozen specialty areas.

Reflecting one of LO's core mandates, over the course of this summer individual ensemble members will receive online modal music instruction on their instruments, fine-tuning their understanding and performance chops in LE's particular modal repertoire. LE's planned November 2021 premiere concert at the Aga Khan Museum will likely feature works from vocalist Lamia Yared's specialty area.



Lamia Yared

### Tempering the dread

So the view from my window (as teacher, musician, member of the public) is a mixed one. Online music learning has not been smooth sailing for me, made more difficult by on-again, off-again provincial and municipal educational openings and closings. Even my most dedicated student, who has taken weekly *suling* (West Javanese ring flute) lessons right through the pandemic, was forced to reschedule and then cancel his summer online lessons, due to unpredictable day-job closures and hours impossible to predict.

As a musician: theatres claim they are ready for summer outside openings, yet as of press time the provincial government has "restrictions" in place until July 21, but with no corresponding detailed guidelines on compliance. Most live theatre venues, by their own calculations, need roughly 75 percent capacity to make productions financially feasible, impossible under current regulations. Most will also do whatever they must to comply with conditions along the road to recovery. So, when will a roadmap come?

From my window I can see and hear a multitude of signs underscoring our unquenchable human need to congregate for a purpose. After being out of work for closing in on a year and a half, distanced from colleagues and workplaces, I worry though, about the ability, as Sean Williams described it, to be public again.

How do we make our lives as artists and audiences whole again?

May this summer bring some answers to that! **O**

**Andrew Timar is a Toronto musician and music writer.**



TURNING POINTS

Poetry Jazz Café

# Looking back at a NOT-SO-SWEET sixteen months

COLIN STORY

To say that these past sixteen months have been exceptional is, at this point, a cliché. Even calling it a cliché has become a cliché! And yet, it's hard not to feel as though this summer represents a major turning point – and, hopefully, a bookend – in the experience of the pandemic, at least in Toronto.

Case rates are down, vaccine rates are up, and businesses are reopening, albeit at reduced capacity. Live music is still not back, though it is slowly reappearing; as of the writing of this article, there is a pilot project in development that allows musicians to play on the ad hoc CaféTO patios in three wards (Davenport, Beaches-East York, and Toronto-Danforth).

It is only a matter of time, however, before we see the return of live music, both outdoors and in; by September, I expect to be back to the normal format of my column, looking ahead to club offerings for each coming month. Thus, in the spirit of celebrating the beginning of the end of lockdown life, it seems like a propitious time to revisit and reflect upon some of the issues, movements, and community responses that have informed the Southern Ontario jazz (and jazz-adjacent) scene throughout the pandemic.

### Venue Closures and Re-openings

It has been immediately reassuring, as lockdown restrictions are gradually lifted, to see (and hear) Toronto's long-shuttered venues welcoming patrons back for dining and drinks, albeit only outdoors. While it may still be some time until we get to hear music indoors in Ontario, a number of clubs have patios open. Some have even cautiously started programming live music outdoors. At Kensington Market's Poetry Jazz Café, a spacious, stylish back patio is host to the likes of trumpeter Rudy Ray, vocalist/bassist Quincy Bullen, and other notable young Toronto musicians. (Programming at Poetry tends to focus on groove-oriented jazz, with both vocalists and instrumentalists in the bandleader chair.) At The Rex, Toronto's perennial favourite for straight-ahead modern jazz, an expanded outdoor patio is in place for the culinary side of their business, but at The Rex the music





The Emmet Ray



The Rex

happens indoors and spills out to the patio. Rex regulars can but hope.

Even as some venues return, others have been lost. The pandemic has hit the service industry hard, and – especially for venues without food programs that could be easily adapted to a takeaway format – closures were all but inevitable. 120 Diner, N’Awlins and Alleycatz have all been shuttered; others, including The Emmet Ray, have maintained themselves by converting their existing space to a bottle shop and focusing on delivery-friendly food options.

### Virtual Concerts and Social Media

Early in the course of the pandemic, virtual concerts were the name of the game, from living-room livestreams undertaken by individual musicians to professionally produced, pre-recorded performances offered by major festivals. This year, as we near the end of what will very likely be our last major lockdown, the number of purely virtual concerts seems to be tapering, which in my view is a hopeful sign. In the United States, where mass vaccination efforts took place earlier and with greater speed than here in Canada, live concerts have already been taking place for some time; scroll through your favourite American jazz musician’s social media and you’ll be likely to see posts about outdoor festival concerts, indoor club appearances and, increasingly, advertisements for tours happening later this year and early in 2022.

Even in Canada, where, at the time of this article’s composition, close to seven million of us have been fully vaccinated, it is becoming more common to see maskless musicians in studios, concert halls and other indoor recording scenarios.

Reactions to virtual concerts have been mixed. This time last year, I interviewed Kodi Hutchinson, artistic producer of JazzYYC and organizer of the Canadian Online Jazz Festival, and Molly Johnson, artistic director of the Kensington Market Jazz Festival. Both were in the midst of preparations for their respective festivals, which were broadcast entirely online last year. During our interview, Hutchinson told me that the COJF was, in part, a fact-finding mission, with the goal of gathering data about audiences’ online music-viewing habits. The larger aim, he said, was to help concert presenters be better online, and to be prepared for a future in which livestreaming options at major jazz festivals were more of a norm.


From the performer perspective, few musicians seem to genuinely love livestreaming, compared to the real thing; in a piece that I wrote for this magazine’s December issue, the consensus seemed to be that livestreaming, absent an audience, is a poor substitute for the real thing. The prospect of remote audiences being able to livestream shows with an audience, however, remains interesting, and it remains to be seen how (and if) concert presenters will incorporate livestreams into their future events.

### Equity and Reckoning in Academia

In September of last year, I wrote about the enduring whiteness of Canadian post-secondary jazz education, the calls for changes in leadership, staffing and curricula at a number of Canadian jazz programs, and about the committee to address anti-racism, equity, diversity and inclusion issues (ARED) at U of T.

Now on the cusp of a new academic year, both the U of T jazz program and its parent institution, the Faculty of Music, are in the midst of ongoing major issues. More than 800 students, faculty and alumni have signed an open letter to the school, asking administration to address “historical and ongoing misogyny and systemic inequalities.” Amongst the stories being shared, common complaints include the suppression and silencing of survivors’ voices, a reticence to act on reports of gender-based harassment and sexual assault, and a culture of denial when dealing with charges against faculty members and students.

Within the jazz program, similar issues are at play. Tara Kannangara and Jacqueline Teh, both sessional faculty members and members of the coalition #thisisartschool, have been part of efforts to address systemic issues within the department. On June 11, both released a joint open letter detailing their experience working within the department and the Faculty of Music. In the letter, Kannangara and Teh describe feelings of “psychological abuse and discrimination” in their dealings with U of T Jazz and the Faculty of Music, including being subject to “a level of problematic behaviour and intense scrutiny” in a masterclass they presented.

I have viewed both letters, and the overall impression they convey is of an institution that is more concerned with maintaining the status quo than with making deeper systemic change. As the prospect of a “normal” September looms, the choices made at U of T are liable to have far-reaching consequences in the coming years, for better or for worse. 

**Colin Story is a jazz guitarist, writer and teacher based in Toronto. He can be reached at [www.colinstory.com](https://www.colinstory.com) on Instagram and on Twitter.**



2021

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# From move one to checkmate

MEGHAN GILHESPY

“There is an indescribable beauty that comes from a quintet working as one on stage to dazzle an audience. The most amazing, calming physical sensation accompanies those moments where your preparation and instinct have successfully married one another. At the chessboard, it is also this beautiful. The drums, bass and piano are like your rook, bishop and queen. The jazz happens from move one to checkmate. The applause from the audience is the hand reached out to you from across the board.” — Michael Shand

I was recently digitally flipping through an old *DownBeat* magazine from 1937, and came across an article on musicians who played chess by mail, by forwarding moves on penny postal cards. It made me think of our current state in the global pandemic, and how people are finding creative ways to connect without the ability to be in the same room.

As a pastime, chess has enjoyed a resurgence during COVID-19, in part due to the acclaimed Netflix show *The Queen's Gambit*. I have not been immune to this trend; learning the intricacies of bishops, rooks and knights has helped to fill the long hours at home. But as a musician, my interest also stems from stories about our jazz heroes playing chess.

From Anthony Braxton playing in Chicago's Washington Square Park for money, to Charlie Parker setting out the board during breaks at the Rainbow Ballroom in Denver, Colorado, to Dizzy Gillespie playing on a plane against Chief Justice of the United States Earl Warren, there is a rich history of jazz musicians dedicated to the game. Several even incorporated it into their musical work – trumpeter Jonathan Finlayson's group *Sicilian Defense*, organist Freddie Roach's album *Good Move!* and Charles Mingus' album *Chazz!*. Art Blakey was also a chess player – the first track on *The Big Beat* (1960) is *The Chess Players* by Wayne Shorter. (I'm tempted to add that America's greatest blues record label is named Chess Records, but it was named after Phil and Leonard Chess, the brothers who owned and operated it. So let's just leave it there.)

Is this devotion still around? In fact, fans may be surprised to learn chess is as popular as ever in the jazz community in Toronto and environs, in part fuelled by a recent swell of interest among young musicians who, like me, have started to play online on sites like chess.com. Here are short interviews with four musicians (from earlier this spring) explaining their love of the game!



## THE ARTIST: ADREAN FARRUGIA, PIANO

Find me on chess.com: adreanfarrugia

**Comparing chess and jazz:** Chess to me is about finding the “right” move(s). Improvising in jazz is about the performer listening to a voice from deep within and expressing one's innermost being through

the instrument, projecting out to the listener creating a bond between the two. If I were a better chess player, then perhaps there might be a space for more lofty and artistic expression to happen in chess. After all, there are rules and there is improvisation. But jazz is about expressing one's soul and to me chess is about expressing one's intellect.

One aspect of both chess and improvised music that has always been appealing to me is the idea that both seem to centre around the idea of infinite and undiscovered possibilities.

**On practising:** For me, chess is about strategy and logic and activating the thinking and analytical mind. Practising music is also very logical and analytical but there is definitely a visceral and experiential aspect to music that I don't find in chess.

**On projects in the works:** I have some livestreamed shows with a wonderful Ottawa-based initiative called *Syncspace* (syncspace.live) to look forward to.



## THE ARTIST: MICHAEL SHAND, GUITAR AND PIANO

Find me on chess.com: thehandshand

Contact: @michaelshandkeys on Instagram

**Comparing chess and jazz:** I am no grandmaster and definitely not a computer with thousands of memorized chess openings.

Instead, I improvise in the opening. However, I am not improvising haphazardly, but within a set of guiding principles. If I were to sit down at the piano right now and perform a jazz piece, it would be no different.

**On gameplay:** Staying cool is important. I like keep my game face on at all times, on stage and when sitting across from my opponent. Mistakes happen. The unexpected happens. We use our improvisational skill to instantly mask or adjust to the issue. You never want the audience, or your opponent, to know that something has occurred you didn't plan for. (But keep that quiet. It's a performer's secret.)



The idea of call and response is of paramount importance in jazz and in chess, of course, the entire game is about responding to what your opponent has just done. As such, you remain in a high state of alertness when playing music or chess. Competitors and musicians alike might think of it as being in the zone. But for me, what makes chess and jazz most similar is the way in which your level of proficiency is so inseparably linked to your grasp of the fundamentals. I can spot an untrained musician without the ear training to support the players around them, about as quickly as I can an opponent who has weak opening principles or hasn't studied king and pawn endgames.

**On projects in the works:** I have a few projects to look forward to soon; a collaboration with Indigenous artist, iskwē, a performance with Joanna Majoko for her album release, as well as the possibility of a month-long stint in Berlin with *Simply The Best: The Tina Turner Story*.



VENUS DESOUSA

**THE ARTIST: RAQUEL SKILICH, VOICE**

Find me on chess.com: raquel43  
Contact: @raquelskilich on Instagram  
email: raquel.skilich@gmail.com

**Comparing chess and jazz:** Jazz and chess are similar in the sense that they both require an instrument to be played. With chess, the pieces are your instrument. You have to know what each part does, know how to manage or control it, and know its limits. I know what each part of my voice does, I know my strengths, my weaknesses, I have a good sense of how to control my voice and I am also aware of what my limits are.

For instance, in chess, you can move a pawn forward a limited amount, but you can't move it back. A rook has unlimited range, but only moves horizontally and vertically. When I sing, I know the parts of my range. I am aware of what my lowest note is and what my highest note is. I am conscious of my breath control, my alignment, what I'm hearing, and where I am in the tune, because I know that I can't go back and redo what I played and it's the same thing for chess.

**On chess as a means to connect during the pandemic:** I can connect with people in the sense that we're both two individuals looking to play a game of chess, and sometimes we happen to be on completely different sides of the world. That's pretty cool, especially because there is most likely a language barrier between my opponent and me. I like that chess is a language that we both know; the only difference is that one of us is better at it than the other.

**On projects in the works:** I am part of a recording in May for a non-profit organization called Students for Music Wellness. Saxophonist Thomas Steele is leading it, and the recordings are being sent to long-term care homes across Ontario for residents to view.



KELSI GAYDA

**THE ARTIST: LEIGHTON HARRELL, BASS**

Find me at chess.com; user: ayytwix,  
Instagram: @leightonmckinleyharrell  
Website: leightonmckinleyharrell.com

**On chess as a means to connect during the pandemic:** Whether it's old friends from high school or my peers I haven't been able to see due to the pandemic, it's been a great joy to pour out a glass of wine, call up a dear friend and play a few games of chess.

In some ways, playing chess with folks online has remedied some of the pandemic isolation, but of course it isn't a perfect cure. My experience with chess began as a communal one. I started to play during my second year of university, when someone in the jazz program brought a chess set to school. Many of my peers and I would gather in the lounge together after class and play for hours, listening to music, hanging out and enjoying the beloved community.

**On balancing chess and jazz:** There's this Max Roach quote from an interview with Art Taylor in *Notes and Tones* that I found pretty interesting and inspiring. When asked if he has any hobbies, Roach said, "I like to do everything seriously... If I'm playing chess or if I'm swimming or in conversation, I like to be as honest as possible. What I am, I am. God made it that way and I'm grateful. That's the way it is." While I do like to goof around and have fun, I am pretty serious about the things I love to do. Whether I'm playing chess or practising the bass or writing music or reading a book, I want to give it my all and take it as seriously as I can, because I think that's how I can engage with these things that I care about in the most honest way possible. In some ways I like to view myself in a lineage of chess-playing jazz musicians.

**On projects in the works:** I'm excited to be heading into the studio to play on Alex Bird's upcoming album, *You are the Light and the Way*, with Jacob Gorhaltzan, Ewen Farncombe and Eric West, and I'll be relocating to Montreal for the summer where you can find me eating bagels, playing bass, and, of course, playing chess! 

**Meghan Gilhespy is a vocalist, teacher and writer from Vancouver, based in Toronto. She is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Jazz Studies at the University of Toronto.**

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# Worth the (virtual) drive ... ?

## The WholeNote Green Pages now online

continued from page 7

Stratford Summer Music's floating barge

In years past, a highlight of this special festival section in print would have been our annual **Green Pages**, our directory of summer festivals and series.

However in this 16-month year of plague uncertainty, we made the choice to put all our directories (Canary Pages, Blue Pages, Green Pages) online, so that choirs, presenters and festivals respectively can join whenever they have a handle on what they are *really* going to be doing. (And the opportunity to revise whatever they said previously, when fate throws their best-laid plans out of whack.)

So there are no Green Pages festival profiles in this issue. But there's a handy index on **page 32** of the summer presenters who have come into the online directory so far, with more arriving all the time.

### "On the Road"

Another pandemic casualty has been the summer feature we call "On the Road", where we invite working musicians to tell us about their summer itineraries – a refreshingly different slant on things, following musicians from place to place. I am sure I don't have to remind you what happened to *that* idea last summer. And while this year is looking better by comparison, it will still be virtual encounters that rule the day this summer, for festivals, performers and presenters alike.

So take the time to sift through the listings on the next few pages, and the directory index on page 32. In fact, if you view page 32 in our flip-through edition online, you can click or tap your way through the websites included there as you go.

I already did that myself and a couple of things struck me.

One was how interesting it is to see how artists adjust to circumstances during times of necessary reinvention. What changes and what doesn't? What do they do differently for themselves? And what are they doing with and for each other?

And, as important, what will we do for them? Is it *really* worth the virtual drive to Acton, or Elora, or Markham, or St. Catharines or Collingwood or Parry Sound, now that the novelty of online concertizing is wearing thin? And "zooming in" sounds like work, not play?

Yes it is. For mutual support. And to remind ourselves of how much it will mean, whenever it happens, for musicians and audiences alike, to be on the road again.

David Perlman



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## Here are some cherry-picked highlights:

► This summer, COVID-friendly concerts will take place at the Ancaster Fairgrounds welcoming audience "bubbles" in their cars. Large video screens either side of the stage illuminate performers. Sound will be projected both live and via FM channel.  
**BROTT FESTIVAL, July 15 to August 8**

► A power-packed week of exciting DRIVE-IN concerts between July 10 to 16, presenting a diverse array of internationally renowned, award-winning artists. Engaging classical and world music performances and amazing cinematic visuals – all projected onto a massive, 900 sq. ft. screen.  
**COLLINGWOOD SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVAL, July 10 to 16**

► Three weeks of vocal/choral/chamber music delights from one of the prettiest towns in Ontario. The Elora Festival has encompassed all forms of classical music, jazz, international music, popular and folk since 1979, and this year's concerts are as exceptional and varied as seasoned visitors would expect!  
**ELORA FESTIVAL ONLINE, August 5-28**

► Six virtual August Concerts – Mondays and Wednesdays in August. Four summer evening Live Concert Cruises aboard the Island Queen – that's right, LIVE concerts!  
**FESTIVAL OF THE SOUND, July 1 to August 25**

► Join us online Sundays @3pm: for "Reflections & Expressions", a series of short concerts ... A shorter season of live performances, including two "Opera to Broadway" concerts and four performances of Mozart's opera, Don Giovanni, are tentatively planned for August.  
**HIGHLANDS OPERA STUDIO, July 5 to 30, August TBC**

► Join us every Wednesday evening at 7pm for a free 30-minute concert. Concerts include solo voice, trumpet, piano, cello, organ, brass ensemble and choral, featuring both professional and emerging artists.  
**HUMBERCREST SUMMER CONCERT SERIES, July 7 to August 18**

► The 44th version of the Festival included pre-recorded performances by musicians and dancers and featured historical walking tours and interviews with performers as well as live spots for our hosts/emcees ... on YouTube, Facebook Live and YouTube video embedded on our website.  
**MARKHAM VILLAGE VIRTUAL MUSIC FESTIVAL, June 18 to 19**

► Once again this season, our concerts will take place online at A440.live at 12:15pm every Monday from June 7 to Labour Day September 6. Join us for this, our 30th anniversary season!  
**MUSIC MONDAYS, June 7 to September 6**

► The eighth iteration of our annual Something Else! Festival – in pieces, outdoors, again, spread across a handful of a dozen or so Saturdays at the luscious Bayfront Park, while our Composite Arts Series, "Watch it Burn!" will be slotted one Thursday per month at the Art Gallery of Hamilton.  
**SOMETHING ELSE! FESTIVAL, July to October 1**

► Every weekend in August, a host of events for music lovers of all ages. The return of our signature Floating Barge, Revival House for our Friday Night Live jazz series, and events in Market Square, Gallery Stratford, the Stratford-Perth Museum, Tom Patterson Island, and Avondale United Church  
**STRATFORD SUMMER MUSIC, August 5 to 29**

► Our 17th Festival, will again feature internationally acclaimed Canadian and global artists performing classical, jazz and contemporary music on the shores of Georgian Bay. Four featured concerts over four days, a special preview concert as well as community concerts and other musical experiences for the new normal.  
**SWEETWATER MUSIC FESTIVAL, September 16 to September 19**

► World-class performances set on an idyllic biodynamic organic farm. Enjoy concerts under the stars in our open air pasture with the possibly spontaneous accompaniment from a contented cow, or a visit from a passing chicken. Performances also livestreamed to our global audience.  
**SYMPHONY IN THE BARN, July 30 to August 1**

► All types of jazz and world music, performed in intimate indoor and outdoor venues in the heart of Niagara's stunning wine country. Experience online Summer Mardi Gras (July 24) from the comfort of your own home! Get dressed up, dance to the music and indulge!  
**TD NIAGARA JAZZ FESTIVAL, July to October**

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Concerts | 'The Leporello  
Diaries', an abridged version of  
Mozart's, Don Giovanni

For more information on all of the above, including purchase of online concert series, HOS '21 Participants, opera casting, dates, times, and locations of live performances, please visit: [www.highlandsoperastudio.com](http://www.highlandsoperastudio.com)



## listings@theWholeNote.com

**Event listings are free of charge to artists, venues and presenters.**

Our listings continue to be a work in progress as we all, musicians, presenters and media alike, explore the best ways to reach audiences in a timely fashion. For us, a comprehensive and reliable monthly calendar of live musical events, in these rapidly changing times is not a realistic goal. Instead what you see here is a snapshot, dated June 22, of our new WEEKLY UPDATES, available both as a regular e-letter and on our website.

In these volatile times, readers are encouraged to check weekly for changes and updates to existing listings, and for the numerous new listings being added each week, both current and further into the future. You can register for the weekly updates at [thewholenote.com/newsletter](http://thewholenote.com/newsletter).

### IN THIS ISSUE: TWO LISTINGS SECTIONS

#### • Section 1: Events by date for June 25 – September 7

These are events with an announced date and time that one could circle on a calendar, in order to “be there” when it happens for the first (or only) time. This includes live and livestreamed performances; first broadcasts and screenings; concerts, workshops, symposia, and so on. If the event in question remains available after that first presentation (e.g. online or on demand), this is noted at the end of the listing.

#### • Section 2: Ongoing online musical activity including date-related events now available on demand online.

These are musical activities that readers can access in their own time, usefully identified by the name of the presenter or the nature of the event.

### HOW TO LIST:

1. Use the convenient online form at [thewholenote.com/applylistings](http://thewholenote.com/applylistings)
2. Email listings to [listings@thewholenote.com](mailto:listings@thewholenote.com).  
*Please note, we do not take listings over the phone.*

### Deadlines

1. **Weekly online updates:** submission deadline is 6pm Tuesday of the week prior to the event in question, for Friday posting.
2. **Print:** approximately fifteen days before publication.

Our next print issue covers September and October 2021, and the submission deadline for new listings and updates to listings previously processed is **6pm Monday August 30**.

## Events by Date | June 25 to September 7, 2021

**PLEASE NOTE:** All times are Eastern Time unless otherwise noted. Listings are based on information sent to WholeNote in advance by event presenters. Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, some events may be cancelled or postponed. Please visit presenters' websites or contact them directly for updates.

• **Jun 25-30: SweetWater Music Festival.** *Next Wave Showcase:* Jeffrey Paik. Jeffrey Paik, cello. Visit [sweetwatermusicfestival.ca](http://sweetwatermusicfestival.ca). Festival runs June 25-30. ONLINE

• **Jun 25 8:00: Sinfonia Toronto.** *Beethoven & Dvořák.* Beethoven: Sinfonia Op.18 No.6a; Dvořák: String Quartet No. 12 in F Op. 96a “American” (string orchestra version). Nurhan Arman, conductor. Call 416-499-0403 or visit [sinfoniatoronto.com](http://sinfoniatoronto.com). \$15. ONLINE

• **Jun 26 7:00: Metropolitan Zoom.** *Feeling Good!* Jazz Classics with Faith Amour. Visit [metropolitanzoom.ticketleap.com/faith-amour-062621/details](http://metropolitanzoom.ticketleap.com/faith-amour-062621/details). ONLINE

• **Jun 26 8:00: Array Music.** *Situated Sounds III: Sound as Contact.* Visit [livestream.com/arraymusic/events/9559566/edit](http://livestream.com/arraymusic/events/9559566/edit). ONLINE

• **Jun 26 8:00: Kindred Spirits Orchestra.** *Grace, Fire and Beauty.* Tan Dun: Concerto for Piano and orchestra “The Fire”; Prokofiev: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat Op.100. Christina Petrowska-Quilico, piano; Kristian Alexander, conductor. Call 905-604-8339 or visit [ksorchestra.ca](http://ksorchestra.ca) or [rhcentre.ca](http://rhcentre.ca). \$15. ONLINE

• **Jun 27: SweetWater Music Festival.** *Next Wave Showcase:* Camryn Ruthven. Camryn Ruthven, piano/vocals. See Jun 25 for contact info. ONLINE

• **Jun 28: SweetWater Music Festival.** *Next Wave Showcase:* Rowan Swarna-Small. Rowan Swarna-Small, piano. See Jun 25 for contact info. ONLINE

• **Jun 28 12:15: Music Mondays.** *The Waters Unfolding at Daybreak.* Giuliani: Preludes Op.83; Bach: Partita in b BWV1002; McDonald: The Waters Unfolding at Daybreak. Andrew Paul MacDonald, guitar. Visit [a440.live](http://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE

• **Jun 29: SweetWater Music Festival.** *Next Wave Showcase:* Bridget Walsh. Bridget Walsh, violin. See Jun 25 for contact info. ONLINE

• **Jun 29 7:30: Toronto Consort.** *A New Voice: The Birth of Polyphonic Playing on the Lute.* Join Artistic Associate Esteban La Rotta, The Toronto Consort's resident plucked-strings specialist, for an Explorer Learning Series session that explores the world of polyphony for the lute. Visit [torontoconsort.org](http://torontoconsort.org). ONLINE

• **Jun 29 8:00: Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.** *Essential Bach.* Sonata for violin and continuo in G BWV 1021; Sonata for cello and harpsichord in D BWV 1028; Sonata for violin and continuo in e BWV 1023; Sonata for violin and harpsichord in c BWV 1017; Sonata for 2 violins and continuo in G BWV 1039. Elisa Citterio & Julia Wedman, violins; Keiran Campbell, violoncello; Charlotte Nediger, harpsichord. Email [info@tafelmusik.org](mailto:info@tafelmusik.org) or call 1-833-964-6337. ONLINE

• **Jun 30: SweetWater Music Festival.** *Next*

*Wave Showcase:* Emily Yarascavitch. Emily Yarascavitch, violin. See Jun 25 for contact info. ONLINE

• **Jun 30 7:30: Music Toronto.** *Virtual Concert Series.* A new Haydn discovery. Lecture/demonstration followed by a complete performance of Hadyn: String Quartet Op.20 No.5. St. Lawrence String Quartet. Visit [music-toronto.com](http://music-toronto.com). Free. ONLINE

• **Jul 01 2:00: Q107.** *Great Canadian Concert.* Guildwood GO Station Parking Lot, G-3360 McCowan Rd., Scarborough. 416-723-7445. \$40-\$60 per vehicle. **LIVE!!**

• **Jul 05 12:15: Music Mondays.** *The Nankunda Experience.* Gloria Gift Nankunda, vocalist; Martin Kuwawi, guitar; Natalie Wong, violin. Visit [a440.live](http://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE

• **Jul 07 7:00: Humbercrest United Church.** *Time Stands Still.* Early music from Ireland and Great Britain. Sinead White, soprano; Jonathan Stuchbery, lute. Call 416-767-6122 or visit [humbercrest.ca](http://humbercrest.ca). Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert. ONLINE

• **Jul 09: Toronto Operetta Theatre.** *The Csardas Princess.* By Emmerich Kálmán. Lauren Margison (The Csardas Princess); Michael Barrett (Prince Edwin); Caitlin Wood (Countess Stasi); Ryan Downey (Boni); Gregory Finney (Feri); Rosalind McArthur (Anhlite) and Sean Curran (Leopold Maria); Robert Cooper, conductor/piano; Guillermo Silva-Marin, stage director. Visit [torontooperetta.ca](http://torontooperetta.ca).



### Lunchtime Concerts

streamed on

**A440.live**

July 5 - Gloria Gift Nankunda

July 12 - Jean-Luc Therrien

July 19 - Tom Allen, Lori Gemmel, & Etsuko Kimura

July 26 - Manar Naeem, Lamees Audeh,

& Kareem El-Tyeb

Church of the Holy Trinity  
[www.musicmondays.ca](http://www.musicmondays.ca)



com or [torontooperetta\\_csardasprincess.eventbrite.ca](https://torontooperetta_csardasprincess.eventbrite.ca). \$22.19. Available until July 23. ONLINE

● **Jul 09 7:00: Bravo Niagara! Concert & Wine Tasting:** *Stéphane Tétreault*. Stéphane Tétreault, cello. Visit [bravoniagara.org](https://bravoniagara.org). On demand until Jul 16. ONLINE

● **Jul 10 7:00: The Joy of Music.** *Midsummer Night's Concert*. Masterworks and art song from the Baroque to the contemporary. Sinéad White, soprano; Tessa Facklemann; mezzo; Daniel Taylor, countertenor; Owen McCausland, tenor; Jonathan Adams, baritone; String Quartet; Rachael Kerr, piano. Whistling Gardens Amphitheatre, 698 Concession 3, **Wilsonville**. 519-443-5773. \$100. Limited to only 100 tickets due to COVID-19 protocols.

● **Jul 10 8:30: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *Popera: Inaugural Concert*. Verdi: *Va, pensiero* from *Nabucco*; Brindisi from *La traviata*; and works by Mozart, Bizet, Leoncavallo, Puccini, Verdi, Gounod, Delibes, and Bernstein. Brott Opera singers; National Academy Orchestra of Canada; Boris Brott, conductor. New Life Church, 28 Tracey Ln., **Collingwood**. 705-300-2405 or [collingwoodfestival.com](https://collingwoodfestival.com). Drive-in Ticket: \$150; Digital Ticket: \$20. Live and projected on a screen in the church parking lot. **Festival runs Jul 10-16. LIVE AND ONLINE!!**

● **Jul 11 10:00am: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *Just for Youth*. Musical activities for preschoolers taking place outdoors on the lawn. Ages 2-6. See Jul 10 for contact info. Free. RSVP required per family. 2 Group Sessions Available (30 min. each). **Festival runs Jul 10-16.**

● **Jul 11 2:00: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *This Land Is Your Land*. This Land Is Your Land and other works. Jerry Gray & Shipyard Kitchen Party (Jerry Gray, vocalist; Derek Downham, guitar); Craig Ashton, Julie LeBlanc & Dean Hollin. See Jul 10 for contact info. Early-Bird: \$40 per car; Regular: \$50 per car; Free for STAR Pass Holders. Gates open at 1pm. Ages 6 and up. **Festival runs from Jul 10-16.**

● **Jul 11 8:30: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *Movie Night!: Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World*. Drive-in Cinema. Screening of the award-winning film *Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World* outdoors, preceded by a live discussion with the movie's producer, Stevie Salas. Ages 12 and up. Jerry Gray & Shipyard Kitchen Party (Jerry Gray, vocalist; Derek Downham, guitar); Craig Ashton, Julie LeBlanc & Dean Hollin. See Jul 10 for contact info. Early-Bird: \$40 per car; Regular: \$50 per car; Free for STAR Pass Holders. Gates open at 7:30pm. **Festival runs Jul 10-16.**

● **Jul 12 12:15: Music Mondays.** *A Wild Innocence*. Prokofiev: Piano Sonata in d Op.14; Schumann: Symphonic Etudes Op.13; David L. McIntyre: *A Wild Innocence*. Jean-Luc Thérien, piano. Visit [a440.live](https://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE

● **Jul 12 8:30: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *A Woman's Love*. Verses from Vera Pavlova's poetry book *The Children's Album* accompanied by P.I. Tchaikovsky's *Album for the Young*; Schumann: *Frauen-Liebe*

und Leben" (*A Woman's Love*); I. Yusupova: *Andante cantabile*. Vera Pavlova, reciter; Natalia Pavlova, soprano; Peter Aidu, piano; Sebastian Handley, electric guitar; Lauren Kohut, Kari Zhang, Sunny Valdez, Jaden Benabdeslam, pianos. New Life Church, 28 Tracey Ln., **Collingwood**. See Jul 10 for contact info. Drive-in Ticket: \$80; Digital Ticket: \$20. Livestreamed online AND projected outdoors at the church's spacious parking lot (drive-in). **Festival runs Jul 10-16.**

● **Jul 13 8:30: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *Chochó: The Butterfly*. Kiyoshi Nagata, taiko/bamboo flute; Aki Takahashi, taiko/voice/shamisen; Tony Nguyen, taiko; Jason Huang, taiko; Naoya Kobayashi, taiko; Andrew Siu, taiko; Nagata Shachu, Japanese drumming ensemble. New Life Church, 28 Tracey Ln., **Collingwood**. See Jul 10 for contact info. Drive-in Ticket: \$80; Digital Ticket: \$20. Livestreamed online and projected outdoors at the church's spacious parking lot (drive-in). **Festival runs Jul 10-16.**

● **Jul 14 7:00: Humbercrest United Church.** *Sounds of Summer: Music for Trumpet and Keys*. Philip Catelinet: *Deliverance*; Frank Simon: *Willow Echoes*; Gershwin: *Embraceable You*; Herbert Clarke: *Portrait of a Trumpet*; Morales: *Mvt III from Concerto for Two Trumpets*. Steven Woomert, trumpet; Barton Woomert, trumpet; Rachael Kerr, piano; Melvin Hurst, organ. Call 416-767-6122 or visit [humbercrest.ca](https://humbercrest.ca). Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert. ONLINE

● **Jul 14 8:30: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *Red Sky Performance*. Dr. Duke Redbird, poetry reader; Red Sky Performance, dancers; Jason Chamakese, Native American flute. New Life Church, 28 Tracey Ln., **Collingwood**. See Jul 10 for contact info. Drive-in Ticket: \$80; Digital Ticket: \$20. Livestreamed online and projected outdoors at the church's spacious parking lot (drive-in). **Festival runs Jul 10-16.**

● **Jul 15 7:30: Brott Music Festival.** *Opera in the Park: Mozart's Così fan tutte*. Catherine Thornsley (Fiordiligi); Ekaterina Shelehova (Despina); Elitta Gagnon (Dorabella); Scott Rumble (Ferrando); Matthew Kim (Guglielmo); Nicholas Borg (Don Alfonso); Brott Opera: National Academy Orchestra of Canada; Boris Brott, conductor; Anna Theodosakis, stage director. Ancaster Fairgrounds, 630 Trinity Rd. S., **Jerseyville**. Visit [brottmusic.com](https://brottmusic.com) or call 905-525-7664. \$34 per person. Rain date: July 16. **LIVE!!**

● **Jul 15 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Opening Night: Charles Richard-Hamelin*. Mozart: *Fantasia in c K475*; Mozart: *Piano Sonata No.14 in c K457*; Chopin: *Preludes*. Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 16 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Gryphon Trio*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 15 8:30: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *The Powerhouse Trio*. Mozart: *Violin Sonata in B-flat K454*; Cris Derksen: *Nice and Clean for Piano, Violin, and Cello*; Cris Derksen: *Planes for Cello & Violin*; Brahms: *Violin*

# TO SUMMER MUSIC

# NEW HORIZONS

VIRTUAL FESTIVAL  
JULY 15 - AUGUST 1



Jonathan Crow, Artistic Director

Featuring

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Sonata in A Op.100. Mayumi Seiler, violin; Cris Derksen, electric cello; Angela Park, piano. New Life Church, 28 Tracey Ln., **Collingwood**. See Jul 10 for contact info. Drive-in Ticket: \$80; Digital Ticket: \$20. Livestreamed online AND projected outdoors at the church's spacious parking lot (drive-in). **Festival runs Jul 10-16.**

● **Jul 16 8:30: Collingwood Summer Music Festival.** *Scheherazade*. Ravel: Scheherazade; Twentieth-century Lebanese songs; and other works. Joyce El-Khoury, soprano; Serouj Kradjian, piano & arrangements; Joseph Petric, bandoneon; Kathleen Kajioka, violin; Naghmeh Farahmand, percussion. New Life Church, 28 Tracey Ln., **Collingwood**. See Jul 10 for contact info. Drive-in Ticket: \$80; Digital Ticket: \$20. Livestreamed online AND projected outdoors at the church's spacious parking lot (drive-in). **Festival runs Jul 10-16.**

● **Jul 17 1:00: Toronto Summer Music.** *Regeneration 1: Strum, Strings, Serenade*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 17 4:00: Toronto Summer Music.** *Regeneration 2: Mendelssohn Quartet*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 17 7:00: Arcady.** *Music in the Gardens: The Strings and Soloists of Arcady*. Emma Verdonk: Zonlicht; and works by Ronald Beckett. Ronald Beckett, conductor. Whistling Gardens, 698 Concession 3, **Wilsonville**. Email [info@arcady.ca](mailto:info@arcady.ca) or call 519-428-3185. \$37 includes day admission to botanical gardens and fountain shows. **LIVE!!**

● **Jul 17 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Regeneration 3: Dvořák Quintet*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 17 8:00: Array Music.** *Young Composers Workshop Concert*. Visit [livestream.com/accounts/15801205/events/9561635](https://livestream.com/accounts/15801205/events/9561635). ONLINE

● **Jul 18: New Adventures in Sound Art.** *World Listening Day 2021: The Unquiet Earth 24 Hour Broadcast*. 24-hour internet audio broadcast of soundscape compositions by Canadian composers and artists including soundscape recordings from across Canada. Call 705-386-0880 or visit [naisa.ca/naisa-radio](https://naisa.ca/naisa-radio). ONLINE

● **Jul 18 2:00: Toronto Summer Music.** *Beethoven Violin Sonatas: Part 1*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Salle Raoul-Jobin, Palais Montcalm, Quebec City. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 19 12:15: Music Mondays.** *Fire and Feathers*. R. Murray Schafer: Wild Bird; Saint-Saëns: Fantaisie; Ravel: Tzigane. Tom Allen, narrator; Lori Gemmel, harp; Etsuko Kimura, violin. Visit [a440.live](https://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE

● **Jul 19 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Beethoven Violin Sonatas: Part 2*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 20 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Pieczonka & Philcox in Recital*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 21 11:00am: Toronto Summer Music.** *Kids Concert: Gryphon Trio*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 21 7:00: Humbercrest United Church.** *Liebestraum*. Liszt: Liebestraum; Mozart: Mvt 1 from Sonata in c; Beethoven: Mvt 2 from Sonata in c, Rachmaninov: Étude-Tableau in d; Liszt: Widmung (transcribed from the Lied by Schumann). Anna Perone, piano. Call 416-767-6122 or [humbercrest.ca](https://humbercrest.ca). Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert. ONLINE

● **Jul 21 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Bach: Concertos & Arias*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Trinity St. Paul's United Church. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 22 7:30: Brott Music Festival.** *Broadway Heroes*. Soloists: Nick Settini, Kaleigh Gorka, Jamie McRoberts, Stephanie Yelovich, Jessica Clement, Grey Soloman, Daniel Allain; BrottOpera; National Academy Orchestra of Canada; Boris Brott, conductor; Lou Zamprogna, stage director. Ancaster Fairgrounds, 630 Trinity Rd. S., **Jerseyville**. Visit [brottmusic.com](https://brottmusic.com) or call 905-525-7664. \$34 per person. Rain date: July 23. **LIVE!!**

## Music TORONTO VIRTUAL CONCERT SERIES



### July 22 at 7:30 pm JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET

● **Jul 22 7:30: Music Toronto.** Concert broadcast free online. [www.music-toronto.com](https://www.music-toronto.com)

● **Jul 22 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Echo Chamber Toronto*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 23 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Romantic Inspirations*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 24 1:00: Toronto Summer Music.** *Regeneration 4: From Modern to Mozart*.

Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 24 4:00: Toronto Summer Music.** *Regeneration 5: Bartók and the Folk Influence*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 24 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Regeneration 6: Schumann Quartet*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 25 2:00: Toronto Summer Music.** *Beethoven Violin Sonatas: Part 3*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 25 7:00: Magisterra Soloists.** *Child Prodigies*. Korngold: Suite; Barber: Adagio; Mozart: Piano Quartet; Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in d. Magisterra Academy Ensemble; Francine Kay, piano. Museum London Theatre, 421 Ridout St. N., **London**. 519-615-0163 or visit [magisterra.com](https://magisterra.com). \$30; \$25(sr); \$15(student with id); \$10(child under 10); \$85(young adult pass-30 years and under); \$15(streamed tickets-adult). All tickets must be purchased in advance. Kick-off event for 1st Magisterra Summer String Institute. **LIVE!!**

● **Jul 26 12:15: Music Mondays.** *A Journey to the Middle East*. Manar Naeem, oud; Lamees Audeh, piano; Kareem El-Tyeb, percussion. Visit [a440.live](https://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE

● **Jul 26 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Beethoven Violin Sonatas: Part 4*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 27 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *New Horizons*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 28 11:00am: Toronto Summer Music.** *Kids Concert with NOSQ*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 28 7:00: Humbercrest United Church.** *If Music Be the Food of Love*. Purcell: If Music Be the Food of Love, Play On; Bach: Selections from French Suite No. 5; Mozart: Pamina's Aria from The Magic Flute; Saint-Saëns: The Swan. All arrangements by Edward Hayes. Marie Gelinis, cello; Edward Hayes, cello; Melvin Hurst, piano. Call 416-767-6122 or visit [humbercrest.ca](https://humbercrest.ca). Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert. ONLINE

● **Jul 28 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *New Orford String Quartet: Homage*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 29 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *NAO @ TSM*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Livestreamed from Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 30 7:30: Brott Music Festival.** *Bohemian Rhapsody: The Music of Queen*. Jeans 'n

Classics Rock Band; Michael Shotton, lead singer; Arcady Singers; National Academy Orchestra of Canada; Boris Brott, conductor. Ancaster Fairgrounds, 630 Trinity Rd. S., **Jerseyville**. Visit [brottmusic.com](https://brottmusic.com) or call 905-525-7664. \$34 per person. Rain date: July 31.

● **Jul 30 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Through Beethoven's Lens*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 31 11:00am: Toronto Summer Music.** *TSM Finale*. A full day of concerts ending at 9pm. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Livestreamed from Temerty Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 31 4:00: Toronto Summer Music.** *Regeneration 7: Debussy & Brahms*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Jul 31 7:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Al Qahwa and Friends Present African Routes CD Celebration*. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. Visit [alqahwa.ca](https://alqahwa.ca). From \$3. ONLINE

● **Jul 31 7:30: Toronto Summer Music.** *Regeneration 8: Death and the Maiden*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Streamed from Walter Hall, Faculty of Music, U of T. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Aug 01 2:00: Toronto Summer Music.** *Encore! Beethoven Violin Sonatas: Part 5*. Visit [torontosummermusic.com](https://torontosummermusic.com). Free. Filmed at Koerner Hall. ONLINE. **Festival runs Jul 15-Aug 1.**

● **Aug 02 12:15: Music Mondays.** *The Charm of Four Hands*. Works by Schubert, Reger and Rachmaninoff. La Fiammata (Linda Ruan and Charissa Vandikas, piano duo). Visit [a440.live](https://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE

● **Aug 04 7:00: Humbercrest United Church.** *J. S. Bach and Three Romantic Friends*. Bach:

## MUSIC MONDAYS

Lunchtime Concerts  
streamed on

**A440.live**

Aug. 2 - La Fiammata

Aug. 9 - Papalote

Aug. 16 - Marcel  
d'Entremont

Aug. 23 - Wolkstein-  
Jurecka Duo

Aug. 30 - Laurel  
Swinden & Stephanie  
Mara

Sept. 6 - Aaron  
Schwebel & Emily Rho  
Church of the Holy Trinity  
[www.musicmondays.ca](https://www.musicmondays.ca)



Prelude and Fugue in a; Stanford: Intermezzo on An Irish Air; Böellmann: Prière à Notre-Dame from Suite Gothique; Gigout: Toccata in b. Michelle Chung, organ. 416-767-6122 or [humbercrest.ca](http://humbercrest.ca). Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert. ONLINE

● **Aug 05 7:00: Stratford Summer Music.** Isabel Bayrakdarian & Gryphon Trio. Works by Brahms & arrangements by Peter Tiefenbach. Isabel Bayrakdarian, soprano; Juan-Miguel Hernandez, violin; Mark Fewer, violin; Gryphon Trio (Annalee Patipatanakoon, violin; Roman Borys, cello; Jamie Parker, piano). The Avondale, 194 Avondale Ave, **Stratford**. 519-271-2101 or [stratfordsummermusic.ca](http://stratfordsummermusic.ca). \$20(online stream); \$60(in person). **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**



● **Aug 05 7:30: Elora Festival.** *Reflection: Music for Choir and Solo Cello.* The Elora Singers; Katie Schlaikjer, cello. Call 519-846-0331 or [elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-aug-5](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-aug-5). Single Concert: \$25-\$60; \$15(st); Festival Pass: \$180-\$350; \$80(st); Weekend Pass: \$40-\$100; \$15(st). ONLINE. **Festival runs Aug 5-28.**

● **Aug 06 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** Marcus Nance & Kevin Ramessar. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 7(1pm) & Aug 8(4:30pm). **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 06 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** Duane Andrews. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 7(4:30pm) & Aug 8(1pm). **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 06 9:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Thompson Egbo-Egbo.* See Aug 5 for contact info. \$20(online); \$50(in person). Once you have booked your concert tickets, we encourage you to call Revival House at 519-273-3424 to make your dinner reservation. LIVE & ONLINE. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 07 10:00am: Stratford Summer Music.** *Being Lost: Part One.* See Aug 5 for contact info. \$20. A leisurely hour-long walk with musical intervals of 15 min each. Please dress accordingly for the weather and bring your hats, water and bug spray. Refreshments from Revel will be available. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 07 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** Marcus Nance & Kevin Ramessar. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 8(4:30pm). **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 07 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** Duane Andrews. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 6(4:30pm) & Aug 8(1pm). **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 07 7:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Being Lost: Part Two.* See Aug 5 for contact info. \$45. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**



● **Aug 07 7:30: Elora Festival.** Jason Max Ferdinand Singers: *New Beginnings.* 519-846-0331 or [elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-7-jason-max-ferdinand](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-7-jason-max-ferdinand). See Aug 5 for pricing. ONLINE. **Festival runs Aug 5-28.**

● **Aug 08 7:00am: Stratford Summer Music.** *Music for String Quartet with The Taoist Tai Chi Society.* See Aug 5 for contact info. \$20. First come first served table seating. Bring your own lawn chair or blanket! **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 08 11:00am: Stratford Summer Music.** *The Swinging Belles.* See Aug 5 for contact info. \$20; \$10(child). **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 08 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** Duane Andrews. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 08 3:00: Brott Music Festival.** *A Note for Every Grape: Mostly Mozart Among the Grapes.* Mozart: Piano Concerto No.23 K488; Mozart: Divertimento K136; Chevalier Saint-Georges: Symphonie concertante. Valerie Tryon, piano; National Academy Orchestra of Canada; Boris Brott, conductor. Sue-Ann Staff Estate Winery, 3210 Staff Ave, **Jordan Station**. Visit [brottmusic.com](http://brottmusic.com) or call 905-525-7664. \$127 per person (includes food and wine). No rain date.

● **Aug 08 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** Marcus Nance & Kevin Ramessar. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 6(1pm) & Aug 7(1pm). **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 09 12:15: Music Mondays.** *Tres Kilos.* Tres Kilos (Larry Lewis, tres/guitar/vocals; Neil Gardiner, trombone/piano/vocals;

Marcus Chonsky, percussion; Ted Sankey, string bass; Jonno Lightstone, flute/clarinete). Visit [a440.live](http://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE

● **Aug 09: RCCO Festival 2021.** *Organ Festival Canada.* Call 647-573-1873 or visit [rccofestival2021.ca](http://rccofestival2021.ca). \$15(per concert); \$60(single day); \$248(festival). ONLINE. **Festival runs Aug 9-13.**

● **Aug 09 from 1pm: Andrew Adair; David Enlow; Isabelle Demers.**

● **Aug 10 from 1pm: Aaron James; Jean-Willy Kunz**

● **Aug 11 from 1pm: Ottawa Bach Choir:** Angela Hewitt; David Simon; Duo Majoya & Mark Segger.

● **Aug 12 from 1pm: Michael Bloss.**

● **Aug 13 from 1pm: Norman Reintamm; Rachel Laurin; Rachel Mahon.**

● **Aug 11 7:00: Humbercrest United Church.** *Melodious Brass.* Marcus Venables: Our Consecration; Webber: Phantom of the Opera; Morley Calvert: Canadian Folk Song Suite; Elgar: Nimrod from Enigma Variations; Gregson: Finale from Laudate Dominum. Venabress Ensemble. Call 416-767-6122 or visit [humbercrest.ca](http://humbercrest.ca). Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert. ONLINE

● **Aug 12 7:30: Elora Festival.** Russell Braun and Carolyn Maule in Recital. Stanford: Songs of the Sea, with the tenors and basses of The Elora Singers. Russell Braun, baritone;



Carolyn Maule, piano; Men of The Elora Singers. See Aug 5 for pricing. Visit [elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-12-russell-braun](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-12-russell-braun). ONLINE. **Festival runs Aug 5-28.**

● **Aug 13 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Vocal Academy.* Free. See Aug 5 for contact info. Also Aug 14(1pm) & Aug 15(1pm).

● **Aug 13 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** Hannah Thomas. Free. Also Aug 14(4:30pm) & Aug 15(4:30pm).

● **Aug 13 9:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Friday Night Live at Revival House: Heather Bambrick.* See Aug 5 for contact info. \$20(online); \$50(in person). Once you have booked your concert tickets, we encourage you to call Revival House at 519-273-3424 to make your dinner reservation. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 14 2:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *TorQ Percussion Quartet.* See Aug 5 for contact info. Free with advance registration. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 14 4:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Cris Derksen.* See Aug 5 for contact info. Free with advance registration. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 14 5:30: Stratford Summer Music.** *Film Screening: Man of a Thousand Songs.* See Aug 5 for contact info. \$25. Followed by a Q&A with the director and producer and a tribute show featuring Damhnait Doyle. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 14 7:30: Elora Festival & Festival of the Sound.** *Elora Festival: Classic Vienna.* Haydn: String Quartet Op.74 No.3; Beethoven: Septet in E-flat. Rolston String Quartet; Mark Fewer, violin; Hezekiah Leung, viola; Bryan Cheng, cello; Joel Quarrington, bass; James Campbell, clarinet; Kathleen McLean, bassoon; Kenneth MacDonald, horn. Elora Centre for the Arts, 75 Melville St., **Elora**. Call 519-846-0331 or visit [elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-14-festival-of-the-sound](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-14-festival-of-the-sound). See Aug 5 for pricing. Tickets are limited. Concert will also be live-streamed. **Festival runs Aug 5-28.**

● **Aug 14 8:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Tribute Concert: Man of a Thousand Songs.* See Aug 5 for contact info. \$45. Following a screening of the documentary film *Man of a Thousand Songs*. **Festival runs Aug 5-29.**

● **Aug 14 9:00: Elora Festival.** *The Elora Singers at Twilight.* Rachmaninoff: Vespers (excerpts); Renaissance and modern music for the end of the day. The Elora Singers. Call 519-846-0331 or visit [elorafestival.ticketspice.com](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com).

**BY SASKY LOUISON & DARRYL JOSEPH-DENNIE**

Behind the scenes of a Caribbean Musical Development by New Generation Artists

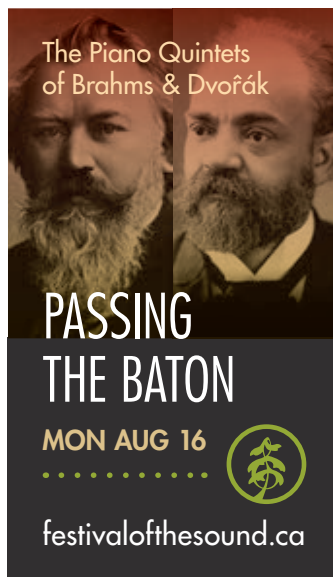
**VIRTUAL PRESENTATION JULY 30 - AUGUST 6**

Overseen by: **Richardo-Keens Douglas** (script), **Mark Cassius** (music), and **Shakeil Rollock** (choreo)

com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-14--the-elora-singers-at-twilight. See Aug 5 for pricing. ONLINE. Festival runs Aug 5-28.

● **Aug 15 11:00am: Stratford Summer Music.** *Graham Hargrove*. See Aug 5 for contact info. \$20; \$10(child). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 16 12:15: Music Mondays.** *I Hear the Little Song: Our Favorite Songs and Arias*. Marcel d'Entremont, tenor; Dakota Scott-Digout, piano. Visit [a440.live](http://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE



The Piano Quintets of Brahms & Dvořák

# PASSING THE BATON

MON AUG 16

festivalofthesound.ca

● **Aug 16 7:30: Festival of the Sound.** *Passing the Baton: The Piano Quintets of Johannes Brahms and Antonín Dvořák*. Dvořák: Piano Quintet No.2 in A Op.81; Brahms: Piano Quintet in f Op.34. Daniel Tselyakov, piano; Alexander Tselyakov, piano; Penderecki String Quartet; Rolston String Quartet. 519-846-0331 or tickets.festivalofthesound.ca. \$22.60. ONLINE

● **Aug 18 7:00: Humbercrest United Church.** *Doxology*. Steal Away (Spiritual); Bless Us, O God (Mongolian Prayer); Two Chorale Preludes on Old Hundredth; Festive Trumpet Tune. Humbercrest Chancel Choir; Melvin Hurst, organ. Call 416-767-6122 or visit [humbercrest.ca](http://humbercrest.ca). Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert. ONLINE

● **Aug 19 7:30: Elora Festival.** *Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir*. Once We Will Reappear [Kord me tuleme tagasi], text by Jaan Kaplinski; Veljo Tormis: Estonian



Elora FESTIVAL

AUG 19

ELORAFESTIVAL.CA

Calendar Songs; The Viru Oath, text by Hando Runnel. Call 519-846-0331 or visit [elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-19](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-19). See Aug 5 for pricing. ONLINE. Festival runs Aug 5-28.

● **Aug 20 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *The Bookends*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 21(1pm) & Aug 22(1pm). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 20 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** *The Festival Brass*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 21(4:30pm) & Aug 22(4:30pm). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 20 9:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Friday Night Live at Revival House: Hilario Durán Trio*. See Aug 5 for contact info. \$50(in person). Once you have booked your concert tickets with us, we encourage you to call Revival House at 519-273-3424 to make your dinner reservation. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 21 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *The Bookends*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 22(1pm). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 21 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** *The Festival Brass*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 22(4:30pm). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 21 5:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Vanny Hu, Cello*. See Aug 5 for contact info. See Aug 5 for contact info. \$40. Performance will take place outdoors. There will be folding white chairs set up in bubbles. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 21 7:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Infusion Baroque: Virtuosa*. See Aug 5 for contact info. \$60. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 21 7:30: Elora Festival.** *The Elora Singers: Cover Story*. Call 519-846-0331 or visit [elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-21---cover-story](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-21---cover-story). See Aug 5 for pricing. ONLINE. Festival runs Aug 5-28.

● **Aug 22 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *The Bookends*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 22 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** *The Festival Brass*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 22 7:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *TorQ Percussion Quartet: The Bright Side - Music for Reconnecting*. See Aug 5 for contact info. \$45. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 23 12:15: Music Mondays.** *I'm Happiest When I'm With You*. Rebekah Wolkstein and Drew Jurecka, violins. Visit [a440.live](http://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE



Music TORONTO

# VIRTUAL CONCERT SERIES

August 26 at 7:30 pm

## FROM THE COLLINGWOOD SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Mayumi Seiler, violin  
Angela Park, piano  
Cris Derksen, cello

● **Aug 26 7:30: Music Toronto.** Free online rebroadcast of Collingwood Summer Music Festival July 15 concert. [www.music-toronto.com](http://www.music-toronto.com)

● **Aug 26 7:30: Elora Festival.** *Choral Dances*. Works by Britten, Berlin, and Duke Ellington. VOCES8. Call 519-846-0331 or visit [elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-26---voces8#ticketBlock](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-26---voces8#ticketBlock). See Aug 5 for pricing. ONLINE. Festival runs Aug 5-28.

● **Aug 27 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Dayna Manning & Laura Chambers*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 28(1pm) & Aug 29(1pm). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 27 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** *Vocal Academy*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 28(4:30pm) & Aug 29(4:30pm). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 27 9:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Friday Night Live at Revival House: Laila Biali*. \$20(online); \$50(in person). See Aug 5 for contact info. Once you have booked your concert tickets, we encourage you to call Revival

House at 519-273-3424 to make your dinner reservation. LIVE & ONLINE. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 28 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Dayna Manning & Laura Chambers*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 29(1pm). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 28 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** *Vocal Academy*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Also Aug 29(4:30pm). Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 28 7:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Stewart Goodyear*. See Aug 5 for contact info. \$60. Festival runs Aug 5-29.



Elora FESTIVAL

AUG 28

ELORAFESTIVAL.CA

● **Aug 28 7:30: Elora Festival.** *Poetry & Song*. Call 519-846-0331 or visit [elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-28---poetry-song](http://elorafestival.ticketspice.com/2021-elora-festival-online-august-28---poetry-song). See Aug 5 for pricing. ONLINE. Festival runs Aug 5-28.

● **Aug 29 1:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Dayna Manning & Laura Chambers*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 29 4:00: Stratford Summer Music.** *Jens Lindemann: Brassfire*. See Aug 5 for contact info. \$60. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 29 4:30: Stratford Summer Music.** *Vocal Academy*. See Aug 5 for contact info. Free. Festival runs Aug 5-29.

● **Aug 30 12:15: Music Mondays.** *Phenomenal Women*. Works by Florence B. Price, Amanda Harberg, Valerie Coleman and Cecile Chaminade. Laurel Swinden, flute; Stephanie Mara, piano. Visit [a440.live](http://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE

● **Sep 06 12:15: Music Mondays.** *20th-Century Masterpieces for Violin and Piano*. Elizabeth Raum: Les Ombres; Prokofiev: Violin Sonata No.1 in f Op.80; Korngold: Suite from Much Ado About Nothing for Violin and Piano Op.11. Aaron Schwebel, violin; Emily Rho, piano. Visit [a440.live](http://a440.live). PWYC. Suggested donation \$10. ONLINE



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● **Capella Regalis Men & Boys Choir.** *Choral Concerts.* A number of concerts are available at the choir's YouTube channel [youtube.com/capellaregalis](http://youtube.com/capellaregalis). ONLINE

● **Recollectiv.** A unique musical online meeting 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, providing a positive intergenerational experience for all. Participation is free with pre-registration. Email [info@recollectiv.ca](mailto:info@recollectiv.ca) for meeting times, information and registration. ONLINE

● **VOICEBOX: Opera in Concert.** *Adriana Lecouvreur.* Music by Francesco Cilea; libretto by Arturo Colautti. Sung in Italian with English subtitles. Natalya Gennadi, soprano (Adriana Lecouvreur); Julie Nesralah, mezzo (Princesse de Bouillon); Tonatiuh Abrego, tenor (Maurizio); Evan Korbuto, baritone (Michonnet); and other singers; Narmina Afandiyeva, music director/piano. Visit [operainconcert.com](http://operainconcert.com) for info. \$20. Available until Jul 2. ONLINE

## BLOGS, PODCASTS, STREAMING

● **Glenn Gould Foundation.** *The Gould Standard: Ai Weiwei: The Conscience of an Artist.* A conversation with Ai Weiwei, a unique presence in the world of visual art -- equal parts avant-garde icon, activist and moral conscience for our times. Visit [glenn Gould.ca](http://glenn Gould.ca).

● **Kevin Barrett.** *Live from Lockdown.* Kevin Barrett does a live-streamed set of solo guitar tunes, coming directly from his Lockdown studio. Tune in to Kevin's Facebook page on Friday at 4pm at [facebook.com/kevinbarrett.165470](https://facebook.com/kevinbarrett.165470).

● **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music of My Life.* Several podcasts are available at [royalconservatory.live/music-of-my-life](http://royalconservatory.live/music-of-my-life). Free. ONLINE

● **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Academic Performances.* Several Academic Performances are available at [royalconservatory.live/academic-performances](http://royalconservatory.live/academic-performances). Free. ONLINE

● **Toronto Consort.** *Explorer: Discovering the World of Early Music.* *Explorer* is a blog for the curious; a place of learning, sharing, and community. Presenting 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 to our beloved repertoire. Visit [torontoconsort.org](http://torontoconsort.org) for info. ONLINE

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# Where, What, and Why Is The WholeNote's Who's Who?

Look under the tab **WHO'S WHO** at [THEWHOLENOTE.COM](http://THEWHOLENOTE.COM) and you'll find detailed profiles for everything listed below. Traditionally we have published an annual print supplement for each of our directories, but during these extraordinary and changeable times it's more useful to keep things up-to-date. Entries are being added and updated all the time.

You can view this page in our online magazine where you'll find that each organisation's web address is conveniently linked to their home page. So for some inspiring and hopeful finger-tip window shopping visit [kiosk.thewholenote.com](http://kiosk.thewholenote.com) and turn to page 32!



## GREEN PAGES 2021 Summer Music Festivals and Series

- Brott Music Festival  
July 15 to August 8, 2021  
Hamilton, ON  
[www.brottmusic.com](http://www.brottmusic.com)
- Collingwood Summer Music Festival  
July 10 to 16, 2021  
Collingwood, ON  
[www.collingwoodfestival.com](http://www.collingwoodfestival.com)
- Domaine Forget International Festival  
July 29 to August 5, 2021  
St-Irénée, QC  
[www.domaineforget.com/en/international-festival](http://www.domaineforget.com/en/international-festival)
- Humbercrest Summer Concert Series  
July 7 to August 18, 2021  
Toronto, ON  
[www.humbercrest.ca](http://www.humbercrest.ca)
- Markham Village Virtual Music Festival  
June 18 to 19, 2021  
Markham, ON (online)  
[www.markhamfestival.com](http://www.markhamfestival.com)
- Music Mondays  
June 7 to September 6, 2021  
Toronto, ON  
[www.musicmondays.ca](http://www.musicmondays.ca)
- No Strings Theatre - Many Voices Many Stories  
July 29 to August 5, 2021  
Online  
[www.nostringstheatre.com](http://www.nostringstheatre.com)
- Something Else! Festival  
July to October, 2021  
Hamilton, ON  
[www.somethingelsefestival.com](http://www.somethingelsefestival.com)
- Stratford Summer Music  
August 5 to 29, 2021  
Stratford, ON  
[www.stratfordsummermusic.ca](http://www.stratfordsummermusic.ca)
- SweetWater Music Festival  
September 16 to September 19, 2021  
Owen Sound and Meaford, ON  
[www.sweetwatermusicfestival.ca](http://www.sweetwatermusicfestival.ca)
- Symphony in the Barn  
July 30 to August 1, 2021  
Durham, ON  
[www.symphonyninthebarn.com](http://www.symphonyninthebarn.com)
- TD Niagara Jazz Festival  
July to October 2021  
St. Catharines, ON (Online)  
[www.niagarajazzfestival.com](http://www.niagarajazzfestival.com)

## SUMMER MUSIC EDUCATION 2021

- CAMMAC  
CAMMAC Music Centre, Harrington, QB  
June 26 to August 22 (TBC)  
[cammac.ca](http://cammac.ca)
- Creative Strings Workshop Online  
Virtual  
Every 7 weeks thru 2021  
[www.christianhowes.com/csw\\_online6](http://www.christianhowes.com/csw_online6)
- Domaine Forget de Charlevoix International Music and Dance Academy  
5, rang Saint-Antoine, C.P. 672, QB  
May 31 to August 22  
[www.domaineforget.com/en/academy](http://www.domaineforget.com/en/academy)
- Interprovincial Music Camp  
Camp Manitou, Parry Sound, ON  
August 22 to 27 and August 28 to September 5  
[www.campimc.ca](http://www.campimc.ca)
- Lake Field Music  
Lakefield College School, Lakefield, ON  
August 8 to 15  
[www.lakefieldmusic.ca](http://www.lakefieldmusic.ca)
- No Strings Theatre - Teen Summer Music Theatre Intensive  
Online  
August 16 to 20  
[www.nostringstheatre.com](http://www.nostringstheatre.com)
- Orchestra North UX  
Ontario (Online)  
July 12 to 16  
[www.orchestranorth.com](http://www.orchestranorth.com)
- Stratford Summer Music Vocal Academy  
Stratford, ON  
August 9 to 17 and August 20 to 26  
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- Summer@Eastman  
Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY  
June 28 to August 6  
[summer.esm.rochester.edu](http://summer.esm.rochester.edu)
- Tuckamore Festival Young Artist Program  
St. John's NL, online, or a combination  
August 9 to 22  
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# Editor's Corner

## The challenge of keeping up with all that solitary reflection

DAVID OLDS

One of the greatest challenges of editing DISCOVERIES is *always* how to do justice to as many of the fine recordings that come our way as we can. Never more so than this past pandemic year, when more artists have focused on recordings in the absence of live performance opportunities. Although we have been able to increase the number of reviews in each edition, there is still a wealth of material we could not get to, with “truckloads [more] arriving daily” to borrow an advertising slogan from the now defunct Knob Hill Farms supermarket chain.

As Stuart Broomer notes further on in these pages, “Though it’s no exchange that one might choose, the COVID-19 lockdown has often replaced the social and convivial elements of music with the depth of solitary reflection.”

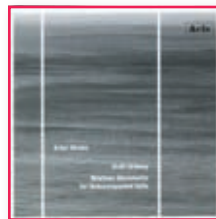
This has certainly been the case for me, and likely also explains the number of solo projects that have crossed my desk in recent months. You will find them scattered throughout the DISCOVERIES section, but I have set aside a few of them for this column.



One of the most ambitious is cellist **Matt Haimovitz's** PRIMAVERA PROJECT, the first volume of which is now available: **PRIMAVERA I: the wind** (PentaTone Oxingale Series PTC 5186286 [theprimaveraproject.com](http://theprimaveraproject.com)). THE PRIMAVERA PROJECT was inspired by the “multi-layered musicality” of German-American artist Charline von Heyl, her “whimsical imagination intertwined with literary and

historical references,” and by Sandro Botticelli’s famous painting *Primavera*. The project’s co-founders, Haimovitz and Dr. Jeffriane Young, asked von Heyl if she would ever consider reimagining the Botticelli painting for the 21st century, and discussion about the idea of commissioning new cello works inspired by the artwork began. Less than two months later, days before the pandemic lockdown, von Heyl had completed her *Primavera 2020*. Haimovitz says “The musical commissions of THE PRIMAVERA PROJECT celebrate our golden age of musical diversity and richness. Each new piece – like the blossoming flowers, figures, and symbols of von Heyl’s and Botticelli’s *Primaveras* – has been a ray of light,

offering us hope for renewal of the human spirit.” There are 81 commissioned works, all based on the paintings, and this first volume includes 14 of these. With influences from the world of jazz and Latin music, Vivaldi and Scriabin, the music runs the gamut of contemporary styles. Highlights for me include inti figgis-vizueta’s *the motion between three worlds*, a rhythmic piece reflecting the composer’s Andean and Irish roots, Vijay Iyer’s reflective *Equal night* which includes an occasional nod to Bach’s iconic cello suites, the dramatic *Chloris & Zephyrus* by Roberto Sierra and Lisa Bielawa’s otherworldly *Missa Primavera*; but all of the tracks have something to recommend them. Haimovitz is in top form no matter how many challenges the music throws at him. *PRIMAVERA II* is scheduled to be released this fall. For more details about the project and upcoming in-person and virtual performances visit the website.



Canadian cellist **Arlen Hlusko** has taken a different approach on her latest release with **Nineteen Movements for Unaccompanied Cello** all written by the same composer, **Scott Ordway** (Acis APL85895 [acisproductions.com](http://acisproductions.com)).

Ordway sees the unaccompanied solo recital as “a kind of high-wire act with no parallel in musical performance tradition.” He says the work recorded here “pushes – sometimes gently, sometimes more forcefully – on the

boundaries of this convention. [...] The music is sometimes fast, aggressive, and reckless. More often, though, it is quiet and contemplative. [...] Each movement is a reflection on one of four ‘images’ related to the themes of solitude and wilderness: walking, singing, wind, and waves.” Most of the movements have “twins” that appear later in the cycle, reworking the material; there are seven instances of *wind*, six of *singing*, four of *waves* but only two of *walking*, the short pizzicato opening movement and the protracted bowed finale using the same motif, where only the final four notes are plucked. Although Ordway does reference existing solo cello repertoire in places, particularly Bach and Britten, I don’t find the work at all derivative. The set dates from 2018 and was commissioned by Hlusko when she and Ordway were colleagues at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Lasting most of an hour, as the composer says, *Nineteen*

### What we're listening to this month: New to the Listening Room this issue

**Transformations**  
Elizabeth Chang

**Territorial Songs: Works for Recorder by**  
**Suneif Rasmussen**  
Michala Petri and others

**Metamorphosis**  
Zachary Carrettin

**Dialogo**  
John-Henry Crawford

**Distance**  
The Choir of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul; Jean-Sébastien Vallée

**Prelude To Dawn**  
Bruce Levingston

**Paul Hindemith: Chamber Music for Horn**  
Louis-Philippe Marsolais; Louis-Pierre Bergeron; Xavier Fortin; Simon Bourget, horn  
David Jalbert; Pentaèdre

**Giga Concerto**  
Eric Lyon/String Noise

**Resistance/Resonance**  
113 Composers Collective/Duo Gelland

**Tulpa**  
New Focus Recordings

**Scott Wollschlaeger: Dark Days**  
Karl Larson

**Ocelot**  
Ocelot

**Genealogy**  
CODE Quartet

**Ain't Got Long**  
Art of Time Ensemble

**This Land**  
Theo Bleckman & The Westerlies

**The Music of Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges**  
Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra

Read them here or visit [thewholenote.com/listening](http://thewholenote.com/listening)

*Movements* demands “a different kind of virtuosity; one of endurance, focus, vulnerability and stillness.” Hlusko demonstrates all those qualities, and more.



Next, another collection of 19 movements for a solo string instrument, this time **Hafliði Hallgrímsson: Offerto – works for solo violin** performed by **Peter Sheppard Skærved** (**Metier msv 28616 divineartrecords.com/label/metier**). Hallgrímsson (b.1941, Iceland) is a renowned cellist and composer who studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and has spent much of his career in the UK, including a stint as principal cellist of

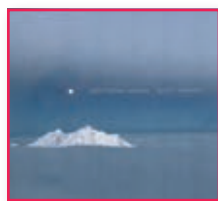
the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. He also has strong ties with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, with which he served as composer in residence. British violinist Sheppard Skærved has had more than 400 works composed for him but also has a strong interest in little-known repertoire from the past. In 2005 he approached Hallgrímsson for a few short sketches for a concert in an art gallery in Mexico City. Hallgrímsson later revisited and expanded these into 15 quite substantial pieces while maintaining the original title *Klee Sketches*, in homage to the painter Paul Klee, also an accomplished violinist. The set explores myriad aspects of violin technique, from the Stravinsky-like spiccato opening of the first movement, *Klee practising an accompaniment for a popular song*, to the playful and virtuosic closing moments of *Klee notates birdsong in the aviary*. The two books of “sketches” are separated on this recording by *Offerto, Op.13 (in memoriam Karl Kvaran)*, written in 1991 for a close friend, recognized as one of Iceland’s finest abstract painters. The four movements, which range from contemplative to frenetic, are all played with conviction and finesse by Sheppard Skærved. One of Hallgrímsson’s own paintings adorns the cover of the CD.



Violinist **Elizabeth Chang** says that American composer Leon Kirchner (1919–2009) had a “profound artistic and pedagogical influence” on her as an undergraduate at Harvard. Reflecting on the relationships formed with her own students and on how “the particularity of the teacher/student relationship [...] bears fruit in our evolution as human beings and musicians,” she conceived of

**Transformations (Albany Records TROY1850**

**albanyrecords.com)**. It features works for violin alone and in duo with piano and cello by Kirchner and his teachers Roger Sessions and Arnold Schoenberg, both “pioneers in seeking a new compositional language in the post-tonal world while being deeply rooted in the Germanic tradition.” Chang goes on to tell us that “Kirchner’s voice reflects the thorny complexity of modernism while palpably reaching for the sensuality of the musical language of a previous era.” The disc begins with a late work by Kirchner, the *Duo No.2 for Violin and Piano* (2002) in which this approach is aptly demonstrated. Sessions’ extended *Solo Sonata* follows, a four-movement mid-career work dating from 1953, and then his brief and evocative *Duo for Violin and Cello* from 1978. Schoenberg’s *Phantasy Op.47* for violin and piano, written in 1949, completes a compelling disc. “Thorny complexity” notwithstanding, I found it interesting to notice my wife moving rhythmically along with this supposedly academic fare as we listened while playing our daily game of cribbage, one of our COVID stay-at-home routines. She isn’t normally engaged by the music when I’m doing my “homework” listening.



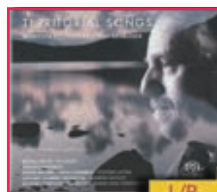
After so many solo string sonorities and so much craggy modernism it was something of a relief to immerse myself in the lush wash of Alaskan composer **John Luther Adams’ Arctic Dreams (Cold Blue Music CB0060 coldbluemusic.com)**. The gradually changing textures and rich sonorities, an early example of Adams’ “Aeolian” sound

world, grew out of his “experiences listening to wind harps on the tundra.” *Arctic Dreams* is dedicated to the memory of the composer’s dear friend, naturalist and author Barry Lopez, and shares its title with one of his greatest books. The seven movements of the suite, with evocative titles such as *The Place Where You Go to Listen* and *Where the Waves Splash, Hitting Again and Again*, are scored for four string players (Robin Lorenz, violin; Ron Lawrence, viola; Michael Finckel, cello and Robert Black, bass), four singers (Synergy Vocals) and three layers of digital delay. The eerie, yet calming, music is a perfect antidote to the stress and tribulations of these troubled times.



Another disc which I’m finding “good for the soul” is **The Arching Path** featuring contemplative, mostly soothing music by American composer **Christopher Cerrone (In a Circle Records ICR021 cerrone.bandcamp.com/album/the-arching-path)**. Pianist Timo Andres is featured on all tracks, alone on the title work, and with electronics by the

composer on *Double Happiness* where they are joined by percussionist Ian Rosenbaum. Rosenbaum also returns with soprano Lindsey Kesselman on the five-movement song cycle *I will learn to love a person* where clarinetist Migzhe Wang is also credited; but you have to listen very carefully to notice. I don’t think I’ve ever heard a clarinet played so subtly or sensitively, simply extending the colour palette of the ensemble sound. I’m very impressed with Kesselman’s voice and control; even in the highest tessitura there’s no strain or shrillness. The texts are five poems by American novelist Tao Lin in which he “ponders the contradiction inherent to life in the digital age, how it is possible to feel at once overexposed and unnoticed to the point of vanishing.” The use of the vernacular is somewhat disconcerting, but the overall effect is riveting, at times with its intensity and at others with its sense of calm resignation. The disc concludes with *Hoyt-Schermerhorn*, a meditation where the piano is once again alone except for some gently nuanced electronics reminiscent of tinkling icicles.



I first became aware of Danish recorder virtuoso **Michala Petri** during my tenure at CJRT-FM in the early 90s when I picked up an RCA CD on which she performed contemporary concertos, including one by Toronto’s own Gary Kulesha. I found it compelling and intriguing and I think it was the first time that I had heard a recorder as an orchestral solo instrument. Since her debut at age 11

Petri has toured the world and performed more than 4,000 concerts, with repertoire spanning the Renaissance era to the present day. She has commissioned more than 150 works and is a tireless champion of living composers; her discography extends to 70 critically acclaimed recordings. Petri’s latest CD, **Territorial Songs – Works for Recorder by Sunleif Rasmussen (OUR Recordings 6.220674 ourrecordings.com)**, presents works in a variety of genres by that celebrated Faroese composer, including the unaccompanied *Sorrow and Joy Fantasy*, *Flow* for recorder and string trio (meant to be a companion piece to Mozart’s flute quartets mentioned elsewhere in these pages, performed here with members of the Esbjerg Ensemble), “I” with a cappella choir (Danish National Vocal Ensemble), *Winter Echoes* with 13 solo strings (Lapland Chamber Orchestra), and the title work, a concerto with full orchestra (Aalborg Symphony under Henrik Vagn Christensen). *Territorial Songs* is the earliest work presented here, composed in 2009 for Petri when Rasmussen was composer-in-residence with the South Jutland Symphony Orchestra. The soloist uses various members of the recorder family – soprano through tenor – in the different movements. There is an “anti-cadenza” in which Petri is called upon to sing and play her instrument simultaneously, a lyric episode “providing a colourful contrast to the non-stop pyrotechnics” heard elsewhere in the concerto. In the concluding section, before the tolling bells of the opening return, the soloist “pushes the recorder’s virtuosity to its limits, with triple tonguing, rapid chromatic figuration, breathtaking waves of rolling triplets and punishingly difficult octave leaps.” It’s an exhilarating ride



handled deftly with seeming ease by Petri. Don't miss the train, get on board!



I first wrote about saxophonist **Jacques Schwarz-Bart** back in December 2018 when he released *Hazzan*, in which he explored his half-Jewish heritage in the context of jazz. Schwarz-Bart's latest, **Soné Ka-La 2 Odyssey** (Enja 9777 [enjarecords.com/word-press](http://enjarecords.com/word-press)), revisits his hybrid of Guadeloupean Gwoka music and jazz first explored on the original *Soné Ka-La* release in 2005.

On that, he set out "to pioneer a sophisticated modern jazz language cross-pollinated with Afro-Caribbean rhythms and melodies inspired by the Gwoka traditions from my native island of Guadeloupe." On *Odyssey* he is joined by singer Malika Tirolien (from Montreal via Guadeloupe) and backed by a dynamic rhythm section with Grégory Privat on piano, Reggie Washington, bass, Arnaud Dolmen, drum kit and Sonny Troupé, traditional ka drum. Tirolien is a true partner in this venture where her wordless vocals, often in intricate unison with the leader's saxophone and extensions, blend seamlessly and add to the distinct signature sound bolstered by the busy percussionists. On first listening I wondered why I found this album hauntingly familiar. Eventually I figured it out. Back in my formative years when I was first exploring the world of jazz, I was introduced to many of the greats by a 3-LP collection called *Energy Essentials* on the Impulse! label, featuring the likes of John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Pharoah Saunders, Sonny Rollins, Archie Shepp and Cecil Taylor among many others. Of particular note was the track *Garvey's Ghost* from Max Roach's album *Percussion Bitter Sweet*. Roach's drumming was supplemented by a pair of Latin percussionists adding island beats, but more important was soprano Abbey Lincoln's bell-like vocalise, soaring and blending with the instruments in a way I'd not heard before. A half a century on from that discovery, *Odyssey* takes me back to my epiphany with Tirolien's vivid vocal expressions as flexible and controlled as any horn you might normally have expected to find, in duet with Schwarz-Bart's supple saxophone lines. His mother, novelist and playwright Simone Schwarz-Bart, describes it well: "Sumptuous duo, astonishing, perilous and breathtaking: the metal is grateful for the ecstatic generosity of the human voice, the voice is thankful for the powerful and delicate vibrato of the metal... Marvel of souls liberated." There is definitely "Essential Energy" here. **O**

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

David Olds, DISCoveries Editor  
[discoveries@thewholenote.com](mailto:discoveries@thewholenote.com)

# STRINGS ATTACHED

TERRY ROBBINS



When the COVID lockdown started in March 2020 the London-based Russian violinist **Alina Ibragimova** decided to use the forced seclusion to do "some serious work" on the notoriously difficult **Paganini 24 Caprices**. The result, recorded in an empty Henry Wood Hall, is her new 2-CD set on the **Hyperion** label (CDA68366 [alinaibragimova.com/recordings](http://alinaibragimova.com/recordings)).

In his excellent booklet essay, which outlines the individual technical issues and challenges in each caprice, Jeremy Nicholas refers to Paganini as a shockingly underrated and "inspired and well-schooled composer whose innovative advances in violin technique couched in music of great drama and poetry remain his most significant contributions to the history of music."

Well, technique, drama and poetry is just some of what you get from the brilliant soloist here. It's a quite stunning performance, with never a hint of any technical problems but also never a hint of mere virtuosity – there's an astonishing palette of colours and moods that holds your interest from beginning to end. If you've ever viewed these pieces as mere technical studies then this set – an absolute must-buy at two CDs for the price of one – will certainly change your mind.



Another product of the lockdown is the **Bach Sonatas & Partitas** set from violinist **Augustin Hadelich**, who took the opportunity to complete a recording project that had long been a dream of his (**Warner Classics** 190295047955 [warnerclassics.com/release/augustin-hadelich-bach](http://warnerclassics.com/release/augustin-hadelich-bach)).

His perceptive booklet notes examine the changing approach to Bach's music through

What we're listening to this month:

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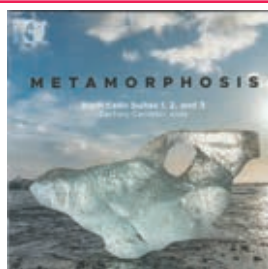
## Transformations

Music of Leon Kirchner, Roger Sessions, and Arnold Schoenberg  
Elizabeth Chang, violin; Steven Beck, piano; Alberto Parrini, cello



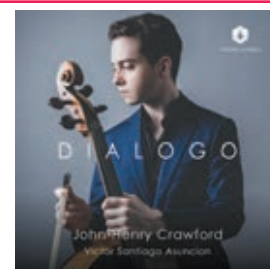
## Territorial Songs: Works for Recorder by Sunleif Rasmussen

Michala Petri and others  
This generously filled release confirms the importance of Sunleif Rasmussen's unmistakable musical voice. Definitely not to be missed! – MusicWeb International



## Metamorphosis

Zachary Carretin  
An intimate and imaginative rendition of Bach Cello Suites recorded during Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.



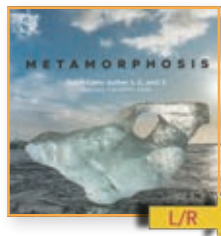
## Dialogo

John-Henry Crawford  
"An electrifying debut" (New York Music Daily) by cellist John-Henry Crawford and pianist Victor Santiago Asuncion.

the historically informed revolution to the current variety of styles. He uses a Baroque bow with his 1744 “Leduc, ex-Szeryng” Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù violin, which he found to be liberating and a revelation, allowing for more fluid multiple stops and more buoyant, light articulation.

Hadelich uses vibrato when he feels it appropriate for expression, and adds occasional ornamentation. Tempi are dazzlingly fast at times, but bowing and intonation are always flawless.

These are brilliant performances; strong, bright and assertive but never lacking introspection.



When the pandemic forced the suspension of Colorado’s Boulder Bach Festival, its music director also took the opportunity to begin the Bach recording project he’d been planning for years. The result is **Metamorphosis: Bach Cello Suites 1, 2 and 3** played on viola by **Zachary Carrettín (Sono Luminus DSL-92247 sonoluminus.com)**.

Carrettín has extensive experience as guest concertmaster with numerous Baroque orchestras, and has lived with these works for over 25 years. The result, not surprisingly, is a superb set of beautifully judged performances. Any loss of low cello resonance is more than compensated for by the lighter warmth of the viola, its octave-higher tuning making these seem a perfectly natural performance choice, and not transcriptions.

The viola is an 18th-century model by an unknown maker, set up with internal and external historical fittings – bridge, tailpiece and bass bar – and wound gut strings, with Carrettín using an ironwood tenor viola da gamba Baroque bow.



**Vadim Gluzman** is in tremendous form on **Beethoven/Schnittke No.3 violin concertos**, with the **Luzerner Sinfonieorchester** under **James Gaffigan (BIS-2392 naxosdirect.com/search/+bis-2392+)**.

Strong opening timpani strokes in the Beethoven announce a performance of real character, but what really sets it apart is the use of the cadenzas written

by Alfred Schnittke in the mid-1970s. With their snatches of Bach, Brahms, Bartók, Berg and Shostakovich, they strike Gluzman as “an incredible time bridge, uniting all into one and pointing to the Beethoven concerto as being the root, the source of inspiration and in a way a model for generations to come.” They’re remarkably effective, never deserting Beethoven’s material but viewing it through different eyes, never simply virtuosic and never disrespectful – better, in this respect, than some of the standard cadenzas.

A cadenza starts Schnittke’s own three-movement *Violin Concerto No.3*, written in 1978 for Oleg Kagan and scored for 13 wind instruments and string quartet, the latter not heard until the transition to the third movement.

Gluzman, playing the 1690 ex-Leopold Auer Strad, is superb throughout, with outstanding support from the Lucerne ensemble on a terrific disc.



**Phoenix**, the latest CD from violinist **Janusz Wawrowski** with the **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra** under **Grzegorz Nowak**, features two concertos written in times of personal stress for their composers: the “*Phoenix Concerto*” for *Violin Op.70* by the Polish composer Ludomir Różycki (1883-1953) and the Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto Op.35* (**Warner Classics 0190295191702** [wawrowski.com/albums-shop](http://wawrowski.com/albums-shop)).

The two-movement Różycki concerto was written in 1944 during

the Warsaw Uprising but never performed. When he encountered manuscript fragments of the work several years ago (no complete fully orchestrated version survives), Wawrowski was determined to see the concerto reborn; he located the manuscript piano reduction, discovered further fragments, including some of the original orchestration, rewrote sections of the violin part that were unplayable, and had a full orchestration prepared. The result is an extremely attractive work, premiered in 2018, with a first-movement theme that will melt your heart, especially given Wawrowski’s sweet-toned, strong, rhapsodic playing. His remark that the concerto reminds him of Gershwin or – in particular – Korngold, with a slight glance towards Hollywood, is spot on.

The Tchaikovsky concerto was written following the breakup of the composer’s disastrous marriage. The performance here is top notch – carefully measured and thoughtful, with great control of tempi – but I’d buy the whole disc just for that achingly, hauntingly beautiful Różycki theme.



Violinist **Rachel Podger**, with **Christopher Glynn** at the fortepiano, completes her nine-CD series of Mozart’s violin sonatas with **Mozart Jones Violin Sonatas Fragment Completions**, world-premiere recordings of six sonata-allegros and a fantasia for violin and piano, completed by **Timothy Jones (Channel Classics CCS SA 42721 rachel-podger.com/recordings)**.

Since 2013, Jones has produced over 80 completions of some 30 Mozart fragments in all genres, a process discussed in detail in his extensive and fascinating booklet essay. Four fragments from Mozart’s last decade in Vienna form the basis of the remarkable reworkings here, with multiple versions showing the various possibilities, all based on Mozart’s evolving style during the 1780s. Three fragments – Fr1782c in B-flat, Fr1784b in A and Fr1789f in G – are each heard in two completions; the remaining fragment is the *Fantasia in C Minor* Fr1782l.

It’s virtually impossible to tell when the fragments end and the completions begin – the continuity is seamless, and never for a moment do you feel as if you’re not listening to Mozart.

The violin is a 1739 Pesarinius, and the fortepiano a 2019 German model by Christoph Kern, based on an 1825 original by Conrad Graf of Vienna. They are well matched, and there’s a lovely tonal balance on a quite fascinating disc.



The Irish duo of cellist **Ailbhe McDonagh** (her first name pronounced AL-vah) and pianist **John O’Conor** make their contribution to the Beethoven 250 celebrations with a double-album set of **Beethoven Complete Cello Sonatas 1-5**, released in late May and available on all major music platforms (**Steinway & Sons naxosdirect.com/search/034062301812**).

O’Conor is an acknowledged Beethoven specialist, having won first prize in the International Beethoven Piano Competition in Vienna in 1973, and having recorded the complete piano sonatas as well as the complete piano concertos. McDonagh, who as a child studied piano with O’Conor, is a great partner and clearly on the same level here, the duo being as one with every nuance in dynamics and tempi in outstanding performances.

Recorded in St. Peter’s Church in Drogheda, Ireland in August of last year, the sound is resonant and warm and the balance excellent. I listened on YouTube, where there is also a short documentary on the project.

**Intimate Impressions for 2 guitars**, featuring Canadian guitarists **Adam Cicchillitti** and **Steve Cowan**, is a collection of 20th-century works written in Paris, heard here mostly in arrangements by the performers (**Analekta AN 2 8793 analekta.com/en**).

The only original piece for two guitars is the four-movement





*Sérénade* by André Jolivet from 1959. Ravel's *Sonatine*, Germaine Tailleferre's *Sonate pour harpe*, four short pieces by the Catalan composer Federico Mompou and two Debussy *Préludes* – *Bruyères* and *La fille aux cheveux de lin* – are all arrangements, with the Drew Henderson/Michael Kolk arrangement of the *Prélude* from Ravel's *Le tombeau de Couperin*

closing the disc.

Each guitarist has a solo track: Debussy's *Arabesque No.1* for Cicchillitti, and Ravel's *Pavane pour une enfante défunte* for Cowan. Fine playing throughout, recorded by the always-reliable Drew Henderson, makes for a delightful CD.



The first two volumes of the **Naxos** series of the guitar music of **Joaquín Rodrigo** featured guitarist Jérémy Jouve, but on **Rodrigo Guitar Music 3**, a selection of eight works ranging from 1948 to 1987, the soloist is the brilliant Turkish-American guitarist **Celil Refik Kaya** (8.574004 naxosdirect.com/search/8574004).

Although unable to play the guitar, Rodrigo produced about 25 solo works for the instrument, an output that, as Graham Wade notes in his excellent booklet essay, is now appreciated as one of the central pillars of the concert repertoire.

The first thing that strikes you is the wealth of variety and imagination and the sheer technical demands of the music. The second thing is how superbly Kaya meets every challenge, with faultless technique, a wide range of tone colour and dynamics and impeccable musicianship. He is joined by flutist **Marianne Gedigian** in two short works for flute and guitar, but the brilliance here is in the solo pieces.

Norbert Kraft's name as producer guarantees a superb recorded sound on an outstanding disc.

**DIALOGO** is the excellent debut album from the American cellist **John-Henry Crawford**, accompanied by the Filipino-American pianist **Victor Santiago Asuncion** (Orchid Classics ORC100166 orchidclassics.com).

"Dialogue" is Crawford's description of the recital's concept: *Dialogo* is the first of the two movements of the brief but striking *Sonata for Solo Cello* by György Ligeti, but the cellist also sees conversation



by fine playing from Asuncion in performances of strength, sensitivity and passion.



between the partners in Brahms' *Cello Sonata No.2 in F Major Op.99* and the desire for dialogue in the *Cello Sonata in D Minor Op.40* by Shostakovich, who at the time of the work's composition was temporarily separated from his wife.

Crawford draws a warm, rich tone from the 200-year-old cello that was smuggled out of Austria by his grandfather following Kristallnacht in 1938, and is ably supported

**Sonidos del Sur**, the latest CD from Canadian guitarist **Warren Nicholson**, features works by composers from Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Paraguay and Cuba (**Composers Concordance Records COMCON0063 warrennicholsonguitarist.com**).

The most well-known pieces are Agustín Barrios' *La Catedral*, Antonio Lauro's four *Valses Venezolano* and João Pernambuco's *Sons de Carrilhões* (*Sounds of Bells*). Also included are Maximo Diego Pujol's five-movement *Suite Del Plata No.1*, José Ardevol's three-movement *Sonata Para Guitarra*, Julio Sagreras' *El Colibri* and Dilermando Reis' *Xôdô da Baiana*.

As always with this player, there's solid technique and clean playing with some lovely moments, but there's also an occasional sense of earnestness and over-deliberation which tends to prevent the music from really expanding and flowing.



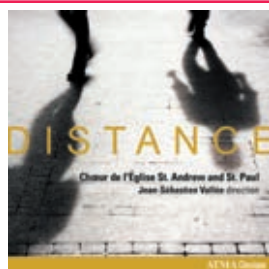
Montreal-based composer **Xander Simmons** has released a digital EP of his **String Quartet No.2**, a five-movement work lasting just over 20 minutes (**xandersimmons.com**).

Simmons describes it as post-minimalist in style, with lyrical, mostly tonal melodies layered on minimalist compositional structures, which is exactly how it sounds. It's a confident, highly competent piece given

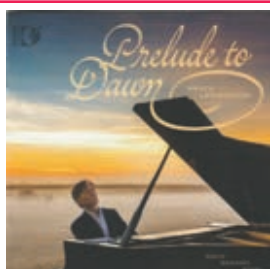
a terrific performance by Montreal's **Quatuor Cobalt**, with whom Simmons workshoped and revised the work. It's well worth a listen. You can check it out on YouTube. 🎧

What we're listening to this month:

[thewholenote.com/listening](http://thewholenote.com/listening)



**Distance**  
The Choir of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul; Jean-Sébastien Vallée  
Distance explores different aspects of isolation and silence: solitude, reflection, but also determination and "breaking the silence".



**Prelude To Dawn**  
Bruce Levingston  
Levingston's exquisite new release, featuring the interwoven, haunting works of Bach, Brahms and Rihm, exudes solace, joy and the possibilities of renewed life.



**Paul Hindemith: Chamber Music for Horn**  
Louis-Philippe Marsolais  
Montreal-based horn player Marsolais is joined by pianist David Jalbert, Pentaèdre wind ensemble, and horn players from the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa.

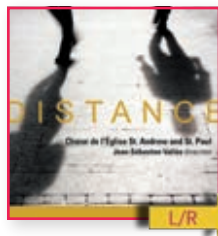


**Giga Concerto**  
Eric Lyon/String Noise  
Jubilant work for two violins and chamber orchestra that combines quotes from popular songs with a prismatic, Neo-baroque stylistic approach.

## VOCAL

### Distance

Choeur de l'Eglise St. Andrew and St. Paul;  
Jean-Sébastien Vallée  
ATMA ACD2 2840 ([atmaclassique.com/en](http://atmaclassique.com/en))



▶ Recorded at the height of Montreal's second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic under extremely specific and restrictive public health conditions, *Distance* could not be more

appropriately titled. Despite these challenging times and conditions, this disc manages to distill an extraordinary amount of strength and beauty into its 69 minutes, a testament to the quality of the Choir of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul and its director, Jean-Sébastien Vallée.

Spanning nearly five centuries of music and a great range of styles, there is something for everyone here. Beginning with a stunning performance of Samuel Barber's *Agnus Dei* (his own arrangement of the *Adagio for Strings*), Trevor Weston's atmospheric *Magnificat* and Bach's *Komm, Jesu, Komm*, the first three works are notable for the way in which the choir is able to modify their performance practice to meet the demands of each era.

The remainder of *Distance* is equally stimulating, with Elgar's legendary *Nimrod* appearing in a vocal arrangement by John Cameron titled *Lux aeterna*, and works by Rachmaninoff, James MacMillan, and Uģis Prauliņš. In addition to these renowned composers, there are also appearances by contemporary composers Reena Esmail, Caroline Shaw and William Kraushaar, each born in the 1980s.

There is little more to say about the performances on this disc, other than that they are extraordinary. The virtuosity present in the Barber is entirely different from that demanded by Bach, which is itself radically different from Prauliņš, and each is simply stunning in its own way. This reviewer is very rarely rendered speechless but, when something is done as well as the interpretations presented here, it is undoubtedly better to talk less and listen more.

**Matthew Whitfield**

**Schubert – Winterreise**  
Joyce DiDonato; Yannick Nézet-Séguin  
Erato 0190295284245  
([warnerclassics.com](http://warnerclassics.com))



▶ There is ample evidence, in their individual oeuvres, to suggest that luminous mezzo Joyce DiDonato and maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin are artists of the first order; enough, it

may be said, to have earned them the right to do whatever they may wish to. This recording of *Winterreise*, Franz Schubert's iconic and desolate song cycle, is an altogether more challenging assignment, but one that's pulled off with aplomb.

This unique duo interprets this music from the despondent woman's perspective and provides Schubert's music and Wilhelm Müller's verses with a new benchmark. This is no simple replacement of the male protagonist – the rejected lover on the verge of madness – with a female one. The lonely peregrinations of Schubert's old character through the snowbound landscape have been given dramatically new meaning by DiDonato. Müller's 24 verses speak to the mezzo in a very special way. She has, in turn, interiorized the bleak despondency of *Die schöne Müllerin* and recast the music's unrelenting desolation in a breathtaking new landscape of personal pain.

Meanwhile, from his vantage point in the shadows behind his piano, Nézet-Séguin conducts himself with impeccable decorum, occasionally emerging into the limelight if only to gently emphasize or provide poignant relief from the music's bleak mood. His musicianship throughout is eloquent. His astute pianism – especially in *Der Leiermann* – highlights and embellishes the emotional veracity of *Winterreise*, combining with DiDonato's darkly lustrous performance to take Schubert's magnificent art song cycle to a rarefied realm.

**Raul da Gama**

**Donizetti – Lucrezia Borgia**  
Marko Mimica; Carmela Remigio; Xabier Anduaga; Varduhi Abrahamyan; Orchestra Giovanile Luigi Cherubini; Coro del Teatro Municipale di Piacenza; Riccardo Frizza  
Dynamic 37849  
([naxosdirect.com/search/37849](http://naxosdirect.com/search/37849))



▶ Nestled on the southern slopes of the Italian Alps is the lovely small town Bergamo, birthplace of one of the great masters of Italian *bel canto*, Gaetano Donizetti. *Lucrezia Borgia*, one of his early successes, premiered in 1833 at La Scala shortly

after *Anna Bolena*, his first major breakthrough. It is rarely performed, as it requires soloists, especially the lead soprano, of the highest calibre. Over the last century the opera went through many revisions, but it never left the stage and attracted the likes of Caruso, Gigli, Caballé, Sills, Gruberova and Sutherland for the principal roles.

The opera centres around one of the most despicable characters of the Italian Renaissance, the daughter of Pope Alexander VI, Lucrezia Borgia who murdered three husbands and is presently on her fourth, Don Alfonso, ruler of Ferrara. The story that follows is a total mayhem of horror, jealousy, vendetta, poisoning, mass murder and suicide, but the music remains one of the composer's most compelling and forward-looking scores. In fact, he is attempting to break the traditional rigid rules of *bel canto* by bringing the *recitativo* and *aria* closer together towards a more fluid style and expressive language, a step closer to Verdi.

The strongest feature of this memorable performance is Italian soprano Carmela Remigio in the title role. She truly carries the show with her dramatic persona, total emotional involvement, absorption into the role and a mesmerizing voice powerful in all registers. Gennaro, her illegitimate son, cause of much of her grief and anguish, is the sensational Spanish tenor Xabier Anduaga, winner of Operalia Competition 2019. Young Marko Mimica from Zagreb, Croatia, as Don Alfonso, is a powerful bass-baritone and the supporting cast is remarkable. Riccardo Frizza, master of Italian opera, conducts.

**Janos Gardonyi**



**Visca L'Amor – Catalan Arts Songs**  
**Isaï Jess Muñoz; Oksana Glouchko**  
**Bridge Records 9548**  
**(bridgerecords.com/products/9548)**



► Six song cycles by Catalan composers, music and words brimming with urgency and passion, are illuminated by the fervent, vibrato-warmed singing of tenor Isaï Jess Muñoz, accom-

panied by pianist Oksana Glouchko.

In *La rosa als llavis* (The Rose on the Lips) by Eduard Toldrà (1895-1962), a lover burns with desire until the sixth and final song, *Visca l'amor* (Long Live Love), ending with the words “la volia, i l’he pres” (I wanted her, and I took her). Ricard Lamote de Grignon (1899-1962) set his three brief *Cants homèrics* (Homeric Hymns) to translations of ancient Greek prayers. Those to the Muses, Apollo and Zeus are declamatory in words and music; that for Aphrodite, gentle and caressing.

Achingly beautiful melismas make *Haidé*, three miniature love poems set by Narcís Bonet (b.1933), my particular favourite among this admirable collection. *Combat del somni* (Struggle in the Dream) by Frederic Mompou (1893-1987) is filled with intense yearning for an absent lover. (I first heard these three plaintive songs, infused with extravagant poetic imagery, on a still-treasured LP from the 1950s.)

The four songs of *Imitació del foc* (Imitation of Fire) by Elisenda Fàbregas (b.1955), commissioned by Muñoz and Glouchko for this CD, dramatically deal with “delirium,” “blood waves,” long-haired winged men,” “racing suns” and “sharpened flames.” The devotional *Ave Maria*, *Benedictus* and three *Alleluias* of *Les Paraules sagrades* (Sacred Words) by Joan Comellas (1913-2000) provide a richly satisfying conclusion to this richly satisfying CD.

**Michael Schulman**

**Samuel Coleridge-Taylor – Heart & Hereafter**  
**Elizabeth Llewellyn; Simon Lepper**  
**Orchid Classics ORC100164**  
**(naxosdirect.com/search/orc100164)**



► The neglect that Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1923) seems to have suffered in his life-time (and after) could rival that of Franz Schubert and Gustav

Mahler. Moreover, like Schubert and Mahler, Coleridge-Taylor's reputation as a composer of exceptional breadth and scope is also being illuminated by the ceaseless proselytizing of a few performers – the latest being the breathtakingly agile lyric soprano Elizabeth Llewellyn together with pianist Simon Lepper.

On *Heart & Hereafter* Coleridge-Taylor's skill unfolds through a breathtaking array of work, from musical settings of Christina Rossetti's poetry to selections from his other songbooks, all of which constitute profound meditations in music brought to life by Llewellyn and Lepper.

Coleridge-Taylor's limitless creativity in art song is evident in the range of expression displayed in this collection. It's clear from the sweep of this music that the composer found inspiration to illuminate each subject with emotional depth and luminosity.

Throughout, Llewellyn does Coleridge-Taylor's work poetic justice. Her instrument is lustrous, precise and feather-light. Melodies are ideally weighed and measured as Llewellyn digs fiercely into the meaning of each gesture, bringing ceaseless variety, fluid dynamics and – not infrequently – a quite magical quality to her phrasing. Lepper's fingerwork is exceptional and he exhibits a gleamingly blended tonal quality in his pianism. It's hard to imagine a duo better

suiting to this repertoire, with both musicians bringing distinct and deeply interiorized readings to complement each other's execution of these utterly beautiful songs.

**Raul da Gama**

**Susan Kander – dwb (driving while black)**  
**Roberta Gumbel; New Morse Code**  
**Albany Records TROY1858**  
**(albanyrecords.com)**



► Near the end of *dwb* (*driving while black*), a woman is teaching her son to drive. “Is this car a ticket to freedom or a time bomb?” she asks herself. It's not a car crash she worries about. It's

a police stop – will her son be assaulted, even murdered, because he is driving while Black?

In Roberta Gumbel's poetic libretto, scenes created from her own experiences as a Black mother alternate with hard-hitting news bulletins. The racially charged incidents these bulletins announce, from dramatically shifting perspectives, escalate from creepy encounters to vicious attacks.

Composer Susan Kander has scored this chamber opera for one singer, a cellist and a percussionist. Her imaginative exploration of this unusual combination resonates with the intensity of a full-scale opera's worth of colourful sonorities and textures. *dwb* (*driving while black*) is just 46 minutes long, and it moves quickly. But the emotional impact resonates long after it's over.

Gumbel, a soprano, sings the part she created with engaging expressiveness. In the detailed vignettes showing her loving relationship with her son, we feel the joys as vividly as the fears – through the jazzy vocalises, the tender lullabies and the theatrical monologues. Her impassioned commitment is matched by that of the versatile musicians of

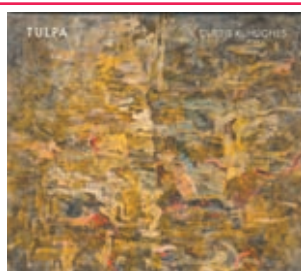
What we're listening to this month:

[thewholenote.com/listening](http://thewholenote.com/listening)



**Resistance/Resonance**  
**113 Composers Collective/Duo Gelland**

These 6 pieces provide ample field for Duo Gelland (Cecilia and Martin Gelland, violinists) to display their wide-ranging voices.



**Tulpa**  
**New Focus Recordings**  
 A fascinating retrospective, elegant in form, restless, and expressively rich, these seven works reveal Hughes to be an imaginative and deeply talented composer.



**Scott Wollschleger: Dark Days**  
**Karl Larson**  
 Composer Scott Wollschleger and pianist Karl Larson release *Dark Days*, an album featuring 10 of Wollschleger's deeply personal works for solo piano, on New Focus Recordings.



**Ocelot**  
**Ocelot**  
 Ocelot's debut on 577 Records is out now! A Brooklyn based avant-jazz trio described as uneasy, meditative and darkly cinematic.

New Morse Code, cellist Hannah Collins and percussionist Michael Compitello.

Together they reinforce the deep sense of urgency driving this powerful work, shining some light on our fraught times.

**Pamela Margles**

## CLASSICAL AND BEYOND

### New Baroque Sessions

**Luc Beauséjour**

**Analekta AN 2 8919 (analekta.com/en)**



► Solitary ways of existence brought on by the current pandemic have resulted in spurs of interesting solo projects around the world. Many performing artists

have been contemplating the question of their artistic identity in the circumstances that extinguish the very nature of their art. A solo statement of a kind, *New Baroque Sessions* is an album that captures one artist's way of retaining the essence of their creative expression while playing the music they love.

This second volume of Baroque music played on piano (the first one was published in 2016) is a collection of Luc Beauséjour's favourite pieces from the Baroque repertoire. The compositions, by Bach, Couperin (Armand-Louis and François), Scarlatti, Fischer, Sweelinck, Froberger and Balbastre, touch upon different corners of vast Baroque treasures. Some are well known, others explored less often. All are predominantly written for harpsichord but translate exceptionally well to piano, which was one of Beauséjour's intentions with this album.

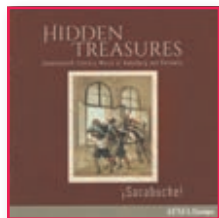
A versatile performer, equally at home on harpsichord, organ and piano, Beauséjour has an elegance to his playing that is truly rare. Here is the performer that plays with colours and articulations; a performer of subtle gestures that amount to grand statements. The pieces themselves contain creative elements one does not necessarily expect – musical portraits, clever compositional techniques, tributes to Greek muses, or simple utterances of the resilience of their times. While honouring Baroque traditions, there is a touch of contemporaneity to Beauséjour's interpretations, adding an incredible freshness to this album.

**Ivana Popovic**

### Hidden Treasures – 17th-Century Music of Habsburg and Bohemia

**¡Sacabuche!**

**ATMA ACD2 2798 (atmaclassique.com/en)**



► This is something new. We are aware of the talented and sometimes prodigious output of Austrian composers such as Haydn or Mozart but their predecessors are

all but unknown. Enter ¡Sacabuche! For 15 years under the direction of Baroque trombonist Linda Pearce, this Canadian ensemble has rediscovered works from Habsburg and Bohemian sources. What is more, the range of instruments such as cornettos and theorbos is particularly diverse.

Indeed, it is strident trombone playing that makes its presence immediately felt in *O dulce nomen Jesu* by the Viennese composer Giovanni Felice Sances. Massimiliano Neri's *Sonata quarta Op.2* is even more complex, demanding an intricate playing which makes the disappearance of these pieces from mainstream music all the more puzzling.

On occasion the CD includes anonymous pieces; the eight-part *Sinfonia* is a vibrant full-blooded composition which any modern brass band would be proud to perform. Of course, this does not rule out vocal input as another anonymous composition *Salve regina à 4* brings out the contralto contribution of Vicki St Pierre – holding her own even while outnumbered by ten instrumentalists! In fact, while most of the compositions on this CD are scored for several of these instrumentalists, St Pierre's performance of *O quam suavis* (again anonymous) brings a virtuoso voice to the selection.

When we consider our familiarity with the contemporary composers from say Venice, the absence of this CD's composers is very surprising. We owe much to Linda Pearce and her fellow musicians in bringing us this anthology.

**Michael Schwartz**

### Spira, Spira Emmanuel Despax

**Signum Classics SIGCD 665  
(signumrecords.com/?s=Spira)**



► In the liner notes to the terrific 2021 release *Spira, Spira*, the name taken from Victor Hugo's novel *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, French pianist

Emmanuel Despax writes that studying and performing the music of Johann Sebastian Bach is metaphysical in that “there is no

chaos, just beauty.” Most certainly, during these trying times, humanity's quest for beauty is, if nothing, unabated. As such, I would suggest (expanding on this point) that Bach's music – particularly when played as beautifully as is captured on this wonderful recording – is an equivalently metaphysical journey for engaged listeners. Perhaps this sounds trite, but beauty is the antidote to ugliness. And sadly, there is tremendous ugliness in society and in the world at present. Beauty, and beautiful artifacts, such as the music of Bach as performed boldly and with nuance by Despax, hold out the possibility of something (a beauty ideal?) towards which we aspire.

Although much of the music contained on this disc may be familiar, the arrangements and album concept (paying tribute to the legacy of pianists and composers – Liszt and Busoni among others – who both revered Bach's music and transcribed it for the contemporary piano) is both unique and musically satisfying. The whole recording is sublime. Even on such work-horses as *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, Despax finds freshness in Dame Myra Hess's transcription and brings to life beautiful musical subtleties that, of course, were always contained within, but needed the deftness of touch and recording sensitivity that Despax and this album offer, to reveal themselves anew.

**Andrew Scott**

### In the Salon of Madame Brillon – Music and Friendship in Benjamin Franklin's Paris The Raritan Players; Rebecca Cypess Acis APL40158 (acisproductions.com)



► This inspired new recording from the noted Raritan Players was conceived and directed by pianist and scholar Dr. Rebecca Cypess, and is the result

of arduous research and performances. The project is focused on the pre-Revolutionary War Parisian hostess, patroness and composer, Anne-Louise Boyvan d'Hardancourt Brillon de Jouy (1744-1824), and on both her musical canon and the sparkling workings of her fabulous, fashionable and elite Parisian salon. Her luminous guests were drawn from the rarified worlds of music, art, philosophy and diplomacy – including her flirty pen pal Benjamin Franklin (then U.S. Ambassador to Paris).

There are seven world-premiere recordings here, which include Brillon's duet for harpsichord and square piano (performed on a rare 1780 English instrument by Johannes Zumpe). All selections have been performed on period instruments and feature not only Brillon's work, but music preserved in her personal collection, including compositions



dedicated to her by the iconic cellist Luigi Boccherini.

Of particular beauty in this heady bouquet are Boccherini's *Sonata No.4 in D Major* from *Sei Sonate di Cembalo e Violino* – particularly the *Andante*, which explores the gorgeous and unexpected, natural sonic symmetry of the violin and harpsichord. Brillion's own *Sonata No.4 in G Minor* is a fresh-sounding and compelling work, and in the *Andante con espressione*, the square piano resonates with passion and urgency – engulfing the length of the keyboard. Henri-Joseph Rigel's three-movement piece for piano and harpsichord, *Duo No.2 in C Minor* is a spine-tingling celebration of musical possibilities.

Constrained by the societal restrictions of her day, Brillion, who nearly disappeared from history, manifested an international life of artistic and historical significance that still resonates today.

**Lesley Mitchell-Clarke**

**Boccherini – Complete Flute Quintets**  
**Rafael Ruibérriz de Torres; Francisco de Goya String Quartet**  
**Brilliant Classics 96074**  
**(naxosdirect.com/search/5028421960746)**



► Virtuoso cellist and composer, Luigi Boccherini, born in 1743 in the city of Lucca in Tuscany, Italy, only 92 kilometres west of Florence, received his musical education in Lucca and

subsequently in Rome. He spent some time in his mid-20s in Paris, which led to his moving to Madrid and his appointment as a musician in the household of the Infante Don Luis, brother of King Charles III.

It was there in 1773 and 1774 that Boccherini composed the two sets of *Six Flute Quintets Opp.17 and 19*, recorded on the first two CDs of this three-CD set. The third CD

is of the *Flute Quintets Op.55*, composed in 1797, either in Spain or in Berlin, where he was employed by King Frederick William II of Prussia.

These 18 quintets, while far from Boccherini's total output, reveal a very skilful and original composer, different from but not inferior to his much better-known colleagues, Haydn and Mozart. First and foremost is his gift for melodic invention, evident in everything on the CD, even in the third set, composed when he was in his mid-50s.

The flute would, you might think, be a bit of a fifth wheel when added to a string quartet, but not for Boccherini. He sometimes uses the flute as a soloist, as in *Op.19, No.3*, which is almost a concerto, the flute even having a cadenza; sometimes as an orchestral colour to bring out a series of modulations, as in *Op.17, No.1*; and sometimes as a source of contrast, as in *Op.19, No.4*, where the flute and the cello alternate as soloists.

The performers are the Spanish Francisco de Goya String Quartet and flutist, Rafael Ruibérriz de Torres. The quartet's playing is technically flawless, and their sensitivity to each other and to the flute is exemplary. Ruibérriz de Torres always sounds as if he belongs, and his facility on the period instrument is astounding during the virtuoso passages. Bravissimi to the five for giving us this first complete recording of these hitherto neglected works.

**Allan Pulker**

**Flute Passion: Mozart**  
**Nadia Labrie; Antoine Bareil; Isaac Chalk; Benoit Loiselle**  
**Analekta AN 2 8925 (analekta.com/en)**



► Mozart's dislike of the flute has long been a topic of controversy, and whatever truth there may be behind the theory, some of

his most charming works were written for the instrument, albeit the result of commissions received between 1778 and 1787. Five of these compositions – the *Quartets K285, 285a and 285b* in addition to the *Quartet K298* and the renowned *Andante K315* (as arranged and adapted by François Vallières) are presented here on this delightful Analekta recording performed by flutist Nadia Labrie and her accomplished colleagues Antoine Bareil, violin, Isaac Chalk, viola and Benoit Loiselle, cello. First-prize winner from the Conservatoire de musique du Québec, Labrie holds a master's degree from the Université de Montréal and has appeared as soloist with such ensembles as the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra. This is her third in the *Flute Passion* series.

These one-, two-, or three-movement works – never more than 17 minutes in length – may have only been written for the purpose of financial gain, but after 250 years they remain miniature gems – amiable chamber music where all parts are deemed equal.

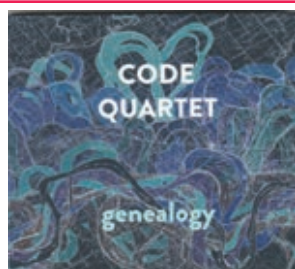
As a cohesive ensemble, this group of four succeeds admirably! From the beginning, the listener is struck with the wonderfully intimate sound these musicians produce. Labrie's pure and sonorous tone is perfectly complemented by the underlying strings that provide a sensitive partnership. This is nowhere more evident than in the second movement of *K285b*, a theme and six variations. Here, the artists approach the graceful intertwined melodies with great finesse, achieving a delicate balance throughout.

Félicitations à tous! This is a wonderful performance of engaging music played by four gifted musicians. Whatever feelings Mozart may have had for the flute, he would surely have approved!

**Richard Haskell**

What we're listening to this month:

[thewholenote.com/listening](http://thewholenote.com/listening)



**Genealogy**  
**CODE Quartet**

The excellent musicianship of this quartet makes the four players sound full and complete – offering well-blended, tightly arranged and exploratory jazz with contemporary, wistful, modern jazz arrangements.



**Ain't Got Long**

**Art of Time Ensemble**

Art of Time Ensemble's 6th studio album, it plays out like a Greatest Hits, with all songs arranged by longtime collaborator Jonathan Goldsmith.



**This Land**

**Theo Bleckman & The Westerlies**

Songs of Resistance and Solace by Woody Guthrie, Bertolt Brecht, Joni Mitchell & more.



**The Music of Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges**

**Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra**  
 In this album, hear music from one of classical music history's forgotten gems: an influential Black 18th-century baroque composer.

**Mozart – Gran Partita & Wind Serenades**  
**Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin**  
**Harmonia Mundi HMM902627**  
**(akamus.de/en)**



► *Alte* is German for “old,” perhaps leading one to imagine fustiness, cobwebs or creaking joints. The Akademie für Alte Musik invert the age of

the music, making old sound new, in their release of two of Mozart’s beloved *Wind Serenades*, K.375 in E-flat Major and K.361 in B-flat Major (known affectionately as the *Gran Partita*). I imagine the players wearing some fashions of the later 18th century, shoe leather worn by the cobblestones of Vienna, marvelling at and revelling in the sounds they are called on to make by the newly written score; some probably in need of a bath, wishing their masters paid more, hoping to avoid cholera.

This music is never old, no matter how often it’s reworked. The playing is so damned fine that every moment is a joy, conjuring the freshness that Mozart inserted into the charming form of the *Serenade* during its moment of popularity. Ever the canny businessman, he wrote the second of these entertainments “quite carefully” to catch the attention of a wealthy potential patron: Emperor Joseph II. Wind players and their audience are much the richer for his efforts.

There’s some oddness of pitch, owing to the use of period instruments; the bassoon sound in particular is quite special. The ensemble colours are fresh and juicy, the phrasing and articulation precise. These performances rank among the finest recordings of this material I’ve heard. Bonus delight: the audible breath upbeats beginning each track.

**Max Christie**

**Mozart – Works for Oboe and Orchestra**  
**Albrecht Mayer; Deutsche**  
**Kammerphilharmonie Bremen**  
**Deutsche Grammophon**  
**(deutschegrammophon.com/en/catalogue/products/mozart-albrecht-mayer-12210)**



► The new Deutsche Grammophon album *Mozart* consists of six works transcribed for oboe, oboe d’amore and English horn, including

a completed version of the first movement of the unfinished *Oboe Concerto in F Major*, expertly performed by internationally renowned solo oboist of the Berlin Philharmonic, Albrecht Mayer and the Kammerphilharmonie Bremen chamber

orchestra. Comprised of a thoughtful selection of works originally for soprano, violin and flute, *Mozart* showcases Mayer at the top of his craft.

The fragmented and unfinished concerto movement was commissioned to be completed by Mayer’s friend, Swiss composer Gotthard Odermatt. Keeping with the style and flare of Mozart, the fragments were imagined by Odermatt into a delightful, charming and convincing first movement. Another highlight is one of Mozart’s most recognized masterpieces, the *Concerto for Flute and Harp*. Transposed to the key of B-flat Major, it was arranged for oboe and harpsichord, featuring Vital Julian Frey. The choice of the harpsichord was a unique and effective substitute for harp, fitting perfectly with the timbre of the oboe. It is truly an elegant performance.

With the addition of *Ave verum corpus* performed on English horn, *Exsultate, jubilate* and *Ch’io mi scordi di te* performed on oboe d’amore as well as the *Rondo in C* and *Ah se in ciel, benigne stelle* performed on oboe, this album really is a “best of” collection featuring the entire oboe family.

The Kammerphilharmonie Bremen follows and matches the elegant, tasteful phrasing of Mayer, highlighting the mastery of the instruments and his clear love of Mozart.

**Melissa Scott**

**Beethoven – Symphony No.3 “Eroica”**  
**Les Siècles; François-Xavier Roth**  
**Harmonia Mundi HMM902421**  
**(harmoniamundi.com/#!/albums/2692)**



► Beethoven’s *Eroica* is a revolutionary work; “not only in physical scale, but in spiritual content it surpasses all classical symphonies written before.”

It completely broke away from the world of Haydn and Mozart, his former principal influences.

It was like a breath of fresh air in the world of music at that time. As it was written not long after the French Revolution and at the time of Napoleon as a “liberator against tyranny” (his words) Beethoven initially dedicated it to Bonaparte. That spirit prevails and the work throbs with élan and heroism in the glorious key of E-flat Major, especially in the first movement. It’s full of invention, breaking traditional forms and even has such powerful dissonant fortissimo chords that the players at the premiere concert refused to play!

That was in the summer of 1804 conducted by the young Beethoven, but now in the 21st century it’s in the hands of a revolutionary conductor, creator of the revolutionary orchestra with period instruments, *Les Siècles*. François-Xavier Roth has the ability to enter the composer’s mind and capture the essence,

the spirit of heroism, the dash and urgency throughout the work. Tempo is fast, but most likely the composer’s original intent, the symphonic argument and all details are crystal clear. I actually saw Roth conducting the *Scherzo* and how simply and easily he induced a tremendous intensity and concentration into the players and what remarkable precision and lightness he achieved. The last movement is tremendous. It’s fast but the orchestra is so precise that all details of the mad Romani episode and the final apotheosis of the Prometheus theme come out magnificently. The overall effect is simply overwhelming.

**Janos Gardonyi**

**Chopin: 24 Preludes**  
**Charles Richard-Hamelin**  
**Analekta AN 2 9148 (analekta.com/en)**



► “All you have to do is write one true sentence. Write the truest sentence that you know.”

–Ernest Hemingway

Pianist Charles Richard-Hamelin is well on his way

to becoming a Canadian national treasure. In fact, he likely already is. Though he also works with collaborators in recordings, the solo stage is where Richard-Hamelin’s talent originated and where it remains most impressive to date. (His performances of the Chopin ballad cycle are now in the annals of recent musical history – a show “to tell your friends about.”) The newest recording from Richard-Hamelin modestly juxtaposes Chopin’s *Preludes, Op.28* with the *Andante Spianato et Grande Polonaise Brillante, Op.22*.

At once, the opening preludes of *Op.28* deliver something unexpected. It’s what is *not there* that seems more notable than what is. Richard-Hamelin plays this music in an earnest and brave language that is difficult to comprehend at first. There is such a brazen lack of the self that the listener feels as if they are missing something. Too many pianists of our day move their egos to the fore in performance; not Richard-Hamelin. He glides through this miraculous set of miniatures with a devotional vision, as if the very composer himself were at the keyboard.

The *Grande Polonaise* is equally unexpected in its freshness and lucidity. Open and honest, this music lilts with a simplicity of means that awakens subtler forms of beauty. One trusts that this is just another iteration – among many – on a long road that Richard-Hamelin will tread. His life and career will bear witness to a multitude of beautiful things as he climbs towering mountains of musicianship, one true sentence at a time. As listeners, he does the work for us, conjuring and shepherding, as we are effortlessly carried to the summit view, ‘pon wings of pianistic gold.

**Adam Sherkin**



**Concert Note:** Charles Richard-Hamelin opens Toronto Summer Music on July 15 at 7:30pm with a free, live-streamed recital featuring works by Mozart and *Preludes* by Chopin.

**Ravel**  
**Jean-Philippe Sylvestre**  
**ATMA ACD2 2773 (atmaclassique.com/en)**



► The charismatic and rakish Jean-Philippe Sylvestre has released an album of music he knows well and truly: solo piano works of Maurice Ravel. And for some

extra flair and curiosity, Sylvestre recorded on an 1854 Érard piano.

Seemingly, the decision to deliver two major cycles from Ravel's catalogue in and of itself was an easy one, but the unusual fancy for a historic instrument here serves as the surprise. Such a shift brings welcome change – crystal clear lines and sonorities emerge from this piano, nearly two centuries old. We are greeted with colourful music-making in a mode that never suggests museum vaults or relic hunting. 'Tis a newfangled lens through which to hear this music and one can't help feeling closer to Ravel.

Sylvestre's interpretations reveal an artist's singular reconceiving of beloved repertoire: having learned it, put it away, then re-learned and now *un-learned* so as to match the demands of an older instrument few are accustomed to playing. At times, the mid-19th-century Érard does hinder the execution, with reduced reverb available and less hammer/damper agency. The performer must work many times harder to achieve the usual results begot from a modern piano. But the efforts seem worth it for Sylvestre as he achieves quirky moments of expressive beauty, textural novelty and uncanny sonorities. An example is the *Alborada del grazioso*, with its chiselled, wood-like clarity and revelatory repeated notes, speckled with equal parts dust and morning dew.

**Adam Sherkin**

**Earl Wild: [Re]Visions**  
**Vittorio Forte**  
**Odradek Records ODRCD399**  
**(vittorioforte.com)**



► Proclaimed "a tribute to the great musician on the tenth anniversary of his death," a disc from newbie Italian pianist, Vittorio Forte, celebrates an impressive assortment of transcriptions from the late great

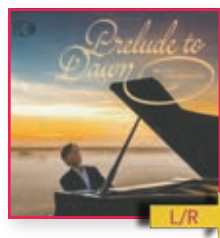
American keyboard virtuoso Earl Wild.

Opening with the oft-heard *Harmonious Blacksmith Variations* by Handel, Forte thrusts the listener into the heartiest of renditions with an unexpected quantity of octaves and thickly voiced figures. Wild's take on the original Handel is, after all, a dated one but Forte seems to relish this peripheral brand of pianism. With such technical command as he possesses, we get caught up in Forte's excitement, not to mention the sheer tunefulness of Handel's music. By its conclusion, one laments the end: what if Wild had written a variation or two of his own?

The album's centrepiece is a collection of transcriptions of songs by Rachmaninoff. Wild earned a reputation for these gorgeous little things and Forte takes up the mantle with admirable aplomb. Naysayers might argue that pianists have enough *original* Rachmaninoff in the catalogue to satisfy and, consequently, dispraise the pillaging of song repertoire for the sake of yet more piano music. The rest of us are just grateful that Wild did what he did, creating felicitous versions of several Rachmaninoff songs. Indeed, the Russian master himself made arrangements of at least two of his own songs for solo piano, offering them as encores in recitals. And so Wild – and Forte – remain in safe (and inspired) company.

**Adam Sherkin**

**Prelude to Dawn**  
**Bruce Levingston**  
**Sono Luminus DSL-92245**  
**(sonoluminus.com)**



► Highlights for me of pianist Bruce Levingston's *Prelude to Dawn* are the variation works that begin and end the recording. Brahms' challenging arrangement for

left-hand piano of Bach's violin *Chaconne in D Minor* is played securely, from the perfectly voiced rolled chords of the theme onward. Through great variety of articulation and tone colour, the work's 64 variations remain fascinating and in character. Levingston's pedalling is especially good in clarifying bass, melody, inner parts and chord structure. The same is true in the *Theme and Variations in D Minor, Op.18b*, Brahms' piano arrangement of the profound second movement from his B-flat Major *String Sextet*. Here Levingston captures the disturbing mood of a broken-up version of the theme in bringing the disc to a moving close.

As for the other pieces, preludes one and two from Wolfgang Rihm's early *Six Preludes* are unexpected but effective choices. I especially like the pianist's pacing and control of dynamics in the spare No.2, with its very low notes suggesting tolling bells. Originally for lute or harpsichord, Bach's *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro in E-flat Major* is unique.

Levingston's flowing prelude and the meticulously articulated fugue with its unusual broken-chord interlude especially captured my interest. Two chorale preludes, the Bach-Busoni *Sleepers, Awake* and Brahms' organ masterpiece *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* add to the disc's pensive mood. Indeed, recent trying times are a subtext here, but so are notes of passion and hope in *Prelude to Dawn*.

**Roger Knox**

**The Russian Album**  
**Lucas & Arthur Jussen**  
**Deutsche Grammophon**  
**(arthurandlucasjussen.com/en)**



► Music scored for two pianos has had an illustrious history – Bach, Mozart and Brahms all wrote compositions for multiple keyboards – and this new recording

on the DG label featuring the brothers Lucas and Arthur Jussen performing an all-Russian program is further proof of its integrity.

Hailing from Hilversum in the Netherlands, the two brothers – both under 30 – studied with Maria João Pires, made their debut at the ages of 10 and 13, and signed a contract with DG in 2010 while still in their teens. Performances in Europe and the U.S. have received rave reviews and this is their seventh (!) recording.

Shostakovich wrote his brief *Concertino for Two Pianos Op.94* in 1954 for his son – then a student at the Moscow Conservatory – with an eye to performing it together. In keeping with the youthful theme, much of the score is vigorous and lighthearted, providing the two artists ample opportunity to demonstrate flawless technique.

Following are three contrasting movements from Rachmaninoff's *Suite No.2 Op.17*. While the second movement *Waltz* and concluding *Tarantella* are frenetic *perpetuum mobiles*, the third movement *Romance* is all heartfelt lyricism. Two movements from Stravinsky's 1935 *Concerto for Two Pianos* is another indication that these two artists seem to thrive on repertoire requiring an almost super-human prowess. At all times, the two demonstrate not only an innate understanding of the music, but a seemingly telepathic connection with each other, performing as one.

The disc closes in a lighter vein – the *Coquette* and the *Valse* from Arensky's *Suites Nos.1 and 2* for two pianos prove a fitting conclusion to a most satisfying program.

**Richard Haskell**

**Hans Rott – Orchestral Works Vol.1**  
**Gurzenich Orchester Köln; Christopher Ward**  
**Capriccio C5408**  
**(naxosdirect.com/search/c5408)**

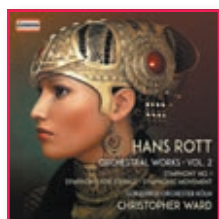
**Hans Rott – Orchestral Works Vol.2**  
**Gurzenich Orchester Köln; Christopher Ward**  
**Capriccio C5414**  
**(naxosdirect.com/search/c5414)**



► Languishing in total obscurity for over a century, the music of Hans Rott (1858–1884) first came to light through Gerhard Samuel's 1989 Cincinnati

Philharmonia Orchestra recording of his *Symphony in E Major*. Rott's surviving works date from his time as a student at the Vienna Conservatory, where his classmates included Gustav Mahler and Hugo Wolf. Mahler in particular treasured him, proclaiming "He and I seem to me like two fruits from the same tree, brought forth by the same soil, nourished by the same air." Curiously, fugitive thematic references to Rott's works are echoed in Mahler's earlier symphonies. Alas, Rott's fate was not a happy one. The aesthetics of his day were wracked by a cultural war between the progressive advocates of Wagner's "music of the future" and the traditionalists, devotees of the absolute music of Brahms. Rott, as revealed in this comprehensive survey, would seem to fall between these two camps, but was rejected for his Wagnerian tendencies when submitting his works to competitions. In 1880 he brought his symphony to Brahms himself for his assessment and was rudely told he had no talent whatsoever. This sent him over the edge; not long after he boarded a train on his way to take up a demeaning provincial job as an organist when he spotted a man in the carriage about to light a cigar. He threatened him with a pistol, screaming that Brahms had packed the train with dynamite! Hauled off by the authorities, he spent the last years of his life in an insane asylum, where he died of tuberculosis at the age of 25.

The first volume of these recordings includes a number of Rott's lesser-known works. There are two overtures, a *Prelude to Julius Caesar* and the premiere recording of a reconstruction of his *Hamlet Overture*, along with movements from two unfinished orchestral suites. Stylistically Rott covers a wide ground; yes, there are more than a few stentorian Wagnerian passages, but they are filtered through the lens of his organ teacher Anton Bruckner, his sole advocate amongst the notoriously reactionary Conservatory faculty. The most substantial work is the closing *Pastorale Prelude*, which ends, somewhat incongruously, with an elaborate fugue.



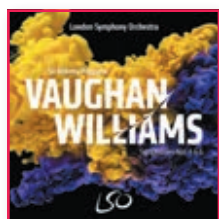
reminiscent of (wait for it...) Brahms! It is his most celebrated work, having been recorded a dozen times to date. A three-movement *Symphony for String Orchestra in A-flat Major* follows, the prim and proper serenades of a 16-year-old tyro aiming to please. The volume concludes with another premiere of sorts, the *Symphonic Movement in E Major*, an earlier version of the opening of the *Symphony*.

These two volumes, impressively played by the distinguished Gürzenich orchestra, sensitively interpreted by the young English conductor Christopher Ward, and expertly recorded by the Capriccio team, are a must-have item for all enthusiasts of this unjustly neglected composer.

**Daniel Foley**

**Vaughan Williams – Symphonies 4 & 6**  
**London Symphony Orchestra; Sir Antonio Pappano**  
**LSO Live LS00867D (isolive.iso.co.uk)**

**Vaughan Williams – Symphony No.5**  
**BBC Symphony Orchestra; Martyn Brabbins**  
**Hyperion CDA68325**  
**(hyperion-records.co.uk)**



► The latest release on the LSO Live label, recordings where the orchestra is the major stakeholder, features two symphonies by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Many diehard fans of the *Fourth Symphony* will point to the 1937 recording, conducted with relentless fury by the composer himself, as the gold standard, but for me, the benchmark recording of this symphony (and, indeed, all of the others) is that of Sir Adrian Boult, who worked closely with RVW for several decades. Pappano's interpretation equals and at times surpasses these, bringing an appropriate anger and relentlessness to this groundbreaking work.

The same can be said of Pappano's interpretation of the *Sixth Symphony*. Composed in four distinct movements without pause, from its opening notes to its life-changing *sempre pianissimo* finale, you get the feeling that you are hearing a monumental and important symphony from the 20th century. And you are!

The London Symphony Orchestra is no stranger to the works of Vaughan Williams,

having recorded the entire cycle of nine symphonies on more than one occasion – the 1970s cycle by André Previn being the most celebrated. And as these are live performances, there is a resulting excitement to the playing that can't be matched in studio recordings.

I have one small quibble with the otherwise excellent booklet notes: the alternating triads that close the epilogue of the *Sixth Symphony* are E Minor and E-flat Major sonorities, not E Minor and E Major as noted.



The release of the *Fifth Symphony* is part of a projected complete cycle of Vaughan Williams symphonies by Martyn Brabbins and the BBC Symphony

Orchestra on the Hyperion label. Brabbins clearly loves this piece and under his baton the themes seem to unfold in a natural, organic way – unhurried, yet with a careful eye on the overall structure of the entire work. The orchestra's winds sparkle in the second movement and its strings luxuriate in the beauty of the third movement *Romanza*. Brabbins deftly handles the architecture of the finale, making the cyclical return of the opening seem inevitable and treating the work's closing pages more like a benediction than a mere coda.

Since the *Fifth Symphony* contains themes originally composed for RVW's then-unfinished opera, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, it seems appropriate to include music from that on this release. The scenes are mostly incidental music, and they don't hold together as a concert work for me, but as a RVW enthusiast, I am very glad to get to hear music from a work that preoccupied him for over 40 years of his long life.

**Scott Irvine**

**Hindemith – Chamber Music for Horn**  
**Louis-Philippe Marsolais; David Jalbert; Pentaèdre**  
**ATMA ACD2 2822 (atmaclassique.com/en)**



► Paul Hindemith was a fascinating figure in 20th-century music, a prolific composer, conductor and theorist whose writings are still used to teach students in conservatories and universities around the world.

A gifted violinist and violist, Hindemith was able to play almost every instrument in the orchestra, as well as the organ and piano, as he attempted to learn an instrument and its workings through practice before composing for it. Much of Hindemith's work is written in a non-tonal style in which



there is nonetheless a clearly defined central pitch; this is not atonal music by any means, but rather a modernist modality that is unique and immediately distinguishable as Hindemith's own musical language.

*Chamber Music for Horn* features five unique works and a range of instrumentations, each featuring at least one horn, including the remarkable *Concerto for Horn and Orchestra*, admirably arranged for horn (Louis-Philippe Marsolais), wind ensemble (Pentaèdre) and piano (David Jalbert) by Simon Bourget; and the strikingly beautiful *Sonata for Four Horns*. This latter work is a masterful example of Hindemith's ingenious skill, using the four horn "voices" to create different moods and characters in exceedingly successful ways.

The intricacies of Hindemith's writing require constant precise tuning and rhythmic precision, and this disc abounds with both. Timbres are robust throughout and always impeccably tuned, allowing the resonance of each instrument to reach its full potential, while rhythms are crisp and accurate. Whether a Hindemith neophyte or a seasoned listener, this recording is highly recommended as an exploration of Hindemith's musical style, even if it contains only a small portion of this master's many works.

**Matthew Whitfield**

## MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

### Alain Lefèvre – Opus 7 Préludes

**Alain Lefèvre**

**Warner Classics 9029540078**

(alainlefevre.com/composer)



► Charismatic Alain Lefèvre is a perfect composer and pianist in his seventh release featuring seven piano preludes, six of which were recorded in spring

2019 in his native Quebec.

Composing and then performing one's own works must be exceedingly gratifying. Lefèvre started his career as a pianist, reaching international acclaim. The liner notes state he started composing in the late 1970s and first recorded his compositions in 1999. He accurately describes himself compositionally as a storyteller.

*No.1 Force fragile* is reminiscent of Romantic-style music with a waltz opening, sparkling high notes, contrasting lower pitches, runs against melodic held notes and loud, percussive, yet surprisingly, never-banging notes building to a happy story finale. *No.3 Amour fou* utilizes subtle touches of contemporary harmonic shifts, shorter repeated melodic phrases, rubato, and an unexpected triple-time faster programmatic section with staccato chords and melodies

with turns, all recounting the search for true (not crazy/fou) love. *No.5 Aux portes du destin*, composed for a Syrian friend with cancer, is a dramatic grief-laden major/minor tonality piece enveloped by melodic high single notes, and at the ending creating a tinkle of hope. *No.7 Mati*, for piano and bouzouki (Thanasis Polykandriotis), was composed after a tragic 2018 fire in Mati, Greece. Recorded in Athens, the bouzouki's plucked strings and piano-hammered keys create a unique sound, especially during quasi-unison duets, melodic conversations with bouzouki high notes.

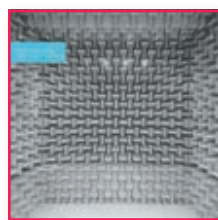
Lefèvre's *Opus 7 Préludes* are colourful, multi-character "best-selling" piano stories!

**Tiina Kiik**

### The Lost Clock

**Rose Bolton**

**Important Records/Cassauna**  
(imprec.com/cassauna)



► The undulating hypnotica of Canadian composer Rose Bolton's latest release demonstrates mastery of colour and form as filtered through the electronic realm.

In the four tracks that comprise the album, titled *The Lost Clock*, the listener is captivated throughout introspective drones and pulses all layered in a foundation of sonic alchemy.

The first piece, *Unsettled Souls*, is a short gem infused with mysterious bells that somehow haunt and comfort simultaneously. The almost 13-minute title work has a mood of wonderful anguish much like hidden corrosion under a brilliant surface. The third piece, *Starless Night*, is comprised of a warm blanket of electronic molasses over which jagged and unknown sound sources create a liminal experience of otherworldliness and real-world mechanics. *The Heaven Mirror*, the concluding work, is as evocative as the title suggests.

This music is serene and calm, but not without deep and profound poetic intention. *The Lost Clock* is a digital release also available on cassette on the Cassauna imprint from Important Records.

**Adam Scime**

### Ri Ra

**Dustin White**

**Mon Hills Records (dustinwhiteflute.com)**



► Early-career West Virginia flutist Dustin White has made a name exploring flute-centred intersections of Western contemporary art and Middle Eastern

musics. His debut solo album, *Ri Ra*, treads that path; featuring seven solo works from the last 18 years for C, alto and bass flutes by composers primarily of Iranian or Lebanese lineage. The inclusion of Montreal's Katia Makdissi-Warren is however no mere coincidence. She is the founding artistic director of Oktoécho, an ensemble specializing in the fusion of Middle Eastern and Western musical idioms, right in line with the album's theme.

Most of the works chosen for *Ri Ra* were winners of a 2020 open call for scores which sought compositions by composers of Middle-Eastern descent, or music inspired by Middle-Eastern themes. White's masterful command of the Western concert metal flute enables him to evoke the sounds of the reed *nay* and *shabbaba*, modes outside diatonic scales and Middle-Eastern forms such as *taqasim*, found in Arabic improvisation.

Makdissi-Warren's beautifully wrought flute solo *Dialogue du silence* is a standout. Inspired by *taqasim*, she eloquently highlights silence in the score. It serves to punctuate melodic phrases, as portmanteaux of transition and as echoes of preceding phrases. *Dialogue du silence* is both compelling as an emotional statement, as well as a rare example of an effective marriage of extended flute techniques pioneered by 20th-century Western composers and received Arabic flute and vocal performance practices. The score is eminently worthy of joining the roster of solo flute concert standards.

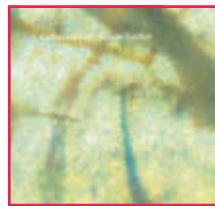
**Andrew Timar**

### Remote Together

**Catherine Lee**

**Redshift Records TK489**

(redshiftrecords.org)



► During the world-wide pandemic, Canadian oboist Catherine Lee turned this experience into a creative solo album, *Remote Together*.

The compositions are put in a specific order to recreate the transformative experience during social isolation; loneliness to overcoming seclusion, with a new perspective on life as we know it. The album features works by Canadian and American composers

from the Pacific Northwest, often incorporating the vibrant sounds of nature with the pastoral timbre of the oboe, oboe d'amore and English horn.

Although each composition brought different perspectives of the oboe family's tonal variety, the one that really stood out was the final work *Silkys*, co-created in 2020 by Catherine Lee and Juniana Lanning. *Silkys* depicts the lifecycle of the domestic silk moth with the integration of field recordings of natural sounds. You can hear the entire metamorphosis from the very beginnings of life, crawling around as a caterpillar, to being sealed in a cocoon hearing the faint world around outside, to developing and trying new wings, to finally emerging a free moth. Lee has cleverly paired this composition with images, creating a video to enhance the experience.

Lee showcases her beautiful dark tone on all three instruments and her mastery of 20th-century techniques. *Remote Together* is a direct reflection of current society and nature's ability to adapt to surrounding circumstances.

**Melissa Scott**

**Alan Hovhaness – Selected Piano Compositions**  
**Şahan Arzruni**  
**Kalan 773 (kalan.com)**



► Drawing upon his friendship with the composer and what he describes as “stacks of handwritten manuscripts,” Armenian pianist-ethnomusicologist-media

personality Şahan Arzruni performs ten works by Alan Hovhaness, several unpublished, here receiving their first recordings.

Hovhaness (1911–2000) was born in Massachusetts to an Armenian father and Scottish mother. Many of his hundreds of compositions reference Armenian historical and musical traditions. Embracing as well the melodic, rhythmic, modal and colouristic resources of other diverse cultures, Hovhaness' music evokes ritualistic processions, incantations and dances in moods ranging from lamentation to jubilation.

This disc contains 34 tracks, nearly all under three minutes long. In the five-movement *Invocations for Vahagn, Op.54, No.1*, percussionist Adam Rosenblatt adds Chinese drums, Burmese gongs, cymbal, conch and thunder sheet to the suitably aggressive music. (Vahagn was an ancient Armenian war god.) Rosenblatt rejoins Arzruni in the eight-movement *Sonata Hakhpāt, Op.54, No.2*. (The Hakhpāt monastery complex in Armenia is a UNESCO World Heritage site, dating from the tenth century.) Unlike its martial companion piece, it begins with slow, bell-like chords; a pensive *Pastoral* and mournful

*Aria* provide repose between mesmerizing, propulsive dances.

Of the solo piano works, my special favourites are the quirky *Suite on Greek Tunes*, the sensuous *Mystic Flute* and the glowing, beautiful *Journey into Dawn*. I enjoyed the entire CD, though, along with all of Hovhaness' music that I've heard throughout over 60 years of appreciative listening to it on disc. Quite simply, I'm a fan!

**Michael Schulman**

**Eric Lyon: Giga Concerto**  
**String Noise; Greg Saunier; International Contemporary Ensemble**  
**New Focus Recordings FCR293**  
**(newfocusrecordings.com/catalogue)**



► Frenetic energy and whirling pastiche permeate throughout Eric Lyon's *Giga Concerto*. Performed by the International Contemporary

Ensemble (ICE), with guest soloists, this six-movement work is certainly a fun ride. The composer notes that the music of Brahms is decidedly “gloomy” and aims to avoid this attribute in his own music. The *Giga Concerto* does exactly that: the obvious polar opposite of gloom. The listener is treated to pure giddiness as Lyon enjoys many jaunty moments in each movement of the piece. The joviality of mood is unrelenting with many sarcastic string slides and punchy percussive romps. This release is truly a carnival dance in a not-to-distant land. The International Contemporary Ensemble, soloists Conrad Harris and Pauline Kim Harris (also known as the duo String Noise) and percussionist Greg Saunier execute the piece with supreme musicianship and technical mastery. The *Giga Concerto* is wonderfully buoyant – the perfect listen on a gloomy day.

**Adam Scime**

**113 Composers Collective – Resistance/Resonance**  
**Duo Gelland**  
**New Focus Recordings FCR291**  
**(newfocusrecordings.com/catalogue)**



► Duo Gelland is comprised of virtuoso violinists Cecilia and Martin Gelland. In their nearly 30-year history, the duo continues to champion contemporary

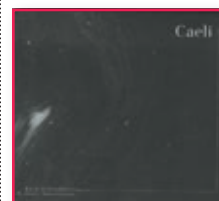
music to a seemingly inexhaustible degree. In the duo's latest release titled *Resistance/Resonance*, members of the 113 Composers Collective were commissioned to provide the six pieces on the album.

Each piece delivers a wide-ranging approach to the violin duet from a noise-based aesthetic to shimmering landscapes produced by string harmonics. Jeremy Wagner's *Oberleitung* is a jagged study in electric gestures. Michael Duffy offers contrast with airy tones and gentle threads. The nostalgia-laden *Autochrome Lumière* by Joshua Musikantow offers a more melodic approach matched with prickly taps of the bow on the instruments. Sam Krahn's piece, the title track, is an engaging juxtaposition of different characters that provide interesting contrast and occasional togetherness. *Difficult Ferns* by Adam Zahller is a decidedly micro-tonal work filled with unstable and phantom imagery. The last track on the disc, *cistern . anechoic . sonolucet* by Tiffany M. Skidmore, creates a distant shadow aura amid slow-moving whispers – a piece that is magnificent in its understated quality.

Duo Gelland has produced yet another astounding example of their talents, and they handle each piece with an expressive and technical mastery that is not to be missed.

**Adam Scime**

**Caeli**  
**Bára Gísladóttir; Skúli Sverrisson**  
**Sono Luminus SLE 70020**  
**(sonoluminus.com)**



► The duo of Icelandic bass players Bára Gísladóttir and Skúli Sverrisson has documented their finely tuned working relationship with

*Caeli*. Deep explorations of sounds from Gísladóttir's double bass are sculpted by Sverrisson's skillful mastery of the electric version of the instrument, shaded by the subtle blues and greys of his electronics. Long expansive bowed scrapes are pushed to the edge, just hanging on before bubbling over to the world of overtones and edgy depths of deep space.

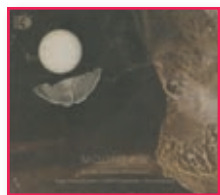
This music is definitely not for everyone, but I found the work expressive and beautiful. More along the lines of a Deep Listening experience, it is enigmatically shy of information either on the album or the press kit, so I am going to assume they are improvisations curated and finely edited to their current state. *Caeli* is exquisite in its expression of layered textural nuances created between the partnership of the acoustic double bass and the electric bass and processing. This is an album that is at times darkly overbearing while simultaneously free and endless; it is without borders, almost frightening in the way one might dream about falling off the edge of a flat Earth or losing sight of the mothership while floating in space. The length of the double album only enhances the endlessness.



With each track delicately balanced and compositionally complete, this is an album for those who are into darkly cinematic ambient sounds. Put on some good headphones, sit in the dark and enjoy the ride.

**Cheryl Ockrant**

**Gunnar Andreas Kristinsson – Moonbow**  
**Siggi String Quartet; CAPUT Ensemble;**  
**Duo Harpverk**  
**Sono Luminus DSL-92246**  
**(sonoluminus.com)**



► Who's up for some sombre Nordic music? Icelandic composer Gunnar Andreas Kristinsson's moody compilation matches the colour palette on

the CD jacket: black, white and muted earth tones. Essentially this is all chamber music, even the opening cut, *Sisyfos*, a concerto for clarinet and small orchestra, featuring Ingólfur Vilhjálmsson with the CAPUT Ensemble. Vilhjálmsson has a wildly unconventional sound and an impressive technical range. Portraying the protagonist in the myth, his part struggles against the accompaniment: descending scales, all at varying speeds and tonalities. The soloist rolls phrase after phrase up this sonic mountainside.

Based on an Icelandic folk song, *Patterns IIb* is quite playful by comparison, but it's still serious play. Reworked from its original scoring, Kristinsson replaced the gamelan ensemble with three mallet instruments, alongside the original violin and bass clarinet.

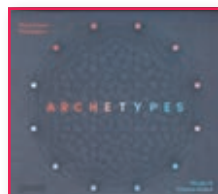
*Moonbow*, for string quartet, depicts the meteorological phenomenon of an arc surrounding the moon. The opening phrases purport to mirror the arc's shape; the musical ideas fragment and spin. Kristinsson means to depict the experience of seeing this nocturnal *arc-en-ciel*; one might be dreaming of flying in ever-narrowing circles upwards, reaching for the thing, then waking suddenly to silence.

Mathematical influence reappears in *PASaCAGLiaB*, originally a duo for harp and percussion with bass clarinet added later. Within the Baroque form, Kristinsson references the numeric pattern of Pascal's triangle. A slow sad dance grows more and more manic, before reverting to resigned calm. It'll take a few more listens before I can detect either a passacaglia format or a triangle.

*Roots*, the final work in three movements for chamber orchestra, reacquaints one with an old friend, the overtone series. It gets pretty funky, especially the third bit. Actually left me smiling!

**Max Christie**

**Archetypes**  
**Third Coast Percussion; Sérgio & Clarice Assad**  
**Cedille CDR 90000 201**  
**(cedillerecords.org)**



► For 15 years, Grammy Award-winning Third Coast Percussion has been praised for the "rare power" (*The Washington Post*) of its records filled with "an inspira-

tional sense of fun and curiosity" (*Minnesota Star-Tribune*). The Chicago-based quartet currently serves as ensemble-in-residence at Denison University.

On *Archetypes* Third Coast has invited celebrated Brazilian guitarist Sérgio Assad and his vocalist/composer/pianist daughter Clarice Assad to collaborate on an album with an intriguing conceit: to conjure up a dozen contrasting universal human archetypes in music. In 12 movements, each from three to just over five minutes, archetypal figures such as magician, jester, rebel, lover, hero and explorer take their turn at the thematic centre.

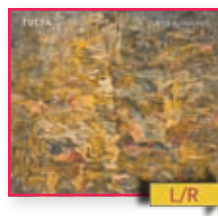
Instrumentally and stylistically the music comfortably inhabits a double frame: contemporary percussion chamber music is infused with harmonically adventurous Latin jazz, acoustic guitar and occasional vocalise. The results of this genuine collaboration can be extraordinary. *Archetypes IV: The Lover* for instance, in its restless and surprising modulations, rippling guitar and marimba arpeggios counterpointed by spare vibraphone and piano melodies floating above, seems to be reaching for something just beyond reach.

The 11 other movements evoke other moods and effects, characterized by innovative arrangements and brilliant playing. Composed by Sérgio, Clarice, members of Third Coast, or jointly, the suite flows organically, exuding musical confidence and virtuosity.

With its mix of classical and jazz elements, the 20th-century music fusion term third stream comes to mind – and here in a good way. *Archetypes* is an unexpectedly delightful musical discovery.

**Andrew Timar**

**Curtis K. Hughes – Tulpa**  
**Boston Percussion Group; Sentient Robots;**  
**Various Artists**  
**New Focus Recordings FCR298**  
**(newfocusrecordings.com/catalogue)**



► Curtis K. Hughes' music is redolent of mystery, wit and adventure, set in a world that is both concrete and abstract. Its harmonic and rhythmic

architecture is expressive, and because it is inspired by the humanity around him (real and imagined) it is never still and dances in graceful movements that are often not simply balletic, but also dizzying.

The repertoire on *Tulpa* adds another exciting layer to the character of Hughes' musical oeuvre, being as it is, evocative of a kind of otherworldly erudition. The title of every work represented here comes not only with an aura of rhythmic mystery but always leads the listener to a luminous musical world, often dappled with many-splendoured tone-textures.

Beginning with the solitary majesty of *flagrant*, we soon find ourselves surrounded by a whole battery of percussion colourists nestling cheek by jowl in *antechamber*. But Hughes, being a ubiquitous master of surprise, constantly switches tonal and structural gears in the music that follows.

Percussion instruments give way to the gravitas of the bass clarinet and moaning cellos; back again to the rich woody tones of the clarinet and piano before he turns his attention – and most definitely ours as well – to a large, grander palette in the four-part suite, *tulpa*. Through this, the album's apogee, Hughes demonstrates an uncommon character which is inward looking and outward bound, woven together with melodic, harmonic and rhythmical elements, and unexpected colours and patterns sweeping through everything musical.

**Raul da Gama**

**A Gentle Notion**  
**Hanick Hawley Duo**  
**II Pirata Records**  
**(ilpiratarecords.com/catalog-1)**



► *A Gentle Notion*, the title work for this disc by clarinetist Richard Hawley and pianist Conor Hanick, is a short meditation by Jennifer Higdon. It's sweetly tonal and at

two minutes plus, sweetly brief as well. It sets the stage for all the works on this release.

The duo open with Aaron Copland's transcription of his *Violin Sonata*, written in what Copland refers to as his "plain period," the early 1940s. I enjoyed wrestling with the piece myself, but to my mind it belongs on the stack of transcriptions more elegant in ideal than action: Schubert's *Arpeggione*, the Franck *Sonata for Violin* (or flute?) and the Prokofiev *Sonata for Flute* (or violin?). Copland transposed it down a major third to ease high tessitura, making better use of the clarinet's baritone voice; I hear Hawley suffer some difficulty preventing pitch from rising in the middle range, a forgivable but nagging flaw. There are also passages that are more suited to the bow than the tongue.

Higdon's two-movement *Sonata*, originally

for viola, is a better fit for clarinet, maintaining the gentle mood of the title track in the opening of the first movement, and never straying far into the upper range, even as the mood darkens. The second movement has pop and energy; to my ear Higdon shows some of the tonal style of Hindemith.

Hawley is not a showy player; elegance and understatement mark his performances. An instance of flutter tonguing in the *Clarinet Sonata* by Pierre Jalbert is subtle, even tidy. Joan Tower's *Wings for solo clarinet* is a tour-de-force; Hawley nails it. His sound is icy smooth up high, and warm in the chalumeau. His musicality is honest and reliable. Hanick meets him on an equal footing; the duo plays with verve and excellent communication.

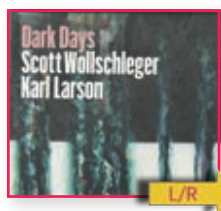
**Max Christie**

### Scott Wollschleger – Dark Days

**Karl Larson**

**New Focus Recordings FCR287**

**(newfocusrecordings.com/catalogue)**



► “Spells of hushed, cryptic beauty... free-floating grace.” So wrote Alex Ross in *The New Yorker* about the music of Brooklyn-based Scott Wollschleger

(b.1980). The ten pieces on this CD, dating from 2007 to 2020, share with the stylistically very different piano works of Erik Satie austere economies of means, eschewing virtuosic displays and overt emotionalism, yet achieving remarkably individual and expressive results.

The opening *Dark Days*, prophetically composed in January 2017 during Trump's inauguration, appropriately rumbles and grumbles in the piano's lowest register. Shifting to the treble, the diaphanous *Tiny Oblivion* reflects what Wollschleger calls “black humour acceptance [of] the fact that our ultimate fate is to die and then eventually to turn into particles that will forever break down into smaller particles...”

*Music without Metaphor*, *Blue Inscription* and *Lyric Fragment* are slow, sombre, haltingly paced, directionless peregrinations. In *Brontal Nos.2, 6 and 11*, single notes intermittently drip or spray; occasionally, chords splash. (Brontal: a coined word Wollschleger employs for “discovery within the unfamiliar.”) Finally, *Secret Machine Nos.4 and 6* are surprisingly cheerful, their shimmering trills and rippling arpeggios marking the CD's gradual emergence from the “dark days.”

In his detailed booklet notes, pianist Karl Larson describes Wollschleger's synaesthetic pairing of different harmonies with specific visual colours; non-synaesthetic listeners must content themselves with the aural colours of Wollschleger's tenebrous keyboard palette.

Wollschleger's enigmatic compositions are ideal accompaniments for sipping wine on a late wintry evening, but you shouldn't wait for winter to hear them!

**Michael Schulman**

## JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

### Montreal

**Holly Cole Trio**

**Rumpus Room Records 8088910067**

**(hollycole.com)**



► Recorded live during a four-day stint at the intimate Lion d'Or during the 2019 Festival International de Jazz, *Montreal* is a succinct six tracks. I don't know if it's

because my attention span has deteriorated in this information-overloaded age we live in, but I quite enjoyed this shorter album size.

I also enjoyed the energy that a live performance lends. So although the majority of the tracks are Cole classics that most fans will have heard before, these renditions have slight differences from the studio versions as well as a unique presence and spontaneity that's difficult to achieve in studio. The sound recording is so good (thanks to Ken Friesen) that you might not even know it's live until the appreciative audience makes its presence felt.

Cole is in top form, doing what she does best: delivering great songs with style, wit and heart, starting with the atmospheric *Whatever Lola Wants*. A singer's dream, Cole's longtime bandmates – Aaron Davis, piano, David Piltch, bass, Davide DiRenzo, drums and John Johnson, woodwinds – deliver their usual imaginative, tasteful support. Each band member has a chance to shine – Piltch on the stripped down *Little Boy Blue*, a playful duet with just bass and voice. Davis solos beautifully on *Girl Talk* and *Talk To Me Baby* and Johnson's evocative clarinet playing strikes just the right note on *You've Got a Secret*.

**Cathy Riches**

### Celebrations!

**Swing Shift Big Band; Jackie Richardson;**

**Larisa Renée; Dave Statham**

**Palais Records SSBB2021CD**

**(swingshiftbigband.com)**



► The home-grown, nationally acclaimed Swing Shift Big Band has been operating for 25 years and in these tough times has released a wonderful album

full of all-time favourites from the genre that are sure to get any listener toe tapping right along. Led by multi-instrumentalist Jim John, through interesting and unique arrangements of well-known pieces, the band does a great job of breathing new life into a genre that can often get pushed slightly to the background. The listener is taken on a time-travelling journey of sorts, one that is just the perfect getaway paired with warmer weather and quickly approaching summer.

The record starts off with a bossa nova classic *Summer Samba*, a sultry and rhythmic piece with scintillating solos by tenor saxophonist and musical director Jeff Pighin, as well as lead trombonist Rob Williams. Compared to the original, Swing Shift's version may even become the preference for some due to the organ melody being replaced by a softer and mellower combination of trumpets, alto saxophones and trombones in this rendition. In *Here's to Life*, renowned vocalist Jackie Richardson lends her rich and soulful voice to bring a melodious jazz ballad to new heights; the subtle yet poignant big band accompaniment pairing perfectly with her timbre. For any jazz fans looking to renew their interest in the big band subgenre or for new listeners alike, this album is a definite must.

**Kati Kiillaspea**

### We Want All the Same Things

**Erin Propp; Larry Roy**

**Chronograph Records CR-079**

**(erinpropp.com)**



► From the first downbeat of this fine recording, the listener is immediately drawn into Erin Propp and Larry Roy's refreshing blend of folk and jazz, a

bright world chock-full of catchy melodies, thoughtful lyrics and great musicianship. On this collection of 12 songs, mostly originals, the Winnipeg-based singer highlights her ongoing collaboration with Roy, one of Canada's finest guitar players. The creative partnership has been a fruitful one, encompassing their 2012 Juno-nominated album *Courage, My Love*, as well as performances with the Winnipeg Symphony.

On this new recording, the duo continue to develop and deepen their artistry. Highlight tracks such as *Farther On*, *The Light* and *Give Me More* feature some exemplary songwriting, with Propp's thoughtful, highly personal singing and lyrics matched alongside Roy's distinctive arranging and harmonic approach.

Propp's versatility and strong affinity with the music of Brazil and Brazilian songstress Luciana Souza is highlighted on *Recomeçar*, a memorable melody composed by Humberto Piccoli. She also displays great vocal and



emotional range on her interpretation of Hoagy Carmichael's *The Nearness of You*. When Propp offers her highly individual take on this much-covered American Songbook standard, it is as if she is pausing to savour every syllable and nuance of the song. It takes a great singer to pull something like this off on such a high musical level.

Special mention also goes to the incredible crew of supporting musicians, Larnell Lewis, Mike Downes, Julian Bradford and Will Bonness. Hopefully this fine recording will help to give Propp and Roy the wider recognition they so deserve.

**Barry Livingston**

## Ocelot

**Yuma Uesaka; Cat Toren; Colin Hinton**  
557 Records 5859 (557records.com)



► With its gorgeous sweeping melodies and fine ensemble communication, this album was juicy listening from start to finish. Sax/clarinet player Yuma Uesaka, Canadian

pianist Cat Toren and drummer/percussionist Colin Hinton deliver a finely arced album, each track a diverse departure from the last but cohesive as a whole. Well known as individual jazz improvisers around the New York scene, the trio has gelled to create this gorgeous debut album, co-composed by the group, a culmination of a year's worth of composing, rehearsing and touring, including a 2019 residency that allowed them to deepen their chemistry and work on the material for the album. This is an ensemble cast; three skilled players and improvisers whose trust in each other shows in the delicate patience and fine balance throughout the album.

It's impossible to name a favourite track. *Daimon II* is a solid opening, with melodic and deep, pulsating support for the soaring sax. The broadly sweeping *Factum* is a great listen, compositionally perfect and beautifully played, while *Post* is mesmerizing and fun. *Anemone* is tightly constructed and finely mixed; *Iterations* shows the group blowing off steam. *Sequestration* is contemplative and spacious, with stunning sonorities, and *Crocus* leads us to a beautiful closing.

Throughout the album, Hinton's percussion never overpowers the other two, showing a fine sense of balance that manages to never sound held back. All three players show a remarkable patience for the natural expansion of the melodic content.

This vibrant trio delivers an authentic and welcome breath of fresh air at the beginning of what will hopefully be a long and fruitful flight.

**Cheryl Ockrant**

## Uncharted Hector Quartet Independent hec001-cd (hectorquartet.com)



► Hector consists of saxophonist Chris Gale, guitarist Ted Quinlan, keyboardist Jeff McLeod and drummer Chris Wallace. These are some of the

most prolific and esteemed musicians in the Toronto scene and the results resemble something one might hear in the casual setting of a jazz club, albeit during a particularly loose and inspired gig. There is that signature flavour of guitar-driven funk, mixed with the stylistic versatility enabled by McLeod's lyrical organ accompaniment, giving way to six tracks of truly impeccable jamming. One thing that stands out about Hector is how egoless the project is. Nobody dominates the soloing order, no force ever overwhelms the others, and most significantly, every compositional voice is heard.

Quinlan's *Building 8* is the perfect opener, enticing the listener by constantly taking harmonic left turns while managing to intangibly weave a melody through, capturing the intuitive enchantment of a lost standard. McLeod's soulful *590 Blues* showcases the band's astonishing familiarity with the pocket, while McLeod's solo sounds poised and comfortable, as if he were playing in his own home. What remains of the tracklist creates a beautiful contrast of moods, alternating between the richly melodious compositional style of Gale and the unflinchingly forceful grooves of Wallace. All the tunes are performed with equal respect, exertion and relish by everyone involved. For a debut album, *Uncharted* sounds a lot like the product of a true ensemble, one that has found its collective voice.

**Yoshi Maclear Wall**

## O Sole Mio – Music from the Motherland Cory Weeds; Eric Alexander; Mike LeDonne; Peter Bernstein; Joe Farnsworth Cellar Music CM100619 (cellarlive.com)



► For years, the venerable New York uptown jazz boîte Smoke featured Mike LeDonne on B3 Hammond organ, along with his funky-adelic ensemble,

the Groover Quartet. Canada's own Cory Weeds – who is not only a fine alto saxophonist, but the founder of Cellar Records (a multiple award-winning, international jazz label) – was also long hip to this soulful group and began an extended performance and

recording relationship with these fine musicians that continues to this day. Produced by Weeds and LeDonne and featuring Weeds on alto saxophone, Eric Alexander on tenor sax, LeDonne on B3, Peter Bernstein on guitar and Joe Farnsworth on drums, this exceptional new recording is a jazzy celebration of the Italian-American songbook, rife with traditional compositions, an offering from iconic jazz bassist Paul Chambers and cinematic hits from Henry Mancini and Nino Rota.

Not only can these guys groove, but they're an incendiary device, as typified by a swing-infused *O Sole Mio*, featuring exquisite sax work from Weeds and Alexander. Mancini's film noirish *Mr. Lucky* instigates Alexander's bobs and weaves, while Pat Martino's bebop anthem *On the Stairs* showcases pumpitude from all five members of the band.

A deep, groove-infested *Estate* allows Weeds to shine – passing through each sultry emotional permutation. Also brilliant are *Torna a Surriento*, featuring the incredible Bernstein on guitar, with contributions from Alexander on tenor. A real standout is the funky-cool *Moody Blues*, which transports the band to California's West Coast in the 1950s. Consummate keyboardist LeDonne is the star here – bringing to mind all of the greats of the B3, while being derivative of none. The closer, Chambers' *Capricci di Camere (Whims of Chambers)* is pure, joyous boplicity!

**Lesley Mitchell-Clarke**

## What Tomorrow Brings Alyssa Allgood Cellar Music CM012121 (cellarlive.com/collections/all)



► With this, just her third studio recording, Alyssa Allgood declares that she is comfortable in her own vocal skin and has also raised her game to become an artist

of the first order. On *What Tomorrow Brings* she shapes the lyrics of these songs with élan, intelligence and passionate engagement, infusing fluid melodies with both a storyteller's sense of detail and a dramatist's sense of theatricality.

The chosen repertoire features beautifully crafted arrangements of beguiling variety and sensuousness, expertly voiced in Allgood's lovingly caressed phrasing. Listening to the way in which she seductively bends the notes in *There Are Such Things* and *Memories*, and how she sculpts the sustained inventions of *Bridges*, it's clear that there's not a single semiquaver of these melodies that hasn't been fastidiously considered. Moreover – speaking of theatricality – Allgood turns into a quite riveting siren as she voices the character in Noel Coward's *Mad About The Boy*, all but transforming what is usually a playful song

into something darkly dramatic.

Allgood's trio – guitarist Mike Allemana, bassist Dennis Carroll and drummer George Fludas – is completely attuned to her vision and artistry. The performances of each of the musicians melt eloquently into the vocalist's highly expressive melodic stories. Melodies are intimately woven into filigreed lines from Allemana's guitar, echoed in the rhythmic musicality of Carroll's bass and Fludas' drums. The music soars throughout, ending in *Passing Glance*, a powerful climax to this memorable album.

**Raul da Gama**

**Aliens & Wizards  
Spike Wilner Trio  
Cellar Music CM120120  
(cellarlive.com/collections/all)**



▶ Throughout this pandemic, Spike Wilner has championed live performances at Smalls Jazz Club and Mezzrow, the two NYC venues he has singlehandedly

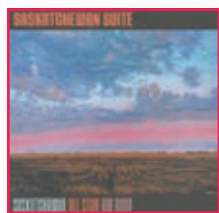
helmed. On his trio recording *Aliens & Wizards*, Wilner slides behind the piano and into the spotlight, showcasing his prodigious pianism with two empathetic bandmates: bassist Tyler Mitchell and drummer Anthony Pinciotti. This release also debuts a significant new partnership between Wilner – through his SmallsLIVE Foundation – and the Cellar Music Group, curated by the Vancouver-based impresario, saxophonist and dyed-in-the-wool jazz fan Cory Weeds.

*Aliens & Wizards* comprises nine works featuring Wilner at his best, teasing out melodic and harmonic lines that are poignant, urbane and stylishly introspective. His six original works are resolutely head-driven, delivered with characteristic warmth and personality. Not for Wilner an empty display of pyrotechnics or sentimental indulgence: as we hear on *Adagio* and *Aliens & Wizards*, the music is sculpted with fluid architectural acuity.

In the latter piece Wilner uses moody chord changes and melodic acceleration to build a monumental abstract structure, unveiling seemingly supernatural themes and characters, and connecting the rhapsodic opening with a grandiose conclusion. This is followed by the indigo blue *Prayer for Peace*, expertly crafted and eloquently performed by the trio. The program ends in the wonderful rhythmic rush and tumble of *Trick Baby*. This album highlights Wilner's captivating pianism against the rumbling backdrop of Mitchell's bass and the percussive colours of Pinciotti's drums.

**Raul da Gama**

**Saskatchewan Suite  
Saskatchewan All Star Big Band  
Chronograph Records CR-094  
(chronographrecords.com/artists/saskatchewan-all-star-big-band)**



▶ The darkly passionate sound of creation gives rise to long-limbed rhythmic excitement that builds, one melodic and one harmonic variation at a time into

this homage to Saskatchewan. Fred Stride's exquisitely visual, ever-swinging eight-part narrative – the *Saskatchewan Suite* – is one of the best long works to be put down on record in a long time. Significantly, almost all the band members are homegrown Saskatchewanians.

The symphonic music is powerfully and lovingly delivered by musicians who bring a deeply interiorized reading of Stride's homage to a Canadian prairie province in a composition that is astutely and idiomatically driven by improvisation. The atmospheric opening movement describes seemingly endless vistas and melts into a series of big-boned movements that depict the fascinating character and history of Saskatchewan. What could have been dry music because of the density of its subject is lifted off the page with the passionate advocacy of this Saskatchewan All Star Big Band, which – in soli and ensemble passagework – brings uncommon tonal refinement to this epic piece.

Beautifully executed contrapuntal writing weaves in and out of free-flowing sections. Especially noteworthy is *Thank You, Mr. Douglas*, a tribute to the iconic premier of the province, Tommy Douglas, father of Canada's universal healthcare system. Tempi, ensemble and balance – all seem effortlessly and intuitively right as this group of some of the most celebrated Canadian musicians parley with extraordinary eloquence and power building up to the suite's dénouement, so appropriately entitled *Saskatchejazz*.

**Raul da Gama**

**Morning/mourning  
Jessica Ackerley  
Cacophonous Revival Recordings CRR-009  
(jessicaackerleyguitar.tumblr.com)**



▶ Though it's no exchange that one might choose, the COVID-19 lockdown has often replaced the social and convivial elements of music with the depth

of solitary reflection. A series of remarkable solo performances has been the result, and Alberta-born, Honolulu-based guitarist

Jessica Ackerley's contribution, recorded during self-isolation in a friend's New York apartment in the final days of 2020 and the first of 2021, is among them.

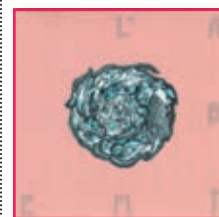
Her music straddles free jazz and free improvisation, and there's a special power afoot here – part expressive determination, part introspection – that the intimate recording captures: the textures of fingers, strings and guitar in close proximity. Ackerley's roots in jazz guitar run deep, evident in the precision and imagination of her plectrum technique. It's especially noteworthy in a set inspired in part by the deaths of her teachers Vic Juris and Bobby Cairns.

That accelerated picking would mean nothing if it weren't intimately connected with Ackerley's quality of thought. As *Inner Automation* develops, she seems to be dial-twirling in space: contrasting and discontinuous figures leap from the fingerboard, colliding, then exploding into auditory fireworks. *Much Gratitude to You, for You* takes the same approach to more traditional techniques with its rapidly muted gestures and occasional hanging chords suddenly broken up with the emotional drama of *rasgueado* strums, derived from flamenco. The concluding *Morning*, another contrast, matches folk reverie with strangely dissonant, glassy harmonics.

Ackerley makes music of significant depth. It's music that insists on being heard.

**Stuart Broomer**

**L'ABÎME  
L'abime  
Multiple Chord Music (labime.ca)**



▶ From French, L'abime translates to "the abyss." That fact, combined with the equal parts striking and confounding cover art (courtesy of the design

savvy of Rosie Landes), appears to scream "concept album." I can neither confirm nor deny whether that is the intent of the artist, but the music possesses the same cinematic stage-play pomp of Carla Bley's early 1970s music. Much like Bley, the members of L'abime find themselves all over the place, in the best way possible. Whether it's the progressive faultlessness of the title track, the nocturnal balladry of *L'étang au crépuscule*, the improvisational masterclass of *Perdu dans les bois*, or all of the above over the course of the show-stopping *Le Culte* suite, L'abime manages to fearlessly explore avenues while never allowing these risks to compromise its sound.

Jonathan Turgeon has mastered his craft. His compositions are unlike anything I've ever heard prior to stumbling across his work. They are dumbfoundingly complex mosaics of various miniscule rhythms and



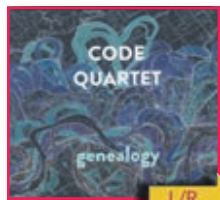
lines, interlacing with each other before ultimately giving way to the next contrasting section. It has often been said that the great writers know how to write for their band, and Turgeon ensures that every part, be it Alex Dodier's flute or Hugo Blouin's contra-bass (considering he's a pianist, Turgeon is a tremendous writer for bass), is maximized. From front to back a mind-bending musical experience, L'abime's eponymous debut will leave an impression.

**Yoshi Maclear Wall**

## Genealogy

### CODE Quartet

**Justin Time JTR 8622-2 (justin-time.com)**



► CODE is a Montreal-based outfit consisting of Adrian Vedady on bass, Christine Jensen on saxophone, Lex French on trumpet and Jim Doxas on drums.

The similarity between this exact instrumentation and that of Ornette Coleman's classic quartet is indeed intentional. In the late 1950s, Coleman and Sonny Rollins both found themselves drawn to the idea of playing with a chordless ensemble, feeling creatively boxed in by the harmony being stated outright. This is what makes the title of *Genealogy* so fitting; it suggests a following of this musical lineage.

Coleman's influence is inescapable for the entire duration of the album. On all tracks but the French-penned opener *Tipsy* (which has a pretty standard chord progression), the revolutionary "time, no changes" format is used as a medium for the band's various modes of expression. Multiple heads can be described only as Coleman-esque, particularly the title track, but the band balances tribute and evolution quite well. Besides the band's technically sound production (the entire quartet was responsible) and Doxas' additional studio wizardry on the mix, there is also an aspect of this modernization that lies in the playing itself. The first "free" track on the album is Vedady's *Watching It All Slip Away*, taking what would otherwise be a typical Latin groove until French goes off during his solo, and the take on *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded* beautifully combines reverence with freedom. Ultimately, Vedady is Charlie Haden, providing the foundation, adhesive and roadmap.

**Yoshi Maclear Wall**

**Concert note:** CODE Quartet is scheduled for performances July 3 at Festival Québec Jazz en Juin at the Impérial Bell, Québec City and July 31 at Sutton Jazz, a free outdoor concert in Sutton, QC.

## Brass Knuckle Sandwich Marilyn Lerner; Nicole Rampersaud Ambiances Magnétiques AM 258 CD (actuellecd.com)



► Polished and powerful as the first part of its name and as layered as the second, Toronto's Brass Knuckle Sandwich has produced a crunchy but powerful snack

of seven in-the-moment improvisations. The duo of pianist Marilyn Lerner and trumpeter Nicole Rampersaud, longtime members of the city's experimental music community, inventively displays every flavourful scintilla of sound from the furthest reaches of their instruments. Lerner clips, pumps and slides over the keys in groups or separately and strums, plucks and buzzes the piano's internal strings. Making use of tongue stopping, tone crackling and half-valve effects, Rampersaud's brass extensions include vocalized blowing, spittle-encrusted squeaks, strangled cries and plunger farts.

Expressing timbres ranging from the dulcet to the dissonant, the two produce a track like *Evermore*, which from its carefully shaped keyboard introduction to mid-range capillary slurs, conveys winnowing motion. Then they abruptly turn around during the following *nat.pit.that* to contrast the trumpet's uppermost screech mode with dynamic piano pacing in the most fragmented mode before joining infant-like howls and resonating key clanks into a balanced ambulatory theme. Kinetics may edge out caution on most of the disc, but in spite of numerous advanced motifs, narratives are always fluid. The disc culminates in the almost 15-minute *Rizoo*, where broken-octave creativity, including hand-muted brass cries and staccato peeps from Rampersaud and bottom-board percussiveness and stopped key thumps from Lerner, predominate until the track and the CD's finale settles into a connective mode.

**Ken Waxman**

## Glenn Close; Ted Nash – Transformation Glenn Close; Ted Nash; Wayne Brady; Amy Irving; Matthew Stevenson; Eli Nash; Wynton Marsalis; Jazz at Lincoln Center Tiger Turn Productions (tednash.com)



► This ambitious, multi-disciplinary recording project was co-imagined, produced, arranged, composed and conducted by Grammy winner and gifted multi-

reed instrumentalist, Ted Nash. All of the accompanying spoken word segments were curated by Emmy- and Tony-winning actress

Glenn Close, and performed by Close and a group of truly exceptional artists, including Wayne Brady, Amy Irving, Matthew Stevenson and Eli Nash. The skilled musical cast includes noted members of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO), including the iconic Wynton Marsalis on trumpet.

*Transformations* begins with *Creation, Part I*. One can feel the contrapuntal influence of Gil Evans in this full-throttle, intricate, challenging music, as the ensemble slides through the primordial ooze. *Creation, Part II* features the JLCO as they swing, wail and bop with exquisite precision. A sturdy and solid trombone solo punctuates the air, followed by a well-placed baritone comment or two. *Dear Dad/Letter* is the transcript of an incredibly moving letter to Nash from his transgender son, accompanied by masterful work on soprano sax by Nash. Other memorable movements include *One Among Many*, constructed around Judith Clarke's journey of liberation, as interpreted by the incredible Irving.

The justifiable rage and hurt, and subsequent illumination in Brady's *A Piece by the Angriest Black Man in America* (or, *How I learned to Forgive Myself for Being the Angriest Black Man in America*) is an awakening in itself, as is *Reaching the Tropopause* – which features a face-melting rhythm and sax sections in concert with the dynamic Wynton Marsalis on trumpet. Ted Nash, Glenn Close, the gifted actors and the nothing-short-of-exquisite musicians of JLCO cement this recording as an artistic triumph.

**Lesley Mitchell-Clarke**

## Jesup Wagon

**James Brandon Lewis; Red Lily Quintet  
Tao Forms TAO 05 (jamesbrandonlewis.  
bandcamp.com/album/jesup-wagon)**



► James Brandon Lewis was voted Rising Star – Tenor Saxophone in the 2020 *DownBeat* magazine's International Critics Poll. His tone is urgent and

emphatic and *Jesup Wagon*, recorded with his Red Lily Quintet, is his ninth release. The title refers to the wagon built by George Washington Carver to travel the Alabama countryside and teach farming techniques. It was a travelling road show of science and hope and Lewis' seven compositions are based on Carver's words and experiences. The quintet includes William Parker (bass), Chad Taylor (drums), Kirk Knuffke (cornet) and Chris Hoffman (cello). The lack of a chordal instrument like piano or guitar gives the group an open sound which, combined with Knuffke's cornet and Lewis' tone, reminds me of the early Ornette Coleman group with Don Cherry playing pocket cornet.

The detailed liner notes describe both

the music and how each work refers back to Carver's ideas and legacy. For example, *Lowlands of Sorrow* is Carver's phrase from when he discovered the extreme poverty of farmers in Macon County. Lewis' saxophone is wailing and, with Knuffke's cornet, blows forth a song of suffering. The melody and solos are deftly underscored by Parker's contrapuntal bass and Taylor's effortlessly polyrhythmic percussion. *Fallen Flowers* has a solemn opening melody which is soon contrasted by a playfully melodic and staccato theme tossed back and forth between sax and cornet. This back and forth movement continues throughout the piece occasionally making way for the soloists. *Jesup Wagon* ends with one of Lewis' recitations that could describe this intense and brilliant album as a whole: "Embedded seeds crack through tormented shells of one colour, giving birth to many hues."

**Ted Parkinson**

**Everything Happens To Be**  
**Ben Goldberg**  
**BAG Production Records BAG018**  
**(bengoldberg.net)**



► Since debuting with the New Klezmer Trio in 1991, clarinetist Ben Goldberg has produced consistently inventive, often witty music, whether playing works by

John Zorn or Merle Travis. His four stellar partners here all have previous connections. Tenor saxophonist Ellery Eskelin shares a breadth of reference, sentiment and humour. Goldberg has played duets with bassist Michael Formanek, while guitarist Mary Halvorson and drummer Tomas Fujiwara have previously joined Goldberg in the improvising trio The Out Louds.

The opening *What About* suggests the gentle melodic clarity and sudden surprise of Jimmy Giuffrè, while *Cold Weather* and *Chorale Type* are updates of early jazz textures, given added authenticity by Goldberg's acquisition of an E-flat Albert System clarinet, the kind employed by New Orleans musicians a century ago. It lends a particularly woody warmth to the kind of abstracted counterpoint Goldberg and Eskelin practise here, sometimes further enhanced by Halvorson's electronic squiggles.

That Goldberg wit surfaces as well with *Tomas Plays the Drums*: Fujiwara does, but not in a solo feature; instead, he appears at the end of a collective blast of bass clarinet, saxophone multiphonics and electric guitar squall, one more unlikely episode in Goldberg's surprise package. The program ends with *Abide with Me*, a 19th-century hymn set to the melody of *Eventide*, composed by William Monk, a tune Goldberg first encountered as a child in a rendition by Thelonious Monk. It's played straight, for 1'10". Now that's jazz wit.

**Stuart Broomer**

**POT POURRI**

**Saved**  
**Alfie Zappacosta**  
**Alma Records ACD20512**  
**(shopalmarecords.com)**



► Colourful, compelling, award-winning, platinum-selling Canadian artist Alfie Zappacosta is back with an energetic, vibrant collection of nine

stylistically diverse original tracks in this, his 16th album. Zappacosta successfully takes on the positions of songwriter, singer, arranger and producer here to create a memorable mix of jazz, pop, rock and ballads. He is joined by many of his longtime songwriting and musical collaborators including Gerry Mosby, Marco Luciani, Andrew Glover, Silvio Pupo and Louis Sedmak.

Zappacosta's decades-long career, with all its personal and professional ups and downs, has provided him the tools to explore, compose and develop his musical style in his own way, and as he explains, now without record label direction. The entire release is a gratifying musical surprise. *Unspoken* is a colourful romantic ballad highlighted by Bob Tildesley's muted trumpet echoing his rich vocal line. The upbeat title track showcases Zappacosta's distinctive rich vocal range, precise pitch placement and clear articulation of the lyrics, with enthusiastic backing female vocals and techno-flavoured instrumentals. *Had Enough* opens with an intense banging drum solo followed by a danceable pop/jazzy tune driven by Zappacosta's low-pitched vocals and bouncy instrumentals. *Here in My Heart*, flavoured by Romantic-style symphonic music and co-written with Pupo, is very emotional, highlighted by a singalong love chorus.

Zappacosta and his team's charismatic, passionate performances are perfectly recorded, produced and "Saved." It's so much fun to listen to, brightening up these pandemic times with musical energy! Simply said, this is music for everyone!!

**Tiina Kiik**

**Ain't Got Long**  
**Art of Time Ensemble**  
**Art of Time Recordings ART003**  
**(artoftimeensemble.com)**



► *Ain't Got Long* features the Toronto-based Art of Time Ensemble led by Andrew Burashko and Jonathan Goldsmith, arranger and producer.

Ten numbers by songwriters ranging from Irving Berlin to Radiohead are arranged with distinction by Goldsmith, featuring singers Madeline Peyroux, Gregory Hoskins, Jessica Mitchell and Sarah Slean. Among outstanding instrumentalists, Peter Lutek plays a variety of woodwinds throughout. Goldsmith's inspired title track uses a solo vocal from one of Alan Lomax's *Prison Songs* recordings, successively adding echoing, a beat, increasingly dissonant chords and more. A ripple effect results that expands in time and space and amplifies the prisoner's cry.

Especially creative Goldsmith arrangements include *Love in Vain* (Robert Johnson) where the achingly bluesy vocal by Peyroux is surrounded by Ravelian piano chords, Hendrix-like electric guitar from Rob Pilitch, and eventually, dissonant high strings that capture the song's despair. Another one I like is of Radiohead's *Exit Music (For A Film)*, sung effectively by Mitchell, who at one point descends unexpectedly into a very low register. The classically based arrangement for piano and strings includes scintillating Chopin-like arpeggios from pianist Burashko, plus familiar high-pitched chords from *Der Rosenkavalier* at the end. Other songs, with arrangements ranging from traditional to unconventional, include *Calling All Angels* (Jane Siberry) sung movingly by Hoskins, *Sad Song* (Lou Reed) with an original vocal interpretation by Slean, and a fine *Someone to Watch Over Me* (George and Ira Gershwin) by Peyroux.

**Roger Knox**

**On the Other Side of Here**  
**Dan Hill**  
**Sun+Sky Records (danhill.com)**



► Award-winning Canadian singer/musician/songwriter Dan Hill's 16-song release, his first in 11 years, is an outstanding addition to his multi-decade

catalogue. His first hit, *Sometimes When We Touch* (1977), is still a favourite of many generations of listeners. Hill does not disappoint here, with more moving songs featuring his trademark lyrics and melodies.



Title track *On the Other side of Here* is a classic Hill song with chordal piano (John Sheard) and guitar (Anthony Vanderburgh) accompaniments – and multiple harmonic key modulations. *What About Black Lives?*, released last November as a single/lyric video, is an intense song written in the wake of George Floyd's killing in the United States. Hill is a child of a mixed-race couple, and expresses his outrage of this horrific event musically with shifting rhythms, dynamics and powerful melodic lyrics in his vocal/piano and Vanderburgh's guitar performances. *Ninety Years Old* is heart wrenching, with words like "When you are 90 years old, you are still a little girl" sung above respectful guitar, piano and strings. Pop-flavoured, radio-friendly, faster *Sometimes I Feel*, composed by Hill and Vanessa Benfield, has Hill singing at the high end of his vocal range and playing rhythmic guitar accompaniment to Vanderburgh's soundscape on Rhodes. All the other tracks are equally enchanting.

Hill's songwriting and performance skills are still so very personal yet relatable to us after all these years. Combined with clear production and virtuosic performers, this is another inspiring Hill masterpiece!

**Tiina Kilk**

**This Land**  
**Theo Bleckmann & the Westerlies**  
**Westerlies Records (thewesterliesmusic.bandcamp.com/album/this-land)**



► The Westerlies are an inventive brass quartet based in New York (though the members are childhood friends from Seattle) and their music is a mixture of

jazz, roots and chamber music (imagine Stephen Foster and Aaron Copland meeting Miles Davis at a church social). *This Land* is their fourth release and is a collaboration with German singer and composer Theo Bleckmann. The album is a meditation on their shared country of America and includes spirituals, Bertolt Brecht, four Woody Guthrie songs, a stark and arresting version of Joni Mitchell's *The Fiddle and the Drum* and several originals. Mitchell's anti-war song is followed by *Land*, which is trombonist and composer Andy Clausen's somber setting of Agha Shahid Ali's poem about immigration, the past and present and America and India. This is followed by a wistful, yet rousing, instrumental version of Guthrie's *Two Good Men* (check this performance out on YouTube). Then we have Bleckmann's *Another Holiday* which begins with the lyrics "It's barbecue and pie, the kids will run around, and I'll sit on the side..." With its minimalist brass accompaniment and ambiguous lyrics the song manages to be both

optimistic and sinister at the same time.

*This Land* is a thoughtful and engrossing collection of 15 works which play off one another to create a fascinating concept album about a turbulent America. The heavy dose of Guthrie proves that the past is always with us in the present. The performances are excellent and the combination of voice and brass is highly original. The Westerlies continue to innovate and push far beyond what we might expect from the description "brass quartet."

**Ted Parkinson**

**I Pray for My Enemies**  
**Joy Harjo; Various Artists**  
**Sunyata Records JH001 (joyharjo.com)**



► A curious mixture of spoken word, cutting-edge poetry, funky grooves and a propelling artistic drive, *I Pray For My Enemies* is one of those albums

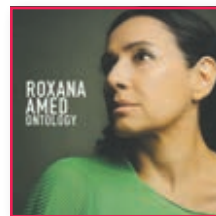
that cuts straight to the heart and sends a powerful message to the world. There is no hiding from the grittiness of the real world here and no pretense. Joy Harjo, the first Native American U.S. poet laureate and the author of several books of poetry as well as six previous albums, is a *force de jour*, an artist with strong convictions and a compassionate heart.

Harjo lined up a powerhouse of musicians for this album: Peter Buck (R.E.M.) on electric guitar, Mike McCready (Pearl Jam) and Rich Robinson (Black Crowes) pumping out fantastic electric guitar solos, and Krist Novoselic (Nirvana) on acoustic guitar. Barrett Martin is nothing short of amazing in his various roles as a drummer, upright bassist, keyboardist and co-producer. A touch of lyricism and dreaminess provided by Iraqi oud master Rahim Alhaj and trumpeter Dave Carter is cleverly mixed in between and the earthy, rocking solos on sax and flute by Harjo herself add an edge to the rhythmical drive underneath.

*I Pray For My Enemies* comprises 16 tracks covering the whole of human existence in today's world. From empowering *Calling the Spirit Back* and *Running*, to the introspective *Remember* and the clever *Rabbit Invents the Saxophone*, this album feels borne out of this moment in time, with vulnerability of truth and the stance of a warrior. You will come back to it again and again.

**Ivana Popovic**

**Ontology**  
**Roxana Amed**  
**Sony Music Latin 19439860962**  
**(roxana-amed.com)**



► With her seventh release, producer and iconic Argentine folk/rock/jazz vocalist and composer Roxana Amed has manifested a musical project

that plumbs the very depths of her identity as a creative artist – as an Argentinian and also as a Floridian, living in the politically bisected United States. The CD title, *Ontology*, refers to a branch of philosophy that studies deep concepts such as existence, becoming and being, and how entities/energies of different groupings manage to co-exist. Recorded amidst the COVID-19 pandemic at the world-famous Hit Factory in Miami, Amed has conducted her own esoteric exploration, incorporating primarily her own compositions and framing her pieces with an exquisite quintet, variously featuring Martin Bejerano on piano; Mark Small on sax; Tim Jago/Aaron Lebos on guitar; Edward Perez/Lowell Ringel on acoustic bass; Carlo De Rosa on electric and acoustic bass; and Rodolfo Zuniga/Ludwig Alfonso on drums.

First up is *Tumbleweed* – an inspired piece, conjuring up motifs of the cinematic American ancient West. Amed's silky, dusky, powerful instrument crawls through the remote desert scenario and creates beauty in the seemingly unending, isolate topography of the Western states, while the ensemble dips, swings and sways with acuity and intention.

A stellar standout is *Chacarera para la Mano Izquierda* – this sumptuous, sexy, enhanced rural tango features a spine-tingling solo from Bejerano and thoroughly lovely and agile scatting from Amed. Additionally, the title track is so rich and compelling that it's of little importance what language this gifted communicator is using. *Danza de la Moza Donosa* is a lightening quick, solid, bebop-ish jazz composition featuring Amed's supple and potent chops. Without question, this is one of the most original and well performed jazz-related vocal CDs of this year!

**Lesley Mitchell-Clarke**

# All Things In Flux

## Anthony Braxton's ZIM Music

STUART BROOMER

**A**nthony Braxton – composer, theorist, master of reeds, philosopher of play – has been recording for over half a century now and has often done so exhaustively. It began in 1969, when the recorded history of improvised solo wind performances consisted of a few brief pieces by Coleman Hawkins, Sonny Rollins, Eric Dolphy and Jimmy Giuffrè. The young Braxton declared his arrival with a two-LP solo set called *For Alto*, outlining a musical language that he's been exploring and expanding ever since, with larger and larger projects and titles ever more evocative or mysterious, like the *Ghost Trance Music* and *Diamond Curtain Wall*. In 2019, in his 75th year, he presented a six-hour performance of *Sonic Genome* at Berlin's Gropius Bau, with 60 musicians spread throughout the museum drawing randomly from Braxton's vast compositional output. Graham Lock suggested his significance in the subtitle of his book *Blutopia: Visions of the Future and Revisions of the Past in the Work of Sun Ra, Duke Ellington, and Anthony Braxton*. Possible alternatives? You might as readily match Braxton with Olivier Messiaen, Karlheinz Stockhausen or Harry Partch as a composer who has constructed his own universe.



Braxton's latest compositional series is called **ZIM – Anthony Braxton: 12 COMP (ZIM) 2017** ([firehouse12records.com](http://firehouse12records.com)). He has just released its first substantial documentation on a single audio Blu-ray disc: 12 pieces, ranging from 40 to 73 minutes each, over ten hours altogether, recorded over a 14-month period by groups ranging from sextet to nonet in the U.S., Montreal and London. As usual though, the real wonder of Braxton's

work is in the listening, not the clock-watching, despite the hourglass he will place on a stage at the start of a piece, signal of a time apart: ancient, infinite, even granular.

Along with Braxton and his reeds, the group constants are Taylor Ho Bynum playing cornets and trombone; tubist Dan Peck and harpist Jacqui Kerrod. Another harpist – there are three others – is always present; accordionist Adam Matlock appears on 11 of the pieces; cellist Tomeka Reid appears on eight; violinist Jean Cook on three; saxophonist Ingrid Laubrock and trumpeter Stephanie Richards figure in the nonet's four performances. The harps, strings and accordion are key to the music's special qualities: it is often sweeping, fluid and delicate, though those dreamlike and gentle textures mingle and fuse with the diverse sounds supplied by the winds. Braxton's own alto saxophone can range from silky sweet to abrasive, and he also brings along instruments ranging from soprano saxophone to contrabass clarinet.

Braxton provides extensive notes in an accompanying booklet, and they're as rich and playful as the music, which can sound as natural as a convergence of streams in a pond: "the notated material is positioned on top of an 'unstable metric gravity'. This is a 'wobbly music architecture'." This multiple and unpredictable movement defines the music, a brilliant confluence of composed and improvised elements, a sonic flux of such delicacy that rhythmic, tonal and timbral incongruities combine to suggest an immersion in the spirit of change.

Braxton has previously remarked that "I want the undefined component of my music to be on an equal par with the defined component," and it's a goal that he continues to extend here. If James



MARTIN MORISSETTE

Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* is the most musical of books, Braxton's *ZIM* is its double, diverging concordances passing over and through one another in a babbling dream discourse, free in some sense that music rarely is, as diverse in its methods as in its favoured sonorities, from those sibilant saxophones to brash brass blasts and hand-swept harp strings.

Whichever iteration of the group appears, the performance suggests it's the ideal scale. As broad as the invention becomes, there's always a sense of meaning rather than mere novelty, each event arising with its own certainty, however realized, an inevitability in accord with the logic of a dream, including a strange nonet passage in *Composition No.415* in which Peck's tuba wanders in a field of sudden pointillist punctuations from the other winds.

By the time the septet reaches the final performances at London's Café OTO, the pieces have stretched past the 70-minute mark and the strange fusions, mergers and discontinuities are ever more fully realized, the group pressing further and further into new territories, all the way to brief and uncredited vocal outbursts. On *Composition No.420*, Braxton's alto initially fuses with the accordion and two harps; later he matches his soprano's whistle with Cook's violin, which can also suggest an erhu; Bynum's cornet flutters on a carpet of strummed harps, then whispers while the harpists diverge, one maintaining conventions while the other becomes percussionist and guitarist, striking the frame, slapping chords and picking a sparse melody. At times there's an aviary in Braxton's horns, from goose squawk to piping sparrow, while Peck's tuba emits a low frequency hum that seems momentarily electronic. Toward the end, anarchic near-New Orleans jazz explodes and a harp sounds like elastic bands.

Braxton's *ZIM* is music of surprise. These are broad aural canvases in which the participants surprise themselves as well as one another, reaching toward a collective music that breeds in myriad individual encounters and in which close conversationalists will come to finish one another's sentences – a saxophone's phrase becoming an accordion's. It's the sound of recognition and empathy, one mind, like one sound, becoming another. **●**

**Editor's Note:** Stuart Broomer is the author of *Time and Anthony Braxton* (Toronto: The Mercury Press, 2009).



# Something in the Air

## Variations on the Classic Saxophone Trio

KEN WAXMAN

**A**lthough unusual before that time, by the early 1960s a trio consisting of a double bass and drums, with a saxophone upfront, became increasingly common in jazz and improvised music. Initially influenced by the sound explorations of Sonny Rollins and Ornette Coleman, the configuration has since become so common that it rivals the traditional piano trio. Stripping interactive textures to their most basic with one woodwind, one percussion instrument and one string instrument challenges trio members to be as creative within these limitations as they would in a larger group.



French soprano/sopranino saxophonist Michel Doneda, who has been involved in varying improv configurations over the past 40 years, adapts to this format as part of **KORR** on *Tombé de la voûte* (**We Insist CD WEIN14 weinsistrecords.com**). Joined by Italians, veteran percussionist Filippo Monico and much younger bassist Andrea

Grossi, the three create a mixture of multiphonics and melody with almost half the CD given over to the seven-part *f.t.f* suite. Memorable interpretations and intersections emerge on all tracks, with Grossi's col legno and spiccato thrusts serving as contrapuntal foil to Doneda's multiphonic explorations. Limiting himself to the occasional shuffle or cymbal accent with an irregular pulse, Monico stays in the background. Meanwhile, from the introductory *not impro in roc* all the way to the concluding *re:call*, the saxist and bassist operate like an accomplished comedy team feeding each other unexpected lines and reacting by topping or embellishing the japes. On the first tune this involves matching triple tongued saxophone shrills with elevated string pressure that almost replicates reed properties. A proper finale, *re:call* climaxes as mellow reed burbles hook up with balanced string strokes, after spiralling sopranino squeaks from inside the horn's body tube are challenged by swaying string slaps. As for the suite, almost every imaginable timbre is exposed during each brief, connected sequence. Tremolo bagpipe-like drones alternate with compressed air forced out of the horn without key movement; or terse reed peeps share space with inflated aviary-like shrills from Doneda. Meanwhile Grossi's expositions encompass techniques ranging from fluid spiccato strops to full-toned rhythmic vibrations, to echoing strokes that resemble the mechanics of long-string compositions in notated music.



Arriving from an almost diametrically opposed concept is **GLOTZE I** (**Boomslang Records Boom 0613 boomslangrecords.bandcamp.com**), an eponymously named German trio whose briskly kinetic tracks move on from the speed and strength projected by many freeform trios since the heyday of energy music. Adding echoing

strokes from Philipp Martin's electric bass to the power pulse of drummer Philipp Scholz and the strident bites of alto saxophonist Mark Weschenfelder, the band ends up with 11 miniatures as reminiscent of the Ramones as Rollins or Return To Forever. While it's only the final *De Wert* that features overwrought buzzing from the bassist and noisy tones launched or unexpectedly cut off by the saxophonist's overblowing, other tunes have arena rock equivalents. They include

*Klangschale #1*, a cymbal vibrating, bell-tree shaking, water-bottle popping percussion showcase for Scholz. Other tracks are more reminiscent of Ornette Coleman's electric bands, as harsh saxophone yelps are matched by stentorian thumb pops or sluicing vibrations from the electric bass, all of which evolves over a carpet of buzzing percussion and cymbal crashes. At the same time Weschenfelder's playing isn't all frenetic flattement and split tones. For every tongue-slapping variation there are tracks such as *Durchführung #1* and *Hobel #3* where floating trills and breathy straight-ahead theme elaborations are buoyant enough to bring Paul Desmond to mind and are met by sympathetic guitar-like comping from Martin.



Meanwhile the Lille, France-based **More Soma** trio on *Hondendodendans* (**Microcidi 019 circum-disc.com**) stretches the creation of freeform improvisation into the 21st century, giving it a more luminously layered but no less ecstatic cast. Built around the altissimo smears, basso scoops and split tones of alto and baritone saxophonist JB

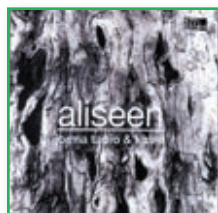
Rubin, the ruffs and rebounds from drummer Fred L'Homme and the sweeps or dot-dash plucks of bassist Mathieu Millet, the three gallop through four tracks with moderated responsiveness coupled with unpredictable invention. On a tune such as *God B*, Rubin's vibrations from the sax's body tube, coupled with flutter tonguing, projects a secondary, complementary tone alongside the baritone sax's lowest reaches. Still open-palm drum shuffles and reverberating slaps from the bassist preserve the broken octave narrative. Similar power dynamics are expressed on alto saxophone features like *Dog A* as Millet's seemingly unstoppable strumming sets the pace even as L'Homme's ruffs and paradiddles redefine the time and Rubin's duck quacking and corkscrew honks repeatedly fragment pitches. Triple cohesive refinement, however, ensures that no matter how many reed multiphonics are snarled upwards, bass strings stropped or drum pressure applied, horizontal expositions are maintained.



This necessary balance is more obvious on **Zacharya** (**Double Moon/Challenge Records OMCHR 71387 uassyn.com**), the debut CD of the young Swiss trio **Uassyn**. Eschewing rock or ecstatic jazz influences, this group's music is so scrupulously symmetrical that at times it threatens to become blood-

less. Luckily the accomplished ingenuity of alto saxophonist Tapiwa Svosve, bassist Silvan Jeger and drummer Vincent Glanzmann means that the six joint instant compositions are enlivened by textural deviations even as triple coordination keep the tunes on level paths. Working up to an unforeseen group definition on the last track, the trio runs through variants in tempos ranging from adagio to allegro and uses breaks and fragmented patterns to pace brief solos. Svosve projects lower-case breaths and gusty smears with the same facility as Jeger's oscillating strokes, and Glanzmann's clanks and slaps propel the music without strain. Most notable are *Mmoosh* and *Kheretem*, the penultimate and concluding tracks. The former is an original concept where disconnected reed stops, echoing drum vibrations and bass string drones define the piece without much ambulatory motion. Likewise avoiding any faux-exoticism in their use, the three players clap and shake bells to introduce *Kheretem*, then employ these metallic resonations along with pinpointed ruffs, cymbal clashing and string slaps to confirm the exposition as the saxophonist decorates its evolution with continuously ascending reed arabesques.

Another unique take on this configuration is on **Aliseen** (**577 Records 5846 577records.com**) which mixes improvised jazz iterations with currents of traditional Finnish folk sounds. That means multi-reedist **Jorma Tapio** & his **Kaski** band of bassist Ville Rauhala and percussionist Janne Tuomi astutely manoeuvre among idioms. While a track like *Nukunuku* is the most overtly folksy, with low-pitched wooden flute puffs evolving over biting string drones, the preceding



*Way Off* is closest to free jazz, with continuous snarling glossolalia and split-tone screams from Tapio's tenor saxophone, the performances are separate enough so sonic schizophrenia doesn't result. In fact the concluding title tune, which makes extensive use of string buzzes from kanteles or Finnish zithers played by the saxist and drummer in tandem with bass strokes,

mostly serves as an idiosyncratic confirmation of the trio's Nordic

identity. Besides that though, emphasis is on contemporary improvisation. Rauhala's subtly expressive plucks are upfront on a couple of tracks and Tuomi's pinpointed cymbal clatter and hi-hat pulses join him on *Siltasalmi*. As for Tapio, playing flute on *She's Back*, he produces Herbie Mann-like shrills with funky echoes and the same facility that his slashing alto saxophone cries suggest Ornette Coleman on a track with the ethnic title of *Lasten Juhl*.

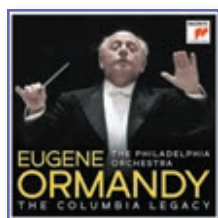
No matter which woodwind is used alongside the bass and percussion on these discs, invention and originality are projected from each. **O**

# Old Wine, New Bottles

## Fine Old Recordings Re-Released

BRUCE SURTEES

**Eugene Ormandy and The Philadelphia Orchestra**  
**The Columbia Legacy – The Legendary Mono Recordings 1944-1958**  
**Sony Masterworks 194397574821 (120 CDs, 200-page hardcover book)**



► Sergei Rachmaninoff's opinion of the Philadelphia Orchestra as "The World's Greatest Orchestra" was proudly quoted by Columbia Masterworks across the top of the covers of their Philadelphia Orchestra releases on LPs in the 1950s. The actual quote from Rachmaninoff, who made many recordings with the orchestra, was "the finest orchestra the world has ever known"

which boils down to the same thing.

The Philadelphia Orchestra was founded in 1900 and in 1910 Leopold Stokowski became their third music director, a post that he kept until 1938 when he was succeeded by **Eugene Ormandy**. Stokowski's association with the orchestra continued until 1941 and the luxuriant virtuoso character of the orchestra was established during his tenure. The Academy of Music, the orchestra's home, had been designed for opera and was less than an ideal venue for symphonic music. Stokowski adjusted the seating to balance the sonorities. He was an organist and he played the orchestra like an organ and together with free bowing in the strings, cultivated the maximum of colour and texture... the evolution of the famous Philadelphia Sound.

Ormandy was born Jenő Blau in Budapest on November 18, 1899. He was a child prodigy and at the age of five became the youngest student at the Budapest Royal Academy of Music and later won the State Diploma for Violin Playing. He was a pupil of Jenő Hubay, who was also the teacher of Joseph Szigeti and Jelly d'Aranyi. He graduated in 1913 and within four years he was appointed a professorship at the Academy. He modestly pointed out that he was only the third-best violinist in the world, after Fritz Kreisler and Jascha Heifetz.

Blau came to America in 1920 after being tricked by a dishonest impresario into accepting a specious engagement there. It was around this time that he changed his name. He worked as a backbencher at a silent movie orchestra in New York and rapidly advanced to first violin and then conductor of the orchestra at the Capitol Theater, one of the largest motion-picture theatres of the day. Becoming a U.S. citizen in 1927, Ormandy gained professional experience and received plaudits as conductor of the CBS Radio Orchestra. As pointed out in the accompanying 200-page hardcover book, his career was initially guided by pure chance and his ability to see the opportunities that were offered him. It gained irresistible momentum in 1931 when he took over the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, his first post as the principal conductor of a symphony orchestra. While there he made a number of Victor recordings including the premieres of Kodály's

*Háry János Suite*, Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and a specially commissioned recording of Roy Harris' *American Overture*, as well as renowned versions of Bruckner's Seventh and Mahler's Second Symphonies which bolstered his reputation.

By 1936, Ormandy had been appointed associate conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, second in command to Stokowski, and in 1938 he became that orchestra's music director. Ormandy remained at the helm in Philadelphia until his retirement in 1980, upon which he became conductor laureate. He died in 1985. Under his tutelage Stokowski's practice of free bowing was abandoned and the cohesive, lush and distinctive Philadelphia Sound was further refined and personalized. He believed that the Philadelphia Sound should more properly be called the Ormandy Sound.

His Philadelphia discography began with Nathan Milstein playing a slightly truncated version of the Lalo *Symphonie Espagnole*, regrettably without the third movement, recorded in November 1944 and March 1945, issued in June of that year. This is, appropriately, the first performance heard in the 120-CD set of every one of the monaural recordings Ormandy made with his Philadelphia Orchestra and the Philadelphia "Pops" between 1944 and 1958. The sound is flawless and solidly real.

There is of course not enough space to list or comment on each performance of this definitive set, but here are some that stand out: Khachaturian's *Gayne Ballet*; Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*; Copland's *Appalachian Spring*; and a spectacular 1953 performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. Of particular note are recordings from two acoustically superior venues, Glière's *Symphony No.3*, "*Ilya Muromets*" from the Broadwood Hotel in Philadelphia, and Saint-Saëns' "Organ" *Symphony No.3* from Symphony Hall in Boston, both dating from 1956. There's also lots of Bach (including Ormandy organ transcriptions), Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky and lighter fare from Gershwin, Franz Lehár, Victor Herbert and Richard Rodgers. Soloists include such noted instrumentalists as Rudolf Serkin, Robert Casadesu, Oscar Levant, György Sándor, Claudio Arrau, Eugene Istomin, Gregor Piatigorsky, Joseph Szigeti, Isaac Stern and E. Power Biggs. Some of the finest singers of the era are included – Bidu Sayão, Stella Roman, Martha Lipton, Frederick Jagel, Jennie Tourel, Richard Tucker and David Lloyd, to name just a few – plus the Westminster and Temple University Choirs and the Metropolitan Opera Chorus. The list goes on and on (and on).

So here we have it: "The world's greatest orchestra" with their chosen music director playing music from Bach to the modern era, in remastered recordings, many of which are issued here for the first time on CD. Should it be changed to "The Ormandy Sound"? With 152 recordings on CD for the first time ever, 139 recordings for the first time on CD as authorized releases from the original masters and 16 remastered recordings, all featuring their original LP artworks, there's a good case to be made for that here! **O**



**The Music of Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges**  
**Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra**  
**Tafelmusik Media 880513103227 (tafelmusik.org)**



► One of Tafelmusik's most interesting and exciting recordings has recently been re-released, available on all major digital platforms. Originally recorded by CBC Records in 2003, *The Music of Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges* features a generous sampling of the music of the one of the most fascinating, influential and multi-talented figures of late-18th-century Paris. In the excellent essay commissioned

for the re-release, Bologne expert Marlon Daniel writes: "A remarkable violinist, orchestra leader, and composer, [Bologne] was at the centre of Parisian musical life in the late 1700s. He was a trailblazer who commissioned and led performances of great works, such as the six *Paris Symphonies* of Haydn." He was also a celebrated fencer, military leader and, as this recording demonstrates, a first-rate composer.

The recording features stylishly elegant performances of the *Symphony in G Major, Op.11, No.1* and the *Violin Concerto in D Major, Op.3, No.1*, the latter featuring the sensational playing of Linda Melsted. Also included are charming excerpts from *L'amant anonyme*, the only surviving opera by Bologne (recently given its Canadian premiere by Opera McGill), and music by Leclair and Gossec. The recorded sound is excellent and the orchestra, under the direction of Jeanne Lamon, digs into the music with passion and grace.

Though Bologne was well-regarded and knew great success in his time, he also encountered racism and was blocked from attaining even more prominent positions – which he deserved – because of the colour of his skin. As wonderful as this recording's program and performances are, its re-release is important because it puts Bologne's achievements and remarkable skill as a composer at the centre of the project and celebrates him for the great artist that he was. Daniel's essay is fascinating, and the accompanying artwork by Gordon Shadrach is beautiful and deeply moving. Let's hope that Tafelmusik will give us much more of Bologne's fabulous music in future concerts and recordings.

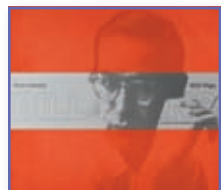
Larry Beckwith

**Everybody Still Digs Bill Evans: A Career Retrospective (1956-1980)**

**Bill Evans Trio**  
**Craft Recordings (craftrecordings.com)**

**On a Friday Evening**

**Bill Evans Trio**  
**Craft Recordings (craftrecordings.com)**



► Emerging in the mid-1950s in New York, pianist Bill Evans already combined an expanded harmonic vocabulary and subtly nuanced voicings, emphasizing elements of Scriabin and Ravel unusual in jazz. He contributed substantially to Miles Davis' 1959 landmark *Kind of Blue*, while his own group redefined the jazz piano trio as a

complex, interactive organism. Unlike Davis, who innovated repeatedly and radically, Evans would mine his defined territory for the rest of his career. This handsome, book-like set celebrates Evans' work with a career-spanning essay by Neil Tesser and five CDs, some 61 tracks, devoted to different aspects of his art. Produced by Nick Phillips and drawn from multiple record labels, the set is both representative and distinguished, spotlighting gems from Evans' career.

Ranging from his 1956 debut as a bandleader to a club performance recorded two weeks before his death in 1980, the first two discs are devoted to trios, the focus of Evans' performing life. While the earliest



recordings present him with conventional if masterful accompanists, e.g. bassist Paul Chambers and drummer Philly Joe Jones, the major shift, for Evans and much of the format's future, comes with the 1960 debut of his group with bassist Scott LaFaro and drummer Paul Motian, the former largely abandoning walking-bass lines for virtuosic counter melodies. While La Faro's death

in 1961 momentarily stalled the group's development, his influence would soon provide successors, particularly Eddie Gomez and Marc Johnson, who inspired Evans for key periods over the next 19 years.

Disc Three is devoted to Evans' solo and occasionally multiple piano recordings, some of the most luminously introspective piano music that the 20th century produced, whether in or out of jazz. The shimmering, trance-like beauty of *Peace Piece*, from 1958, reveals Evans as already a completely formed artist. Three overdubbed tracks from *Conversations with Myself* and its sequels emphasize the introspection, like the mournful N.Y.C.'s *No Lark*, the title an anagram for deceased fellow pianist Sonny Clark.

Disc Four presents Evans' various collaborations, including duos with singer Tony Bennett, guitarist Jim Hall, and saxophonists Stan Getz and Lee Konitz. The *Interplay* quintet sessions from 1961 match the diverse talents of Hall, trumpeter Freddie Hubbard and saxophonist Zoot Sims, effectively bridging hard bop and cool styles.

The fifth CD breaks the pattern. It's a previously unreleased hour-long trio set from Vancouver's Oil Can Harry's. Recorded on June 20, 1975, it highlights the spontaneous interplay with Eddie Gomez and Eliot Zigmund. The material ranges from Evans' own *The Two Lonely People* to the younger pianist Denny Zeitlin's *Quiet Now*, Jerome Kern's *Up with the Lark* and jazz tunes from Mercer Ellington's *Blue Serge* to Miles Davis' *Nardis*. For Evans enthusiasts who have the bulk of the material from the four-CD overview, this is also available from Craft Recordings as *On a Friday Evening* on two-LPs or CD.

Stuart Broomer

**Albert Ayler Quintet 1966:**  
**Berlin, Lörrach, Paris & Stockholm Revisited**  
**ezz-thetics 2-1117 (hathut.com)**



► A historical keepsake from the first extensive European tour by the quintet of innovative tenor saxophonist Albert Ayler (1936-1970), this two-CD 16-track set features re-mastered radio broadcasts from each of the cities visited. It's notable, since except for trumpeter Donald Ayler, the band was completely new and included bassist William Folwell, drummer Beaver Harris and violinist Michel Samson.

Someone who came from and returned to contemporary notated music, Samson's emphatic, astringent string slices and staccato glissandi immeasurably change the interpretation of Ayler originals.

Concert considerations mean that *Truth is Marching In*, *Our Prayer*, *Bells and Ghosts*, for instance, are played three times, often as part of a medley, yet each has a unique emphasis. In Berlin, *Truth...* is treated as a bouncy march with trumpet yodels, string jumps and drum ruffs; in Lörrach, it starts as a refined dirge before guttural saxophone split tones and presto brass sprays jerk the theme to a bouncy climax. In Stockholm, the interpretation judders between a detached harmonized exposition and a climax that kinetically projects altissimo reed screeches and drum pops. Samson's double and triple stopping frequently contrast with Ayler's pitch straining, honking scoops and multiple theme interpolation — Paris hears snatches of *La Marseillaise*, for instance. Yet those triple-tune renditions, versions of other compositions played twice and new versions of some little-recorded Ayler lines, mean the end result is unique. A half century on, Ayler's mix of spiritual seriousness and carnival-like jollity remains inimitable. Yet this set offers a different and rare take on his creations.

Ken Waxman



# REAR VIEW MIRROR

## Alexander Neef and the relevance of excellence

ROBERT HARRIS



Alexander Neef, at the Opéra national de Paris

One of the more unfortunate things about the pandemic, in my biased opinion, has been the lost opportunity we Canadians have had to say a proper goodbye – goodbye and thank you – to Alexander Neef. Neef, who ran the Canadian Opera Company

for 12 years, actually slipped out of town last fall during the pandemic and officially took up his duties at the Paris Opera in February. Since then, he has emerged as one of the boldest artistic directors in the world.

First, he shocked the intellectual complacency of France by daring to set the companies and administration of the Paris Opera on a thoroughly modern course of social equity and inclusiveness.

Then, he surprised the world again, this time in the artistic sphere, by hiring Gustavo Dudamel to be the music director of the Opera for the next five years, the expected choice of, it seems, no one. Both were provocative acts of artistic gutsiness and bravado, part and parcel of a man we hardly got to know while he was here. Hardly got to know, and (gauging by some of the chatter I've read and heard about Neef over the years) weren't entirely sure we approved of. I guess it shouldn't surprise me anymore, because this is Canada after all, and artistic success, especially our own, seems to enrage us. But honestly, am I the only person in Toronto who thinks that Alexander Neef was one of the best things that ever happened to us?

I'm beginning to think I am, based on the many critical commentaries I've read about Neef over the years, and the damned-with-faint-praise evaluation of his tenure in the announcement by the COC of his successor, Perryn Leech. Maybe I'm overreacting, but if *all* I hear in regards to the COC's future is talk about accessibility, community

involvement, partnerships and fundraising, someone's ideas about opera are different from mine – and, I'm guessing, from Alexander Neef's as well.

Neef reinforced for me the idea that the goal of the arts should be excellence, not accessibility; relevance, not outreach. Excellence and relevance earn you accessibility and outreach, make those goals something easy and natural. Excellence ensures the arts shine, stand out with clarity; relevance cements the arts to their community. Both together ensure healthy audiences, financial stability, artistic worth. It is a trap laid by the non-artistic to make us think that the arts should be judged by the same criteria as other public spectacles – that art is, in the end, just another form of entertainment in a modern, pluralistic society.

It is a trap because the arts do not truly belong in that world. Once lured into the marketplace of entertainment, the serious arts will always be seen as elitist interlopers, and hated more, not less. That's because the serious arts have different goals than the Blue Jays or Drake. Or should have. The arts sell value, to put it crudely – they traffic in meaning, in worth. Not in tonnage, audience involvement, clicks per thousand, bums in seats. Of course, art is useless if no one experiences it – but audience involvement is a means to an end in the arts, not the be-all and end-all of it.

That's what I think Neef was striving for here in Toronto – excellence and relevance. If we were willing to listen, he taught us how the two could be made compatible and complementary. And he taught us something else as well – he showed us what it is like to play near the top of the heap in international artistic enterprise. It wasn't always pretty – Neef was single-minded in his quest for international excellence; he could be autocratic; he wasn't the schmooziest person you ever met; I'm told he could play favourites among his staff members. But that's how it's done if you want the world's finest singers, directors, set designers and conductors to adjust their schedules and make Toronto, Canada one of their new international stopping points. That's what it takes to be at or near the top of a tough, competitive, international artistic world.

It also explains why Neef leaned heavily on new and controversial productions during his time here, a constant source of friction during his tenure. He unashamedly challenged audiences to the breaking point, demanded the best of his artists and directors and musicians, pushed his audiences into constantly new territory. There was a single-mindedness about Neef that didn't always translate well to amicable relations with the rest of the Canadian opera and musical community.



An example: although he was forced to backtrack eventually and commission a couple of Canadian operas, Neef repeatedly said during his tenure that he was opposed to nationalism in the arts as a matter of principle (and as a German man in his late 40s, let's assume he understands a few things about nationalism we don't). He hired Canadian singers for the COC, he once told me, because he hired them when he was casting director at the Paris Opera; he hired them because they were the best, not because they were Canadian. When he was therefore reluctant to commission a Canadian opera, composers in this country read the subtext, and were offended (and then when he commissioned Rufus Wainwright finally to write *Hadrian*, they were apoplectic).

But Neef gifted us so many illuminating and crystalline evenings in the opera house, to me, it was all worth it. I think especially of the two Peter Sellars productions Neef presented here, a *Tristan and Isolde* with astonishing videos by Bill Viola, (and the return of Ben Heppner to a COC stage after an inexplicable 17-year absence) and Sellars' *Hercules*, a Handel opera transposed to the American experience in Iraq. We saw work by Robert Carsen, the Alden brothers, David and Christopher, and the remarkable *Don Giovanni* of Dmitri Tcherniakov.

And the voices! Neef let us hear Sondra Radvanovsky as Queen Elizabeth and Norma, Christine Goerke as Brunhilde (before the Met heard her), Isabel Leonard as Sesto, Gerald Finley as Falstaff, Ferruccio Furlanetto as Don Quichotte and many others. We got to see and hear opera on the highest international level of performance for a decade. Was all of it brilliant? No. Was all of it successful? No. Did all of it fill houses? Quite the contrary. Was all of it worth it? For this operagoer, yes – a thousand times yes.

On the other hand, "the purpose of the theatre is to be full," Neef himself once told me, quoting Giuseppe Verdi; with declining audience figures, and slightly anemic philanthropic numbers at the end of Neef's tenure, perhaps it was understandable that the board of the COC decided a slightly different approach was necessary in the next phase of the institution's life. They, after all, unlike me, have to balance budgets, worry about fundraising, fret over community partnerships, manage a company. I just got to go to the Four Seasons Centre for a decade and more, more often than not to come away dazzled, uplifted, changed – seized by art, the way art is supposed to seize you, but which it does so rarely in the world. That we could be so grabbed by the collar and shaken loose, and then, when it was done, still hop on the subway at Osgoode or the King car, was an especial treat, a homegrown treasure.

This is why I, for one, am thankful every day that Alexander Neef stopped here for a time – a good round dozen years, by the way, so hardly an opportunistic sojourn – and I hope he stands up to the rigours of a



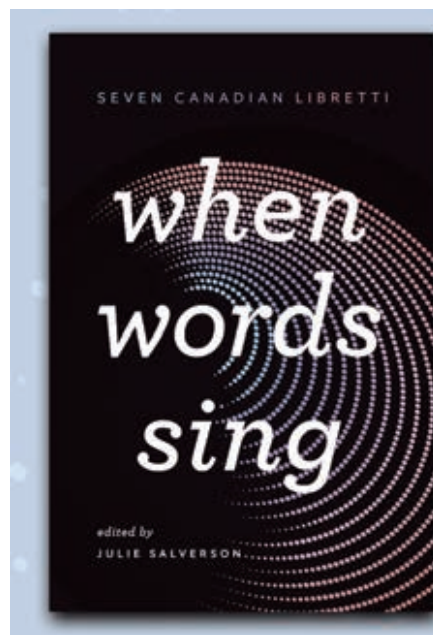
Ben Heppner and Melanie Diener in *Tristan und Isolde*, 2013

MICHAEL COOPER

hyper-everything French cultural hothouse. Somehow I think he will.

I hope, as well, that the path he led us on remains clear and potent for the COC, and doesn't get overgrown with the innumerable compromising weeds that are the bane of true art the world over. ●

**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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